

Life History of the first KiKaonde Teacher and former Headman of Kiboko village

JERSEY JIPAMPALA SANDASANDA

(Draft by Dick Jaeger , revised jan.2020)

Sandasanda (1905-1991) was a well- known teacher and personality in the Kasempa District. He was very devoted to his life-long teaching work at primary schools and establishing many new native and government schools in the Kasempa and Mufumbwe District. He was a charismatic speaker. At older age he became Headman of the well-known Kiboko village.

Jersev Jipampala SandaSanda died in 1991. He died after a prostate surgery in Mukinge Hospital in octobre 1991. His age was 86 , according his village clan members, which means he was born in 1905.

His latest function was Headman of Kiboko village, period 1981-1991.

He succeeded headman Mwatula Muluka, who was Headman of Kiboko village in the Lubofu area Kasempa District from 1951 till 1981.

The date of his birth is not exactly known. It might be some years later as 1905 (on photos of the late sixties he looks younger as sixty).

The year 1905 was also the year the well-known Kasempa chief Jipumpu died. In that time the Kiboko lineage group was part of the large village of Chief Jipumpu and located about 5 miles west of Kasempa Boma (Chibanza ,1961 p 41, reports that a sister of him is called Chiboko and lives in his village, she is the grandmother of Chief Kasempa Kibunda 1926-1947).

Kiboko village

Kiboko is a very old name in the Bena Kvowa (mushroom) clan of the Kasempa Chieftainship. According oral history the first Kasempa Chief got the title KIBOKO in the DRC (the Katanga region, the Luba Sanga region) about three centuries ago from the Lunda Paramount Chief Musakatanda with the authorization of King Mwatiamvwa (refer Chibanza.1961, the document on Kaonde history compiled by Chewemululu 1942, Watson,1954, and Jaeger.1971 and 1981). They were settled at a river called Kaonde. Oral history mentions successively twelve Kasempa Chiefs, of which the well known Kasempa Jipumpu settled (around 1895) in the region of the present Kasempa Boma and had his stockade and place of defence at Kamusungolwa Hill , the well known landmark in the centre of Kasempa District,

Jipumpu made history due to his defeat of a small Lozi army in 1897.

Sandasanda claimed that his direct family lineage belonged to an older lineage than Jipumpu and that in fact the Chief Kasempa office bearers should have to become from the Kiboko lineage. He was proud on his descent from the Kiboko lineage.

The Kiboko group/lineage established themselves as an autonomous headman and founded their own village in the Upper Musondweji river region - 50 km north west of Kasempa around 1920. Chief Kasempa recognized the Kiboko Headman as one of his main regional Headman in his Chief's area . Internal disputes about the succession of headman, caused a split in that village in 1938. Headman Kiboko Mukinkwila remained in the same area and later moved his villlage near the Solwezi-Zambezi road. His brother Kiboko Mwatula established a new village also under the name Kiboko near the fertile soils of the Lobofu and Mpungu river, 30km south east of Kasempa and became a regional Headman for Chief Kasempa in that area. (note 1).

Sandasanda

Was born (refer above in about 1905) in that period Kiboko village was part of Chief Kasemba 's stockade/village. Subsequently he resided in Kiboko village in the Musondweii area located in the same area where the SGAM established a mission post in 1914 (refer chronology in Jaeger 1981).

Sandasanda received his (western and Christian) education from the SAGM (South African General Mission), in particular the missionary Mr C.S. Foster (who lived for 50 years in Kasemba District).

In 1926 the SAGM mission post moved from the Musondweii region to a location, near Lufupa river and on the overside of Kasemba Boma and established there the well known Mukinge Mission post and in 1952 the Mukinge Hospital.

Very likely Sandasanda was baptized at Mukinge church (needs a further investigation). He told the author that as a boy of about 15 years old he took part as a carrier for the (SAGM) missionary Foster in the long journey, three weeks by foot, from Kasemba to the Broken Hill railway siding (today Kabwe) and back to Kasemba. He made that long journey several times .

Sandasanda told me often the well-known story of the small Twa people living on the fringes of the Lukanga swamps (note 2 and 3). When you met them near the swamps their first question was always : 'were have you seen me"; if the answer was : 'Oh already from far away', they were very delighted , clapped hands and danced, if the answer was 'Oh just now, from nearby', they were disappointed and angry; they preferred to be known as tall.

Sandasanda started teaching at some of the small mission schools spread over the District in 1933. In 1934 he became a certificate mission teacher. In 1942 he became the first Kaonde teacher at the first Native Authority primary school established at Kasemba Boma. He was very proud on that position and achievement.(refer also attachment of an unfinished of letter he wrote in 1962 to the African Minister for Education).

From 1948 till 1952 he was also a native councillor of the Kasemba District. He attended the large Indaba with all the Kaonde Chiefs at Kankonkolo , near the Kayimbwe salt pans, (often called the heart of the Kaonde land) in 1951.The boundaries of the Kaonde chiefs areas were discussed at that meeting.

He was a generous man in many aspects and also a gentleman, as the British administrative cadet Robin Short described him in a personal communication to the author. In 1951 he could have stand for the succession of the Kasemba Senior Chieftainship post. But he did not in respect for the older and subsequently incoming chief Samushi Mawende. He could have claimed the position, based on belonging to an older lineage group in the Bena Kyowa clan, but he did not do so (personal communication by Robin Short).

He supervised the building of many primary schools in the District and in his early years build with his own hand several 'native' schools and government schools (refer photo's). His teaching methods included also practical teaching of carpentry, handicrafts, brikmaking, gardening. He emphasized to me the importance of teaching these subjects for the future of young people.

I met him the first time in 1967 as teacher at the government primary school at Kanongo, ex-chief Kalasa's area , in that time intended to be a centre for the newly planned ,but never completed, Mpungu resettlement scheme (Jaeger , 1981, p 135)

He was a very outspoken personality. With a loud, charismatic voice, he could very well give long and clear speeches and address a large crowd of people, who breathless listened to him and followed nearly always his advise. He was friendly and honest.

When you came near the school building, you could hear already his loud and clear and convincing voice from far.

We were settled with a group Dutch volunteers/peace corps workers at a camp called Kanongo Hill, near the small Kanongo centre and the village of (ex)chief Kalasa in the years 1967-1969

We had very good contacts with him and often we went to him to discuss matters of Kaonde culture. He did speak very well English. He told me about oral Kaonde History and he gave me a copy of the account written by Chewemukulu (Deposit at archives of the Livingstone Museum).

He had plans to write more about the Kasempa Chieftainship and himself but never did so.

He lived with his wife in house built with sundried -bricks (locally called Kimberley bricks) near to the Kanongo school. Like all Kaonde man he was eager to do hunting. He had two guns and a license. Although he was big and heavy, he could move through the bush quickly and swiftly.

After some years at Kanongo he was transferred to the Gezira region to start a new government primary school.

Since his pension (around early 1970's) as a teacher he moved to his village Kiboko-see above- and build himself a good house and did some farming of maize for the market.

When the Headman Kiboko Mwatula Muluka died in 1981, he became his successor, a choice that as far as I know did not give rise to any discussion. Refer photo of him with the Headman insignia , two mpande shelves and a large drum (a very old traditional master piece of a split-drum -which could very well be of the time the Kaonde lived in the Congo).

He belonged to the ECZ (Evangelical Church of Zambia, name change from SAGM) Lobofo church and attended the church regularly and was active in the church community.

He was married, his wife was a friendly (corpulent) lady(refer attached colour photo) She died soon after he became a village headman (1981) and that was a great sorrow to him. It is not known how many children they had.

His oldest child was a very intelligent and friendly daughter Meriam.

Meriam was a community worker assistant and for several years the counterpart of the community- and health dutch volunteers at Kanongo Hill. She functioned also as a translator for them, while she did speak well English. Refer photo of her with one of the Dutch female volunteers. By motorbike they went visiting villages and they gave lectures about health and community development.(refer attached photo)

Meriam had a daughter, who was named 'BaKoli'- after the name of one of the Dutch volunteers : Corrie. Later Meriam moved to the Nselauke region (near the road junction- of the Solwezi, Zambezi, Kasempa road T5) . She had a house there and worked as a community development worker in that area. In 2013 I tried to visit her ,but they told me that she was heavily ill and at Solwezi hospital (also mentally not very well anymore). So I had no chance to meet her at that time and to collect more information about her father (I am afraid she died, this needs further investigation, as well as on other descendants of Sandasanda).

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Note 1 Watson in his publication 'The Kaonde Village' 1954. gives a detailed account of that village and Jaeger. 1981. reports about the changes and settlement layout of the same village in 1968 and in 1978. I visited the village again in 2006 (at the occasion of the installation of a new headman) and in 2012- so longitudinal information about that village is recorded (refer Jaeger 2015).

Note 2 The route between Kasempa and the railway head at Broken Hill, today Kabwe, went via the Lobofu region, crossed the East Lunga nearby Kelongwa, then crossed the Kafue river and went south of the Lukanga Swamps., an area where the BaTwa people lived on small reet islands (refer Brelsford, 1965, p 109) , and via Chipepo village to Broken Hill/Kabwe.

It was an intensively used connection for many years (refer publication on pre colonial and colonial paths by D. Jaeger 2019)

Note 3 refer publication by Elise Killander 'Sista Brevet fran Kasempa' written in Swedish title 'Sixty letters from Kasempa', published by Roos Tegner, Malmo 2014. It are the letters written by Henrick Strenspiertz(known under the local name Djifumpa) who was a hunter and trader in the years 1917-1927 in Kasempa. He died at Kasempa and is buried at the former European cemetery near Kasempa Boma. The letters are to his father and mother in Sweden- in those letters often the walking/cycle route between Kabwe and Kasempa is mentioned, there are some photos of the porters. It was a very well known route, often used by traders to carry goods to Kasempa (and from there as far as to Mwinilunga) the route was also used by colonial administration, and missionaries. The letters deal mainly with his hunting and trading activities and give very little information about the Kaonde people or culture.

Additional literature info: Next to the Swedish book by Elisa Killander with the letters of the Henrick Sternspiertz- see above , there is recently published also the memories of his compatriot and friend Siegfried Orre (kown under the name Mirasa).

A Swedish hunter and farmer in Mwinilunga and later in Congo/Katanga. The book is written by Mie Engman and Ake E. Anderson in Swedish with the title "Misara, Jakthovdingen fran Mjolby", published by Roos and Tegner, Malmo 2015. The publication includes aspects of the Lunda people and culture and also about animals and flora in the Mwinilunga District. Orre was married for some time with a daughter of a lunda chief (probably Kanongesha) and had off spring, of whom several still live in the Northwest province.

Orre returned in 1961 with a UN rescue convoy from the Congo to Sweden. A collection of his ethnografica and photos are at the ethnographic museum in Stockholm. In the book are also various interesting photos of people and carriers in the 1920's- several times he made the above mentioned walking tour from Mwinilunga via Kasempa to BrokenHill.
