

## Healing Dances: A Case Study of the Luo Juogi and the Dawida Mwazindika Dances

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### Abstract

*During miend juogi and mwazindika dance ceremonies, the dancers dramatize the activities of the healing process. To perform the act of cleansing the possessed, and the cleanser move to the possessed, and pours water on the head. During such activities, the dance becomes more provoking and involving. The dance climax is known as yiengo juogi, for juogi and benzi for mwazindika. This is one of awe, wonder and admiration at the techniques of the drummers, especially the ones who play master drums (min bul for juogi and the simba mbaa for mwazindika). The simba mbaa player steals the show, especially when hu zira ngoma or kushevera ngoma. The idea behind pouring water on the heads of the possessed is to assist them get rid of the evil spirits. The significance of the spirits is medical as it is believed that these spirits caused diseases whose cure lay in the dealing with them. It could be said that it was the diseases which were spiritualized, in the same way the illnesses were diagnosed in terms of the anger of the ancestral spirits, or the curse of the living parents. If it was stomach ache, headache, miscarriage and other diseases that are spiritualized, the techniques of treatment deal not only with the physical aspects; the patient was given herbs to drink or rub on the affected part, but at the same time receives psychological treatment as well. It is important to note that the complaints that deal with spirit possessions in the two communities are cases anxiety. The diseases attributed to ancestral spirits result from guilt as a dominant factor. This is because the ancestors are angry because they have been neglected, because somebody among the living has not done his/her duty.*

### Operational Definition

Jo	... People, persons in relation to a superior, or to someone, or to someone to whom they belong. ... Also means related by blood, descendants or children of.
Jii	... The prefix is often combined with another as in Jo – wat ...Others, opposite of “the Lwoo race”, foreigners, strangers, people to whom one has no relationship, as used in... <i>jii ataa</i> , mere foreigners...
Kwar,	...From <i>Kwaro</i> , grandfather or ancestor;
Nyi	... Child of, as in <i>Nyi-Gilo</i> , <i>Nyi-Kango</i> ;
Wuote	...From <i>wat</i> , relative as in <i>Wuote –Dimo</i> .
Pa	... Belonging to. Other forms are <i>ka</i> , <i>fa</i> , and <i>ya</i> .

### Introduction

When I was thinking about the contribution I could make, from my experience, about the theme of this Symposium, I had a strong urge to talk about music and healing among the Luo of East Africa. Since I had also carried out research among the Dawida, and realized that they have a song-dance that caters for this aspect of their life, I strongly felt that it would be a good idea, also to bring on board Mwazindika, a song-dance, which for many years, like the Luo *Miend Juogi*, acted as a traditional body regulator against nagging conditions of life that call for courage, hope, aspiration, anxiety, faith, trust and steadfastness (Quarm, 1997). The absence of the above undermines the state of health, joy and happiness of the people as individuals and as a community. It is not far fetched to say that disease, pain, suffering and death have always been the bane of humanity in society. In order to attempt to overcome and cope with the bane, the Luo and the Dawida like other traditional African communities believe in the existence and powers of spirits and/or ancestral spirits, which are ‘believed to take interest in the promotion of the welfare of the lineage.

In case of illness, families of the sick consult traditional healers to diagnose the cause and/or causes of illnesses and to prescribe treatment. As noted by Ruzvidzo (1997:1) “the traditional healers who divine by means of their ancestral spirits need the mediation of music to be possessed, to diagnose and prescribe the medicine”. Such musics, played on varied instruments mediate and link the world of the living with that of the spirits. So far I am talking about music yet the title of the paper refers, **healing dances**... or modified song-dances! Among the Luo and the Dawida like in many other African communities song and dance, operationally referred to in this paper as music, are inseparable (Nyakiti,1988).

For our purpose here therefore, it would suffice to note that the title, **healing dances** referred to as the title of the paper is about music. It is about *Healing Musics*! One may ask, “What is Music healing? Is it the use of music as medicine or its use to promote healing of both? Conventional notion of music, as Kofie (1997) noted, tend to overlook music potentials, more so, in least suspected areas such as *music therapy*, music in healing. When heard for the first time, guesses are made as to what may be implied by the name! Some of the guesses would be appropriate but a few seem to think that like “speech therapy” which means *therapy of speech deficiencies*. Music Therapy would be *deficiencies in music making*.

Omibiyi-Obidike (1997) while discussing music healing among the Yoruba noted that Brandel (1991:21) noted that “music as a charm to insure health and to cure illness is well known throughout the world”. The practice was confirmed to be prevalent in Central Africa. The practice of music healing in Yoruba (Omibiyi-Obidike, *ibid.*), closely linked with religion and belief systems, is equally connected to the concept of both good and ill health. This therefore means that the use of music in healing in Yoruba is seen within the framework of the peoples’ attitude to their well being and cause of ailments and disease. On the same note, Asare (1997:1) noted that “the arts, no matter what form they take, are a great source of aesthetic, emotional and spiritual fulfillment. When developed and practiced in religious contexts, they achieve other dimensions because of their association with the spiritual world. It is important to note that “in traditional African societies the specialized skill and knowledge of music therapy, as we shall see in the two societies, are transmitted orally from generation to generation by the custodians of culture whose duty is to ensure continuity” (Mokwunyei, 1997”2). Since the practice of music healing is shrouded and protected by the traditional belief systems, the full appreciation and understanding of both is required.

## **The Luo**

### **Historical Background**

Historically, the *Luo* seems appeared to have on the scene at about A.D. 1500. They are presented to have migrated from a cradle land, somewhere in the southern Sudan. During the migration, they moved in three different groups. The group that moved towards the south, swept through the present day Uganda into Kenya and northern Tanzania as thus noted by Watermann (1912) that

the Shilluks emigrated into 3 directions: south, north and north-west. The division wandering south is the Gang or Acholi and from the Gang a number of smaller divisions branched off into south-west, south and south-east: the Lur (Alur), jalafu (Jo-pa-Luo) Lango, Ja Luo (Kenya Luo).

The division by the colonial government into administrative units coincided with tribal areas which reflected the aspirations and desires for socio-economic benefits. According to Waldow (1967) ethnic consciousness is not a static one and for ever sense of belonging, it is an evolving sense of identification, something smaller than a nation, something more mobile than a village and yet larger than an extended family. Traditions and a number of ruling clans were founded by the Luo who crossed the Nile and Lake Albert and so were the chiefdom deities connected with beliefs and practices of spirit possession.

### **Who are the Luo?**

According to Okot (1971, 2), the term *Luo* is the name of the mythical founder or leader of the Luo peoples. He further observes that although the name is widespread it does not appear in the founding myths of those who call themselves Luo. For example, the Shilluck say that their original home was Luo and the other people merely mentions Luo as the first man. These myths being about the foundation of the existing political institution and groups are dominated by who the founder was; for example, in Sudan, among the Northern Luo, Nyikang’o, Gilo, Dak and Dimo; among the Acholi, Alur and Chope Labong’o, Nyipir and their mother Nyikal; the Padhola and Kenyan and Tanzania Luo by Labong’o, and Gipir but speak more so of Owiny, Podho and Ramogi.

The name Jo-pa-Luo then means people, followers or descendants of Luo. Although it is possible to reconstruct histories of the Luo groups separately, it is not possible to trace the history of the Luo people to the first Luo man. However, a comparative study of different Luo myths reveals striking similarities; many of them about quarrels over beads or spears. The people call themselves Luo, their language *dho* or *lep* Luo (Luo tongue) and their customs *kit Luo*. They are conscious of their Luo-ness. When shrines are built for ancestors, two are built; one called *tipu Luo* and the other *tipu Jomiru/kimirwa*. The first one refers to those of sociologically pure ethnic stock, who are all agnatically descendants of chiefs and *Jumiru /kimirwa* refers to all other clans who are regarded as subjects of the Luo. The Kenyan Luo refers to the Kalenjin: Nandi, Suk, Maasai, etc., as the *Jo-Lang'o*. The Central Luo also calls their eastern neighbours *Lang'o*.

### Traditions of the Luo

Traditions of the Luo remain the only historical source of information though far more has been demanded of it than it is capable of performing. Legends whose proper function is to make the world intelligible has been read for history, events related taken as if they actually took place, as in the case of the period when the Batembuzi and Cwezi kings ruled; a period that belonged to the morning of the world when the gods walked the earth. The Bacwezi never existed except in the imagination of men. Their supernatural powers and attributes are not secondary but original and inherent. The results are the lakes and hills, the features and forces of the natural world, unusually sharply personified, and converted in kings and princes. It is interesting that the Luo form an important raw material out of which the legends are woven. Among the Banyoro, for example, is a cult of Cwezi spirit mediumship, but the spirits are not thought of as ghosts of real men who died long ago, but rather, as unchanging, timeless powers. The term *muzimu*, Lunyoro word for ghosts of dead people, is not applied to them. The quasi-mythical Cwezi were not rulers, not ancestors, and the Cwezi spirits which possess people today are independent spiritual powers, and not ghosts.

### Theories of Jok

The Luo did not have a word for creation, or to create or creator, hence, no word equivalent to the English word God. Driberg in Okot (1971:50) explains that the idea of the word *Jok* to a *Lang'o* is

The sum total of the long departed souls merged into one pre-existing deity called *Jok*, a plurality of spirits merged into one person of a single godhead, a spiritual force composed of innumerable spirits, any of which may be temporarily detached without diminishing the oneness of the force.

Ogot 1961 noted that the word *Jok* was found in various forms in all Nilotic languages and that for the Shilluck *Juok* and *Nyikang* are the most general explanatory concepts. *Jok* accounting for the existence of nature or reality and *Nyikang* for the way in which it is ordered and interpreted. *Jok mal* created and maintains the world, while *Juok piny* determines how and for what purpose the God's gift should be utilized by man. For the idea of *Jok* among the *Lang'o* and Acholi (Hayley 1947), it was a neutral power permeating the universe, neither well nor badly disposed towards mankind, unless made use of by man. *Lang'o* religion was the conception of this *Jok* power, and their magic was the practice by which man uses *jok* power. The world to Acholi (Wright) was one vast plain enclosed by the vault of the sky, charged throughout with magical force. The force is released by change from its static condition which then becomes fluid and powerful as seen in lightning, whirlwind, curious mountains and rocks. The *Lang'o* (Harley) attributes anything of an unusual nature and unusual occurrences to some aspect of *jok* power. This included abnormal births, peculiarly shaped stones, hills, rain, hail, lightning, locusts and earthquakes. They (Hayley and Wright) noted that it was not the hills or forests that formed the objects of worship; these were mere shrines, the abode of *Jok*.

Lightning was not associated with *jok* power, nor was rain, hail, locust or earthquake. When lightning struck a house in a village, or when rain failed or hail, locust destroyed crops, prayers were offered to *jok* and sacrifices made to ancestral ghosts, just as other troubles occurred. But they were not sparks of *jok* power. Whirlwinds were regarded as *jok* in transit. Twins were regarded as *jok*. The spiritual part of man, the only part which survives death, is *jok*. Hence, to the Nilotes *Jok* is not an impartial universal power; it is the essence of everything, the force which makes everything what it is, and God Himself. The Greatest *Jok* is life force in itself. Above all force is God, *Juok* of *Jok mal* which is followed by the famous chiefs of the old such as *Nyikang'* among the Shilluck and Podho among the Kenyan Luo. Next to come are the dead followed by specialists like *ajwaka* (*ajuoga*), medicine men and prophets who are believed to have special *jok* power. The specialists are followed by ordinary mortals, then animals, plants and finally, inanimate objects (Okot, *ibid.*:55).

The *ajwaka/Ajuoga* may be possessed by a spirit which helps him or her to divine; the witch *la-jok* also has *jok* power in him. And to have more *jok* power meant to be a more dangerous witch. The dead among the Luo are mostly forgotten, except those that believed to be troublesome. Such are referred to as *cen*, vengeance ghosts. The ghosts of certain animals such as elephant, lion and leopard are feared. Certain inanimate objects used by sorcerers to harm their victims such as *lugaga (gagi)*. But, these are not considered as bits of *jok* power.

### **Jok Possession**

Outstanding feature of the religious activity of the Luo was the annual feast at the chiefdom shrines. Each chiefdom had a shrine on a hill, in a dark forest or by a riverside. Some of the shrines were unusual natural phenomena or outstanding landmarks in the landscape. Some of the larger chiefdoms had more than one shrine at which they offered sacrifices. Among the lowland Alur the *jok* possessed one of the chief's wives in each reign; she then had duties in the service of the *jok*. *Jok Lokka* of Koc in Acholi possessed the priest who was also the medium. *Jok Langol* of Padibe caused the person possessed to become barren. *Jok Lamwoci* of the Payira caused barrenness in men, and insanity in women. *Jok Lalangabi* of Palaro made the possessed person hate members of the opposite sex, so that he or she remained a bachelor or spinster for life, or if married, divorce followed soon after *Lalangabi* had fallen on one of the couple.

Few shrines were founded by chiefs. In fact, most of the chiefdom shrines and *Jok* originally belonged to commoner clans who continued to provide the line of priests. When chiefs visit or go to the village of priests they lose their normal prerogatives. Moreover the chiefdom *Jok* that possessed persons did not possess members of the chief's clan. Almost every force which can affect human beings may be and has been spiritualized. The elemental power of nature, sun, moon, rain, thunder and lightning, lakes and rivers and forests and deserts, all have been conceived of as spirit and have become objects of worship and sacrifice. The Luo did not offer sacrifices to the rocks or forests or rivers, they did not worship the spirit of the hills or forests or rivers, but *Jok* whom they believed lived in the caves or in the middle of the dark forest or by the riverside. Areas around these places were sacred grounds. No one might urinate, defecate, drive the blade or the butt of his spear into the earth. The duties of a priest were burdensome, dangerous and profitless. *Ibaana* (Crazzolar) means a person chosen and at times possessed by *Jok*. The Lang'o put the phenomena of possession by ghosts in the province of *Jok Nam* which is contrasted with *Jok Lang'o*. *Nam* refers to riverine peoples: Pa-Luo, Nyoro and those bordering the Nile and Lake Kyoga. *Ajwaka* (Driberg) who dealt with diseases caused by *Jok Nam* were *abanwa* or *abani* (plural) who were men or women possessed by *Jok Nam*.

There are similarities in the beliefs and practice between the *mbandwa* cult and that of *Lokka*. Like the Cwezi spirits in Bunyoro the spirits *Omot* and *Lagweya* were not thought of as ghosts of real men who died long ago. They were not ancestral or vengeance ghosts, but were regarded as independent spiritual powers. Again *Omot* and *Lagweya* were not hostile spirits, but concerned with the wellbeing of the people generally. The initiation ceremony of the *mbandwa* cult, however, differed from that of the priest of *Lokka*. Like the Cwezi Spirits *Jok Lokka* (the spirits of *Omot* and *Lagweyi*) fell on certain persons, causing some kind of madness or ill-health but the elaborate and expensive ceremonies that victims underwent in Bunyoro were totally lacking in Koc. But functions and the benefits derived were almost identical. The spirit of *Lokka*, being the medium of the spirits of *Omot* and *Lagweya*, divined and generally helped people solve their psychological, medical and social problems.

### **Spirit Possession**

When according to the diviner, *ajwaka*, ill-health or misfortune was due to certain spirits other than ancestral or chiefdom *jok*, the situation was dealt with by inducing the offending spirit to possess the victim, and then depending on whether the particular spirit was friendly or hostile, it was allowed to stay in the victim or sent to where it belonged, or killed and destroyed. The preliminary examination of the patient usually took place at the home of the *ajwaka*, but the spirit possession ceremony, *yeng'ng'o jok*, shaking *jok*, was held at the home of the patient.

### **The Dawida**

The Dawida are considered to have migrated to the Taita Hills (Dawida, Sagalla and Kisagau) through Kilifi by the 17th century. And by the 19th century, the main mountain ranges of Dawida, Sagalla and Kisagau had already been occupied. Their neighbours are the Kamba, the Taveta and the Maasai; all of whom have influenced each other.

According to some members of the community (Personal Interview {P.I.}, 1993), the movements of the Dawida to Taveta then to Pare and Sambara (in the United Republic of Tanzania), then to Kamba and Chaggalands and perhaps also the reverse movements into Taita Hills were results of famine, wars and epidemics.

In the hills, one language is spoken with various dialects. These dialects coincide with the three main hills along which the population is oriented. The dialects are mutually intelligible and thus do not prevent communication. The dialects are Kisagau, Teri (in the narrow valley on the western side of the Sagalla Hills where most of the Sagalla live) and Kidawida spoken in the main massif of Dawida. The Taita seem to be bilingual in that they can speak both the Teri and the Kidawida. They account for the differences that exist in their language to the close contact with their other Coastal neighbours. For example, the Sagalla claim to have had closer contact with the Giriama than they have had with the Dawida. Despite the language differences, both the Sagalla and the Dawida still consider themselves as one people. The Taita people, especially those inhabiting the mountains, have been highly influenced by the foreign religions. As an informant once commented, “these foreign religions have become new modes of life to most of our people. They have greatly influenced most of our cultural activities, rituals and ceremonies.” Culture being the total way of a people’s life, encompasses social set up, political set-up, religious set-up, etc.

### The Dawida Religion

Religion plays a central role in the Dawida life and music is an important medium through which religious ceremonies are conducted. The term Dawida religion is used here to refer to what the Taita call *Watasi* which is shrouded within their total way of life. Though *watasi* is not as strong as it used to be due to the introduction of foreign religions, its influence is only evident in the ceremonies connected with “spirit casting” and the “casting out of anger”, the two of the most important religious ceremonies of the Dawida. Of the two foreign religions that have been introduced among the Taita, Christianity seems to have had a stronger impact on the Dawida than Islam. Similarly, Christianity seems to have had a more negative effect on the Taita religious ceremonies which the missionaries labeled “evil” and /or “satanic”. The Dawida are well aware of this fact. They readily admit the fact that after the introduction of Christianity, they were discouraged from practicing any traditional ceremonies and in the process the music that accompanied the ceremonies were lost or modified to suit the missionary requirements and demands. This was also evident in some elder members of the Dawida who because of their associations with Christian missionaries are unable to recall any traditional practices of their people (P.I., 1993). The effects seem to be even more serious in Sagalla as adults find it a bit embarrassing to discuss issues related to their secretive *ngasu* initiation ceremonies.

The Dawida take their religious ceremonies seriously and attach great values to them. They conserve their rich and varied cultural heritage through music which reminds them of what used to take place in their midst during rituals and ceremonies. The Dawida religion *Malago ga Kutasa*, the words or affairs of *Kutasa* refers and signifies the basic religious act. In this case, religious matters are similar to other bodies of knowledge and actions such as farming, *malago ga kulima* and trade, *malago ga biashara* or *malago ga pesa*. The Dawida have some special shrines where the skulls of the family members were kept. The shrines are the Dawida *Kanisa*, Church. They use the word *dini* in order to compare their religion with that of others. The elaborate ceremonies of song and dance performed during birth, initiation, marriage and death ceremonies were all connected to their religion which gave them an inner dimension of life in community. Christianity as understood from the missionary teachings and observations of the Europeans was *Dini ya Kristo*; Islam was *Dini ya Islam*; Judaism was a religion of the Old Testament referred to as *Dini ya Bayahudi/Wayahudi*. It was *Dini ya Kutasa* or *Butasi/Watasi* or *Butasi gwa Kidawida*, that is, *Butasi* or *Watasi* according to the Dawida ways. The centrality of the Dawida religion and its music are based on the act of *Kutasa*, which simply means to **cast out anger**, that is, to **remove evil spirits!** This is basic to *mwazindika* and *kishavi* music repertoires, which are simply to be performed in order for the participants to cast out anger (*evil spirit*) resulting in enjoyment, relaxation and celebration of one's life.

### Kutasa Ceremony

The initiates perform the ceremony in a squatting position with the arms held closely across the knees, with one hand holding a container of sugar-cane beer, unfermented cane juice or water. Mouthful of this liquid is sprayed or spattered while the performer utters phrases exhorting or supplicating nuptial agents and calling down blessings on one or more living human beings and what pertained to their welfare. At some point, the utterances are explicitly or implicitly rejected by the angry feelings of the performer himself.

As an act of belief, *Kutasa* is asserted to have an inner aspect of which the spraying and speaking are the outward and audible forms. The state of performer's heart (*ngolo*) is intrinsic to the performance, since only clean, cool heart is able to free one from anger, resentment and hysteria. The use of the ceremonies and musical performances of *Kutasa* tends to release tension and create ease among the performers.

### **The Dawida Initiation Ceremonies**

The Dawida grow up in stages. This means that before a Dawida boy or girl becomes an adult or elder, he or she has to go through various stages in life. At each stage, music plays a very significant role. Music is the medium through which the initiation ceremonies are conducted as well as a vehicle for cultural transfer from the old to the youth. These are in three stages namely childhood, youth and adulthood. During each stage, a ceremony is held, resulting into childhood, youth initiation, *mwari* and marriage ceremonies.

#### **Childhood Ceremonies**

At birth, the family is visited by a bagman who brings gifts to the new born. Birth is seen as an occasion of joy for all the members of the community. The new born are welcomed into Dawida society through song and dance. After birth, the Dawida initiate their children into a stage commonly known as the *akili*. The *akili* is the acknowledgement of the child having attained the sense age. This results from the child's ability to reason, hence, demonstrating his/her ability to understand his/her environment. For example, a child being able to carry a branch of burning firewood from the hearth to the father to light his pipe without being burnt as a result of not falling into the fire nor touching the burning end of the burning stick is said to have demonstrated his or her having attained the *akili* age. Children who have reached this stage could make judgments such as right or wrong. It is also believed that children of this stage could assess the actions of their parents towards them. They could tell as to whether the parents are kind or over severe to them. After many years of total social dependency, punctuated by ceremonies as children, young men and women become less and less dependent on their parents and community through observation and participation in children's songs and dances and finally team up with their peer groups and elder siblings.

#### **The Youth Kutasa**

It is believed among the Dawida that before initiation, both the girls and the boys are alike. They are both referred to as *mwana*, meaning a child. Later on girls go for female circumcision or clitorodectomy at the hands of a skilled elderly female kin. This is done at the time the initiate attained the age of puberty. The girl then becomes *mwai* after the ceremony, but this is not the end for the girls. Performance for elaborate sequence of *mwari* initiation rites promotes the girls into another stage of maidenship/maidenhood, which ends with the final part of the ceremony where boys are allowed to take part in the showing of wonders known as *ngasu*, thus, bringing the whole of *mwari* ceremony to an end. The boys on the other hand, undergo circumcision at the age of about six to twelve years. The initiation ceremony opens complicated transitory period for both sexes, much of which are concerned with matters of courtship and marriage. The Dawida sing and dance to welcome the initiates when they attain the requirements. For example, a circumcision song *yambolele* will be performed to welcome the circumcised initiates into adult society. *Yambolele* is performed to the music of *kishavi* beats.

#### **Mwari Ceremonial Rites**

The popularity of *mwari* ceremonial rites in Dawida music cannot be overemphasized. It forms a part of the rich repertoire of songs and dances performed by the Dawida. This is presented either as a single item of song and dance or as demonstrations of the rituals of *mwari*. However, *mwari* can be presented in sequences when performed during the real ceremony. The repertoire of *mwari* covers the initiation, the showing of *ngasu* and finally the wedding ceremony which is usually crowned by the song *muka wai heku*, welcome to adult society. In the *mwazindika* and *kishavi* groups, *mwari* is still a part of their musical repertoire. The Dawida still perform *Ngoma Mwari* with the same drums used for *mwazindika*.

#### **The Mwari Processes**

According to Wamburi (P.I.,1993) *mwari* means "exposure of the secrets of life to the young initiate." *Mwari* is therefore, the whole process of initiating girls to the secrets of womanhood. In the process, the dancers dance naked. *Mwari* process consists of a sequence of activities which begin with initiation, seclusion, *ngasu* secrets revelations and finally marriage ceremonies.

## The Preparatory Activities

The preparatory activities are called *mwari wakaro*. During *mwari wakaro* the girls collected sticks to build their hut. The collection is generally accompanied by songs, mostly work songs. On their way back from the collection of the sticks, the girls sing and dance in anticipation of the fate about to befall them. Other girls in the meantime have already collected the necessary bundles of sugar-cane from the farms. They (the girls who brought bundles of sugar-cane) also bring these bundles home for pounding. Pounding of sugar-cane is done in turns by the pounders rhythmically competing with each other, thus producing a pounding rhythm to which they sing as the work continues. The most favorite of this song is *E koko*. *Koko* means sugar-cane. The song is a solo-response one with a climax at the phrase *Vele mwahua* which is responded to by the phrase *Ee yahua*. The juice thus extracted from the cane is used in making cane-beer. Other work songs are performed as well.

## Initiation

The beer having been brewed and ready, the celebrations begin. The initiates are placed in the middle of a circle of performers and onlookers and the initiation begins. Various songs are sung to the initiates such as *yambolele*, you have become an adult, *wamae*, my cousin, my cousin has a lady who has to come out and help in the house chores. Other dances include the *nyanjiero* dance meaning *ndege hao*, these birds. It is an illusion to the girls that sooner or later they will be like the birds and will fly away from home to get married elsewhere. The songs are sung to promote the initiates into the responsible state of womanhood and adulthood. The celebration ends with the young maiden kept in doors, that is, secluded in their huts. The period of seclusion varies from place to place. It generally lasted between one month in Mbololo and Sagalla to six months in other areas.

## Gura wa Karo

During the periods of seclusion, the young maiden is visited and sung to. The main theme is on her preparation for womanhood. She has a constant attendant, a lady who assists her throughout this period. This is a very crucial stage of the ceremony. It is during this stage that the young woman is told the secrets of the society, especially the secrets of womanhood, *mwari*. The attendant also carries out virginity checks, and if she is found to be a virgin, she proceeds to the next stage of *ngasu* ceremony. If found not to be a virgin, she is permanently disgraced from the society. When the maiden initiate is almost about to complete her seclusion, the song *ngaola* is performed to advice the maiden on womanhood. Presents are also given to her during the rite known as *kukira mwai*, to give a present to the maiden.

## Ngasu Ceremony

In *ngasu* ceremony, a young maiden is being revealed the secrets of womanhood. A selected old man, tests the maiden's virginity by having sex with her. *Ngasu* is a striking event among the Dawida. They laugh in amusement at the mention of the word. Since the initiates are bound by the oath not to reveal what takes place, the young maiden is bound by this secrecy never to tell any one what really transpired. In some areas, dolls are used to fulfill the objectives of these operations (during the demonstrations of the ceremony). *Ngasu* is performed between the ages of twelve and fourteen years. It is performed in a homestead but the maiden is kept in isolation. There are spectators and dancers who are allowed to perform the *gura* dance outside without entering the hut where the secluded maiden and the selected old man are to perform the *ngasu*. According to Mwambi (P.I., 1993) the maiden is taken out to dance naked to expose to the society that she has actually undergone *ngasu* initiation ceremony. The Dawida refer to this initiation as *kuaikwa*. Before the operation the maiden is taught informally how to become a woman and how to do wifely duties. She is also taught how to handle men as well.

## Spirit Dances

There are dances designated to appease the spirits. They involve dancing, singing and drumming which are intended to activate possession externally observed in the shaking of the dancers' bodies. With *njuga* which the dancers tie around their ankles, they accompany themselves and finally fall into trance. The dance can go on for hours. The dance is convened by one or two women who need to be relieved of *pepo* which is disturbing her or their peace. When drummers are summoned, the lady or ladies in question prepare food and drinks for the drummers. During the dance, the lady disturbed by *pepo* would demand many things in the name of *pepo*. The demands include red caps, small coloured cloths, water used by other people to wash, etc. The dance takes place at night and goes on for many hours; sometimes it goes on throughout the night. Mwakitela (P.I., 1992) noted that "there was once a lady whose *pepo* needed water from the engine of a train in order to be appeased. Because of this, the lady had to go all the way to Mombasa to get the water in order to get herself treated".

### **Pepo Mwashila**

This is a fast moving dance that requires both the advancing and the retreating movements of the dancers. The speed of drumming is dictated by the *pepo* which makes the performers either to dance slowly or quickly thereby influencing the tempo of the drums.

### **Pepo Jini**

The performers possessed by this spirit, *Jini*, will be dumb for a long time. The only cure to the patient's ailment is the drumming which will bring back her speech.

### **Pepo Mwazindika**

Those possessed by *pepo mwazindika* will be at their best at the climax of drumming. The drummers of *ngoma mbaa* and *ngoma simba* produce rolling sounds using their wetted fingers which they roll on the vibrating membranes of the drums; thus producing rrr... sounds. This is commonly known as *kuzira Ngoma*. We were informed that the King of *Dawida* drum rollers was Mzee Fredrick.

### **Drums**

A set of drums is used during *mwazindika* dance performance. The number of drums in the *mwazindika* ensemble varies from group to group; but "the standard number of drums in the *mwazindika* ensemble is five, that is, two *ngoma* or *simba mbaa* (which are the largest of all the drums); two *simba ndogo* and one *kengele* or *kizembe* or *mganda*, the smallest of the five drums". Other groups use only three drums— *ngoma* or *simba mbaa*, *kengele* (which must always be present in the *mwazindika* drum ensemble) and *simba ndogo*.



The tree used in making *mwazindika* drums is the *mlungu*, which is very large and soft. The membrane is attached to the hollow shell by small sticks or pegs commonly known as *mambo*. *Mwazindika* drums are single headed. On the stage, the *mwazindika* drums are arranged in the order of two *ngoma* or *simba mbaa*, each placed at the extreme left and right ends; followed by *simba ndogo* on the inner side of the *simba mbaa* with *kengele* in the middle of the four drums (see the diagram bellow and plates 31 and 35). The *kengele* or *kizembe* or *mganda* maintains a steady speed tempo throughout the performance. The other four drums are mainly dependent on the controller (conductor) who indicates to the other performers the patterns to be followed. The patterns are usually in counts of two, three continuous beats or strokes. It is also the duty of the controller to tell the drummers when they are not blending well. He corrects them by giving them the correct pace.



At the climax, commonly known as *shebere*, there is no singing, as only the drums are left to speak. This is illustrated by the drums' rolling sound produced by moving the saliva wetted left hand fingers on the vibrating membrane.

This is achieved through the drummers' actions commonly known as *kuzira ngoma*, which thus produces the sound *Rrrrrr...* During the climax, the *simba mbaa* player leads the performance by indicating when to *kuzira ngoma*. Due to the vigorous playing and weather changes, the drums which tend to loose their tensions are retuned by a member of the troupe charged with the responsibility of warming such drums on fire. According to Elias Alama of Marisechu Dance Group, Mwatate Location (personal interview, 1992) drum playing is the responsibility of men among the *Dawida*.

### Filimbi

This is the traditional *Dawida* whistle used during traditional dances, especially during *mwazindika* dances. In *kishavi* dances, it is used as a bridge between two different musical entities to show the end of one song and the beginning of another. It is also used to show when a new song is to start. In *mwazindika* dance, it is used during climax, mainly to show the four drummers when to perform the rolling at the same time. *Filimbi* is made from the *mwingo* tree and by the time of the research it was costing Kenya shillings eight (Kshs 8.00). Plate 28 shows a woman blowing the *Dawida* traditional whistle as she dances.

### Njuga

These are metallic rattles used by the *Dawida* for various purposes. The rattles are of various sizes and shapes and are played by shaking the legs or stamping the stave around which they are tied. Originally, the *Dawida* musicians made their *njuga* from a special kind of clay. This, they molded and hardened through baking it in fire. Later on, when the Kenya Uganda Railway line was built, the *Dawida* musicians used the materials, especially those of the railway sleepers. They also used bicycle ball bearings together with railway sleepers to make their *njuga*.

The *Dawida* use *njuga* to enhance and coordinate the music and the dance during performance. For example, in *kishavi* dance, ladies tie small *njuga* around their ankles. Their dance movements enhance the rattling. Similarly, in the *mwazindika* dance, the dancers wear *njuga* around men's legs and women's ankles. The men wear large set of *njuga* around both legs while women wear a set of small *njuga* around their ankles. Where the controller (see drums) wears the *njuga*, he would lift one of his legs in the air and shake it vigorously resulting into rattles that produce rhythmically fast and loud rattle sounds. The *njuga* would assist the dancers to march together by steadily adhering to the rattle sounds. This helps them to be together in terms of tempo. All in all, this assists and harmonizes with *kengele*, thus making the five drum players keep together. It also adds to the sending of the possessed dancers into frenzied movements.

### Mouth Organ

This is a Western musical instrument which has been incorporated into the repertoire of *ngoma mwazindika* as a result of the demands put on the possessed women by their *pepo*. *Mama Chao* of Nyolo *Mwazindika* Group of Bura (personal interview 1992) observed that "*pepo* will only leave her after she has played a mouth organ".

### Juogi and Mwazindika

The *Jok* or *Juogi* spirits fell on certain persons, causing some kind of madness or ill-health (Okot, ibid. 79) but the mediums concerned divined and generally helped the victims solve their psychological, medical and social problems for which they were rewarded. The *Jok/Juogi* mediums could be of either a male or a female. When *Juogi* cult spirits fell on an individual, the victim can either grow thin and sickly or all of a sudden the victim can get mad and runs away to a swampy place or forest to live among the wild for weeks, if not the victim may be directed by the spirits to a medium who would induce the offending spirit to possess the victim, and then depending on whether the particular spirit was friendly or hostile, it was allowed to stay in the victim or sent to where it belonged or killed and destroyed.



*Mwazindika* Dancers' Footwork

## **Juogi**

After the victim has been directed by the possessing spirits or sent (by members of the family) to the homestead of the medium, the medium will carry out the preliminary examination on the patient in order to identify the offending spirit, before treatment could begin. Music (both instrumental produced by *ajawa* or *poko*, gourd rattles and vocal) becomes handy when a possessing spirit is a stubborn one, that is, when it refuses to talk or to identify itself. These possessing spirits respond to their cult names. Some of the cult names include *Juok Lang'o*, *Juok Nya-Nam*, *Juok Mumbo*, etc. The spirits have prohibitions, concerning food, especially mutton, or mud fish considered to be unclean by the *Jok/juogi* spirits. This is what is meant by inducing offending spirits. This is not a matter of a day or so as the process could take weeks for the initiate to stabilize and be ready to be taken home for possession ceremony. During the inducement, the initiate carries *ligangla*, a sword, ties metallic rattles to his or her legs, *gara* or *mbororo*, and wears *pien diel*, a goat's skin bangle on one or both of the wrists. At times *pien diel* decorated with *gagi*, cowrie shells is worn as a necklace by the initiate. *Juogi* initiates also paint their arms, legs and faces with *pundo*, white clay or ochre as signs of purity of the spirits.

They wear *bwombwe*, convolvulus creeper plants and they are medically kept stable by *manyasi*, the herbs which are administered whenever need be. When the initiate's condition has stabilized, the medium consults with the initiate's family and arrangements for bringing of the initiate back home for the final spirit possession ceremony gets in gear. The family members settle the payment to the medium for his or her services, a date for the ceremony is given. The payment for such services varied from one medium to another. Food and drinks are prepared for the ceremony that could go on for two or more days. After a date for the homecoming has been set, *jago juogi* arrives with a party of the initiate dressed as noted above, assistant and members of the cult.

## **Miend Juogi**

Their arrival will be announced through music that included *wer* song, *bul* drum and *ajawa* gourd rattles. On reaching the threshold of the homestead the initiate stopped and trembled all over. This is an indication that the spirit troubling the patient is opposed to the entry of the group. *Jago Juogi* would sprinkle and administer *manyasi*, a mixture of herbs to the patient and the remains smeared on the patient's head. The troupe headed by the *jago juogi* will start shaking their rattle gourd vigorously and rhythmically. They will be joined by everybody present. Those without gourds will clap their hands. The drummers will be joined and soon there were excitement with singing and dancing to the rhythms of the drums and gourds. For sometime the patient may remain unaffected. The *jago juogi* pranced and made frightening gesticulations at the patient, and would say

Biuru un Juogi,	Come you Juogi
bi ugony tol ni	come and untie this knot
ang'o momiy'ok ubi	why don't you come
piyo?	quicly?

If the patient did not respond at all, this would be interpreted to mean that the offending *jok/juogi* was extremely hostile, dangerous and powerful. Another attempt was made after a short break and if this was again unsuccessful, more powerful herbs were administered. In most cases, however, the patient soon began to tremble and to shout, and when this happened, the tempo of the drumming and the shaking of *ajawa* and the singing quickened, and the volume of music increased. *Jago Juogi* then started dancing and helped the patient to his/her feet and other people joined the dance known as *miend jok* or *Juogi*. It is important to note that it is only those who have been possessed before who joined the dance.

After a short interval the patient collapsed. This would be referred to as *juogi ogoye piny* or *jok oreto* has thrown the patient down or the spirits have hurriedly come. The music and dancing stopped. The diviner bent over the patient and began to talk to *jok/juogi* through the patient. The diviner will ask questions such as "In e ng'a?", "Who are you?" The patient would mumble some words which only *jago juogi* the diviner could make out and tell the people what *juogi* has said. Often, *juogi* gave its praise name, other *juogi* gave their full names such as *Jabar got*, Mountain splitter; *Ja-gero*, fierce one; *Oturo dala*, breaker of the home; *Kalaus*, Whirlwind; *Kwa gweng'*, the leopard of the village, etc. The significance of the use of praise names is that it shows some form of friendliness. Only men of the same age-grade or group addressed each other by their praise names. As will be seen, most of the free *juogi* are treated as though they are friends and are either asked to leave the patient after taking gifts, or allowed to stay permanently in the patient. After discovering the particular *juogi* that was the source of ill health, *jago juogi* asked it what it wanted and why it was troubling the patient.

It was then coaxed by praise songs, and promised gifts. Each category of free *juogi* has its own songs and special gifts. If the *juogi* was totally hostile, for instance, that of a vengeance ghost, *chien/cen*, which refused any gifts and was unmoved by praise and persuasion, then the diviner led the patient into inner room. Then there took place a violent struggle, and a hot argument between the diviner and *juogi* speaking through the patient. Most of what the *juogi* said, of course could not be understood, because the patient, being in a state of near physical and emotional collapse, only mumbled certain words. But the diviner repeated these in understandable language, and then answered back. What could be understood is something like

Obola piny nang'o?	Why do you deceive me?
Obola piny nang'o?	Why do you deceive me?
In idhago dhano tulwal	You have troubled people very much
Ti ineno	Today you will see (you will die)

The diviner emerged from the inner room with a spear in his/her hand, and “blood” on the tip of the spear; and in another hand he/she held a gourd with a cork in its mouth. The diviner pranced here and there, and declared that the hostile *juogi* is in the gourd, dead. One of the assistants started a song, and as the dancing went on in the house, the diviner and the patient and a few people went and buried the gourd containing the dead *juogi* spirit in a live ant-hill or in the middle of a swamp.

Miscarriage and other illness connected with pregnancy were often attributed to *juok kulo*, the River *Jok*. The diviner declared that *Kulo* had seen the woman, and had grumbled against her. The treatment of *Juok kulo* consisted of persuading *Juok Kulo* to leave the woman and go back to the river where it belonged.

As already been indicated, free *jok/juogi* made their presence known by causing illness and possessing the victim. One way of classifying them would be according to the diseases or other misfortune attributed to the particular *jok*. This knowledge was of great importance to the diviner, as it was his/her task to find out the *juogi* that is troubling the patient; and having done this, special arrangements were made to suit the likes and dislikes of the particular *juogi*. For example, *juok olit*, having possessed the patient, could only be persuaded to leave the victim and return to the trees by being offered a chick. The chick was placed near the door way.

### **Mwazindika**

*Mwazindika* is a traditional women body regulator of the Dawida which got them out of psychological diseases and others such as heart attack, high blood pressure, the reduction of their obesity and the chasing away of evil spirits.

There are two kinds of *mwazindika* dances; namely, *mwazindika ngoma* and *mwazindika jini*. The names are derived from the way the drums are played. The Dawida would say *mwazindika ngoma*, meaning, they are beating (playing) the drums or *mwazindika jini* if the drumming is more vigorously executed. During the *mwazindika* performances, the drummers vary the rhythmic patterns of the drums in accordance with leader's guidance. Such guidance consists of cues or finger signals to direct the rhythmic changes. There are also intervals of silence from *simba mbaa* (master drum) to allow *kengele* (lead drum) to perform solo. The leading skill shown by the *simba mbaa* player is referred to as *kuchimba ngoma*, to dig the drum.

### **Mwazindika Dance**

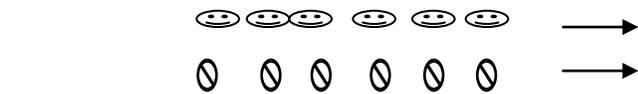
*Mwazindika* is both a dance for treatment and entertainment on social and public occasions. This is when people require music for therapy, during occasions that require music such as *mwari* and marriage or just during general entertainment. *Mwazindika* dance is performed by both male and female adults.

*Mwazindika* dance begins with a song which is performed by a male soloist and a mixed chorus. The dance steps have similar rhythms with *njuga*. The dancers slightly lean to the left, thus giving the body a left hand tilt and while moving, a slight left foot accented rhythms. The movements and the activities there in are kept constant.

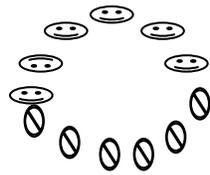
The dancers enter the stage in two lines which then join to form a circle. The circle then breaks and forms two lines which further break into halves and move in the opposite directions. The lines join again and form two semi-circles. First, the two semi-circles formed face the front, then backwards. They then break and form two circles which further break into two lines which finally form two circles.

*Mwazindika* dance formations as indicated below

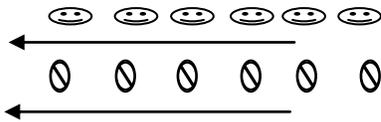
#### *i) Entering the Stage*



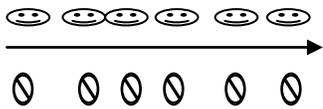
ii) form a circle



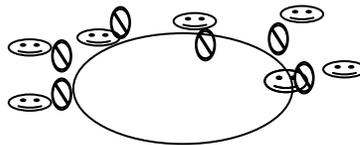
iii) Breaks to form two lines



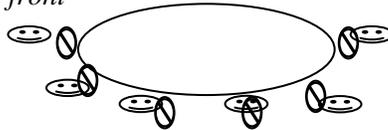
iv) Two lines break into half and move in opposite direction



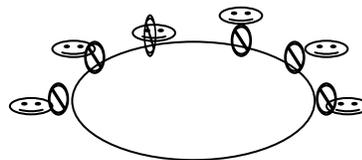
v) Join again and form two semi-circles



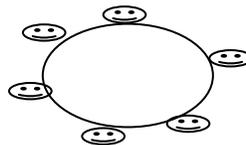
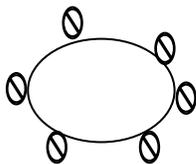
vi) Two semi-circles face the front



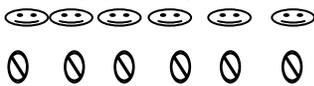
vii) then face backwards



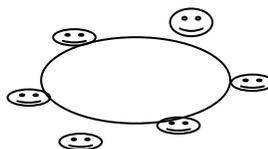
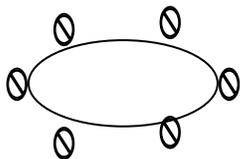
viii) Break and form two semi-circles



ix) Further break into two lines



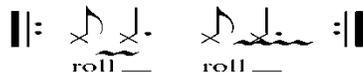
x) Finally form two circles



The formations and variations of the movements are directed by the *filimbo* as well as the drum styles especially at the climax when the drums are being played in a style commonly known as *kuzira ngoma*.



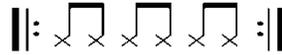
the roll. Something like



then signals for ending the roll,



which are taps.



*Mwazindika* melodies are more elaborate. There are sections where there is no singing, especially at the climax towards the end. In this section, it is purely instrumental with *kushevera* rolls of *simba mbaa*. Throughout the dance, *kengele* plays a very important role of keeping the ensemble together by constantly keeping rhythm. The repertoire of *mwazindika* songs is quite rich. They have a variety of songs with a lot of technical places of entry for the solo. The solo singer doubles up as a lead drummer, and in this context, it is easier for him to control the performance. The *kengele* drum is constantly tuned in order to maintain the pitch. The tuning is done by having it warmed on fire.

### Costumes

These varied according to the demands of the spirits. For example, the spirits might demand that the dancers use *lessos*, papers, sticks, human sweat, blue caps, and other incredible things. The drummers dressed according to their own desire

The women dancers put on red hats, beads and waist clothes such as *kidemu*. Only the women who were emotionally forced to gate crush were the ones who did not possess or put on any special costumes. At times some dance groups have different types of coloured *shukas*– black, white, stripped and even red hats, as they claimed were the demands of the *pepo*. However, some dancers appear possessed all through the dance and are noted to bite their *lessos* and never let them out of their mouths unless they are drinking *pepo* quelling water. All in all, the costumes ranged from calabash, beads, *vikois*, flywhisks, etc

### Conclusion

During *miend juogi* and *mwazindika* dance ceremonies, the dancers dramatize the activities that go along with the healing process. To perform the act of cleansing the possessed, the cleanser (diviner for the Luo *juogi*) moves to the possessed person, and pours water on the head. During such ritualistic activities, the dance performance becomes even more provoking and involving. The climax of the dance for *juogi* is known as *yiengo juogi*, shaking *juogi* (for *miend juogi*) and *benzi* for *mwazindika*. This is one of awe, wonder and admiration at the techniques of the drummers, especially the ones who play master drums (min bul for *juogi* and the *simba mbaa* for *mwazindika*). The *simba mbaa* master drum player steals the show especially when he *zira ngoma* which is also known as *kushevera ngoma*. The idea behind pouring water on the heads of those possessed is to assist them get rid of the evil spirits.

The significance of the spirits was first and foremost medical as it was believed that these spirits caused diseases, the cure for which lay in dealing with the spirits in the methods described. It could be said that it was the diseases which were spiritualized, in the same way the illnesses were seen in terms of the anger of the ancestral spirits, or the curse of the living parents. If it was stomach ache, headache, miscarriage and other diseases that are spiritualized, the techniques of treatment deal not only with the physical aspects; the patient was given herbs to drink or rub on the affected part, but at the same time received full time psychological treatment as well.

It is important to note that most of the complaints dealt with in spirit possession in the two communities are cases in which anxiety plays a large part. The diseases attributed to ancestral spirits are that guilt is a dominant factor. This is because the ancestors are angry because they have been neglected, because somebody among the living has not done his/her duty.

### THE DAWIDA CLANS

Weni Mwashemo, Weni Tabo , Weni Mbole, Weni Mwamina, Weni Kambito, Weni Kamine, Weni Mwavalagho, Weni Wazanga and Weni Ngulo

**INFORMANTS**

Ainea Odera Simbiri, Albert Ater Odundo, Alex Omolo Oduogo, Akungu Ojwang'  
Daniel Onguto Ngore, Felix Ogada Athembo, Ex-Chief Hesbon Ogada Wamamba  
Leah Achola, Mariko Ombaka, Nyangwara Muok, Shem Dienya Nyaoke

Mgange Nyika Sabina Njala Lawrence Mwikamba  
Mgange Dawida Silvesta (Group Leader), Sebastian Mwachofi  
Mbololo Group Leader: Mwakiki Women Group  
Jean Mwang'ombe Mwawuganga, Mwangale Kodi  
Sagalla Mang'oni (Teacher Talio Primary School, Chief Samwel Kimwer  
Jimmy Wakize  
Bura Nyolo Benzi (Drum Tuner), Celestine Kivungi, Enoch Shake  
Ex-chief Boniface Mganga  
Bura Umari Sechu Alama DSDO Mwatate, Assistant Chief James Mururu  
Mulamba (Group Leader), Mwakima (Drum Tuner)  
Bura Mission Kizaro Mwambi, Joseph Mwalinda Mwakio

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**APPENDIX 1**

**WEND JUOGI**

**SONG ONE. Juoki Dana Kaega**

- |    |   |          |
|----|---|----------|
| 1. | dana ...It is your possession spirit my grand mother<br>C: Kayega ... Kayega  | S: Juoki |
| 2. | dana ... It is your possessing spirit my grand mother<br>Emomaka that has fell on me<br>Juoki dana It is your possessing spirit my grand mother<br>C: Kayega kayega ...Kayega kayega<br>yega Kayega yega kayega       | S: Juoki |
| 3. | Juoki dana ...It is your possession spirit my grand mother<br>C: Kayega ... Kayega  | S:       |
| 4. | Juoki dana ... It is your possessing spirit my grand mother<br>Emomaka that has fell on me<br>Juoki dana It is your possessing spirit my grand mother<br>C: Kayega kayega ...Kayega kayega<br>Yega Kayega yega kayega | S:       |

♩ = 88-90

Solo

E ju o ki da na — E ju o ki da na e mo ma — ka ju o ki

♩ = 88 90

Chorus

Ka re — ga

♩ = 88-90

6

da na\_\_\_\_\_ Ju o ki

6

Ka ye\_\_\_\_\_ ga ka ye ga ye ga ka ye\_\_\_\_\_ ga

6

6

**SONG TWO: Jalang Bul Buloolo**

- 1. S: Opule jalang bul ...Opule the lover of drums  
Bulo olo is tired of drums
- C: Jalang bul ...The lover of drums
- 2. S: Opulo wuon Jon ...Opule the father of John  
Jalang bul bulo olo the lover of drums is tired of drums
- C: Jalang bul ...The lover of drums
- 3. S: Omin Awino ...The brother of Awino  
Jalang bul bulo olo the lover of drums is tired of drums
- C: Jalang bul ...The lover of drums
- 4. S: Awino omera ...Awino my brother  
Jalang bul bulo olo the lover of drums is tired of drums
- C: Jalang bul ...The lover of drums

Solo

O pu le\_\_\_\_\_ ja lung bul\_\_\_\_\_ bu lo o lo O pu\_\_\_\_\_

Chorus

Ja lang bul\_\_\_\_\_

Gara

Bul

DAWIDA SONGS

**Song One: E koko? (Are you there?)**

- 1. S: E koko? ... Are you there?  
C: E koko. ... Yes, I am here.
- 2. S: Aba mwahua? ... Are fathers crushing sugarcane  
C: E dahua ... Yes, they are.
- 3. S: Nawa mumo ... Are others cutting  
komea? sugarcane?  
C: E dakomea ... Yes, they are.
- 4. S: E mami koko ... Is my mother there?  
C: E koko ... Yes, she is there

The song *e koko* is a work song initially performed by women during the pounding of maize, millet, and sugarcane. It was performed to the rhythm produced by the pestle on the mortar. In the song, *musi* and *kitiri* provide the required rhythmic sounds. Initially, the two pounders called and responded to each other as they alternately pounded the grains on the mortar. The solo and chorus parts represented the two initial women pounders. The singers sang about themselves and their environment. They inquired as to whether their partners, brothers, mothers, fathers were there. They also wished to know as to whether others were cutting sugar cane, chewing sugar cane, talking, or crushing sugar cane. The song is intended to aid the pounders in this demanding task. This then means that the song can go on and on as long as the pounding continues. What is given above is just but a small section of what goes in during the performance of the song. The changes likely to be observed are those made by the soloist and hence the chorus since the chorus gives an answer to whatever the soloist asks. The soloist is free to sing whatever comes into her mind and as many times as she may see fit. The chorus replies in the affirmative.

**SONG TWO: Ngaola Ngaolela**

- |   |                      |                  |
|---|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 | S. E ngaola          | ... Look         |
|   | C. E ngaola ngaolela | ... Look and see |
| 2 | S. E ngaola he       | ... Look         |
|   | C. E ngaola ngaolela | ... Look and see |
| 3 | S. Vimu ngauza       | ... I have sold  |
|   | C. E ngaola ngaolela | ... Look and see |
| 4 | S. E ngaola he       | ... Look         |
|   | C. E ngaola ngaolela | ... Look and see |

This is a *ngasu* giving ceremony song. The maiden undergoing the initiation is introduced into the secrets of the society and admonished to give respect and to take care of their future affines. The maiden is required to look. The look referred to in the context has a deeper meaning than the ordinary sense of the word. The maiden is supposed to be watchful of the social needs that accompany womanhood. She is supposed to understand the properties of mother, *Vimu waweke mao*... she has to watch out for men in both the positive and the negative sense. The maiden has to be literally sold out to owners of cattle where she is supposed to go and produce children and look after the husband and other members of the large family. *Ngasu* initiation ceremony is a very important *Dawida* ceremony and the music performed during the occasion is considered in the same line.

**Song 3 Yamahehe**

- |    |                 |                       |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1: | S. Ya mahehe    | ...It is mothers      |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya Masombe      | of Masombe            |
|    | C. Ya mahehe    | ... It is mothers     |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya mahehe       | it is mothers         |
|    | ya Masombe      | of Masombe            |
| 2: | S. E ya mahehe  | ... It is the mothers |
|    | C. E ya Masombe | ... Of Masombe        |

This is a work song performed by women as they crush sugarcane for the preparation of local beer. The performers sing the song as they move up and down the hill to collect sugarcane from the farms. As observed earlier, sugarcane is grown on the upper sides of Mbololo. Traditionally, this famous crop is known as *ndege*. The song accompanies *kishavi* dance with its short run like steps which accompanies the rhythmic sounds of the *musi* – *mlingo* and *njuga* instruments. The texts of the song are quite poetical. The dancers pronounce their presence by informing the audience, who they are, that is, the mothers of Masombe. The song is performed by those adults who have gone through *ngasu* initiation.

**SONG 4: E chanikua**

- |    |                       |                                |
|----|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1: | S. E chanikua?        | ... Has it found you?          |
|    | C. E chantukira       | ... Yes, it has found me alive |
| 2. | S. Kilambo cha mwana? | ... Properties of a baby?      |
|    | C. E chantukira       | ... Yes, it has found me alive |
| 3: | S. Mwana wa womi      | ... It is a baby boy           |
|    | C. E chantukira       | ... Yes, it has found me alive |
| 4: | S. Viko na viringo    | ... Things are circular        |
|    | C. E chantukira       | ... Yes, it has found me alive |

The song is performed at birth ceremonies of the *Dawida*. In the song the performers are happy to witness the arrival of a new member of the society. This is reflected in the text *e chantukira* ... it has found me alive, *kilambo cha mwana* ... properties of a baby ... the meaning behind the song is that nobody is sure as to whether children would be born in their homesteads.

So, new births are treated with the surprise they deserve. Especially if the births were of baby boys, there truly was a reason for celebration.

The song is a happy one and at times is performed at traditional wedding ceremonies instead of celebrations of birth. During weddings, the singing and dancing activities are quite vigorous. Dances are accompanied by dramatic activities which accompany *Dawida* weddings. Performers make circular formations with the bride seated in the middle, dressed and covered with *lesos*. In this connection, the bride is seen as a baby whose arrival has to be celebrated. In other words, the performers consider themselves lucky for the event to have found them alive. In fact, the arrival of a bride carries with it *kilambo cha mwana* ... properties of a baby, as through her, babies are born. Who then would dispute the fact that celebrating birth and wedding to the *Dawida* are synonymous?

**SONG SIX: Mwaku waku**

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1: S. Mao mwakuwaku       | ... Mothers you are difficult |
| C. Samulemaku             | ... Like mulemaku             |
| mwakuwaku                 | you are difficult             |
| samulemaku                | like mulemaku                 |
| 2: S. Weke mao mwakuwaku  | ... mothers you are difficult |
| C. Samulemaku             | ... Like mulemaku             |
| Mwakurieku                | you are difficult             |
| samulemaku                | like mulemaku                 |
| 3: S. Weke aba mwakurieku | .. Fathers you are difficult  |
| C. Samulemaku             | ... Like mulemaku             |
| Mwakurieku                | you are difficult             |
| Samulemaku                | like mulemaku                 |
| 4: S. Weke mao mwakuwaku  | ... Mothers you are difficult |
| C. Samulemaku             | ... Like mulemaku             |
| Mwakurieku                | you are difficult             |
| Samulemaku                | like mulemaku                 |

This is a kishavi song dance for removing the secluded girl or maiden at the end of the seclusion period. The text addresses the parents or members of the community in question. The performers seem to be taken aback by their difficult nature. They are seen in terms of *mule maku*, one of the hardest trees that are grown on the region. One may wonder what is actually meant by this. Could it be because of the demands of the fathers, *aba*; mothers; *mao*, or members of the *Mbololo* community?, the *Wambololo*?. Whatever it is, they are seen or rather considered to be hard! The form of the song is call and response. First, the song begins on a high pitch before it stabilizes. Climax of the song has two syllable word to which chorus section responds. The song usually lasts for a long time before it is ended. According to some informants, it can go on for hours before the performers change to another one. In such circumstances, it is the soloists who would be alternating. In fact the performance becomes lovelier by every minute it lasts. The dancers perform to rhythmic patterns made by the sounds produced and reinforced by *musimlingo*, *filimbo* and *njuga*. The dances are vigorous and full of the twisting of bottoms. The dancers perform in pairs of male and female. Generally, the occasion is a very happy one as the initiated maiden is happy to have completed her seclusion and the parents and the community have got one of their members achieved one of the traditional rites of passage, therefore ready to join the next stage, in this case marriage.



A prototype of a Juogi Initiate