

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

Luba of Shaba, Luba-Katanga/Baluba/Kiluba (Luba_Sh), Bantu (1a)
Luba of Kasai, Luba-Kasai/Luba-Lulua (Luba_Ks), Bantu (1b)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): [ISO 639-3: lub](#) for Luba_Sh, [ISO 639-3: lua](#) for Luba_Ks

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

For Luba_Sh: (-7.80 / 27.00) – of the “central” Luba region

Katanga Province, Haut-Lomami District. “Luba country stretches from the River Lwembe to about 50 kilometers east of the Zaire River, between 6°30' and 10°00' S in north-central Shaba, in southern Zaire.” (2, Orientation)

For Luba_Ks: (-6.50 / 23.50) – of the “western” Luba region

1.4 Brief history:

“[...] the Luba Kingdom was founded in the eighteenth century or before, in the vicinity of the present town of Kabongo. It exerted a strong political influence on its neighbors and was the main reference point for many rulers' genealogies and many religious institutions of the Eastern Savanna peoples. Until 1870, the Luba king—the mulopwe (pl. balopwe)—had at his disposal a powerful army able to wage war hundreds of kilometers from the capital. But the kingdom did not rest on a firm centralized administrative apparatus: royal authority was mostly effective in the capital's region; beyond that center lay “chiefdoms,” which had more autonomy the farther they were from the capital. Each was governed by a local ruler—also called a mulopwe—whose ritual life was similar to the king's. These chiefs had to bring tribute to the king as acknowledgment of his hierarchical seniority. The kingdom began to collapse by 1870 on account of an unending succession struggle and of repeated attacks by Angolan slave traders and Tanzanian conquerors who took advantage of their firearms. Belgian colonizers settled around 1900 and hastened the fall of the kingdom by dividing its center into two large territories, the government of which was assigned to two rival heirs from the ancient dynasty: Kabongo and Kasongo Nyembo. Moreover, about twenty Luba chiefdoms were acknowledged as fully independent from those two rulers. [...] After the independence of the Congo, the Luba led a harsh war against their southern neighbors who supported the Katanga secession (1960-1963). [...] The expansion of the kingdom (up to an area of about 200,000 square kilometers) and of long-distance trade stimulated contacts between the Luba and their neighbors. Nowadays political ties have come to an end, but Luba influence is still noticeable, notably in the regalia and religious practices.” (2, History and Cultural Relations)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

As noted in 1.4 above: “The kingdom began to collapse by 1870 on account of an unending succession struggle and of repeated attacks by Angolan slave traders and Tanzanian conquerors who took advantage of their firearms. Belgian colonizers settled around 1900 and hastened the fall of the kingdom by dividing its center into two large territories, the government of which was assigned to two rival heirs from the ancient dynasty: Kabongo and Kasongo Nyembo. Moreover, about twenty Luba chiefdoms were acknowledged as fully independent from those two rulers. [...] After the independ[er]nce of the Congo, the Luba led a harsh war against their southern neighbors who supported the Katanga secession (1960-1963). [...] The expansion of the kingdom (up to an area of about 200,000 square kilometers) and of long-distance trade stimulated contacts between the Luba and their neighbors. Nowadays political ties have come to an end, but Luba influence is still noticeable, notably in the regalia and religious practices.” (2, History and Cultural Relations)

Relating to marriage: “Syncretic churches have multiplied; among them, the Jamaa is a Catholic movement inspired by Father Tempel's famous book, Bantu Philosophy; it is focused on the union of the community and of the married couple.” (2, Sociopolitical Organization). “[...] monogamy is the norm and is gaining ground with Christianization” (2, Marriage and Family)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

“Except for the Upemba Depression, where the Zaire River flows through a system of marshes and lakes, the area is a wooded savanna. Annual rainfall exceeds one meter; the rainy season begins in October and ends in May, with a short break in January. The temperature keeps close to its annual average of 24°C.” (2, Orientation)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

For Luba_Sh: “1,510,000 (1991 UBS)” (1a)

“The Luba form the largest ethnic group of Shaba. Their population is estimated at 1,100,000, which would represent an average density of 12 people per square kilometer. Outside urban centers, high densities are found in the northern end of the Upemba Depression.” (2, Orientation)

“[...] The total population of a village varies considerably: a few thousands along the main streams, as a result of conurbation processes, sometimes well under a hundred in the countryside. Formerly, the capital used to be densely populated.” (2, Settlements)

For Luba_Ks: “6,300,000 (1991 UBS)” (1b)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

“The most cultivated plants are cassava and maize; to a lesser extent, one also finds sweet potatoes, peanuts, tomatoes, onions, beans, cucumbers, tobacco, and sesame. Millet and sorghum are now mainly used for brewing beer. [...] One can find banana, mango and Elaeis -palm plantations, as well as wild olive trees surrounding some villages.” (2, Economy)

“Nshima. This starchy food prevails in the Luba/Kasai territory. It is a paste made of corn flour and cassava flour.” (7 p98)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

“In the Upemba Depression and, to a lesser extent, along the Zaire River, fishing is the principal economic activity. Everywhere hunting is a secondary activity. Great collective hunts take place when the savanna is set on fire, at the end of the dry season. The Luba breed sheep, goats, pigs, and some poultry [...]” (2, Economy)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

As noted in “[...] bride-wealth (a gun [...])” (2, Marriage and Family), it is apparent that guns were in use and available.

2.4 Food storage: Not found

2.5 Sexual division of production:

“Men deal with political affairs, hunt, fish, fight, clear the bush, rear animals, make nets and fashion wooden tools, and build the framework of the house. Women do the rest of the agricultural work, brew beer, make pottery, deal with the children and the home, and tend the poultry. Children and adolescents are compelled to perform few tasks, although girls soon help their mothers at home. Political leaders, religious specialists, and specialized workers are the only people not to follow the common pattern of labor.” (2, Economy)

2.6 Land tenure:

“The first man to settle on a land is its "owner," and this title is transmitted to his successor. This dignitary has a right to a share of all that is taken from his land, whatever it may be: game, gathered or cultivated plants, salt, or iron ore. This right applies also to the lakes. As land suitable for cultivation is not scarce, its use is not the privilege of the lineage to which the landowner belongs.” (2, Economy)

2.7 Ceramics:

“True” ceramics are not mentioned, but the use of clay pottery is noted. See 2.5 above. Also: “modern Luba pottery tradition” (4 p68)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

“Sharing living quarters with relatives from different nuclear families is a common practice in the Congo. [...] the stay at the host relative's house may become permanent because of the shortage of jobs and affordable housing.” (7 p131)

2.9 Food taboos:

Specifics unknown, but food taboos are present: “The patrilineages (bisaka ; sing. kisaka) may have alimentary taboos [...]” (2, Kinship)

“Luba people consider okra as a vegetable for women and children, although many adult men eat it also.” (7 p103)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

There is no specific mention of the type of watercraft in use by the Luba, but several passages describe them as a “society of pedestrians and paddlers” (3 p5), indicating the use of the waterways via some means of watercraft.

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): Not found.

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Not found.

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

Since Luba females become marriageable at menarche, “fourteen or fifteen years old” (6 p139)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

Since marriage at puberty is the norm, first birth is typically nine months after marriage. Ages for male and female are indicated below in 4.5.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

Since females move in with the male husband after marriage, the female then belongs to the husbands family. “[...] the individual is integrated into several family-related groups, whose members are expected to care for each other. A married adult man with children maintains family relations and obligations to his wife (or wives) and children, relatives from his father's side; relatives from his mother's side; and in-laws.” (7 p30)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

“Total abstinence by nursing mothers was the most commonly practiced birth control method. Abstinence usually lasted one or two years, but in some places it could continue for three or four.” (7 p125)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

“She might be fourteen or fifteen years old, but with the consent of the two families, she will become automatically an adult and fully responsible for a husband, his home, his tradition, and, the families hope, his children.” (6 p139)

“[...] Congolese children grow up expecting to get married when they reach the appropriate age. Maturity for marriage is both a physical and a social criterion. Physical maturity is marked by the body changes that occur at puberty. Puberty for girls is manifested in the appearance of first menstruation and the development of the breasts and pelvis. For boys, puberty manifests itself in such features as the growing of a beard and deepening of the voice. Physical maturity alone does not qualify one for marriage, however. Marriage requires social maturity, also. It is measured by one's ability to assume gender roles and responsibilities associated with the status of husband and father or wife and mother. Physical maturity and social maturity are interrelated. In the countryside, a young man shows his physical suitability for marriage by building himself a house and tilling a field of his own. [...] A young woman was considered fit for marriage when she could carry out the chores of an adult woman, including cooking, participating in farming activities, fetching water and gathering cooking wood. Usually, girls mastered these tasks around puberty. Boys became marriageable later.” (7 p118)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Nothing found.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

Actual percentage unknown, however: “Large-scale polygyny was the appanage of the ancient sacred chiefs, small-scale polygyny is the ideal of every man; monogamy is the norm and is gaining ground with Christianization.” (2, Marriage and Family)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

“[...] bride-wealth (a gun; formerly, precious beads) [...]. Divorce calls for the repayment of all or part of the bride-wealth. The responsibility for the death of a wife is ascribed to her husband, who has to pay heavy death-dues to his in-laws.” (2, Marriage and Family)

Concerning Luba-Ks: “The bridewealth or the dowry was usually paid in kind. In-kind valuables represented the wealth of the area. For instance, the goat is the animal of honor among the Luba of Kasai. The Luba paid the bridewealth in goats.” (7 p120)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

“The possessions of a man are inherited by his brothers and his sons, the eldest taking precedence over the youngest. Levirate is frequent, and a sister's son may sometimes inherit one of his uncle's widows.” (2, Marriage and Family)

“Extended families that were descended from a common ancestor,” shared “[c]ommunal ownership of ancestral lands [...]. Being a legitimate offspring of a Luba father gave a child automatic access to these lands.” (7 p129)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

“Children stand close by their mother and are very protected until the age of weaning, at around 2 years old. Then, until the age of 7 or 8, they play with other youngsters, near their mothers. Girls begin to learn to do housework. By the age of 8 or 10, punishments are harsher; sexual dichotomy increases, especially in the games. Formerly, during the dry season, children built mock villages where they would imitate the adults' lives. Education tends to minimize the competitive spirit, for which there is no place in the games, and to emphasize conformity.” (2, Marriage and Family)

“Having created life, the parents have a right to be respected: children who fail to perform their duties to their fathers may be struck by illness or great misfortunes, sent by their ancestors. Outside of this domestic setting, minor offenders are tried by judges from the village or by lineage elders; the more important cases are settled by the sacred chief, helped by his counselors. In the past, ordeals (by poison, etc.) were often imposed by ritual specialists on offenders.” (2, Social Control)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Nothing found.

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

“The matrimonial alliance follows a semi-complex pattern: the prospective wife may not come from any of Ego's grandparents' lineages, nor have a common great-grandparent with him, nor be a close relative by marriage (wife's sister, sister's husband's sister, brother's wife's sister, and so forth).” (2, Marriage and Family)

Pertaining to the creation myth: “The royal actualization of incest, the legacy of Nkongolo, is the other side of the legitimization of a strict exogamy among the Luba according to Mbidi's lessons of civilization.” (6 p75)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?

Males take on the role as the sole father, so paternity is not partible. In the case of “other fathers”, no information was found.

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)

The mother's role in procreation is to be the bearer of children for the husband's lineage. “It is the dream of most Congolese girls to get married and have children.” (7 p132) “Motherhood is a supreme value.” (7 p180)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

No. In fact, “During the last months of a pregnancy the traditional Luba woman abstains from sexual intercourse because she believes that the sperm could damage her baby's vision.” (7 p132)

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: Nothing found.

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin):

Not found. But according to 4.12 above, exogamy is favored.

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Typically, married women have sex only with their husbands. “In urban centers [...] unmarried adult women who are called “free women” [...] rent individual rooms or apartments. If they cannot afford to rent, they live with relatives or share with friends. Free women receive their lovers in their own quarters.” (7 p124)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: None found.

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

Nothing specific found, however, the extended family (from the father's side) would most likely raise the children, along with the

father. As it is stated: “[...] the individual is integrated into several family-related groups, whose members are expected to care for each other. A married adult man with children maintains family relations and obligations to his wife (or wives) and children, relatives from his father's side; relatives from his mother's side; and in-laws.” (7 p30)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: Nothing found.

4.22 Evidence for couvades: Nothing found.

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): Nothing found.

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

After moving in with her husband, a new bride is given a “master charter [which] specifies and individualizes her major duties toward her spouse and his family and in doing so maintains the configuration of a patrilineal tradition.” (6 p139) Included in these rules are ways to show respect for the husband, the husband's brothers, father-in-law, and mother-in-law. (6 p139-142)

4.24 Joking relationships?

“Joking relationships are maintained with maternal uncles and with all grandparents.” (2, Kinship)

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:

“patrilineal” (2, Orientation)

“The patrilineal ideology is not very developed: for example, a person's protective spirit, after which that person is named at birth, may come from either his paternal or his maternal family.” (2, Kinship)

For Luba_Ks: “The Luba of Kasai recognize patrilineal descent and live in patrilocal villages.” (7 p129)

“Luba nuclear families, whether monogamous or polygamous, were imbedded in a hierarchy of larger groups connected at different levels of descent. The most immediate descent level was the extended family. Luba extended families included seven generations of relatives identifiable by special kinship terms. These were siblings (brothers and sisters), parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In each generation, cousins were treated as siblings.” (7 p129)

“Male descendants of the same paternal grandfather were at the core of Luba extended families. These individuals had common responsibilities to the grandfather and to each other based on their fathers' position within the grandfather's household. Obligations were sanctioned by the ancestors, with rewards or punishments affecting the individual, his children or grandchildren. Extended families that were descended from a common ancestor, collectively sharing ownership rights over ancestral lands, formed the next descent level. Communal ownership of ancestral lands was the most significant feature of this level of common descent. Being a legitimate offspring of a Luba father gave a child automatic access to these lands.” (7 p129)

“It would appear that the Luba of Shaba and their neighbors had been predominantly matrilineal at some point in the distant past and that the shift to a predominantly patrilineal descent system has been a slow and on-going process. Special terms for “sister's son” (mwipwa) and “mother's brother” (manseba), found in kiLuba and languages closely related to it, are evidence for the former matrilineal system. These matrilineal vestiges were far from incompatible with a Luba political system in which the royal patriline provided the contenders in succession disputes, and eligible royal males had to seek support from their mother's lineage and especially from their mother's brother.” (4 p72-73)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

Specific rules, other than exogamy are undefined. The rule of exogamy is related in 4.12 above, pertaining to the creation myth: “The royal actualization of incest, the legacy of Nkongolo, is the other side of the legitimization of a strict exogamy among the Luba according to Mbidi's lessons of civilization.” (6 p75)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Yes. “Marriage is customarily concluded at the residence of the bride's family. [...] Emissaries of the guest family are welcomed according to the hospitality customs of the host family. Usually they are treated to a special meal prior to the business encounter. [...] An elder who is the spokesperson of the host family opens the meeting by asking the elder of the guest delegation to tell the assembly what is on his mind. [...] He ends by expressing the desire of his entire delegation and the larger family community at home to see the groom and the bride become husband and wife and the two families united through the couple's marriage.” (7 p121) At this point, bride-wealth is discussed, presented, counted, and either accepted or rejected by the elder representing the bride's family. “If the response is positive, he asks the groom if he, too, really wants this marriage. [...] If nothing militates against the marriage, the bride's

family receives the bridewealth from the hands of the groom's family witness. From now on, the groom and the bride are husband and wife.” (7 p122)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

A persons name, determined at birth: “a person's protective spirit, after which that person is named at birth, may come from either his paternal or his maternal family.” (2, Kinship) As far as name change or obtaining another name, even with marriage, nothing was found.

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Nothing definitive was found, however, as in 4.12 above, exogamy is favored.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Arranged marriages were not uncommon, but for Luba, this is uncertain. However, among most Congolese traditions, members of the two families would, at the very least, conduct investigations into the worthiness of the bride and groom as potential marriage partners. “[...] mutual investigation was designed to ensure the marriage's stability and prosperity.” (7 p119)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

As in 4.30 above, potential marriage partners were thoroughly investigated by the two families. If they did not agree that the couple should marry, or the couple refused the families rejection of a potential marriage, “This could lead to the young man or woman running away with the candidate of his or her choice. This generally left the parents with no choice but to accept the accomplished fact when the two lovers returned to the village after consu[m]mating the union.” (7 p120)

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Nothing found.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

Outgroup: War between neighboring border-cultures. See 4.16 below. Nothing found for ingroup cause of violent death.

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

“The expansion of the kingdom was the result of a warlike and matrimonial policy. In the past, after the death of a king, his potential heirs had to fight. The war dignitaries, once numerous, have become scarce since the pacification.” (2, Sociopolitical Organization)

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, “a devastating war raged all over the Luluwa [Kasai] country”. (7 p64) This was caused by an alleged domination plan by the Luba against the Luluwa (Kasai) after they had won independence from the Belgians. “Soon the war became so damaging, says the writer, that Luluwa chiefs, Luba chiefs, other Kasai chiefs, and Congo president Kasa-Vubu decided to call it off.” (7 p64-65)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

The Luba-Katanga people are bordered by the Luba-Hemba people to the East (which are “a branch of the Luba of Katanga” (7 p76)), the Luba-Kasai to the West, the Songe to the North, and Lunda people to the South. (1)

For Luba_Ks: “The territories to the east, west, and south where they migrated were sparsely inhabited. The scattered Bushman-type population was either killed or driven away by the Luba. By the early seventeenth century one Luba group had moved westward and made contact with the Portuguese before settling down in the Kasai.” (5 p151-152)

“The patrilineal Luba of Shaba differ in their descent system from the Eastern Luba (the matrilineal Luba-Hemba, living east of the River Zaire); by their culture and language, they are distinct from the Western Luba (Luba of Kasai).” (2, Orientation)

For both Luba_Sh and Luba_Ks: Between the Luluwa (Kasai) and the Luba-Katanga, the end of war as noted in 4.16 above was sealed by a pact. “They sealed a pact between the two groups allowing them to live in peace from then on.” (7 p65)

4.18 Cannibalism?: No reference found.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

“[...] The total population of a village varies considerably: a few thousands along the main streams, as a result of conurbation processes, sometimes well under a hundred in the countryside. Formerly, the capital used to be densely populated.” (2, Settlements)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

Nothing found, but as agriculturalists, villages are typically permanent with no seasonal mobility.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

Chiefs, court of dignitaries, and headmen: “Chiefs are surrounded by a court of dignitaries, whose functions are more or less specialized. The subdivisions of the chiefdom are controlled by local lineage headmen or secondary chiefs appointed by the court; they are responsible for the sending of tribute, the composition of which depends on the region's specialities. This tribute is the main sign of one's submission to the chief.” (2, Sociopolitical Organization)

5.4 Post marital residence:

“After having paid most of the bride-wealth [...] the husband brings his bride to live near his parents.” (2, Marriage and Family)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Since territories in this region are difficult to concretely define, see 1.3 and 4.16 above.

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

“The main cooperative work group is that of brothers, in particular for the building of a house. There is not much cooperation in the agricultural work. The secret societies are less powerful than in the past: the most important of them is the Mbudy society, which formerly was closely associated with political power.” (2, Sociopolitical Organization)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

“Joking relationships are maintained with maternal uncles and with all grandparents.” (2, Kinship)

5.8 Village and house organization:

“Small villages are sometimes exclusively inhabited by members of the same lineage, but the larger ones are divided into lineage quarters. [...] The layout of the houses of the chief, his wives, and his dignitaries followed a definite checkered plan.” (2, Settlements)

“An adobe building with a metal roof and a few partition walls more and more often takes the place of the ancient four-cornered house with a thatched roof and walls of branches plastered with clay.” (2, Settlements)

“The household includes a dwelling for the husband and one for each of his wives. Young children live at their mother's house. If the owner is an important man, these houses are surrounded by an enclosure, and there is a special kitchen for his meals” (2, Marriage and Family)

“[...] a classic Luba house comprises three sections. First, the bed is always located to the right when entering the house, with the head always turned toward the door. The hearth is always at the foot of the bed in the right corner, away from the entrance. Over the hearth is a stand where items are laid out to dry. This is also where fish and game meat are dried. The left side of the house, opposite the bed, is empty except for the far-left corner, where a jug containing drinking water is kept. The remaining space is used for sitting on a chair, stool, mat or goatskin when it is raining outside. It is also used for sleeping quarters for close relatives when separate quarters were not available.” (7 p83-84)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

As noted in 5.8 above: “The household includes a dwelling for the husband and one for each of his wives. Young children live at their mother's house. If the owner is an important man, these houses are surrounded by an enclosure, and there is a special kitchen for his meals” (2, Marriage and Family)

“[...] among the most traditional people, next to the kitchen there are little huts for the ancestors' worship.” (2, Marriage and Family)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

As stated in 5.8 above, a “[...] bed is always located to the right when entering the house, [...]” (7 p84)

Also, “Sometimes, out of respect for the guest, the host would give his or her bed to the guest and would sleep on a mat on the floor opposite the bed.” (7 p84)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

Due to exogamy, lineages with extended families from other lineage groups. See 4.25 and 5.3 above.

5.12 Trade:

“The discovery of copper crosses in eleventh-century graves proves that as early as this era, a long-distance trade connected the Upemba Depression with the Copperbelt. This trade intensified from that time onward, and it is also via the Copperbelt that the Luba acquired the glass beads and shells that were to become the means of exchange during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The currencies used for commercial and ritual purposes, although distinct, could be exchanged for each other. The Luba also traded with populations to the north and to the east: the Songye of Kasai bartered raffia cloths and other finished products for iron, copper, salt, and fish from the Luba. Commercial trips were undertaken by groups of usually less than twenty people. In the past, there were no marketplaces, as there are nowadays in the centers.” (2, Economy)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

“Excavations of graves in the Upemba Depression show that as early as the eighth century A . D ., a social stratification had developed in the region: some of the tombs show more wealth than others and contain artifacts that are nowadays connected with power (ceremonial axes, hammers/anvils). Power was probably transmitted hereditarily, as some children were buried with a great number of valuable objects.” (2, History and Cultural Relations)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

“The enthronement and the funeral of the mulopwe, of his dignitaries, and of the kilumbu are occasions for great ceremonies. The public announcement of a woman's first pregnancy, birth, marriage, funeral, and the end of mourning are regarded as being important steps in one's ritual life cycle. In the past, the coming of the first teeth, the boys' circumcision, the girls' initiation, the harvest of the first crops, and the great hunts at the end of the dry season were occasions for collective rites.” (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

“Many specialists communicate with the spirits. The head of the household leads the familial ancestors' cult; he prays to them in front of their little huts in his courtyard when there is a problem or at the new moon, which is the day of the spirits. Among the lineages possessing some lake or some land, a kitobo priest is in charge of offering beer to the territorial spirits when the game or fish disappear. Professional mediums (male and female) are possessed by the mighty spirits. When they go into trance, the spirits speak through their mouth; they carry out divination and are in charge of locating sorcerers and their charms.” (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

“Every sickness is supposed to have originated from a spiritual cause, and a divination process is employed to discover it. The sick person either has to apply to the spirits responsible for his misfortune and to submit to some ritual obligations in connection with them, or must have a charm made up to protect him from the harm of the sorcerers.” (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

6.2 Stimulants: None found.

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

“Until the 1950s, children had to undergo a complex ritual initiation of several months, which was not the occasion for any utilitarian teaching. Circumcision (mukanda in the west, disao in the east) was collective and followed by a long seclusion in a camp out of the village; nowadays the operation is carried out individually and casually on youngsters. The girls' initiation (butanda) was individual and took place long before puberty in the village; in the next years, the girl was tattooed and underwent manipulations aimed at developing her sexual organs. These manipulations are still usual practice.” (2, Marriage and Family)

6.4 Other rituals:

“Before taking up his function, a potential chief (mulopwe) undergoes a test to show that the tutelary spirits of the chiefdom accept him. The critical point of the enthron[e]ment process is a four-day seclusion, during which the recipient has incestuous intercourse with a female relative and gains a new spiritual identity through close contact with some relics of his predecessors. He formerly had to be smeared with human blood to gain his full status. A chief has to submit to many prohibitions: he may not touch a lake, nor see a

corpse, nor share his meal with anyone. In a mystical way, he is responsible for the well-being of his subjects, who are his "children"; in the past, he was killed as soon as he became mutilated or in poor health." (2, Sociopolitical Organization)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

"According to the genesis tradition of the kingdom, an aristocratic hunter hero coming from the East (Mbidi Kiluwe) met an aboriginal ruler (Nkongolo); unaware of the demanding customs of sacred kingship, notably of the meal rituals, he married the two sisters of this ruler and went back alone to his country. One of the sisters gave birth to a son (Kalala Ilunga) who eventually became a mighty warrior whom the ruler planned to kill. The young man had to flee to his father's country. Later, he came back, beheaded his maternal uncle, and became the first king of the Luba." (2, History and Cultural Relations)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

"Luba wood sculptures (caryatid stools, bowl bearers, bowstands, cups, staffs, spears, paddles, axes, etc.) have earned their excellent reputation, but they are mostly ancient works. They are intended for the mulopwe, his court, and the ritual specialists. To gain any efficaciousness, a statue has to be activated by a ritual specialist, who introduces some charms into it so that it can serve as a receptacle for spirits. The Mbudye society uses a wood board ornamented with patterns of beads or other elements as a mnemonic device to relate the kingdom's history. The exact use of the numerous masks has not been cleared up; they seem to be connected with secret societies and with the circumcision ceremonies. Chiefs had their musicians." (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

"Some of the best known Congolese artistic traditions are [...] Luba (of Katanga), [...] They include ancestral figures; divination, initiation and healing spirits; human faces; authority regalia; and ceremonial masks." (7 p76)

"The Luba of Katanga were known for being mask producers also. Some of their masks belonged to secret societies." (7 p78)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

Pertaining to spiritual power: "Ancestors protect a man's homestead from threats, including natural calamities. The shrines for sacrificing to the ancestors are located by the senior wife's house. The husband's other protective powers are located by her house as well. Her house plays the role of a spiritually fortified place. Traditionally, in Luba villages, the house of the senior wife faced south, in the opposite direction of the movement of the scourge-carrying rivers. The house orientation and empowerment enabled it to detect perilous forces and reroute them from the homestead, thus protecting its members from calamities." (7 p84)

Pertaining to Bilumbu, or Diviners: "Both men and women can become Bilumbu. Although it is said that women diviners outnumbered men in the past and, indeed, were of great repute and immense influence, nowadays male Bilumbu outnumber female mediums. [...] Bilumbu women were "indwelt by the renowned heroes of the past", carried spears and axes, and acted in as masculine a fashion as possible [...]. Luba generally consider women to be more apt for spirit possession than men [...]." (5 p46)

6.8 Missionary effect:

Relating to marriage: "monogamy is the norm and is gaining ground with Christianization" (2, Marriage and Family)

"Catholic and Protestant missions have settled in many regions of Lubaland; their influence is felt everywhere, but it has not put an end to the belief in the power of the spirits and of the sorcerers." (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

Integration of Christian beliefs and traditional ancestor worship systems developed through several movements. "The Jamaa movement was an attempt to revamp Christianity by organizing its teaching around selected compatible principles of the African worldview. Kimbanguism was born as a revolt against European hostility to Congolese peoples' values and interests. The Dieudonnes diviners used the Holy Spirit, a Christian weapon popularized by Kimbanguism, to fight sorcery; this was a deep-seated need in the traditional African belief system. Prophetic churches represent an amalgamation of elements from the two religious traditions designed to meet the spiritual and material needs of urban migrants, underpaid workers and middle-class individuals experiencing downward mobility." (7 p43)

"Syncretic churches have multiplied; among them, the Jamaa is a Catholic movement inspired by Father Tempel's famous book, Bantu Philosophy; it is focused on the union of the community and of the married couple." (2, Sociopolitical Organization)

6.9 RCR revival: Not found.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

"Some people, even if sociable during their lifetime, become malevolent after their death. Expulsion rites are then required. In the past, the Tusanji secret society was responsible for neutralizing malignant spirits, by unearthing their corpses and ritually eating them. Usually, however, the spirits of the dead are benevolent and protect the members of their family who are still alive. Dead people who

have no link with the living and who do not give their names to newborns sink into a deeper afterworld, more gloomy than the first (which is described as a continuation of earthly life)." (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? None found.

6.12 Is there teknonymy? Nothing found.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

"Three categories of spirits are at the heart of the Luba religious system. The first are the ancestors; they are most commonly encountered in a relative's dream, coming as a favor to announce to a man or his wife that the wife is pregnant. The ancestor is then expected to protect the fetus, being "godfather" to the unborn. Territorial spirits (often called mikishi [sing. mukishi]) are responsible for the plentifulness of game and fish. The third type (bavidye ; sing. vidye) are mighty spirits able to possess human beings. Some traditions include a "great vidye," the creator of everything, although he does not receive any worship. Sorcery is particularly feared and harshly condemned." (2, Religion and Expressive Culture)

"The Supreme Being's relation to the humans is one of a father to a son, a protector to a protegee; in brief, it is one of dependence. For most groups, God relates to members of a particular group collectively through their ancestors. A few, including the Luba of Shaba, assert a direct individual relationship. All groups see respect of the law, love for their fellows and solidarity among family members as divine prescriptions. As a rule, God's demands and the ancestors' demands coincide. Both aim at maintaining unity and solidarity among humans." (7 p42)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Generally, no body paint. However, Bilumbu diviners typically wear face paint for ritual purposes.

7.2 Piercings:

Other than ear piercings for earrings, typically of hoop design, no other piercings of note.

7.3 Haircut: Nothing found.

7.4 Scarification:

"Scarification was practiced almost everywhere in the Congo. It conveyed more than the message of ethnic identity or bravery. Typically, scarification, especially on a woman's abdomen, was meant to accentuate beauty, attractiveness and eroticism. [...] A Hembra female statuette was sculpted with a design singling out the center of the abdomen in the form of a lozenge." (7 p111)

Concerning passage rituals: "in the next years, the girl was tattooed and underwent manipulations aimed at developing her sexual organs." (2, Marriage and Puberty)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

"Kisalian smiths were skilled artisans, and metal was drawn into thin wire or laminated and then twisted and plaited into a variety of shapes. Anklets, bracelets, necklaces, and other objects of personal adornment were made [...]." (3 p70-71)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

Concerning passage rituals: "in the next years, the girl was tattooed and underwent manipulations aimed at developing her sexual organs." (2, Marriage and Puberty)

"The symbolic importance of the pillar anvil can be traced to at least the Ancient Kisalian period (8th - 10th centuries CE), for conical iron or copper pins in the shape of miniature nyundu anvils have been found in excavations in the Luba heartland as embellishments for axes and on the backs of skulls as they adorned the coiffures of the deceased [...]. Many Luba royal emblems incorporate similar pins: they often adorn the coiffures of female images depicted on royal insignia, and they appear on the handles of figural adzes and axes and on the tops of staffs and spears. Luba explain that nyundu pins in the hair "close" the spirit within the bearer's head, retaining what is precious and rejecting what is dangerous." (5 p43-44)

"Iron-bladed axes with figurative wooden handles also appear early in the archaeological record [...] and it is common to see kings, chiefs, and titleholders wearing such axes over their shoulders in ritual contexts in our own times [...]. Though the most beautifully realized ones are reserved for kings, chiefs and titleholders, figurative axes also belong to Mbudye members and spirit mediums [...]."

(5 p44)

“Like other Luba regalia, bowstands were deployed in secret rituals and rarely publicly displayed.” (5 p45)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

“Older persons in Congolese villages speak of times where people used to dress in bark clothes or raffia clothes. Nowadays, the wrap dominates among women and European-style clothes among men. During the Mobutu regime men dressed in abacos or in boubou. The abacos is a men's four-button or six-button single-breasted unlined suit with a notched collar and narrow lapel. It can also be made with a mandarin-type collar. A West African import, the boubou, or dashiki, is a shirt generally in multicolored printed material that men wear over their pants. It is often part of a suit.” (7 p107)

7.8 Missionary effect: Nothing found.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Nothing found.

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

“Many Congolese languages do not have a word for “cousin.” Cousins and any relatives of the same generation are designated by the same term used for “brother” or “sister.” (7 p130)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

“Levirate is frequent, and a sister's son may sometimes inherit one of his uncle's widows.” (2, Marriage and Family)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

“The Luba of Shaba use Hawa[i]ian cousin terminology and bifurcate-merging avuncular terms.” (2, Kinship)

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. Ethnologue.com.
 - a) http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=lub
 - b) http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=lua
2. Everyculture.com. <http://www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Luba-of-Shaba.html>
3. Gailley, Harry A. (1970) History of Africa, from Earliest Times to 1800. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
4. Reefe, Thomas Q. (1981) The Rainbow and the Kings. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
5. Roberts, Mary Nooter and Allen F. (2007) Luba. Italy: 5 Continents Editions.
6. Mudimbe, V.Y. (1991) Parables and Fables. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
7. Mukenge, Tshilemalema (2002) Culture and Customs of the Congo. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.