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KUANYAMA AMBO FOLKLORE

BY

E. M. LOEB

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KUANYAMA AMBO FOLKLORE

BY
E. M. LOEB

INTRODUCTION

Heretofore, only scanty material on folklore has been published for the Kuanyama Ambo, 1 a Bantu tribe living about thirty miles on either side of the central part of the international boundary between South West Africa and Angola. This is the largest of the Ambo tribes, numbering at present over 60,000 in South West Africa alone. Many of them formerly lived in South Angola where, according to Hambly, 2 they came into direct contact with the Ovimbundu in Central Angola and either influenced or were influenced by these people in their folklore and customs. A comparison of the Kuanyama literature with that of their immediate neighbors in the south, the Ondonga Ambo, 3 indicates that the Kuanyama folklore has elements of both the Ondonga and Ovimbundu folklore. In culture, likewise, the Kuanyama are similar to both these peoples. To illustrate this point only a brief resumé of Kuanyama culture -- not a comparative cultural analysis -- can be given here. The sections presenting the texts also contain ethnological footnotes and explanations. 4

Geography.--The Kuanyama country, about 3,300 feet in elevation, is the flat, gently southward sloping floodplain of the Kunene, the Kuvalley (a dry river bed), and the Okavango rivers. Precipitation and flooding occur from December to April, and during these months the country is intersected by broad, shallow watercourses known as marumbas, which flow south to the Etosha Pan. Thus, as one progresses from Ondonga north into Angola, the land becomes considerably less saline and more fertile. The whole area is covered with white silted sand under which the rich dark humus supports a luxuriant parkland of subtropical trees and vegetation. There are no minerals except for iron ore in the Angola section, and stones are scarce. Thus the people have no stone tools.

A long dry season starts in April, the South African autumn, lasts through a June winter, which has an extreme diurnal temperature range of 32 to 70 degrees F., and ends in October or November with temperatures rising above 100° F. This long dry season and short rainy season regulate native economy, the drought necessitating a seasonal migration of cattle combined with a sedentary agriculture in fast growing grain crops.

KUANYAMA CULTURE

Dwellings.--The Ambo do not live in villages, but in scattered one-family stockaded enclosures containing many huts and quarters for livestock and surrounded by several individually owned gardens, which together may cover from ten to twenty acres. These round enclosures with their wooden stockades are called "kraals" throughout South Africa, but those of the Ambo are unique in size and complexity. They are built on the raised ground between the natural watercourses or marumbas. An average pagan kraal owner with four wives and several servants has quarters covering perhaps an acre. For the Ambo a kraal provides not only a shelter for his increasing family and livestock, but also a protection from outside enemies and spirits, while the palisaded labyrinth of passageways may serve as a traplike maze.

1 E. M. Loeb, Bibliography, "Transition Rites of the Kuanyama Ambo," African Studies, 7:82-83, 1948. The resume in the present paper has been abstracted from Pt. I of the earlier article.
The map and diagram were drawn by Ella-Marie Loeb.
2 W. D. Hambly, The Ovimbundu of Angola, Field Museum
4 The spelling and pronunciation of native words used in this paper are explained in fn. 17, p. 294.
Fig. 1—Cartograph of a typical Kuanyama Ambo kraal. Based on the ground plan of a kraal built by natives for the 1935 exhibition at Windhoek, South West Africa, and also on photographs and field notes. Scale: 1/24 in. equals 1 ft. on the ground plan; 1/16 in. equals 1 ft. on the objects.
facing the first wife's sleeping hut, which is built on the inside of the olupale or just outside its southeast end; to the south of her hut stands a large wooden rack full of sacred ox skulls and horns. The olupale is the family meeting place or parlor; there the wives bring their daily cooking, which is then apportioned by their husband, the kraal head -- for himself, his guests, servants, and herdboys, a portion being returned to each wife for herself and her children.

Domestic quarters have four main stacked divisions: the kraal head's quarters, which contain many accommodations for visitors; the first wife's quarters, where the first wife oversees all domestic duties, being in charge of issuing butter and beer meal (a sorghum grain) to the other wives and acting as the kraal's chief hostess; the second wife's quarters, whose occupants are in charge of cooking and issuing cereal (a millet meal) to the other wives; the third wife's quarters, which house the most wives, these being in charge of general housekeeping and issuing beans, greens, nuts, and lesser foods. A boy, when about the age of eight, leaves his mother's house and becomes guard of his father's or uncle's kraal. All boys must have their meals at their sleeping huts (7 in diagram) near the kraal's entrance passage. Visitors must walk through the boys' sitting place (9), not around it. They may return there to cook their meals, if not invited to dine with the kraal head.

Economy. --Among the Kuanyama, sex division of labor is pronounced. A hoe-culture complex belongs entirely to the women; a cattle-raising complex entirely to the men. Large economic powers are held by the agricultural women, hence wealthy land-leasing cattle raisers desire a number of wives. Although the Kuanyama still use as mediums of exchange ivory and shell buttons and beads, as well as livestock, the real signs of prosperity are the granaries (26 in the kraal diagram), filled by the work of many wives. The plow has been introduced in late years, but has met with only limited success. In most areas, because of the poor drainage caused by the yearly floods, the only feasible method of agriculture is by tilling and planting in hillocks. This is done by the women, who also transplant the seedling grain by hand.

The women commence planting as soon as rain is expected. The chief crops are Kaffir corn (sorghum) and millet, sowed in hillocks, between which gourds, melons, and Vigna beans are later planted. Tobacco growing was introduced in modern times from Angola. Cotton grows wild and was formerly used to protect the arrow points in old-fashioned quivers. Besides cereal from the millet, Kaffir beer from the sorghum, and a limited meat supply from cattle and the game hunted in the forests between the tribal divisions the Ambo catch many fish at the close of the rainy season. The Kuanyama women make and use their own dip baskets, while the men place trap baskets in dam openings. Men also poison fish with the sap of the umuhongo, a species of Euphorbia. The dried branches of this tree are used as torches for catching frogs at night.

The Ambo have access to iron, salt, and copper. Iron is obtained once a year by the Kuanyama blacksmlths from Angola. The Kuanyama barter salt from the Ondonga and use it in seasoning and preserving fish and meat; it is never used in porridge. Similarly, the Ondonga formerly bartered copper from the Heikum Bushmen at Tsumeb and the Kaokoveld. It was then smelted, shingled, and traded to the Kuanyama and other Ambo.

The men's occupation with cattle raising allows them an increment of wealth without work. It releases men for hunting, trade, travel, social and political activity. The boys herd, milk, and churn butter. During the dry season they take the cattle to grazing outposts in Angola and Eastern Ovamboland. At the end of the rainy season, when the boys bring the cattle home, a ceremony is held in which the animals are presented to the kraal owners (both the living and dead owners) with much singing, dancing, and feasting.

Besides cattle, the Ambo raise goats, which are the poor man's property. In Christian kraals there are a few pigs and an increasing number of chickens, although the eggs are rarely eaten and are not used in sacrifice. Horses were introduced after contact with the whites and are owned by the wealthy. They are not mentioned in the stories. Nor are sheep, which thrive only towards the Kaokoveld; the few sheep the Kuanyama possess are considered sacred, being a gift of the High God Kalunga. Every kraal has its native dogs which were formerly used by the nobles and kraal owners in hunting expeditions and in robbing neighbors of their goats. All Ambo eat dogs, but the Kuanyama never ate them in the king's kraal. Like the Owimbundu the Kuanyama formerly practiced cannibalism at the coronation of a king and at the beginning of a war.

Since the native aristocracy has been replaced by a council of headmen and cattle raiders and intertribal warfare have been outlawed, men now find little to do. Some, under strong protest, help their wives in the fields, especially the Christians who have only one wife. As among other cattle-raising peoples, plastic arts are shunned, and now even the native crafts are on the decline. The stores in Ovamboland have done away with native trading and, altogether, this sends the men south to work for the Europeans. The men still do all woodwork, make and move the kraals, weave storage baskets, traps, and mats, and tan skins, including those used in women's costumes. Women make coil baskets, grass brooms, beer strainers, and roof thatching, head and seed ornaments, and pottery. In Ondonga, the women manufacture and sell ostrich-eggshell beads to all unmarried Ambo girls. A girl buys only a few beads at a time, and wears strands of them about her hips, adding to them year after year until she has a white shell girdle, which should, if she is wealthy, reach to her knees by the time she is ready for marriage.

Political and social organization. --Status is determined by sex and age, although the Kuanyama have no actual age classes. Each period of life is marked off by appropriate clothing and bead decorations. Besides the ostrichshell-bead girdles worn as symbols of presumed virginity, the unmarried girls also wear headdresses of corded human hair decorated with cowry shells and stiffened with fat and red ochre into Egyptian-shaped head crests. The married women wear helmets of corded hair wound into peaked caps, having two horns in front and two in back connected by side brims, thus giving the effect of Mandarin headgear. The sign of motherhood consists of the skin of an ox face draped over the belt front; of widowhood, the wearing of black bead necklaces.

5 Hemly, op. cit., p. 335.
An unmarried man wore, sticking up above the buttocks, a hollow tail-shaped skin with a small sack beneath, which was filled with fat for oiling the limbs on long journeys; a married man replaced the tail with a cup-shaped skin filled with fat and wore a head decoration to denote his professional status. Today, the men wear whatever European clothing they can afford.

Blacksmiths and medicine men are the two professionals still practicing among the Kuanyama. Medicine men cure and sacrifice for the sick, detect thieves and witches, and find lost articles. Abortion is practiced by women professionals. Up to the time of the last king, Mandume, who was killed by the Union forces in 1917, it meant death for any girl to give birth to a child before the efunula, the combined puberty and marriage ceremony of the girls' group.

Most of the Ambo, except for a few small tribes along the Kunene River, had sacred kings. The Kuanyama king (ohamba) was thought to be in control of the weather; theoretically, he was above the law, and was owner of all land, cattle, and subjects. Kingship descended from older brother to younger brother or to mother's brother's son. A hierarchy of nobles (elenga) received land grants and other concessions according to their special merits; they in turn leased land to the smaller kraal owners in true feudal fashion. Tribes are still organized into matrilineal clans; however, the custom of naming children after the father and the handing down of sacred utensils and knowledge from father to son suggest patrilineal organization. The main property, which consists largely of cattle, is inherited by the brothers and nephews of the deceased.

In former times a new king, before ascending the throne, had to kill his father, since the latter came from a plebeian clan and was not of royal blood. The kings themselves were always strangled or smothered by their servants to prevent their natural death, which would have restricted their rain-making powers in the next world. After the reign of King Haimbili, the last of the circumcised monarchs, who died in the middle of the nineteenth century, the rulers were no longer allowed to live in the royal "palace" (ombala) and lost some of their divine attributes. After King Mandume's death in 1917 the Kuanyama were given indirect rule by an administrative council of headmen and subheadmen acting under the advice of government officials.

Religion. --Religious ritual was centered in ancestor worship. Offerings were made at the graves of kings and of such important men as kraal heads, when special favors were desired or at the times of planting and harvesting.

Ordeals were used by the Kuanyama in connection with the detection of witches by the medicine men. The investigating specialist stroked his greased palm with a hot knife and when the knife stuck to the palm, the "criminal" was named. In the days of the kings at least one witch (omulodi) was killed after every death. Today, the witch is still very much feared.

The Kuanyama formerly believed in the existence of three worlds: the world above, in which lived Kalunga, the High God, and the souls of the nobles (called ovakuanunghu); the earth itself; and a world below for ordinary souls. Rainfall and abundance characterized the upper world, but very little penetrated to the world below.

KUANYAMA FOLKLORE

The following collection of folklore may appear scanty in comparison with what may still be collected in West Africa, but the present state of European acculturation among the Kuanyama makes it difficult to select authentic material. The activity of missionarists since 1870 has caused a large part of the folklore to be replaced by Bible stories, and the old songs by hymns.

Kuanyama stories.--The lengthy Jackal and Hyena story has been omitted, since part of it has already been published and since it does not portray the culture of the people. The Kuanyama migration story leading into the history of the kings will be given space in a later publication.

Melodi is an unusual version of the "Pandora's Box" theme. The love motive, symbolized by two caged birds, is handled so delicately that to one unaccustomed with Kuanyama

courtship customs, certain elements in the narrative might seem neither primitive nor African.

Nambaitsa, or "He Who Was Self-Created," is a combination of culture-hero story and the animal-helper theme. According to the universal plot of the culture-hero tale a child (the hero) is born in an unnatural manner, arouses the anxiety of the ruling powers, who fear the overturn of their regime, then proceeds to deeds of valor, and finally does overturn the established order.

In the present story the hero, Nambaitsa, is born from an egg, and is therefore an unnatural child. According to Kuanyama theory any unnatural child is dangerous; hence, the father tries to kill his son before birth. Once he is born, Kalunga, the High God, plots his destruction. When this scheme likewise fails, Nambaitsa overthrows Kalunga and becomes God.

Simbaba no Kadenge Kaje, "Simbaba and His Nephew," is a second and less esoteric ver-

6 Acknowledgments are made to Professor H. Vedder, historical ethnologist, Okahandja, South West Africa, and to the Reverend G. W. Dymond, St. Mary's Anglican Mission, Otibo, Ovamboland, South West Africa. The Reverend Dymond gave me his manuscript on religious proverbs and songs. Professor Vedder made available an old unpublished manuscript by the missionary, H. Schaar, which contains valuable ethnographic material and proverbs. Both manuscripts were checked and re-translated by my informants.

7 A. Pettines, op. cit.

8 Melodi is a woman's name, but is similar to the word omulodi, meaning "witch."


10 The name Simbaba comes from osimbaba, "palmleaf basket."
The name Nehova, "The Girl, Nehova," is the story of a girl robbed of her status by an impersonating slave girl. An Ovimbundu story called "Ngana Fenda Maria" has a similar plot, probably of European origin, in which a female rival substitutes herself for a girl journeying to her lover. In both stories the criminals are found out and put to death; only in the Ovimbundu story, however, is the suspect tortured. The Kuanyama seldom used torture except when obtaining confessions from suspected witches.

Onduku Kavandje, "The Medicine Man, Kavandje." is a true story, the incidents of which occurred during the reign of the last Kuan-
yama king, Mandume, who died in 1917. By a clever ruse Kavandje tricked the monarch into believing that he was being given supernatural powers.

Okadona Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba, "The Girl, Nekoto, daughter of Namu-uandjoba." is the first of a series of omakisi or "ghost" stories. In this tale the omakisi are albinos and not spirits, although one and the same word is used for both. The omakisi were guarding a water hole and preventing the people of the kraal from fetching water. The heroine, Nekoto, lures the albinos into letting her fetch water and finally entices them to destruction. Albinos are not considered human, so the painful manner of their death, as told in this story, is considered humorous by the Kuanyama.

Omakisi, "The Spirits," starts with the animal-helper theme and the conquest of evil spirits by a boy. The second part of the story relates how the boy gets the better of his cannibalistic mother-in-law.

Omumati Enkembe, "The Boy, Enkembe," is another story with a cannibalistic theme. The boy is in conflict with his stepmother, who tries to have him killed so that his flesh may serve as medicine for her own sick son.

Kuanyama poetry.--The translation and explanation of a few Kuanyama songs comprise the second section of this paper. Song and dance accompany every native occasion except death and burial, when the people chant their grief. While most Kuanyama songs are anonymous, in the present collection names are attached to the three prophecies. Apparently the Kuanyama had no professional bards, although some of the men are better than average in the arts of singing and pantomime.

Kuanyama proverbs.--The third section of this paper contains proverbs classified as legal (nos. 1-22), ethical (nos. 23-53), philosophical (nos. 54-124), and religious (nos. 125-137).

Kuanyama riddles.--In native cultures, riddles and proverbs are usually associated. This is not necessarily so in our own form of riddle, in which a definite solution is asked, and it is to this type that numbers 26 to 32 of the Kuanyama riddles in the fourth section of this paper belong. In numbers 1 to 25, however, the riddle takes the form of two proverbs set off against each other, a type also characteristic of many Ondonga Ambo riddles, some of which are presented in the Addenda to the fourth section of this paper. There, certainly, the riddle is associated with the proverb.

In Ondonga each riddle which requires a solution is prefixed by the remark, "Listen to this! Now give answer!" Kuanyama riddles, however, have no introduction; the usual pattern is for one proverb to be capped by another. 16

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11 The name Nehova comes from shove, "oxen."
13 The name Kavandje comes from okavandje, "jackel."
14 The name Nekoto comes from ekoto, "navel."
15 Words related to Enkembe are pembe, "white"; elembe, "fading thing" (a plant).
16 Robert Petech (Studien iiber das VolkerKiel, pp. 58-63, 1898) has presented various introductions to riddles. One is, "Come tell me my riddle, an' I'll gie ye my head."
The translation of texts.

The Kuanyama now have a written language with grammar, dictionary, and published texts. Hence my informants were allowed to write down texts in the manner they had been taught in the missionary schools. An article on Kuanyama phonetics, based on tape recordings, may be published by the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Union of South Africa.

For the convenience of the reader, the following short fable is presented with interlinear translation:

Ekondololo lo numa okuali lalonda
Rooster of certain had he climbed

komuti kuamue nenghadi, Ndele olo
on tree with chickens. And when

lamona ombadje tainondaunine, opo
he saw Jackal he was approaching, then

ombadje ajahovela akutonga ke kondobolo
Jackal he starts to talk to Rooster.

ombadje ojati, "Kaume kange, diako
Jackal says, "Friend my, get off

komuti, tuje tu kundafane omblili ipe
from tree, you come to have talk [about] peace new

oji janingua mounjuni paife,"
which made in world just now,"

Ekondololo olanjamukula nde taliti, "Heno mbela,
Rooster he answered and he said, "Yes perhaps,

ame inasisiva naua esi totongi! Ndelene
I do not know well what you mean! And

paife ondiuete omukongo taende kuinja
now I see the hunter he is passing over there

eli nembua. Inda kuje utale nge oje ena
with dogs. Go to him and see if he has

ombili ipe nave. Opone fie hatuhembuluka
peace new with you. Then we get off

komuti tu paifeneni omke."
from tree to shake together hands."

Ndele ombadje taiti, "Ahohe, paife
And Jackal he says, "No, now

ondiua oupiakadi mahapu, simba embua
I am busy much, [and] I think dogs

edi inadistuda naua, sasi omblili ejj those not have heard well because peace this

jatongua paife tu-esi."
It is announced now just,"

The following is a free translation of this fable.

A certain rooster climbed up a tree to roost with the other chickens. While there he saw Jackal approaching. Jackal started to talk with Rooster, saying, "My friend, come down from the tree and have a conversation [with me] about the new peace which just now has been made in the world."

Rooster replied, "Really! But I hardly know what you mean! And besides, just at this moment I see a hunter passing by over there with his dogs. First, you go over to him and see if he has made a new peace [pact] with you. After that we will get down from the tree and shake hands with you."

But Jackal exclaimed, "Oh no! At this moment I am quite too busy. Besides, it comes to my mind that the dogs have not heard [the news] very well, since the peace has been announced only very recently."
MELODI

1. There was once a rich man [named Nasilenge] who was married to three wives. Among his wives, one was newly wed [a young bride], and she was loved far more than all the others. Her name was Melodi.

This man [Nasilenge] was in the custom of going to his cattle outpost. One day, while he was there attending his cows, he heard some birds singing beautifully in a near-by pan [water hole]. When he went to the pan he found two birds in a hole; they were magnificent to look at and had shining [feathers]. And [strange enough] although the man had been dumb, now he was able to talk; so he stayed [at the place] in order to praise the birds. Finally the man took the birds to his outpost, and, placing them in a pot, he hid them in the bush shelter where he slept. The birds remained alive singing the whole night through.

2. The next day Nasilenge went home with his birds in the pot; they remained alive although the pot was tightly closed. When he arrived in his kraal, he placed the birds in the sleeping hut of his young bride, Melodi. From that time on Melodi took good care of the birds. Eventually the husband spoke to his bride, saying, “Do not talk to anyone about this, and [above all] do not let the birds escape. If the birds fly away, I will never be able to speak again. Then I will kill you,” Melodi answered, “Yes, I will take good care of the birds.” Melodi was glad when she heard her owner [husband] speak as other people. After this, every time Nasilenge came to the kraal he removed the lid from the pot and sang into it, while the birds answered [his song].

One day Melodi had a dispute with the other wives. They argued which one was the most beloved among them. The first wife said, “I am greatly beloved, because [our husband] gives me his war belt to look after.” However, the second wife replied, “Oh! His war belt! That is nothing. He gives me his spear, his ornaments, and all his weapons to safeguard.”

3. Melodi merely kept silent, and therefore she was looked upon by the other [wives] as a poor woman. They then started abusing her, saying, “Our owner [husband] does not care for you.” One day, while they were scorning and blaming her, Melodi’s heart grew weary, so she replied, “The owner of this kraal gave me something better than anything he has given you; something [better even] than your war belt and your weapons. He loves me very much indeed.”

MELODI

1. Okali omulumenu umue osikuna, ndele okuali ahombola ovalikadi vatatu, ndene je okuali omufitandaka. Okuali ena okafuko kuvakauo avese aka ali eakahole unene komeso javakauo avese, edina lako Melodi.


18 Kohambo nengobe: outpost for cattle. The Ambo keep their cattle at outposts from the beginning of the dry season to the end of the rainy season.

19 Osikellelifo: war belt, a form of leather armor extending up to the chest.

20 Omuiona. Poverty is a disgrace among the Kunyama, so the term omuiona, “poor person,” is an insult.
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Vakala sili tavakala nokuchenana olufuuo.

4. Kohununua Melodi okuati, "Ohamutu ne ostike sadinina oudaka ja Nasilenge." "Vo tavapula hapopi ne?" Melodi; "Ihamudu nge tato? Hano ngenge omuapuliikine naua otamudu esitapopi."

Opone oujamunghuu vo tatinga atavai, "Oo omuholile! Tutuala ko ndjwulo oo tukatale, fte utulikile osinima osos silimo siua nosikumusiif." Opoe okevutavala mondjuo jaje nde taidilepo osivelvo. Esi ne vajamo, Melibo tatlaku ositvikile kombija lilpo inene josivela; nde oso tukafapene, nde ne kohunununua oduila vatukapo nde tavi.

Nasilenge oukali taeta keumbo je taimbi, oukuwara esii ondaka jaje vali ngati nale. Opone esi afika meumbu okuama ajukilila kondjowo Melodi, ndene okuahanga Melodi aja nale afadukapo nde taji kostoongo sotina komukunda 24 oku adile. Atale oduila navo vaia vatukapo.

5. Ndelene inavakala nokuhafela mujja mondjwo, ovejo pondje ne tavevapitifamo nokukuuliisa23 nehafo linene, sasi ngenge oujelele utangalo taumulikile momenja avo chavakala tavavemva nenghono. Imbo ne oduila veli momake avo, otavahale okutukapo, ndele ne kohunununua oduila vatukapo nde tavi.

Nasilenge oukali taeta keumbo je taimbi, oukuwara esii ondaka jaje vali ngati nale. Opone esi afika meumbu okuama ajukilila kondjowo Melodi, ndene okuahanga Melodi aja nale afadukapo nde taji kostoongo sotina komukunda 24 oku adile. Atale oduila navo vaia vatukapo.


Esi omukunda ouali ne mefilu. Melodi oukudikiso adidala naua je telituelle kokari kostoivela, ovakulunu vaje ovemudika ne naua vati opo ne mune ne temunono emupande nokudime ehandu laje.

But when the other wives asked Melodi what their husband had given her, she kept quiet and answered them not a word. Therefore they blamed her more than ever. Finally Melodi said, "Those things which you were given are nothing at all, since they have no life. They are not living beings. But the thing in my sleeping hut is very much alive, and also it is very useful. Furthermore it is a secret, and I won't tell you anything about it." After this the co-wives 21 [naturally] tried to force Melodi to tell them what was in her hut; without ceasing they questioned her over and over again.

4. At last Melodi said, "This object about which you are talking contains the voice of [our husband] Nasilenge." "Oh! He speaks then?" Melodi replied, "What! You don't hear him when he speaks? If only you will listen, you will hear him when he talks."

The co-wives replied, "Oh dear one! Take us into your hut, so that you can show us the good and wonderful things inside of it." Melodi took the co-wives into her hut and closed the entrance. After they were all inside, Melodi removed the large iron lid from the pot and showed the birds. There were two of them; very fine birds with glistening feathers. The two [elder women] looked at the birds with great respect and indicated their intense happiness by clapping their hands, 22

5. But the co-wives were not contented inside the hut, so they came outside, bringing the birds with them. [Once outside] the two women shivered with excitement when the beams from the sun shone on the birds and made their feathers glisten. When the birds were [outside] in the hands of the women they tried to escape, and at last they got away, and were off!

Nasilenge was bringing his cattle home to the kraal, singing on the way, when suddenly his voice left him, and he [was dumb] again as before. When he arrived in the kraal he went straight to the sleeping hut of Melodi; but he found that she had fled and gone back to the district of her mother 24 from whence she had come. The husband looked for his birds, but he found them also gone; they had flown away.

6. Once Nasilenge found out what had happened he was angry the whole night through. The next morning at dawn he sent a messenger 25 to Melodi's district, asking her to come home. When the messenger arrived, he stayed on top of a hill 26 and sang [his message].

The district of Melodi was in a valley. She appeared, finely dressed and leaning on an iron walking stick. Her parents had dressed her up well, so that, if her husband should see her, he would be pleased and his anger would be appeased.

21 Opo vo ovapula, "Wives in a kraal are "njamunghuwo," co-wives, to one another.
22 Okukondjifira: "Let them clap their hands in thanks." The Kunyama always clap their hands when they are pleased with a gift.
23 Okukuuliisa: a shrill singing made by Kunyama and other Bantu women to show great excitement, as at the time of cattle. The tongue is made to vibrate against the roof of the mouth.
24 Oina komukunda: "the district of her mothers." The country of the Kunyama is divided into districts, each under a headman. The word oina or "mothers" indicates both the mother and the mother's sisters, all being called "mother."
25 Omutumua: a messenger. It is customary to send a messenger when a man wishes to retrieve a young wife. The messenger sings according to a formal pattern.
26 Okulukundo: a hill. There are hills between Kunyama land and Ewal to the north. Kunyama land itself is flat.


Nasilenge okuajandja ne engobe dihapu kovakulima ta Melodi nde tomuhombola vali. Nde takala ohole jaje ngasi sali nonale.

7. As Melodi came walking along, she sung, "I will come back in spite of everything and bring Nasilenge his birds, I will come back anyway."

When the first messenger had returned to the kraal, Nasilenge sent another and still another. Each time the same thing happened, Melodi only came partway [to the hill], singing as usual [and then turned back]. Many times Melodi was sent for, and the messengers sang over and over again, until they became tired. [This was what the messengers sang.]

"Our child, I married her.

Too early. We thought that she was the eldest child;

But it was the youngest child I married.

As I turn my face up, tears sink back

Into my head. My nose runs and the mucus

Sink back again into my nose. I cry and cry

And I am laughed at for my lamentations.

For my bride. The heart of the youngest

Is not like the heart of her elder sisters."

8. Finally, Melodi came to her husband's kraal. As soon as she was in sight Nasilenge made a signal to his servants to kill her. The body was hacked with spears and sharp daggers into small pieces.

Then the father of Melodi arrived and picked up all the bits of his daughter's flesh, put them in a bag, and brought them back to his kraal. He hung up the bag on the roof of his sleeping hut and waited a long time for Melodi again to become a person; but she did not return to life. Eventually [the inmates of the kraal] put medicine time and again [on the bag]. Finally they saw one of Melodi's hands appear, and then the other hand. Next the two feet emerged, one after the other. Then the face and head were formed inside the bag. The people took Melodi out of the bag and fed her well; and thus she again became a proper human being, as well as she had ever been before.

9. One day Nasilenge gave a big feast; there was food and drink and dancing. So the parents of Melodi dressed her up well and decorated her arms with armbands. Thus she was splendidly attired.

[When all was prepared] Melodi started on her way and came to the feast. As soon as Nasilenge saw her, he cried out, "Is this not my wife, Melodi?" His people answered him, saying, "Yes, it is she." Nasilenge cried out again [this time to Melodi], "Do not go away, but remain here and be my wife."

10. So Melodi again became the wife of Nasilenge, as she had been before, and was as much beloved as in former days. The birds returned once more to their owner, Nasilenge, and he immediately recovered his power of speech.

Nasilenge gave many cattle to the parents of Melodi and was remarried to her; she remained his favorite, as she had been in former times.
1. Our ancestors long ago created the following story. Once upon a time there was a good girl who was married in a faraway country. After she was married she started laying eggs. Each time she laid an egg she gave thanks, saying, "My child! My child!" But every time she went away [when she returned], she was certain to find the egg broken. This happened every time she laid an egg.

Finally, when at last she laid another egg, she informed her mother [about it], saying, "Mother I have given birth to an egg. Yet [it has happened every time] when I have been away, my egg has disappeared." The mother replied, "Look! The next time you lay an egg, place it on top of the granary."

2. The next time the woman became pregnant [got a womb], she went to her mother's and stayed there a long time waiting for her child. Then when she bore her egg, she placed it on top of the granary.

The day that the egg broke open, a child came out, who spoke at once, saying, "I have come out of here. My name is Namaisita, since I have been made by no one. Also I have no ruler to own me, not even the Ruler of this World." 

3. When the Supreme Ruler heard that a child had been born who had not been made by a person, and who [therefore] was not under the jurisdiction of the Ruler of the World, he sent [a message] to him, which said, "My friend! You who have been born from an egg, and have not been made by anyone; you shall come here!"

As Namaisita grew up he obtained animals and insects of every variety as servants: elephants, lions, leopards, rabbits, spring hares, kudus, spiders; indeed, all kinds of animals.

4. Presently the Ruler invited Namaisita to come and visit him, since he wanted to test the youth's magical powers. For this purpose he placed all kinds of dangers [in his path] in order to stop him. [But] when the boy went he took with him his animal servants.

As they were walking on their way they encountered some high ground full of thistles. The boy summoned the moles, and they piled up heaps of dirt so all the people were able to pass through. After they had left the hard ground full of thistles, they came to a large river which stretched across their way. The boy then summoned the spiders, who spun their webs on top of the water; this enabled everyone to walk across [on the webs]. After having crossed the river, the group came to a large thick jungle. The boy summoned the elephants who plowed through the jungle, so that the people also could pass through. From there they came to a garden surrounded with a high thorn hedge and overgrown with thick cornstalks. The boy called upon the elephants and the spring hares, and these destroyed both the hedge and the thick cornstalks in the garden.

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27 Pangelii, a title for the Ruler of this World, that is, Kalunga, the Kuanyama High God. In one of the three texts of this story, the name Pambwa, a title for Kalunga, was given. "This World" signifies Kuanyama land. When the reign of a king is mentioned, it is always as the "King of the World So-and-so."

28 Omaluvilu: spider web. The word for spider is "omaluvilu" (plur. "omaluviluvi"). Spider web is "omaluviluvi" and is always used in the plural.

29 Ongoja: jungle. Large jungles of dry forests lay between Kuanyama and the Okavango River impeding intercourse between the peoples of these areas.
5. [When the party arrived at the kraal of the Supreme Ruler] they found that it had a very long entrance way \( ^{31} \) along which they had to walk and that pointed sticks \( ^{32} \) were placed [in the ground along the entrance way]. Therefore the elephants came and picked up logs and broke all the pointed sticks which they found.

As the group entered the kraal itself, the Ruler of the World welcomed them, but he was not happy. Once having been admitted, they received a large quantity of porridge; but it was made of ground-up human bones and human flesh. When Nambaisita was given the porridge, he said “No! We do not eat porridge made of human bones; we certainly do not eat that!”

6. Hano esi veuja meumbo ovatulua kolupale \( ^{33} \) ndele oipundi ojaalua kombada jomakelo potapajalua oumbadua; vati opone ngenge tavadala omutumba vamulkulile momakelo. \( ^{34} \) No momakelo omutulua omeva afuluksua.

Esi ne vali osumbululula, Omupangeli tafula omakati kauje katala engobe daje mosiunda. Hano esi veuja mosi-

7. Omupangeli tati, “Kumbeti lange aluka! Kumbeti lange aluke!”


Esi veuja mepia Omupangeli okuati, “Kokamati, uete tu
tola jange esihapu. Tala londa ko muti ou, utale apa lifike.” Opo omakati alonda ko muti nde tati, “Tamula

8. Hano okudia opo ovaja meumbo nde Omupangeli

Olupanda: the passageway leading to a native kraal. This one is said to be long (lilelite).

Epango: (pl., omangango): pointed sticks planted in the ground, which pierce the feet when stepped upon. This type of defense is widely used in Malaysia and Africa.

Omakelo: holes. Pit traps still are used for larger animals. Formerly, pit traps for enemies were made in the kraals, set either with sharpened stakes or with boiling water.
Hano esi vaja mondujuvo vo tavafe okuena kuakambadu-kila ko mempi. Esi oufiku uaja mokati vo tavasukamo, nde tavatutile omatanga mondujuvo omu kuali, nde vo tavasukamo tavatipite kokuena, nde onduda tave tulma umundilo. Hano esi onduda taipali, omatanga tatopa, je tati, “Ijalol! Onufu jondoja taitopa, nonufu jakavandje, nokamati kapi-lamo!”


**SIMPANGA NO KADENGE KAJE**


35 Omukifi udui. Omukifi is an evil wind which brings disease; udui is a magical poison.

36 The boy kills the Ruler of the Universe and becomes ruler in his place. This is the same concept as “Killing the Divine King.”

**SIMPANGA AND HIS NEPHEW**

1. An old man had two children, a girl and a boy. One day the boy was bringing his cattle home, when he saw a tree, called the omuve tree 37 standing at the entrance of his kraal. The tree had never stood there before, and it bore red ripe fruit.

The boy came home and spoke to his sister, saying, “Let us go and climb the omuve tree with its embe fruit. The tree stands at the entrance of our kraal. The fruit is all red ripe. "When the two came to the omuve tree the girl climbed up it. 'While she was on the tree, it uprooted itself and started running to a distant land from which the girl had come, thus running away with her. When the boy saw his younger sister run away with by the omuve tree, he followed, and as he ran he kept shooting with his arrows, saying to the omuve tree, "Take me, Omuve! Take me with you!”

2. So for many days the boy followed the tree, all the time shooting at it with his arrows. Finally, the omuve tree stopped at the entrance of the kraal from which it had come. The country was at a great distance, and was owned by a king. This king had sent the omuve tree to a far-off country to search for a wife for him. When the tree stood still, as if it had grown on the spot, the boy remained by its trunk, while the girl remained on top.

Then a man was sent by the king from the royal kraal to investigate what was on top of the omuve tree. When he arrived, he ordered the girl to climb down. He spoke thus: “Girl! You come down! And this boy, who is he? Come now, what is your answer?” The girl replied, “He is my older brother.” When the two were taken into the kraal, the king asked the boy, "You! Who are you?" The boy answered, “My name is Simbaba.” The king told his servants to kill Simbaba lest he take the girl away. So they killed him. The girl was married by the king.

3. The girl belonged to a tribe of people whose women laid eggs. But every time the woman laid an egg the king broke it. This happened for a long time, for the king

37 Rhamnus Zeyheri Bond. Botanical identifications were made by Robert Redin, of the University of California.


4. Okamati tati, "Inda ukatalelenge osihua somu-fiati."38 Opo ina esti aeta osihua, okana okadenga ombila ia Simbaba noshua takati, "Mulumenu ove uli medu ngenge omulumenu mo tujeni, ngenge omualikadi fialamo!" Simbaba anjumukamo nde teuja ko kamati noko kandenge kaje. Okamati takati, "Tujeni ko silongo oku muudile," Nde tavalongelepo eumbe alise fimbo avese veli ko itendele, thought that it was a hen who was laying the eggs in the sleeping hut of his wife. One day the woman took her egg and concealed it on top of her corn granary, where it remained [for many days]. Then finally when the king was invited to a feast at another kraal and went there with his [other] wives, the woman who had laid the egg refused to go, for she knew that hatching time was near at hand.

While the woman was alone in the kraal, her egg hatched and a child came out. The child spoke, saying, "Aha! I am hatched!" [Then he called his mother, saying, "Mother, is this country your [land]?" The mother answered, "No. This country is not our land." The boy asked, "How did you get here?" The mother told the boy the true story of how she came [to the country]. Then the boy asked, "With whom did you come?" The mother replied, "I came with Simbaba." The boy asked, "Where is he now?" The mother said, "He was killed." The boy: "Where is he buried?" The mother replied, "In the passageway leading to the cattle kraal."38

4. The boy said, "Go bring me a branch of a mopane99 tree." When the mother had brought the branch, the youth hit the grave of Simbaba with it [charming], "You who are in the ground, if you are a man, come out so that we may leave! If you are a woman, stay where you are!" Simbaba arose [out of the grave] and came to the boy, to his younger sibling [nephew]. The boy said, "Let us go to the country from whence you came." So they gathered everything in the kraal while the inmates were at the beer party.

5. They found a boy herding cattle and cut off the end of his tongue. Then they sent him to tell the people at the [other] kraal that Simbaba had stolen their cattle. When the messenger came near he shouted, "While you people were drinking beer Simbaba stole your cattle!" The messenger shouted many times, but the people failed to understand him, since he was unable to speak distinctly. So the people called him to come closer, so that they could hear what he was saying. Then they heard that Simbaba had run off with their cattle.

At once the crowd [of men] commenced running after their cattle. When they found [the fugitives] the boy said to Simbaba, "Don't shoot at them, I alone will shoot." The boy had a bow40 and many arrows. As he shot [he charmed], "My arrows, shoot together, so that we may depart!" The arrows all shot at the same time, killing about one hundred people. The boy continued shooting until all the people were finished off. Only the father [of the boy] now was left. The youth shot him in the knee, and his leg broke off.41

38 Okomudingililo uengobe. The passageway to the cattle kraal. The Kuanyama pagana still bury their dead in the kraal. A young boy ordinarily would be buried in the calf kraal.

50 Omufiati tree. Called "mopane" by the whites. It is the Capparica mopane Kirk. Omufiati means "person dead." Branches of the tree are believed to have the power of bringing a dead person to life; hence the

name. Branches of this tree are used in the native cattle ceremony to insure long life to the cattle.

40 Jouta uusangongo: a bow with string. A gun would be called simply "jouta." Guns are not mentioned in old stories, since the Kuanyama had none until after 1870

41 Okulu takutokokak adjective. A child born in unnatural circumstances, is bound to bring misfortune to his family.
6. As they were traveling they came upon a fork in the roadway; one path was dripping with honey; the other was [covered] with manure. The boy said to his mother, "Let us go on the path with the manure [on it]." But his mother replied, "No! I intend going [on the path] dripping with honey." Then they disputed. But the boy and Simbaba with some of the cattle went on the manure-spread way. The mother, on the other hand, [taking with her] some of the slave women she had brought from the king's kraal, went on the path which dripped with honey.

The father of the boy, after he had been shot in the leg, turned into an evil spirit possessing one leg. While the women were on their way they saw this spirit coming towards them. He was in front of them. The spirit said, "Give me something to eat!" The women gave him a head of cattle. The spirit took it, and then came around again in front. This happened until all the cattle were eaten up, and the women also.

7. Meanwhile the boy and Simbaba arrived safely home where they awaited the mother. However, when they found that the mother took a long time [in coming] Simbaba took a drum. While drumming he [charmed], "Boom-boom-boom! May the spirit who ate Nehova, our mother, come to the drum! Boom-boom-boom! May the spirit who ate Nehova, our mother, come to the drum!" Then the spirits arrived, walking one after the other. Each exclaimed, "Oh! It was not I who ate your mother! I come to the drum, but it was not I who ate your mother!"

As each spirit arrived, Simbaba asked, "You, eh! Perhaps it was you who ate Nehova, our mother?" But each answered, "No! No, indeed!"

Finally a spirit came, who, when Simbaba asked if he had eaten the mother, Nehova, answered, "Yes, I ate her." Simbaba said, "Eh! You just wait awhile until I am ready to greet you[ properly]." Then Simbaba went into his kraal.

8. The spirit wore [as decorations] the sun, the moon, and the stars. These [decorations] consisted of shining iron [beads], and fine seashell and ivory [buttons]. The people gave the spirit beans, and while he was eating the beans the boy came with a small but very sharp axe and cut off [his head] at the neck. He cut through [the spirit's] stomach and removed Nehova and all the other things which the spirit had eaten.

THE GIRL, NEHOVA

1. Once upon a time there was an old man who had a wife. He also had two children: a boy and a girl. The girl's name was Nehova and the boy's name was Heloha. There also was a slave girl by the name of Namutako.

One day the old man was shooting with his bow, when it broke and the man was hurt by one of the pieces. He got sick, and finally he died.

OKADONA O NEHOVA


Efiku omusamane okuali taumbu outa uaje unangongo ndele tauteka oje muene okuilutu kosiuxanda souta uaje ndele tavele unene fijo otafi.

42 Eksisi: an evil spirit. When a magician dies he is believed to turn into this kind of cannibalistic spirit unless certain precautions are taken at his burial. An albino also is called "ekisi."
2. [The father] had a hornless cow named Mbulu. The wife wept profusely over her husband. While she was mourning she spoke thus to her children: "When I die go to Dilanene, who is a relative of my mother. She lives in a far-off country, and she will look after you."

Then the woman died. When the boy saw that his mother was dead, he took his sister and his slave, and they went to the distant country spoken about by their mother while she was still alive. They took along Mbulu, their father's cow. While they were on the trip they suffered much hunger.

3. One day they found an omuandi tree whose fruit was ripe, but the tree was very tall and the boy was unable to climb it. So the boy made a ladder in order to gather fruit for his sister.

After the girl had eaten her fill of the fruit, the slave took away the ladder from the trunk of the tree and concealed it. The boy, being unable to descend, was left as a present for the tree. As soon as the slave saw that the boy was left on the tree, she removed all the beads [decorations] from the well-born girl and put them on herself.

4. Then the slave spoke to the child, saying, "Drive on the cow; we are leaving. When we arrive at our destination, do not say that you are well-born. Tell the people that you are the slave and that I am well-born; that I was born by your mother and that therefore you are the slave, and not I." The girl was cowardly and agreed; [especially] since the slave was much older [than she was].

When they arrived at their destination the slave spoke to the woman, saying, "This child is an okaxuna; she caused the death of her father and mother. My mother used to feed her with the dogs and make her sleep in the calf kraal. She was awakened early in the mornings so that she might drive the birds out of the garden."

5. [Dilanene] believed the words of the slave; she thought that the child, who was poorly [dressed], was really a slave. So she fed the child with the dogs and made her sleep with the calves. She wakened her early in the mornings to chase the birds from the garden. As the girl chased away the birds, she sang:

"Sooje, sooji, the birds are very hard to chase away:
Poor me! A stranger without father or mother.
Mother said that when she died I should go to her relative Dilanene in a distant country.
Now that I have gone, I am made to eat with the dogs
And sleep with the calves, and make a noise
[to scatter the birds] in the morning."

Omuti omuandi; the omuandi tree (Biospyres maspiliiforme Hochst.). The tree has edible fruit called enjandi.

Omani: a ladder made of a tree trunk with some branches attached.

Okaxuna: a child who is unnatural or born in an unnatural manner, for instance, a bastard. According to native belief, such a child would be likely to cause the death of her parents.
6. Ongobe Mbulu jaxe ei veuja najo esi jauda okana takaimbi mepia jo. Taikuena taiti, "Mbuu! Mbuu!" Okana takaimbi natango, takati:

"Ojojo taikuena taaidlalida omufita uajo ou aifalà komutì; Mulemulé komutì udulé ololono. Mene ouakuíia koililo taitili omulumeni uaje: Taiti ouakuia koisuandà souta uaje."

Okanona manga takaimbi oka ouakılıka ko mukulukadi umue ou meumbo omo ndele tapullikine oka takaimbi. Ndele esi adimbuluka kutia okana aka oko akadalu, okuatondoka nde taifana Dilanene meumbo euje apulakene omuana esi taimbi mokulela oudila mepia.

7. Dilanene esì euja popepi oje okudite eui lokana lanjika oufjje, opone Dilanene okuaendele nde teja pokana. Vo avese nomukulukadi ou ekemufanene meumbo ovupalula naa okana ndele okana okaholola onina aise eji janingua.


Ndlele esi valuluka keumbo omupika oiuhave muningila nande oui. Ndeleni komafiku okomeso ovafa olumbo sile nde tavatilile omeva afuluka nengo no kambahada jelambo, tavatuvikileko nombadua.


ONDUDU KAVANDJE

1. Mandume oje ohamba jaxununja moukuanjama. Esi anangala osslongo 46 okuapulapula ovakilunu apa pena ondu-

6. The girl's cow, Mbulu, came to [her mistress] when she heard her singing in the garden. She [joined in] the crying, saying, "Mu! Mu!" Then the child sang again:

"I cry when I think about the herdboy who was left on the tree; It is the tallest tree in the country. Mother died crying for her husband; Father died [pierced] by a piece of his bow."

One of the women from the kraal heard the child singing in the garden. While she was listening to her she realized that it was this girl who was the well-born one. So she ran and summoned Dilanene that she also might hear the child singing while she was chasing the birds away from the garden.

7. When Dilanene approached she heard the sad voice of the child. She hurried up and came to her, along with the woman who had summoned her from the kraal. They questioned the child well and she revealed everything that had happened.

Dilanene then took the child back into the kraal and rubbed her with butter and red ochre. In the meantime the slave was stamping grain in the stamping place. The child said, "Let us go and get my elder brother. Perhaps he still is alive, or perhaps he is dead, but let us go![18] Allow my father's cow, Mbulu, to lead the way. She will take us [to the spot] where we left the boy." So they took Mbulu, and she walked ahead of them crying, "Bu! Bu!"

8. When [the people] arrived at the tree, [the cow] kept crying and looking up at [its top]. Then the girl brought the ladder which had been hidden by [the slave] Namutako, placed it at the tree trunk, and the boy climbed down. He was thin and completely white from the droppings of birds. The people gave him water to wet his lips and throat; then they washed him all over. Finally they smeared him with butter and red ochre, and had him drink gruel a little at a time.

Upon arriving home the people showed no anger towards the slave girl. Yet some time afterwards they dug a deep hole and poured a lot of boiling water into it. Then they covered the top of the hole with a dried cattleskin.

9. Then they called the slave. When she came, they said to her, "Stay here. You are very dirty, so sit down on this skin and we will give you meal mixed with water so that you may clean yourself."

Namutako showed no mistrust, but prepared herself [for washing] and sat down on the skin. As she did so, she fell into the hole and remained in it and died. Then the people covered her with earth. So that was the way Namutako met her death.

THE MEDICINE MAN, KAVANDJE

1. Mandume was the last king of the Kuanyama. When he came to the throne he asked the old people for the

46 Namgala osslongo: to lie upon the country, i.e., to possess the country as a man possesses his wife.
du jakula ei taïdu lu okupamekela omunu mosilongo
Oukolambuela nokutia opena omue Kavandje ou tesidulu.
Ohamba ojati, "Nakatalue sasi he ndanangala osilongo inan-
dipama nande."

Kavandje esi euja okuati, "Tatekulu, 47 itopame nande
fimbo inonua omueva adja momuti ubena omututu.” Ohamba
jafa jatlalo kanini esi jauda osinima naistiuda nale.

2. Opo ovafikama vakakonge omuti ubena omututu. Esi
veumona oveutatalala ndeke kauna nande omututu, Kavandje
okuati, "Ohatuja ne tuke omuti ou.

Esi vadjapo Kavandje okuaja kokana kaje tati kuko, "Enda
ongula inene nekopi lomeva ndeke tohondama mengade.
Lungama naua opo uninge ngasi hatuningi sito."

3. Ongula fimbo eluua inalitenda Kavandje nohabma
ovapita ndeke tavalufa ekuva taveuva pomuti. Kavandje
talombuile ohamba tati, "Otoke omuti oo lune aluke. 48
namejo ohandiuke lune.” Ohamba jalombuelu ike ponele
imwe aike. Opo ne ekuva ngenge lauluka momeva otoku
tati, "Uuil! Osilongo ndesingalga!" Opone omueva amue
tonu amue toliko momutu nomosipala.

Esi Kavandje afatululila ohamba ngaho, ota ne komuti
ndeke teuke lune. Opone tadipo ndeke talape omuna euje
atiepo omueva. Omona euja ndeke tatilipo omueva. Kavand-
dje taendelele atulele ekuva ko hamba.

4. Ohamba taluja pomuti ndeke tashovele okuka, esi
jaka okuati ngaho, Kou! Ekuva laka momeva! Ohamba
ojahovela ne okukua, "Uuil! Osilongo ndesingalga!"
Kavandje tujua taitoka tapula, "Uaulula tatekulu?"
"Heno, nduluwa.” Kavandje takua oimbodi, telie ohamba.
Esi vaja kumbo Kavandje apeua engobe mbali dinoutana.

OKADONA, NEKOTO LA NAMU-UANDJOBIA 49
1. Momukunda uonumba umuali muna omifima petambi
lomifima opali omakisi akelelapo aluse. Ovanu vo momu-
kunda ou okuali havatila okukateka moluante uomakisi.
Tavati pamue otava ualipo komakise.
Opaningua nokutia okadona Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba
okejua ouenda. Komukunda ou kataleleo oina valna veliko.
Esi kali momukunda oina tavati ku Nekoto: "File omu la tuu

48 Lune aluke: four strokes. Four is the sacred number
among the Kuanyama. In general, though, even num-
bers are considered lucky, odd numbers unlucky.

47 Tatekulu: Uncle, mother’s brother; a term of respect.

name of a medicine man who could make him [magically]
powerful. He was told that there was a medicine man by
the name of Kavandje who could do this. The king said,
"Let him be brought [before me] , Ever since I have ob-
tained possession of this country I have not been at all
strong."

When Kavandje came, he said, "Uncle, 47 you will not
be strong until you have drunk of the water which comes
out of a tree which has no hollow spot in it." The king
seemed a little afraid when he heard about this; the like of
which had never been mentioned before.

2. Eventually they went out to find a tree which had no
hollow in it. When they had found one, they examined it
well, and determined that it was quite solid. Kavandje
said, "We will come then and cut this tree."

After all the other people] had gone away, Kavandje
went to his little son, and said to him, "Go early in the
morning with a cup of water and hide yourself in the bushes.
Be careful to do the thing as we have done it before."

3. The next morning, before the break of dawn, Kavand-
dje and the king arose, and taking an ax along, went to the
tree. Kavandje instructed the king, "You cut the tree with four
48 strokes only, and I will give it four strokes." The
king was further instructed to cut each time at the same
spot. Then when the ax struck water, he was to shout,
"Uuil! I have occupied the country!" After this he was to
drink some of the water and wash his face and head with
the remainder.

As soon as Kavandje had explained [matters in this
manner to the king, he went up to the tree and gave it four
cuts. Then he departed and motioned his son to come and
pour water. After this Kavandje himself came quickly and
gave the ax to the king.

4. The king came to the tree and started to chop. As
he did this, the ax hit into the water, "Splash!" Then
the king commenced shouting, "Uuil! I have occupied the
country!"

Kavandje came running, and asked, "Uncle, did you
strike water?" "Yes, I did." Kavandje took herbs and rub-
bed them on the king. When Kavandje returned to his
kraal, he was given two cows with their calves.

THE GIRL, NEKOTO DAUGHTER OF NAMU-UANDJOBIA 49
1. In a certain area the place where there were water-
holes was constantly guarded by albinos. The people of this
locality were afraid to fetch water because of the albinos.
They feared lest they be eaten by the albinos.

Now it so happened that a girl by the name of Nekoto la
Namu-uandjoba came to visit the sisters of her mother at this
district. When Nekoto arrived her aunts told her: "We peo-

2. Nekoto otati, "Oko handi. Peninge asike osito ndikatale omeva." Opo Nekoto okukufa osito ndele tai komufima,


Omakisi ese taimbi oo taadana vali taanuka anaha.


Fijo otatsuna keumbo vo otavadana ngaho vahafa.


Efiku ezi Neketo okuea adiala osikafa sehafuni komakata aje, Nekoto taende ugho taimbi fijo osesi taiki puvo. Vo tavati, "Inofeua tu Nekoto, oilele ekufeuuka ngaho? Kunatu onguo iua?"


Nekoto tateke omeva momufima ndele tati komakiti, "Ileni tujeni keumbo musite mukadikue naua ngasi ame ndhili."


"Oi hengo" (sing., oihengo): irons used for burning designs in wood.

People here are unable to drink water because there are albinos at the water holes. They will eat our people, and therefore we are afraid to fetch water." Nekoto answered, "Give me a pot, and I will fetch water at the water holes," But her elders said, "Oh no, child, you will be eaten by the albinos. Keep away from there entirely!"

2. Nekoto said, "I will go there. Just give me the pot in which to fetch water," So Nekoto took the pot and went to the water holes.

As she approached the water-holes, she sang, "Nekoto, Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba, I am very pretty, and I have come to fetch water." Now the albinos are very silly, and they love to listen to songs. Therefore when they heard the girl singing, they said, "None of us must answer her", since when they heard the girl sing they all wanted to imitate her song.

3. Then Nekoto sang again the same song as before. The albinos heard her sing twice and then a third time. They became very much interested, and answered her song, singing, "Nekoto, Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba is pretty, She has come to fetch water." The albinos danced and jumped while they sang. They were very happy.

When Nekoto arrived at the water holes she was still singing. The albinos left the gate of the water holes, jumping high up into the air [as they did so]. They kept on singing, "Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba." Nekoto went quickly to the water holes and fetched water, while the albinos kept on dancing. When the girl arrived home (she and her relatives) danced with joy.

4. The next morning Nekoto went back to the water holes, singing as before, "Nekoto, Nekoto la Namu-uandjoba, I am pretty. I come to get water," The albinos said to one another, "Today, indeed, we must not answer her. As soon as she comes we will eat her up."

On this day Nekoto came wearing a squirrel skin on her buttocks. As soon as she reached the albinos, they said to her, "You look fine, Nekoto. Who made such a spendid back apron for you?"

5. Since Nekoto wanted to entice the albinos so that they would allow her to approach the water holes, she told them [all about her apron]. She said, "My elders at the kraal dressed me like this." The albinos said to one another, "Let us go with Nekoto so that the same thing will be done to us. Then we will look as beautiful as she." So they said to Nekoto, "Take us with you to your kraal so that we may be dressed the way you are." After Nekoto had obtained water from the water holes, she [invited] the albinos, saying, "Come home with me and you will be given clothing the same as mine."

6. The albinos followed Nekoto to her kraal. Entering the kraal they remained in the sitting room. Nekoto went to her aunt's cooking place and instructed her: "Place the marking irons in the fire so that we may burn the albinos in their anuses, and they will die."


**OMAKISI**  


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51 *Kala naua, uningue naua:* "Stay well, remain well."  
52 *Omakisi* (sing., ekisi): *spirits.* Here the word "omakisi" means "spirits" and not albinoas, as in the pre-

**THE SPIRITS**

1. Once upon a time there was an old man who had a son. One day the boy shot a hare with an arrow; the hare ran away with the arrow still in it. The boy followed deep into the forest. Now this boy had many "dogs"; they were really carnivorous forest animals of all kinds. The boy remained many days in the forest without food.

Eventually the boy came upon some wind-shelter houses of the spirits. In one of the wind shelters he found a spirit who was all alone; the others had gone hunting. The spirit had put some meat in a pot, and the meat was cooking. [The boy] spoke to the spirit, saying, "I would like to roast a bird here in your fire." The spirit whistled, and kept on whistling; but he said nothing. Finally the spirit spoke, "If you roast meat here, I will at once beat you."

2. The boy threw the bird into the fire [anyway], and then the spirit tried to beat him. But the "dogs" of the boy--the lions, the leopards, and the wild dogs--growled at the spirit. So the spirit said, "My friend, go ahead and roast your bird." After the boy had finished eating the bird, he begged from the spirit, saying, "Give me some of your meat, so that I and my dogs may eat." The spirit dared not refuse the boy, lest he be eaten by his "dogs." After they had finished eating the meat, the boy went [back] into the forest with his animals.

In the evening the other spirits returned from hunting, all feeling very hungry. So when they found out that their meat had been eaten by a boy they became very angry at the friend who had been left behind. They said, "You coward! Why did you allow a [mere] child to do that? Why did you not beat him, or even kill him, so that we might find him here?"

The next day at dawn the spirits again went hunting, but this time they left at home one of their number who was very strong.

3. Then the boy came back with his animals and acted the same as on the previous day. The [strong] spirit said to the boy, "Do not roast your bird in the fire. Certainly you..."
takupula kaje pediko amuena. Ekti talikufa outa ualo tali-
lufa okamati. Okamati takakumidza embua dako dilile ekise.
Esti lamanu omojena, okamati okalimbo ombelela mombija
ndele takatetaulemoa ekisi. Emadi, nenjala, nomutue,
nomatondo, nooda, okatula kosi jomblia ndele takaji nomufo
jako.

Ongolosi esti valuka koukongo ovaanga ombija ijadi om-
belela. Vanjakuka unene tavati, "Ijaloi! Kuweteke memumbo
esi muusaulele omulumenu elela. Ombelela inililuliso nena."
Ndlele tavalatalata numbam vakondja, tavati, "Tala omulu-
menu! Numba akondja!" Opone esti vala ombelela kosi
ovamonako enjala nofiro ase jolotu lamukua. Novakungana
esi vedimbuluka nokutla ovalla oluta lamukua.

4. Ongula esti kuasa ina vaja vali koukongo, aseve ovanan-
gela. Okamati aseve vevakadipae. Okamati okaholoka nembu
aksi. Nena omakisi esti aseve okualufa omamati. Omakisi tai
onapo momakuena oivanda. Okamati takatu nosibengo seonga
komakuenza. Ekti limule esti talitutu metso olati kuliliku.
"Ehenako! Handitulupula vali eisoi!" Okamati esti kamana
okupa omakisi okaja.

Ndlele vali ifiku limule okahanga okambo omukulukadi
ndele takalmo. Mokaumbo okahangamo omukukina esti mo-
kaumbo naina. Okuemhombola antinge omuulikadi uaje.
Omuulikadi okualombuela omulumeni uaje, tati, "Meme
hali ovanu. Oukala ualingama, otekudipa ase ombelela."

5. Opone ifiku limule omuulikadi ahala okudipa ositenja
saje. Oufiku ase veukuaenda takongo omundilo konduda
jostitena, Okamati esti kanangala embua dako odanangala
postvelo sokalupale konduda. Okakulukadi esti takela konduda
takabondjauna ombelela tadinao, Omulukulukadi tati, "Uu!
Tandilika kembua doje!" Okamati takapula, "Oo kongo
aike?" Okakulukadi: "Omandido." Takapula omundilo
ndele okakulake. Takekadi tati, ase omundilo ako uli konduda
jako. Okahala okudipa ositenja.

Esti kakafope omukukinu okuvalombuela omulumeni uaje,
tati, "Tuje kosi kongo seni tulivake manga meme akofa."
Nama peli esti ondaloloka meme osesi itandimo vail
omulumeni. Osele kese tu ou takongenge meme otemulipo.
Navejo otekulupo ngenge itatulivake utje kosi kongo senti."

6. Okamati okadimina endjovo odo. Omukukina takufu
ongoma 53 ndele talange komutala uavo ndele tavali,
Omukulukadi esti apenduka okuaje konduda jostitenja. Ndele
esi amona nokutla embua kadilipo pokalupale, okuelipotil
muene ndele tati, "Ijaloi! Embua dositenja sange odakanangala,
ohandimudipa nena." Ndele tassula ongoma pokati, Kualf
esi okamati kanangala.

53 Ongoma: the large drum. This is made of a hollow
log, and is the size, and roughly the shape, of a
person.

are as rude as they said that you were." However, without
saying a word the boy threw the bird into the fire. At once
the spirit took up his bow and commenced fighting the boy.
The latter then shouted to his animals to bite the spirit. As
soon as the spirit was entirely destroyed, the boy ate the meat
which was in the pot. Next he cut up the spirit. He put the
feet, fingers, head, testicles, and penis in the pot; then he
went off into the forest.

The other spirits returned that evening from the hunt. They
found their pot full of meat. They were very happy at this,
and said, "Thank you! Now you see we left a proper man at
home. Today our meat was not eaten." Looking around they
saw the signs of conflict, [Again] they said, "What a man!
See how he fought!" But after they had eaten the meat in
the pot, they found the fingers and other parts of the body of
their friend. Then they all vomited, remembering that they
had eaten the flesh of their comrade.

4. The next morning at daybreak the spirits did not again
go hunting. Instead they all lay down in order to wait for
the boy and kill him. Then as soon as the boy appeared all the
spirits attacked him. [But when they were repulsed] they ran
away and [hid] in anthill holes. The boy stuck the blunt end
of his spear in [one of] the holes. One of the spirits was stuck
in the eye, and called out to the other, "Go further in! My
eye is being plucked out!" After the boy had finished killing
the spirits he left.

One day the boy came upon a little kraal belonging to an
old woman, and he entered it. In the kraal there was a girl
who was living with her mother [the kraal owner]. The boy
married the girl, and made her his wife. The wife then
spoke to him, saying, "Mother eats people. You must be
careful, or she will kill you for her meat."

5. Finally, one day the old woman wanted to kill her
son-in-law. That night while walking about she came
to his hut. The boy was lying down, with his animals sleeping
at the entrance of his house. As the hag walked on tiptoes
to his door, the "dogs" growled. The old woman said, "Oh!
I am being eaten by your dogs!" The boy asked, "What are
you looking for?" The hag said: "For fire." But when she
was given fire and a little wood, she put out the fire. She
had fire in her sleeping hut; it was her son-in-law she wished
to kill.

That [night] while the girl was in bed she spoke to her
husband, saying, "While mother is asleep, let us leave here,
and without saying a word, go to your own country far away.
I am tired of my mother. I will never get a husband this way,
since every time a man marries me, my mother eats him up.
She also will eat you up unless we leave for your country."

6. The boy agreed with the words of his wife. They took
a drum 53 and laid it on their bed. Then they left. When
the old woman arose she went to the hut of her son-in-law.
When she saw that the "dogs" were no longer in the open
space around the hut, she said, "Thanks! The dogs of my
son-in-law have gone to sleep. Now I can kill him." She
cut through the middle of the drum thinking that it was the
sleeping boy.


Oso ngo laninge oluha ase talipopfia. Nde ase taituama naise ojafa nga inakueka ndele nande. Ndeleni jimbomyelo epahu talipopfia oluha oleja nepopepi nosihua esei sali tahonama omakati. Opo omakati okuakuta epahu nde takeltivila mumbo. Takatulapo ombjia jombeva takelitimo mombija nde tava-

The old woman [after she had found out her mistake] started to follow the married couple. She took with her little ax with which she was accustomed to kill people. As she passed near the fugitives, both the boy and his wife heard a little breeze blowing by. The wife at once knew that it was her mother following them, so she said to her husband, "Let us climb [a tree]! This [breeze] passing by means that mother is near." They climbed a tree while their animals lay down around the trunk. The old woman came to the tree and started cutting it with her little ax [charming], "This little ax of mine never fails! Even though this tree is hard and green, yet it is falling down!"

7. The boy shouted to his "dogs," who ate up the woman, blood, bones, and all, until she was entirely consumed. Then they continued on their way. But one of the "dogs," which had licked up the blood, split some of it down again, and it turned into the hag. The old woman, after she had come to life, once more followed the boy and his wife. Then a fresh breeze passed the couple, and the wife said, "Let us climb [a tree]! Mother is coming!"

So they climbed a tree. When the old woman arrived she started chopping, and the entire tree fell to the ground. The boy urged his animals on the hag [and they devoured her]. The wife said, "Let us point out the drops of blood on the grass to the animals. All must be well licked up, else it will come to life again." Then they were once more on their way, until finally they arrived at the home of the boy.

8. The boy's mother met the couple at the kraal's entrance. The boy said to his mother, "Another woman, who looks like you, is following us." The mother then went to meet the other woman. When the two women met, the mother of the boy devoured the mother of the girl. The girl's mother, however, passed through the anus of the boy's mother. Then the mother of the girl devoured the mother of the boy, who in turn came out of the other woman's anus. Finally the mother of the boy devoured the mother of the girl, and then stopped up her anus with an amarula pit [from the fruit of the omugo tree, Sclerocarya Schweinfurthiana, Schinz].

When the boy's mother came to the kraal, she said, "Boil some water in a pot." When the water was boiling, she removed the pit and stood on top of the pot of hot water. The girl's mother passed into the pot of boiling water and died.

9. However, the hag came to life again, became a locust, and flew away from the pot into the bush. The boy made his garden there. One day when he went to his garden, he found that the bushes stood up as if he had never before cut them. After he had again cut these bushes, he hid himself. While he was there behind the bushes, a locust came by and charmed, "Bush, you who were here before, get up and stand upright! Bush, you get up and grow again! Limba bush, you stand upright and move!"

All the bushes which were charmed in this manner suddenly grew up as if they had never been cut before. While the locust was charming the bushes, it came very near the bush behind which the boy was hiding. The boy caught the locust
and took it to his kraal. He put it in a pot of water, and covered the pot with a lid. This time the mother of the girl died completely.

THE BOY, ENKEMBE

1. There once was a kraal owner who had two children: a boy and a girl. The mother of the children died, and the man married again. The second wife had a child who became very sick, so the woman took the child to a medicine man in order to question him [and find out the source of the trouble]. The medicine man said, "The child must have the sacrifice of human meat." Since no human meat was available, the wife suggested that the boy called Enkembe be killed.

When the younger sister of Enkembe heard that her older brother was to be killed as a sacrifice, she ran to the cattle kraal, calling, "Enkembe, child of my mother! Enkembe, child of my father! When you go to the butter storage hut, do not pour milk into the butter calabash! In it will be your father who wants your liver and your bowels, Enkembe!"

2. Enkembe said, "I understand! Collect your wood, and then hurry and return home!" When Enkembe returned home, he milked [a cow] and then poured the milk on the ground. The old woman said to Enkembe, "Pour the milk into the calabash!" Enkembe answered, "No! I won't pour the milk into the calabash! There is a person in the calabash." The old man came out at once, saying, "Ha! Ha! My Enkembe is clever!"

Soon after this [the married couple] made another plan to kill Enkembe. They arranged for the husband to hide in a cow by the name of Naindongo. While Enkembe was milking the cow, the old man was to catch and kill him. When the younger sister heard this plan, she ran and said to her elder brother, "After you have returned home you are to milk Naindongo. Don't go near her, because your father is inside of her. He wants your liver and your bowels, Enkembe."

Enkembe replied, "I understand! My little sister, you go and collect your wood and then hurry back home!"

3. That evening when Enkembe brought the cattle home, he allowed the calf of Naindongo to go to its mother. But he did not try to milk the mother cow. The old woman cried out, "Milk Naindongo!" So the boy commenced milking, [and while he was doing so] the old man jumped out at him. But Enkembe killed his father and skinned him. Afterwards he put on the skin, thus assuming the appearance of his father, while the corpse assumed the appearance of Enkembe.

When Enkembe saw that he had the appearance of his father, he went to his stepmother and said, "I have killed Enkembe. Now your son Lufufo will get a sacrifice." The mother of Lufufo was very pleased. She said, "Thank you! My child will recover from his sickness after he has eaten the sacrifice."

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54 Oxula jonjama jomunu: the sacrifice of human meat. When a medicine man is consulted, he always asks for some kind of a sacrifice to the ancestral spirits. A cannibalistic sacrifice would have been unusual but not impossible in former Kwanza society.

55 Dilamo omasisi: to pour milk into the butter calabash. The calabash then is shaken on a stick, and butter is formed. The calabash would hardly be large enough to contain a person.
4. Enkembé cut up the body of his father and hung up the meat. When it was cooked, he divided it, giving Lufufu the penis. When he saw that all the other people had finished eating, although Lufufu still had the penis, he removed his appearance of his father, and assumed his own form. He went back to the cooking place, and said, "I am Enkembé."

Then the old woman realized that it was her husband who had been killed by Enkembé. Enkembé spoke to Lufufu, saying, "You are eating the penis of your father." The old woman was mortally ashamed, and said to her child, "Throw away the penis of your father. It does not belong to Enkembé, but it is that of your father." Lufufu did not throw the penis away. He replied, "The meat belongs to me. I will not throw it away. I will eat it all up." It is indeed in this way that the story ends.

THE ELEPHANT AND HIS STOOLS

1. Once upon a time a certain man was sent by an elephant to get him some stools. He met a tortoise and said to him, "I have been sent by my elder the elephant to find him some well made stools." The tortoise replied, "I indeed know how to make fine stools." The man gave a reward to the tortoise and told him that he would return the next day. Upon returning to the tortoise, however, he found [the animal] had retreated back into his shell. So the man asked the wives [of the tortoise] where their owner husband had gone, for all that [he thought] he saw there was one of the finished stools. He knew that a tortoise has arms and legs, and therefore he did not recognize the tortoise when he saw him. The wives of the tortoise replied that their husband had gone into the woods to look for his stools.

2. The man came every day, but he did not find the tortoise, he found only his stool. The wives always told him that the tortoise was in the woods looking for his stools. Finally, the elephant grew tired of waiting. So he told the man to take him to the tortoise so that he himself could demand his stools.

[The man and the elephant] entered the tortoise's kraal. When they asked for the tortoise, they were told that he was in the woods looking for his stools. The elephant knew that a tortoise is formed differently from a man, and that whenever he hears someone coming, his head, legs, and arms, retreat back into his shell. So he asked [the man], "What is this object here which looks like a tortoise?" The man replied, "It is one of the tortoise's stools. He made it himself."

3. The elephant said, "I will take this stool with me, it will serve in the place of the one which the tortoise should have made for me." So the elephant took the stool and placed it in his bag. He then went one way, while the man took a different path.

While on the trip the elephant put down his bag in order to eat. Then looking at the bag he found the tortoise inside,
4. The elephant said, "I think it best that you go ahead while I remain here, since you walk slowly." So the elephant commenced eating and the tortoise made a pretense of walking a little way; then he turned back. After the elephant had wandered a bit [to browse], the tortoise crept back into the bag. The elephant returned, picked up the bag, and off he went! Some time afterwards he placed it down again to resume his eating, and when he once more returned [from browsing], there was the tortoise! The elephant asked, "So it's you! Where did you come from?"

The tortoise replied, "I merely stopped here on my way to the river." The elephant said, "Go there while I eat something more, since you cannot walk quickly." The elephant ate and the tortoise pretended to go off. Then when the elephant was a short distance away, the tortoise again returned to the bag. The elephant came back, picked up the bag, put it down again while he was eating, and there was the tortoise once more!

5. The elephant asked, "Tortoise, where are you walking to? Is it that every time that I stop you are at the place to meet me?" Then the elephant said to himself, "I will hide in this way find out how he always manages to get into my bag." So the elephant again instructed the tortoise to walk in front while he himself was occupied in eating.

[This time] the elephant went only a little way, and afterwards hid himself behind a bush. The tortoise [meanwhile] pretended [as usual] to travel on, but [instead] he returned to the bag near which the elephant was hiding. Then when the elephant asked, "Who is in my bag?" the tortoise replied, "I am in it." So the elephant took the tortoise out of the bag and hung him up between the branches of a tree. He exclaimed, "There you will die, you thief, you!"

6. At the time [of the story] the cheetah was entirely black; he had not as yet acquired his stripes. While the cheetah was hung up there on the tree, along came a cheetah. The tortoise said to the cheetah, "If you will get me out of here, my friend, I will give you some good presents." The cheetah questioned the tortoise, asking, "What kind of presents will you give me if I get you out?" The tortoise replied, "I will give you stripes." The cheetah climbed up the tree and removed the tortoise. So the tortoise gave the cheetah his stripes. Before this time the cheetah was black all over, like the end of his tail.

The latter said to the elephant, "Uncle! I am indeed the tortoise whom you picked up [in the kraal]. I was afraid of the man, and that was the reason I retreated into my shell," Then he added, "I have fine stools for you, but they are far off by the river,"


OITA JE KAFFI NE MBUNGU

1. Embungu laile okukatalaleapo kaume kalo. Kaume kalo telidipaele osikombo. Embungu laila naa noalakuta lanjaku-
2. Okadila taskikula embungu, okelihanga lanangala momudile umuti no olahobela okudila no kuaseka nai. Ina joudilona esi euja okuhangha okudila tavalili ndele esi evapa oikulka inavahala okulka. Ina esi evapula ovemulombuela aise esi aningua ndele tavati fie itatuli nande oikulka fimbo embungu inalitupa ombili, Ina okuehekeleka nendjovo diu ndele tati, "Lienen ngabo oikulka manga hankasikula embungu. Ngenge ndelimono taluja limupe ombili."


self and was in fine humor. On his way home, the hyena passed by a tree in which there was a wren's nest with two little birds in it. The parent birds were not there; they had flown off to find food.

As soon as the hyena came to the tree he commenced calling the little birds bad names and generally abusing them. When the mother returned she found the little birds in tears, and when she tried to give them food they refused to eat, 61 Upon being questioned the little birds told their mother all that had happened and said that they would eat no food of any kind until the hyena had made peace with them. The mother comforted her children with kind words, and said, "I will go after the hyena; in the meantime you eat your food! As soon as I find the hyena there will be peace."

2. The bird followed the hyena. She found him lying down in the shade of a tree, sleeping [off] his full [stomach]. The bird flew to the tree and [tried] to awaken the hyena, but he did not wake up. Then the bird flew to the ground and picked up a stick. She flew up again into the tree and allowed the stick to fall on the hyena; it hit him on the nose.

The hyena woke up and looked about him, and finally up at the tree. The [wren] cried, "Hyena! Hyena! " The hyena replied, "Who are you, that you should wake me from my sleep?" "I am Wren. I came to you because I found my little birds crying. They did not want to eat because you called them bad names. I want you to come and make peace with them," The hyena retorted, "Who do you think I am, that I should come and make peace with your little birds? What have I to do with them? Be off with you! Go and pick worms out of the manure with your little birds!"

3. The bird became angry and said, "If you do not intend going to my little birds and making peace with them, we will have to fight a war. The one who is defeated will be the slave of the other." The hyena laughed when he heard this, and exclaimed, "You will kill me! And with what? Perhaps with your little beak or those tiny claws of yours! Go then and collect your army while I go and collect mine. After that we will fight."

So the wren went and collected her army. She mustered in every living creature which has wings, such as the crow, the eagle, and the hawk. Indeed, she gathered together all creatures that fly, including the mosquito, the hornet, and the bee. The hyena, in turn, collected for his army every living thing that has four legs, such as the elephant, the lion, the cheetah, and all other such animals.

4. Before the combat both armies discussed their plans of war. The wren's army sent mosquitoes to listen to the plans of the hyena's army. The mosquitoes were sent because they were tiny and therefore could not be seen. [First] they heard that the jackal had been appointed war leader, 62 Then they heard that the fox had said, "When

61 Inavahala oikulka: they did not want to eat. If a Kuanyama is abused and is unable to retaliate, he rejects food for the time being. This pattern of behavior starts in childhood.

62 Omulikiti uoita: leader of war, or leader of the army. Oita means either "war" or "army." The Kuanyama always chose a war leader who conducted the strategy and magic of war but took no part in the actual fighting.
pombada opone siveni nokutia tuevata, ndele ngenge tamumono uajuka pedu indeni onapo osei otuateua.

Emue esı dauda endjovo edı odaja ndele tadikalombuela ombinga javo. Ombinga et ojaholola enjiki odo dininge ovauiliki voila javo. Ndele tailombuela enjiki taiti, "Ngenge muamono ombadje jajelula omusila uajo enjiki odo otaendjeleleke omusila uaje."


you see my tail standing up high you may know that we are defeating [the enemy]; but should it droop down, you must run, since it is [our side] that is being defeated."

After the mosquitoes had heard these words, they returned and reported what they had done. The scorpions then were chosen as war leaders of their army. They spoke to the bees, thus: "When you see the fox raise his tail, you must be quick to get under it and sting hard, until he again lowers it."

5. When the [two] armies met, the bees got under the fox’s tail and stung him severely. The fox tried to endure [the pain] of keeping his tail raised, but he could not, the bees had stung too hard. So the fox lowered his tail. At once the army of the hyena fled, for they saw the tail of the fox hanging down [in surrender].

Now the bees left the fox and came to the hyena, whom they treated very badly indeed. Then the hyena let out a loud shout, "Oh! Oh! Let me be, my kings! I will make peace with the little birds." So the hyena went and made peace with the little birds.
Haimbili was the greatest of the known Kuanyama kings, and the last to be circumcised. The missionary Schrä giving the dates of his rule as 1805-1850. Both dates are probably wrong; the first is too early and the second even more so, since it was in Haimbili's reign that the first whites came to Ondonga. Galton and Anderson, in 1851, 63 were the first to explore the country. Hence 1861, given as the date of Haimbili's death, appears more probable than Schrä's date.

THE PROPHECY OF SISAAMA

Ondjaba jonoleki tai-tauluka osilongo. 64 The elephant crosses goes across country,

Jeja kepia ja Haimbili. He comes to the garden of Haimbili,

Ostil je-ja ningila ondjaba eti. Evil was done by elephant this,

Esi je-ja okufila mepla laje. When it comes to die in garden his.

Nasi ende po, osike oso? So happened it, why like that?

Mondangua mu ningila ende omulenga. In Ondonga they must let pass big men. 65

Eja okutala mepla omo. They will come to look in garden in it. 66

Ovanu ouuambba ua Pamba. 67 The people of the palace of God

Va pita-ko va juka oku. They went away but they are coming this way again.

POETRY

SONGS OF PROPHECY

Hi uete ko oku tava di,
I cannot see where they are coming from,

Nda mona-ko oku taveja.
I have seen only that they are coming.

Ve ja, va-tula mo mondonga. They have come they have settled in Ondonga.

Ndele va juka koukouambi no koungandjera. 68 And they go towards Oukuambi and Oungandjera,

Ndele va juka koukuanjama, And they go towards also Kuanyama.

Ohnuuo jepongo? 69 Cry for help of the poor?

Hinga tai-ka lotokua ku Pamba; Perhaps he will run for help to Pamba;

Hinga, Hinga, efiku detu nadi hule; 70 Perhaps, perhaps, day our must stop;

Hinga omunu ou akalela ohamba; It may be a person who will serve the king;

Hinga elimalima akalela, 71 Perhaps the bat will serve [the king]

Ova-endanandjila 72 tava lombola nomondjila. The strangers they will say the right way.

64 The Kuanyama believed that, when an elephant left the herd and wandered into cultivated land, the men signified the coming death of the king.
65 That is, white men.
66 They will come here also.
67 Pamba is another name for Kuanyama High God, Kalunga. The missionaries have taken the name of Kalunga for the Christian God. "People of the palace of God," i.e., the missionaries.
68 The whites first came to the southern tribe, the Ondonga. They then went to the Oukuambi and Oungandjera tribes, who are west of the Kuanyama. All these tribes are Ambo.
69 This line and the next line form a paraphrase of the Kuanyama proverb: "When a poor man cries for help, only God will aid him." (See below proverb no. 138.) The noun ohnuuo signifies a call for aid, either in war or at the time of a cattle raid or other emergency.
70 Perhaps the king will die.
71 The bat was believed to bring good luck to the Kuanyama. In the days of the kings, every kraal owner kept a bat alive in a cage in the milking place. The bat was fed with rice, and it was believed that the animal would cause the cows to yield an ample supply of milk. The bat was killed when the kraal owner died. At present some women keep a snake or frog for good luck.
72 Ova-endanandjila, those who walk on the trails, hence "strangers." Here the missionaries are implied.
The following is a free translation.

An elephant loose from his herd crosses the country.
He enters Haimbili's garden.
This elephant indeed was a portent of ill omen
Since he died in Haimbili's garden.
But if misfortune were to come, why of this kind?
In Ondonga, big men have forced their way through,
They will even come here to look at the garden.
These people are from the palace of God;
They have left, but they will return again.
I cannot see from whence they came,
I can only see that they are coming.
These people have settled in Ondonga;
Now they go towards Oukuambi and Ougandjera;
Presently they will turn towards Kuanyama.
Is the king so poor that he too must cry for help?
Then he likewise must seek the aid of Pamba;
Or perchance his days are numbered,
Is there no one who can serve our king?
It may be that only a bat can protect him.
The new-comers will point to the proper way.
The unborn children,
It is they who will be instructed,
From those who have, all will be taken.
A cry for help is heard,
It comes from the headmen.
Only the Kuamundja district will yield to the strangers;
The remainder of the people will seek refuge in the palace.
Then they will burn the palace,
And when it is burned, the people will house in bush shelters.
It is fate that Haimbili will die.
And his successor likewise will perish.
It is the strangers who will thrive in our country.

The prophet Sisaama also spoke a parable, which runs as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efuma</th>
<th>latukile</th>
<th>Okavandje;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frog</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jackal;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hangalili</td>
<td>mokukenje,</td>
<td>kuananjanala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He cries</td>
<td>in dry season,</td>
<td>no rain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medu</td>
<td>lastamo</td>
<td>okukalopo; odulajaloka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In ground he sinks before rain comes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndele</td>
<td>omafuma</td>
<td>astiuka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then frogs come out [in the rainy season].</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavandje</td>
<td>notanoloka ne ta-emuli le,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackal</td>
<td>comes and eats [frog] up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehnulundja</td>
<td>dasti</td>
<td>emulukile mokukenje.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>because impudent</td>
<td>in dry season.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This parable evidently refers to the future fate of Haimbili after the arrival of the whites in Kuanyama land. Freely translated it runs as follows:

Frog is fleeing from Jackal, and complaining because there is no rain. Then just before the rain falls he buries himself in the ground where Jackal cannot get at him. As soon as the rains fall, all the frogs come out and croak. Then Jackal comes along and eats up Frog, who has been able to elude him in the dry season.

King Musipandeke, who ruled from 1861 to 1881, was king when the whites first entered Kuanyama land. The following prophecy of Nakulenga was uttered after the Finnish missionaries had entered Kuanyama country.

Sihangadi tasi likokole momeva;
Something strange is creeping on the water;
Ova-endanandjila tave-likokole ollongo,
Foreigners are creeping into the country.

Sali kokule, se-uja popepi, se-uja.
It was far, it has come near, it is here.

Ovanu tava-hovela okuenda.
People start to walk [somewhere].

Hinga omuhama tau uile ondjila.
Perhaps an omuhama tree will fall [across the] path.

Ovanu va-dia kollongo;
[The strange] people come from a [distant] country;

Tave-uja nendjovo dimue;
They come with words different;

Ndele, es tava-tongo si udeni.
So, when they are talking [they] should be listened to.

Onda enda mosilongo
I walked and walked through the country

Ndana mona omaumbo omalengga.
And saw the kraals of the nobles.

Ina dia-ko osininina siua,
Not from it thing good,

Ndele enda ko lutivali,
I walked there twice,

Inandi mona omaumbo omalengga;
I did not see kraals of the nobles;

Ndele engulu nde di-ute.
But European houses I have seen.

Freely translated this runs:

Something strange is creeping over the waters;
Foreigners are entering the country.
They were far off, now they are near; they have arrived.
When people start walking somewhere
Perhaps an omuhama tree will fall across their path.
The strangers are coming from distant countries;
They are bringing new ideas;
When they talk, they should receive attention.
I walked many times through the country
And always saw the kraals of the nobles.
Now I have walked there again;
This time there were no kraals of the nobles;
It was only European houses which I saw.

King Uejulu ruled from 1884 to 1904. He was a great friend of the missionaries, although he himself was never converted.
It was in Uejulu’s reign that the German missionaries came to Ovamboland and joined the ranks of the Finnish missionaries. The prophet Muselenga opposed Uejulu’s friendship for the whites:

Uejulu! Hi uete eumbo lohambo.
Uejulu! I do not see the kraal of the king.

Hi uete eumbo lenga,
I do not see the kraals of the nobles.

Eli laminda, olo alike ndi uete
Only that of Naminda, this alone I see
mosihedi,
In Oshihedi,

Engulu ndi uete metunu
European houses I see in what were the fields

la-Haindongo.
of Haindongo.

Engulu ndi uete ko itoka ngoufipa,
Houses I see which white like millet meal.

Ounjuni tau xulu, tau-di kondongolondongo,
The world will end, it will end completely,

Taudi kambala jefuma,
It goes to the palace of the frog.

81 It is considered a bad omen if the omuhama tree (Albizia anthelmintica Brongo) falls across the path. This indicates the approaching death of the king.
82 A noble woman.
83 A district.
84 The king will die and go underground with the frogs.
Ame hai-di-po apa, hai sama
I will go away from here, I will stay with
nouiši; the bees;
Handi i moikutu jedu,
I will go in clothing of earth
Nda tuka ohamba,
I have cursed the king.

The following is a free translation:

Uejuu! I no longer see the kraal of the king;
I no longer see the kraals of the nobles;
The kraal of the noblewoman Naminda I still can see.
European houses are now in the fields of Haindongo;
Everywhere there are houses, white like millet meal.
Surely the world will end, it will be destroyed completely.
The king too will die and be buried underground,
I, likewise, will find my subterranean abode;
In the grave earth will be my clothing.
I must die, for I have cursed my king.

WAR SONGS

War songs actually are songs of praise, sung when the troops return safely home from a victory. This type of song is called osilimo, (plur., omaimbo, verbal infinitive, okuimba). The same native word is used as a general name for "song." These words also are now used to describe the singing of church hymns. The following are two examples of war songs:

Otuadjako ne kondjala,87
We are safe from hunger.
Kuhaja elume limbada;
The coward did not go to war;
Halikungile naina, otali alukile mondjila.
He followed the advice of mother, so he came back on way.

Ikovalumenu ava tavalu osilumenu, kefio lihapu,
For brave men who fought bravely, deaths many.
Kefio lafa omupuma.
Deaths as sudden.
Simbungu alele tauelele, Haulamba alele
The hyena was crying, was crying, the hyena was crying.
tauelele.
was crying.

Oku namukuetu akana momuanda, ahalele
There was our comrade left in camp, [he did] not sleep
pufie.
with us.

Oko tuemu fija oko, omuaulu nemadi
There we left him there, legs and feet

85 The bees also have their holes underground.
86 In the grave.
87 Capture of cattle will save the country from famine.
In free translation, this song runs as follows:

Now we will be free from hunger,
It was only the coward who did not go to war;
Following the advice of his mother, he returned when halfway to the battle.
Among those who fought bravely, many met their deaths;
Those deaths were sudden ones,
Now hear the hyenas crying.
We left one sick comrade in camp, he did not sleep with us;
We had to leave him there with his feet and legs on a side path
And his head concealed in the bushes.
Soldiers of Nekanda,
We have captured cattle for Haivinga, son of Nasitai,
While in camp we are all blood-brothers,
But at home we are apt to fight over women,
Make fast your belts, my comrades,
For you are leaving famine behind you,
You, so-and-so, my relative, I am bringing you a slave.

The following war song is a variation of the one just presented:

Nambala ja Haivinga ja paka oimbambinnga. 92
Nambala son of Haivinga has outspreading tusks;

Otta ja paka jafa ondjaba nambinga dapama,
Army has like elephant tusks strong,

Komameno nga tadiu otaikatondoka,
Where they grow if they break off [the army] will run away,

Nge uaimo likujuga, nge uaimo
If you go in it will hurt [you], if you go in
lekutuohoma,
it will gouge [you].

Haulamba alele, tauelele.
The hyena was crying, was crying.

Nondove 93 tuaholelekele.
Nondove we hid him.

Simbungu alele, tauelele. 94
The hyena was crying, was crying.

Namukutu tuaholele pamue.
Our companions did not sleep together.

92 The two wings of the army are compared to the tusks of an elephant.
93 Our companion.
94 Haulamba is the honorary name of the hyena, simbungu the common name. The hyenas were crying, and kept on crying. The word alele really means "sleeping," but in reference to the hyenas it means "to cry while sleeping." In this version it is clear that the sick companion was hidden so that the hyenas would not eat him.
95 Our army was concealed in the thicket like a young steenbock or kudu.
96 Ile: the depressions or open places through which water flows in the rainy season. The Herero call such a place omoramba, and it commonly is referred to by whites as "marumb." In the song, the army is described as going on the edge of the open places, but not entering them for fear of discovery. These places were the customary paths for travel in times of peace.
97 The singer is instructing the women not to praise the army on its victorious way home. Perhaps a son of one of the women turned back while the army was only halfway to battle.
Every year at the end of the rainy season the cattle are brought home from the outposts and are presented by the herd-boys to the kraal owners. At such times the herd-boys are praised, when deserving, and songs also are composed in praise of the cattle. There is also much dancing by both men and women. While an ordinary song is called omamokola, a cattle song is named ongoveloa (plur. engoveloa). In the song which follows the outposts to which the cattle are driven is in Angola, on the northern side of the Kunene River, in a region where elephants roam.

**Njaba jalja omandakani;**
**Elephant ate it opened the way!**

**Sopa, nadife, kuma!**
Open, jungle, open out!

**Tulombela apa uanokila**
Tell us where you jumped

**Omeva omulonga uakenene.**
The water river Kunene.

**Sikede datile tualukene;**
Sikede I said might go back;

**Oku uea okukule, liakuo omboloka okahenge.**
Where you are is far away, to rest under trees of elephant.

In free translation:
The elephants opened a path through the jungle;
Open, jungle, open out!
Tell us where the cattle will be able
To cross the waters of the Kunene River.
One of the oxen, named Sikede, I sent back.
Since the place was still far off
Where the cattle could rest
Under the trees, in the land of the elephants.

**SONGS OF SICKNESS AND DEATH**

If a person is very ill, the medicine man may prescribe a certain sacrifice to the ancestors (ovakumungho), and also the performance of the magico-religious rite called omamokola (literally, "calabashes"). At this rite a female shaman beats calabashes with sticks, making a drumlike noise; meanwhile friends of the invalid dance and sing.

**Ombul taimbuabufi ekeulo;**
**Rain bubbling from the sky!**

**Hatu uana na Pamba,**
We are going to meet

**Hatu uana na Kalunga,**
We are going to meet

**Nda pula efiku handi fi,**
I ask the day I will die,

**Ame nda-tja omongula.**
I said [it will be] tomorrow.

**Je tatit: Kala manga,**
He said: Wait a bit,

**U ninge ombilia inene;**
So you may have grave big;

**Kala manga nomuenjo,**
Wait awhile in life,

**U ninge elambo lomakololo,**
So you may have hole scooped out well,

**Nombila ja pita ekege;**
From grave out of it poisonous mushroom;

**Nau pita oukola.**
From tomb out of it fungus.

Freely translated this runs as follows:
The rain is bubbling from the sky;
We are going to meet Pamba,
We are going to encounter Kalunga.
I asked for the day on which I am to die,
I said, "It will be tomorrow."
But God said, "Wait a bit" So that you may have a hole well scooped out,
Remain alive yet awhile.
Then from your grave a poisonous mushroom will sprout,
And from your tomb a fungus.

---

98 Made a path.
99 Where there is a ford.
100 An ox name.
102 A fungus that grows on anthills.
The burden of this somewhat macabre song is that while the patient is seriously ill, yet life is not despaired of; there is still hope of recovery. As stated in this song, every death was attributed to God (Kalunga): Kalunga alapu omnuuaje, "God took his life [soul]," the natives used to say. And yet deaths were at the same time attributed to slighted ancestors (ovakuamunghu), and to the malpractices of witches.

The last song was sung to a cheerful tune, but the next is a funeral dirge recited by women over the grave of a dead male relative. Each woman recites one line, but many more lines, in addition to those here given, may follow as feelings dictate. There is no dancing at a funeral. The mourners weep and sing over and over again, "Oh, my father!" or "Oh, my mother!" according to the sex and relationship of the deceased. The mourning lasts four days for an adult.

Ngeno ha nena! 103
If not today!

Kalunga na ifana omiva!
Kalunga called too soon!

Mu pa omeva, okua ja inalja;
Give him water, left without eating food;

Sakala, inafia outalala.
Make a fire, he must not be cold.

Tu ningileni onele,
Prepare a place.

Inga tumu hanga,
While we will find [you],

Tuli hangeni,
Until we meet.

Freely translated this runs as follows:

Would it were not today!
Kalunga, you have called too soon!
Give him water, he has left without food;
Light a fire, he must not be cold.

[Spoken to the dead]
Prepare a place for us,
In a little while we shall join you,
Farewell, until we meet again.

103 Lyndon, op. cit., p. 148.
PROVERBS

LEGAL PROVERBS

Among the pagan Kuanyama, and in part among the Christians, much of the instruction given the young is in the form of proverbs, since these are easily remembered. The proverbs cover the realms of law, ethics, philosophy, and religion. The first proverbs to be presented here are those which might be called legal; they represent to a certain extent the codification of Kuanyama law.

1. Omunu ohodulu okujasa okadila keli
   A person should not shoot a little bird which is komutue uoje.
   on head his.

   "Never shoot a bird which is resting on your own head." One should never harm a relative or clanmate. This proverb is used in the modern law courts when one relative refuses to testify against another.

2. Omukuluuemba linene lauvikila omepe.
   A powerful man basket big protects from wind.

   "A powerful man, like a big basket, protects one from the wind," A big man in a clan protects his clanmates. He does this by paying a large portion of their fines.

3. Hauli auke, londal!
   Left alone, climb up!

   If your relatives have died, make friends with people in other clans.

4. Setekela dipa
   Setekela kills
   ondjabaka nekuma.
   elephant with lumps of clay.

   "Setekela tried to kill an elephant with lumps of clay." Both the king and the elephant may turn on you and kill you.

5. Omukunda embili, osilongo emangela.
   [In] district peace, [In] country law and order.

   "There must be peace in the district to have law and order in the land."

6. Pombili shapa potua,
   In peace is not evil.

   "When there is peace, there is no evil."

7. Momutue umutumua ihamuende omkole.
   On head of messenger has never been wound.

   "A messenger while in service is never harmed." The messenger of a king or nobleman always carried a knob-kerrie stick of his master as his credential.

   Every hyena knows the way to the forest.

   "Everyone knows how to be crafty." If a member of one's clan is killed, he should secretly retaliate on someone in the killer's clan.

9. Oikulia ihailiua nga kahnuti.
   Food is not eaten as by a dove.

   "If one does not work, he should not eat." A dove does no work, only pecks at its food.

10. Toja ngaho uafa ombabi judia elso.
    He comes just like a duikerbok with one eye.

   This is said of a person who comes unannounced to a strange kraal. This is considered a breach of etiquette, since a kraal owner needs a day's notice in order to prepare beer for his guest.

11. Omudilo uongula opoenele joje.
    Fire of morning on side your.

   Under the matrilineal laws of inheritance, when a man dies a brother or a sister's son comes to administer the estate. The property, consisting mostly of livestock, is divided among the members of the man's clan, the nearer relatives obtaining the greater portion. The distant relatives obtain very little; they keep warm, close to the morning fire. The near relatives get most of the property.

12. Eheto ishajasua.
    The absent one is not hit.

   If a clan member is absent from a funeral, he receives nothing from the estate of the deceased.

    The eldest child of a cattle owner grows up
    e-ongobe with cattle.

104 Meaning "one who tries."
Although the children of a rich cattle owner are supposed to inherit nothing when the father dies, yet the oldest son, when still a child, is always given cattle by his father and thus "grows up with cattle."

14. Omuongo ou ulilila ojou kukuminina
Backbone which you ask is that related to you.

Only relatives and clannemates should be asked for favors.

15. Qhonde okupana idule omева,
Blood is thicker than water.

This proverb was said by my informant to be original among the Kuanyama.

16. Inga tulimona moita jahada.
Until we meet in the war of the king.

When the king announces a war, all the young men in the country should join the army.

17. Oumjuni ouehongo lekuu.
The world of Нонго falls.

Even if a man is very rich, if he falls under the displeasure of the king, he may lose everything. The king may send armed troops against him and confiscate his cattle and goods. In the olden days, being very rich was in itself a danger, and kraal owners tried to conceal the number of their cattle by lending them out. Even today it is impossible to take a correct census of cattle.

If you go first you will not drink muddy water.

After the first man drinks at a water hole, the pool is likely to be stirred up and become muddy. This saying may be applied to marriage; the first marriage lasts longest. "The first wife is the best wife. She should be the chief wife."

19. Oxuxuena hadela njoko, njoko, nale
Young chicken scratches [or] mother, mother before

   e ku hadela,
   for you scratched.

"A young chicken should scratch for its mother, your mother previously scratched for you." You should support your mother when she is old.

20. Ondjala nda-dala.
Hunger I gave birth to,

"I have given birth to starvation." My children do not support me.

A shadow is better than a grave.

"It is better to be blind than dead." The Kuanyama were, and of course still are, very considerate of the old and blind. In former days if a man blinded another he had to support the injured one for life by paying him an annual fine. One of the present headmen has a special room in his kraal for blind relatives.

22. Onjiki ja-dala odi.
The bee gives birth to the fly.

Because of the rules of matrilineal inheritance, "a rich man may give birth to a poor son." The circumstances, of course, may be reversed.

**ETHICAL PROVERBS**

The Kuanyama have many ethical proverbs, which are mainly used for the instruction of children. These proverbs are taught the young either by their parents or close relatives; there is no indication that ethical instruction was given either at the time of the boys' circumcision ceremony or during the girls' coming-of-age ritual, the efundula.

23. Omundja ja kula na xe,
The steenbok goes big with [his] father;

   ombabi ja putuka na ina,
the duikerbok is brought up by [his] mother,

   ku oukola.
they do not eat poisonous mushrooms.

24. Ngeno thai jada okandu.
Supposing does not fill grain basket [granary].

"Mere wishing gets one nowhere."

25. Ufena etondo, omutumba itau etasa.
Rubber of testicles, sitting brings nothing.

"By sitting down all day long, you accomplish nothing."

26. Si valula, si nondjabu.
What hurts, that has reward.

"It pays to accomplish the difficult."
27. Tasi havaela, inga-nasi ningi sili.  
What tries, it may become true.

"If at first you don't succeed; try, try again." This proverb is said especially to apply to courtship.

28. Si-i sandjala situala kelolo.  
A bad thing leads to good fortune.

"Misfortune spurs one on."

29. Uhai-imba-umba kujase.  
If you do not try to shoot you hit nothing.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

30. Mokahua ada uadina,  
In little bush which you did not think of
omo muna ndika, 
in it there is hare.

"Good fortune comes when least expected."

31. Tetekela si-i, siua sbuninua.  
At beginning hard time, good in future.

"Every beginning is difficult."

32. Oukengeli shaumonka nokapala kajela.  
Wealth does not appear with face clean.

"If you work hard, you can't always keep clean."

33. Namu ha lombuelua, ohai  
A person who does not listen, goes with
netudi povanu,  
faeces among the people.

"He who does not take advice, must suffer the consequences."

34. Kokule shaku fikua ongula,  
Far place never reached in morning.

"Little by little you get what you want." The natives always start on a long journey early in the morning.

35. Mua-ka nale ndele kamun-a onduba  
You cut long time and have not heap
domiti,  
of sticks.

"You can work for a long time and still accomplish nothing."
"One finger will not pick something up, one hand cannot clap thanks." The natives express gratitude by clapping their hands and even by dancing in joy. This and the following two proverbs mean that the people must work together.

43. Omunue umue shau litola ona Finger one cannot catch lice
momutue,
from head.

"One is unable to catch head-lice with one finger." Under ordinary circumstances the people do not suffer from head-lice, since both sexes usually keep their heads well shaved.

44. Okulendela kunjenga. To walk alone is impossible.

45. Lakuta latumbu lamanepo When you have something and you are finished
hata omukofi,
it is you have nothing.

"When you have food and eat it, there is nothing left." (Unless you have given some to someone else, so that some day he will return the present).

46. Mupa ekupajo. Give to him [so] that he may give to you.

47. Okujandja okutulika. To give [is] to keep.

48. Omulongelo chauka fa ukuao melimba. Gift turns up the other from pantry.

"When you make a present of some food, it will be returned from someone else's pantry."

49. Etimaumbule lidule ekuta. To keep a promise is better [than] to have something.

50. Sauna metiti omukulunu entjandja. Enough in meat pot big person divided it.

"When there is enough in the meat pot, a big person should be present to divide it."

51. Leinda ongula olo halitola osima. Walks morning is that picks up thing.

52. Tel mumeva nenaku. To go in water with sandals.

The custom of wearing sandals is widespread in Africa, extending even to the Bushmen. Kuanyama men wear hide sandals as protection from thorns, but remove them before entering water. Hence to enter water without removing one's sandals is to do something inappropriate or rude, such as interrupting a conversation.

53. Sekunjekele oha la ohoendepo What takes things away ostrich feather be careful tofifila, when you pass by.

The ostrich feather worn in the hat was a sign of a king or male member of the nobility. Now any old man may wear one. "Be careful when you pass by an old man wearing an ostrich feather. He may take away some of your property."

**PHILOSOPHICAL PROVERBS**

Philosophical proverbs are generalizations which influence the actions of the people but still are not legal expressions. Thus, "Too much butter makes one sick" is a simple Kuanyama proverb; "You can't take a fish out of water" has wider implications.

54. Oita ohali heita. War kills the soldier.

55. Omupika allo njata, kalia A slave can eat manure, [but] cannot eat
uanga, witch's poison.

"It is better to be a slave than a witch."

56. Kapena omudalua shadjulukus; There is not a person who is not homesick;
nomupika oha la jo koina, and a slave wants (misses) his parents.

57. Tujenil! Elao lostimbungu Let us go! The luck of the hyena
mondjila, is on our path.

This is said when an army sets out for a cattle raid.

58. Limbadungila, onapo jamukueni Trying to run, running of other
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"No one else can run for you when you are escaping in war."

59. Dalondoka hadi oita. For warned people there is no war.

"Forewarned is forearmed."

60. Ombabi tailombuela ovana: Duikerbok tells [his] children:

"Vo omundja veuditeko."
"Those bucks can hear."

If the king told his nobles the place where an attack was planned, the enemy would be warned. The ordinary people in an army never knew whom they were to attack until the night before the battle. Only the war leader was informed.

61. Mundja ohalile komdimbukilo. The buck dies at last.

The army has fought all day, and just when it is about to return to camp the leader is killed.


The elephant is a symbolic name for raided cattle. "Do not drive off in a joyful manner the cattle you have raided, or you may lose them."

63. Eumbo omuijo. A kraal is a trap.

In former days a person entering a strange kraal was likely to be killed. The kraal was a traplike labyrinth, and pitfalls were often placed to catch thieves and hostile people.

64. Otuadiako tuakondoveka omusila. We come from running with tails between legs.

We come running home, defeated in war.

65. Oujika jepumba ikunuala. A torch of cattle dung leads kuaji jomuhongo until you get [a good hardwood torch] of omuhongo-wood.

This was said when the nobles first got breech-loaders, since there were not enough rifles to go around. "Anything does in a pinch."

66. Osimombo sahala okuja kohambo, The goat wants to go to the cattle post, So siti kutla osina omusila muhapi, But he knows that he has tail short.

Goats are able to eat the short grass at home, so they are not brought to the cattle outposts. "A weak man cannot fight a strong man; a weak tribe is unable to fight a strong tribe."


"When you have a new wife you put her in the honeymoon hut, she does no work, and you treat her well—as a new skin. But afterwards she may be neglected."

68. Enguo nadilomonue Woman's back apron butter is put on it ovasiona, fie tu vave, poor, we get robbed.

When butter is used for tanning, what is left is given to the poor. Hence, the people of the kraal where the tanning takes place consider themselves robbed, since they do not get the butter.

69. Olikafa shapu, shapu eena. Skins many, many [have] lice.

"Where there are many people, some must be wicked."

70. Ndaimbua odikua 106 kostluka. I forgot cradle in garden.

To have food in the kraal and feed one’s guests while neglecting the kraal inmates.

71. Oukongo ohauli haukongo. Hunting suffers the hunter.

"The hunter suffers from the hunt" if he shoots nothing.

72. Okadila aka ualokua uako, Little bird which rained on with you, okahojama nako, you shelter with it.

"When it rained, you sheltered with a little bird." Comrades in trouble remain comrades in fair weather.

73. Sili shamumono okadila kalokua Surely when you see little bird wet [shivering with cold]

106 A Kuanyama cradle usually consists of a calf-skin or goatskin carried on the back of the mother or older sister.
Among the Kuanyama poverty is considered almost a crime, yet you should treat a poor man kindly.

74. Otike saenda mongava.
What goes through sorghum grain sprouting in the ground?

The Kuanyama make their beer from sorghum which is allowed to sprout in the ground before being placed in boiling water. The beer is spilt if a person or dog urinates over the sprouting grain, or if an osiololo (a harmless red snake which comes in the rainy season) crawls through the grain. Hence if a person whom you know well suddenly changes for the worse in his behaviour towards you, you may ask yourself this question. (The osiololo snake, of course, has only an imaginary effect on the beer).

75. Sappia ohnolue osaenda
What is said by a drunken man kept it
najo komutima,
at bottom of heart.

"What a drunken man says comes from the bottom of his heart." In vino veritas.

76. Kuadia eendu kuna ondjala.
Where there is millet dough there is hunger.

When food is cooked for a guest, there may not be enough to go around, and the other people of the kraal may go hungry.

77. Omuali epuka.
A woman who just has had a child gets hungry quickly.

78. Ou uaninga ostvilo, ove uastudana.
Who makes a feast, you look funny.

"You look funny when you make a feast" unless there is plenty of food to go around.

79. Eumbo fahakatungua simbuela.
A kraal is not built for many men.

"A man should be master of his own kraal."

80. Shengehenge osakati kamue.
A bird name to carry a stick one at a time.

When a man makes a kraal he cuts his stakes one at a time, or two at a time. "Little things mount up."

81. Omadi ohajena.
Butter makes one sick.

"Too much of a good thing." Butter is used both for anointing the body and for frying meat after it is boiled.

82. Ongudi ka-tana, osua kal
Fresh butter is not plentiful, the good does not multiply.

Butter is usually kept in a gourd where it is preserved with herbs. Fresh butter tastes better, but is rare. "A wicked king rules for a long time; the rule of a good king is short."

83. Ka xo kedule kanjoko,
Your father is more than your mother.

"You should love your father more than your mother." Half brothers of the same father should mean more to one another than half brothers of the same mother.

84. Hamutemo mondjabi,
The worker in the ondjabi feast.

A woman who has a large garden to harvest may invite other women of the neighborhood to help her. As reward she gives them beer and perhaps beans. This is called the ondjabi feast. The proverb above applies to a woman who works best in company.

85. Kollonga tamu-tumbula Mbangua;
For work you call [a man's name];
kokulia kamusi Mbangua,
in eating you do not know Mbangua.

"You call on so-and-so when there is something difficult to do; when there is a feast you forget all about him."

86. Eonga longula shalidi honde.
Spear of morning does not shed blood.

"When an ox is speared in the morning, not much blood is shed." The Kuanyama always kill their cattle by spearing them. "If you drink beer in the morning, you won't get drunk."

87. Omunu ngenge elf moukengeli
A person when is wealthy
chaluenduka,
is selfish.

"A wealthy person is a selfish person."

88. Ouafa tolil omaxuku aepupa;
A rich man eats amarula nuts sifted;
"Even a rich man must have his amarula nuts sifted for him. He would be helpless if he tried to eat them by himself."
Amarula nuts are always opened and the flour is sifted by women. The meaning is: "If you try to do something without asking advice, you will fail."

90. Kuama koje thamonika ta dalua.
Friend your do not choose before born.

The Kuanyama, both men and women, have the custom of choosing close friends of the same sex. There is a constant exchange of feasts and presents between friends. A man or woman will sometimes even select a friend before he is born. The proverb, however, says, "Do not choose your friend before he is born"; he may be of the opposite sex. Kuanyama male friends do not share their wives, as do the neighboring Herero.

91. Kuli uoje iha kulepa.
Where there is friend not far off.

"A friend is never too far away to be visited."

92. Ovanu vandibha shavakala oxisu simue.
Children of hare do not live in bush same.

"The children of the hare do not live in the same bush." If a man has two sons, they do not always live or work in the same place.

93. Omona uondijabha ta-dalua ena omakaka.
Child of elephant is born having thick skin.

"A young elephant is born with a thick skin." Even though a child is young, he resembles his parents. "Like father, like son."

94. Ofa jeleta komutemo.
The ant comes by itself to the fireplace.

In Ovamboland the winged ants fly by night in the rainy season. The Kuanyama catch them in the following manner. In the daytime small holes are dug near an anthill. At night the women come and build fires in the holes. The next morning the fires are out but the holes are full of dead ants. These are then roasted with butter and salt and eaten. "A needed person does not have to be summoned; he comes of his own accord."

95. Muku-dede uhitetuka fimbo edula inadiuja.
Lazy-lazy be early before rain comes.

"Lazy-lazy, be early and plant your garden before the rain comes." In Ondonga, millet and sorghum are planted after the first light rain, but the Kuanyama always plant when they think that rain will soon fall.

96. Omuenda alifile ovaumbo.
The guest eats with the people of the kraal.

"When a guest arrives, the kraal inmates get sufficient to eat." This proverb is the opposite of No. 76, which says that the kraal inmates may go hungry with the arrival of a guest, since there may not be enough food left to go around. Both proverbs may be true; circumstances alter cases.

97. Us-ula, tottila okulonda.
You fall once, you are afraid to climb again.

98. Okahandja jahutika ofuka.
A little firebrand burns up the jungle.

"A little word may accomplish a big deed."

99. Enamba la kengelela
[Small] frog
efuma,
[large] frog
betrays

These two kinds of frogs are always together; the first kind is not eaten, but its croaking tells the hunter where to hunt for the larger variety. "Kings are betrayed by the smaller people around them."

100. Okaffi ta-tumine ondjabha.
The little wren sent the elephant.

"Even a servant can influence his master."

101. Omuhupi kalla embe, omuile
A short man does not eat embe fruit, a tall man
does not eat unripe fruit.

Only a tall man is able to reach for the best fruit on a tree. "Although you go to the king's palace with a rich man, if you yourself are poor, you will receive nothing. To him who has, will be given."

102. Sa anjena onuato kasi kufua kenjala.
What defeats pincers is not removed by fingers.

"That which cannot be removed by pincers cannot be removed by the fingers." The Kuanyama make and use iron pincers to remove thorns from their feet.

103. Ngenge sa njengua ombua, omukongi
If thing defeats dog, hunter
okusitsikula vail ito si hange.
follows it again never it reaches.

"If a dog is unable to catch the prey, the hunter likewise will never succeed, no matter how much he tries." This and the preceding proverb were explained as follows: "What defeats a king certainly will defeat an elenga [nobleman]."

104. To kuata momevu fimbo omufuma taai
You are fishing in water which frogs have left.

After the rainy season the ponds in Ovamboland dry up until they are too shallow even for the frogs. "What you are doing is hopeless."

105. Totete omufuma kondobe.
You cut the frog from the pond.

Like a fish out of water. "You take a person away from the things he understands."

106. Okaffi ke-lumumuka ei lako.
Small wren picks up egg his,

"Even the small bird rejoices over his egg, no matter how tiny it is."

107. Enongo ihai likalele.
A climbing plant does not stay alone.

"A person cannot remain alone in this world."

108. Omeva ihaelinjenge eheni kapuka.
Water does not move without an insect,

"A person is not cross without reason."

109. Uvelavela inga ngofi.
Many times you are sick otherwise you die.

"To be sick often is not dangerous."

110. Okuoko ihakuldi peteta.
Arms not taken away by woman's sexual organs.

"If your wife is unfaithful, it is not as bad as losing your arms." If your wife disgraces you, you should keep it secret.

111. Pahevela mbabi ingapatipite.
Trys duiker deer to escape.

"If you shout at your wife, she will run away."

112. Kamukueni nande kapa
Son of related woman, even give him

efima, linene okoina ngaho-takaji.
porridge, [when] big to mother he may go.

A Kuanyama kraal owner follows the custom of having youthful relatives, especially his sisters' sons, act as herd-boys. His own sons also take care of the cattle. "One should feed one's own son better than a boy who is a mere relative, for the relative, when grown-up, will leave the kraal and return to his mother."

113. Oudano shuhanamuka inau lififila kadu.
African "checkers" not break up before they fight.

"African checkers always ends in a fight."

114. Simbungu ngenge adiku elenge
Hyena if dressed in herdsman's hat

okenu hakatondoka.
go to other kraals.

"If the hyena puts on the fancy hat of a head herdsman, he will be invited to visit other kraals." "Apparel of proclaims the man."

115. Okahaluni nopeumba lako.
Little squirrel in den his.

"A child in his own kraal will be naughty to strangers."

116. Inasilia ombua, omukongo okualonda.
Do not kill the dog, the hunter is up on the tree.

"A man and his wife may quarrel, and later the woman, still angry at her husband, might beat the children. She should not, however, since the husband may be within hearing distance."

117. Okavanda uhela habo takudungua.
Anthill where you go not pick mushrooms.

"You will not find mushrooms on the first anthill you encounter." The girl with whom you first bundle is not the one you will marry.

118. Omukulunu shapuka mosipaxu.
A grown-up man is not lost among locusts.

"Even if an able man has many difficulties, people will say, leave him alone, he can take care of himself."

119. Kapena osikangua shali ombja.
There is not a cracked pot which was not a good pot.

A cracked pot is something useless, like an old person.
"Every old person was once a useful person, and therefore should be taken care of."

120. Okuhombola omupofi kadule
To marry a blind woman is better
omupombolume,  
than to be a bachelor.

121. Sikokomena ihalukilua  
A deaf and dumb person no one names for him  
omona,  
[his] child.

"No one names his child after a deaf and dumb person."  
A namesake supposedly has the attributes of the person for whom he is named.

122. Hamuka shajavala  
A cutter of bush does not help  
omukoki,  
the gatherer of the bundles.

One man goes ahead and cuts the bush, another follows and picks up the sticks and makes them into bundles. "In

the olden days one nobleman [elenga] would not have felt sorry if another nobleman died or fell into disgrace." The Kuanyama nobility usually were chosen by the king for their ability, and they were not necessarily connected by blood ties.

123. Satunga dingilli oudila vakuao  
What is built [by] dingilli bird others  
kavesi,  
do not know how.

The dingilli bird builds his nest of wild cotton. Only the dingilli bird knows how to build his nest in this fashion. "One never knows of what another person is thinking."

124. Unjika iboludu,  
If you smell badly you can't smell yourself.

"A bad man is not aware of his own wickedness."

REligious proverbs

Although many of the old religious proverbs now frequently quoted deal with the nature of the High God (Kalunga or Pamba), many more such sayings were added with the coming of Christianity. The proverbs given below are said by the old men to be authentically pagan.

125. Enhombo hadi ombo omuti umue  
The cattle shelter under tree same  
nā Pamba,  
with God.

"The cattle shelter under the same tree with God." Cattle are sacred among the Kuanyama, although not to the same degree as among the Herero. Formerly sheep were the most sacred of the Kuanyama domestic animals.

126. Etango likulla. shali ku koja,  
The sun [which] kills never you pass by.

"The sun which will kill you will never pass you by." The Kuanyama unconsciously identify Kalunga with the sun; both are the givers of life and death, and both move across the sky from east to west in daytime. The Kuanyama believe that a person's soul may be dragged down by the setting sun, The rising sun, however, is health-giving, and for this reason all the kraals face the east. "You will die on your appointed day."

127. Kalunga ailapu omnuuajie,  
Kalunga took his soul [life].

This was said in the old days when a person died.

128. i na joito ondjibololo;  
The mother of pots is a hole in the ground;  
i na jovaniu Kalunga,  
the mother of people is Kalunga.

Among the Kuanyama the women make their pots in holes which are covered over and thus sheltered from the wind. They say they do this so the pots will not crack. In this proverb Kalunga is called "the mother" of the people; usually he is thought of as male.

129. Omuayikkadi uakalunga oje ohengana,  
The wife of Kalunga she[also] ran away.

If many wives have deserted their husbands in a particular district, the men there are consoled with this proverb.

130. Pamba iha jandje luvali,  
God does not give twice.

"If a man is clever at raising cattle, he should not also try to be a good medicine man."

131. Kalunga ihakualeluwa tatenge,  
God needs no help [when] he is cutting,  
otumuningifa evongo,  
you bend his way.

"God needs no aid when he cuts wood. May I cut likewise." This actually is a charm used in cutting wood.
132. Kalunga fulenge!
   God blow me!

   When a person gets something in his eye, he pulls down
   his eyelid and turns his eyes to the sky, asking God to blow
   out the particle.

133. Kalunga tupa odulal
   God give rain!

   In time of drought, sacrifice and prayer are offered to
   the ancestors, especially to the dead kings; Kalunga also
   is invoked.

134. Ovanu va 'Mbangu.
   We are people of God.

   During a severe thunderstorm the people invoke God under
   the name of 'Mbangu.

135. Kalunga ahanduka.
   God is angry.

When there is much thunder and lightning during a storm
the people believe that God is angry with them. They then
rub their noses and foreheads with charcoal and throw the re-
mainning charcoal outside their huts.

136. Se kupa Pamba, tambula
   That given[by] God, take [with]
   nomaoke avali,
   hands two.

   To take with two hands shows special gratitude. The
   Kuanyama usually receives presents with his right hand while
   his left hand rests on his right upper arm.

137. Onghuuo jepongo o Kalunga heitondoka.
   Cry for help of poor man only God will help.

   "When a poor man cries for help, only God will aid him."
RIDDLES

Generally speaking, the Kuanyama may be said to have two forms of riddles. In the first form, a proverb is presented to a child or grown-up person, and he is expected to answer with another appropriate proverb. The second form is more like our own; in this a definite solution is required. Riddles 1 to 25 are of the first type. The exchange of riddles is a form of education among the pagan Kuanyama, and a person unable to give a correct answer is thought stupid. Riddle exchange, as well as storytelling, takes place usually at night around the fire.

1. Kakunena kedule onguma;
   A little ax is better than a stone ax;

   Kapundi kanini kedule omuiohne.
   A seat little is better than to squat on one's heels.

   The first proverb refers to the custom of splitting amarula nuts by tapping them with a stick while they rest on the blade of an ax. The people still remember a period long ago when there were no iron axes and stones were used to split the nuts. Ovamboland is stoneless, so the memory must extend to the period before the Kuanyama entered their present abode.

   The second proverb refers to the oipundi or log seats in the sitting room of the kraal.

2. Ehangu lile laeta oudila mepia;
   Miluvanda lile laeta oita meumbo.
   Kraal entrance long brings war to kraal.

   A kraal cannot be concealed if it has a long entrance.

3. Omuva lile muua ohapo;
   Shade good [of] new leaves;

   Epangelo liua ohamba.
   Ruling good [of] king.

   "New leaves produce a good shade; the laws of a king are always as good as new." Since royal orders are supposed not to change from one king to the next, they are always as good as new.

4. Siliva satelua naponda;
   Native mousetrap made for a pound;

   Emba latelua nehaulapa.
   Ivory button [or] a copper mine made for a penny.


If you work in the Tsumeb white man's copper mine you may lose your life. In that case you will have worked for nothing. (If you lose your life, a pound is nothing.)

5. Londa kostiva uueko;
   If you climb anthill you fall;

   Dipa njoko umone oihuna.
   [If] you kill your mother you will have a hard time.

   Matricide will not be punished by the mother's clan, since it is also the murderer's clan. But, according to the proverb, misfortunes will follow the crime. If a father kills his child, after the child has received a name, he has to pay the mother's clan the usual fine for homicide.

6. Hilitu keki ja mohalbo jatate;
   I am not hurt by thorns in cattle hedge of my father;

   Randende moupika tate ejadi engobe.
   I won't be a slave [while] father has [many]cattle.

   It was a good thing for a man if his father had a large cattle hedge around his kraal, which indicated the possession of many cattle. It was the father and not the son's clanmates who had to ransom the son if he were taken prisoner in war.

7. Oxuxua japita polumalungusu
   A chicken passes through an opening between kraal posts

   jatipapo oluenschu lajo;
   leaves feathers its;

   Afia afitapapo adina laje.
   [When a person] dies leaves name his.

   "When a person dies he leaves nothing but his name."

8. Okua tukha omadila ku nomeva;
   Where fly birds is water;

   Kua jola ongadja oko kumaumbo.
   Where laughs woman's laugh is kraal.

   "Where one sees birds in their flight, there is water;
   Where one hears the sound of women laughing, there is a kraal."

   This riddle is sung by the men at the time of the girls' puberty and marriage ceremony (the efundula).

9. Ohnulungumbu ktpu maktja;
   An old hedge is full of thorns;
Eumbo lakula kalipu valodi,
A kraal big is full of witches.

10. Ekuva nomomuhene olatau;
An ax for the omuhene tree is sharp;
Ondjala nomomumati ojehama.
Hunger to young man feels it.

"An ax always is sharp as far as the soft omuhene tree is concerned; a young man is least able to bear the pangs of hunger."

11. Okadila kaenda apa, takati tui-tui!
A little bird flys up, says tui-tui!
Etango laenda apa talitii,
The sun passes by, says

tulaieni-tulaieni!
sleep well—sleep well!

12. Efundja kalikungulula enenge;
The flood does not wash away the grass;
Ombelila janjina kaitokola elaka,
Meat fat does not break the tongue.

"If you speak a bad word, your tongue will not come out of your mouth."

13. Ohnutulia jangongola nostai;
A dove runs along on a branch;
Onako jangongola nomunino tondoka.
A ball of porridge runs along runs down the throat.

14. Ekuju la-andamena kondonga;
The wild fig tree leans to the south;
Ovanu avese okefia vatelela.
People all death they face.

15. Metiti muualila osiuia;
In the meat pot there is something good;
Medu muapiala ehamba.
In the ground there are buried the kings.

16. Osvanda onali jedu;
An anthill is a walking stick of the earth
Oilemo ehnaku deulu.
Clouds are the sandals of the sky.

17. Hamupadi muene haje apermba;
Big nose owner does not sneeze;

Hamupadi muene haje afulula ondjila.
Big feet owner does not disturb sand on way.

"A person with a big nose does not necessarily sneeze; a person with big feet does not necessarily create a cloud of dust when he walks." A strong man may have a mild temper.

18. Ndili mekuma hifi ndjala;
I am in a cave but feel no hunger;
Ndili moitana jehove hifi ndjala,
I am a calf of an ox but feel no hunger.

"I am protected by a powerful man."

19. Okahuxuilo koje nande nakale kaua
A small pot for urine your although it is good
kulilemo;
you cannot eat from it;
Mumuanjoko nande nakale muua
Your sister even if she is beautiful
kumuhae,
you cannot have sexual intercourse with her.

20. Omukuku kauhokua ngoma;
The omukuku tree does not make a drum;
Ohamba jakula kaibongua ndunge.
King big hard to give him advice.

"The omukuku tree is too hard to be fashioned into a drum; a powerful king is difficult to persuade by advice."

21. Omubeke apa ombeambuedu apa eheke;
Water hole there is sandy here is white sand;
Osilongo apa efia kuinja oudano.
Country here at funerals there are dances.

The sand at water holes actually is dark, and not white. Dark is the color of mourning and black beads are worn as a sign of mourning. The people never dance at funerals. The riddle says, "If the sand were white at water holes, then the people would dance at funerals."

22. Ondjuuo jomomufitu kaipu edu;
Sleeping hut on sand is full of sand;

Omunu nande lifeta
Person even if he cleans himself
kupu dilo,
cannot keep away the dirt.

108 Ficus capensis, L.f.
109 Combretum imberbe Wawra.
"If one's sleeping hut rests on sand, no matter how much one cleans himself he will still remain dirty." The sleeping hut usually has its floor and walls lined with clay from the anthills. The Kuanyama clean themselves daily with a mixture of millet meal and water. "If one goes with bad company, he will himself become contaminated."

23. Eti lau a kembuela;
    Eti falls down in Embuela;
    ndele nafie hatujoto;
    and we get firewood;
    Etango lapita kousilo
    The sun rises in the east
    ndele laminikila apese.
    and sheds its light everywhere.

Owing to the shortage of wood, the Kuanyama at present are not allowed to cut down living trees in their own country. When a tree falls by itself, however, it may be used for firewood. This kind of a gift is compared, in the riddle, to the gift of sunlight.

24. Ekija lo mumbungululu latiula
    Thorn of mumbungululu sticks through
    etende tondjaba;
    hoof of elephant;
    Ova uatenda mosivanda,
    Mushroom comes out of anthill,

25. Samena osadia ketindi?
    What grows from trunk of a tree?
    Nenge xo stokoka nave oso
    If father is clever also [son] is
    tokala,
    clever.

Compare "chip of the old block."

The following riddles (26-32) resemble our own: a question is propounded and an answer is expected.

26. Q. Tuakaxukile Mutope.
    We are going to burn Mutope.13
    Kapile.
    He does not [burn]

27. Q. Tasili e kunde omulukunde
    What eats beanstalk in beanstalk
    ngaho still?
    is in it?
    A. Kaume koje oje tekukengele.
    Friend your he betrays you,
    "What insect is in the beanstalk eating it up from the inside."
    It is your friend who is living with you and betraying you at the same time."

28. Q. Okajumbo kambuletu kahupi
    A little old man of far-off kraal is short
    kejadi has many boils.

29. A. Euni.
    The wild orange tree.

30. Q. Haidongo115 nande mudehga,
    Haidongo even if you beat him,
    nande kukula, otadija,
    even if you cut him in pieces, he comes back again.
    A. Ehuiki.
    The hair

31. Q. Sikunda ovaenda?
    What greets visitors?
    A. Ohnu.
    The kraal entrance.

32. Q. Omambale a Nangobe efike
    The baskets of Nangobe are
    pamue,
    equal in size.

110 The name of a large tree.
111 A district.
112 The name of the tree.
113 A personal name.
114 Strychnos spinosa L. m.
115 A name meaning something black.
A. Edu neulu.
Earth and sky.

Nangobe is the father of the High God Kalunga. The word "nangobe" means "having cattle." Actually it is Kalunga himself, in his role of Sun God, who is supposed to pass around the earth every day with two baskets. One basket contains millet meal and from it food is strewn to the deserving; the other basket supplies famine and sickness for the wicked.

ADDENDA

The following addenda to my collection of riddles have kindly been supplied by Archer Taylor, whose book on English Riddles has recently been published. The references here given are either from A. Pettinen, "Lieder und Rätsel der Aandonga," Zum Eingeborenensprache, 17: 202-230, 1926-1927, or from Taylor's own manuscript. The numbers at the beginning of each paragraph refer to the riddles in the present paper.

7. Pettinen, 3: "The chicken has passed through a hole and left behind it a feather. -- A person has passed out of this world, but he has left his name behind him."

9. Pettinen, 23: "An old kraal can never be without thorns. -- An old kraal can never remain without young girls."

10. Pettinen, 41: "The ax cuts into the amarula nut. -- Hunger is painful to a young man."

13. Compare "From knocking and thundering there rolled little balls along a wide board. On seeing the dawn, they jumped into the water. -- Dumplings" (Russian: Sadovnikov, 506). See Taylor, English Riddles, headnote to Nos. 489-490, sec. 4.

14. Pettinen, 39: "A little thorn bush on the meadow is full of pigeons. -- All human beings approach death."


A thorn bush on the meadow full of birds reminds one of a cemetery full of dead people.

15. This has a remote similarity to comparisons of a grave to a locked box by the roadside (Taylor, headnote to No. 1187) and to comparisons of a graveyard to something that eats meat but not bread (Taylor, headnote to No. 483).

19. Many riddles referring to the impossibility of marrying one's sister are collected in the headnote to Taylor, No. 1070. None, however, are closely parallel.


28. For objects compared to a man with pockmarks see the headnotes to Taylor, Nos. 576-577.

31. Compare Pettinen 21: "When I arrive he is already laughing. --- The door."

32. African riddlers often call the earth and sky blankets or calabashes of equal size. See the headnote to Taylor, No. 1282.