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TRADITIONAL ILA PLANT REMEDIES FROM ZAMBIA

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SUMMARY

Information is presented about 177 plants formerly used in healing by the Ila people of southern Zambia. The material is largely drawn from manuscripts held in Kasenga, together with information from various more recent authorities.

Two lists are presented: (a) plants that have so far been identified together with those of which only the Ila name is known, and (b) the diseases and species used for treatment. Suggestions for further research are included.

KEY WORDS: Medicinal plants – Ila people – Zambia

INTRODUCTION

The Ila people

The Ila people of southern Zambia numbered about 25,000 in 1900. Their territory on the middle Kafue was only about 400 km long by 80 km wide (Figure 1). The men were imposing in appearance: they were tall, dressed their hair in tapering cones almost 1.2 m high, and never travelled even a short distance without two or three 2.5 m spears over the shoulder. They had the reputation of being a particularly warlike and turbulent people. Until the arrival of the Methodist missionaries in 1893, no European had settled in their country, and several attempting to do so had been killed. David Livingstone encountered them in the 1850s, and knew them as the Bashukulompo (Smith 1907: 1).

In 1920 they were the subject of a ground-breaking anthropological study, "The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia" by Edwin Smith, a missionary, and Andrew Dale, a district officer. Their work set the pattern for much subsequent research in Africa, and led to Smith becoming president of the Royal Anthropological Institute in 1933 (Young 1997).

Purpose of the present study

In 1959 my wife Ena and I were stationed at Kasenga, a Methodist mission station in the heart of the Ila country. In the corner of the office I found a filing cabinet stuffed with cards and papers. It proved to be a collection of about 12,000 items on Ila vocabulary and usage dating back to Edwin Smith’s arrival as a Primitive Methodist missionary in 1902, and continued by his successors (Smith 1906-1913). When we returned to England in 1966, I brought the material with me.

For the next 30 years the Ila material remained in two battered suitcases in our attic. Once or twice I made attempts to sort through them, but the task was too much for me until I retired in 1994. It took three months to put the entries into alphabetical order and start work on translation, and it was to be another six years before the "Dictionary of Ila Usage" was published (Fowler 2000).
Figure 1. Location of Ila-speaking areas, southern Zambia.
Buried in the mass of the Kasenga manuscripts were the Ila names of 741 trees, shrubs and plants. The botanical identification of these vernacular names posed a fascinating problem. The Forestry Department at Kitwe, Zambia, was able to furnish the botanical names for almost 70 trees, and others were tracked down at Kew with the aid of Paul Smith and the staff there. Identifications given here are taken from these sources, supplemented where necessary with others such as Torrend (1931), Gilges (1955), Palgrave (1957), Trapnell & Clothier (1957), White (1962), Mitchell (1963), Storrs (1979) and Sekeli (1999).

My effrontery as an author without botanical training in presenting this article is excused only by the motive. Many of the plants were used by traditional doctors, and I hope that some at least of the prescriptions described may be developed to heal people today.

PLANTS SPECIES USED AND APPLICATION

All uses are from the notes by Smith (1906-1913) or Smith & Dale (1920), unless otherwise indicated.

*Acacia nigrescens* (mukunku) - tree with hard timber, used for poles and mining. Leaves are crushed and used to foment the shins of those with scorch marks (imbale). Roots are powdered and scattered round a field to keep thieves off. Bark is decocted and used as a lotion for sore gums. [also sitantasokwe.]

*Acacia sieberiana* DC var. *woodii* (mutube-tube) - thorny tree. Leaves used to foment sores caused by *kanamalumbe*, a kind of blister. [Trapnell (2001) equates it with combwe and distinguishes it from *Sterculia quinqueloba* (mutubatuba), but Torrend (1931) equates them. Smith (1906) calls it *muukila* and *mungotuba*. There is need for clarification here.]

*Acacia tortilis* (mungasia) - thorny tree, producing good fibres and gum (Torrend 1931). Leaves are chewed and used to poultice *iute*, a kind of abscess. [Smith (1906) calls this tree *muungausiya*. The Plateau Tonga name is *mukoka*, which in Ila is the general name for any hooked thorn tree.]

*Afzelia quanzensis* (mwande) - tree with good timber and wide shade for assemblies. Young leaves are eaten and beans used as ornaments (Torrend 1931). Twigs are coiled, dipped into hot water, and applied to treat a poisoned arm.

*Albizia glaberrima* (mukomba) - tree. Leaves are decocted as a lotion, or dried and powdered to be applied as a remedy for sores on woman’s breasts and children’s buttocks. [also mbaselwenje]

*Albizia versicolor* (cisomwe) - tree with timber used for drums and mortars (Torrend 1931). As a remedy for madness, the roots are scraped and crushed in a potsherd and the fumes inhaled. [also mububa]

*Boscia mossambicensis* (cibanze) - tree. Leaves used as medicine to treat haematuria and toothache; they are either smoked or chewed.

*Boscia salicifolia* (White 1962) or *B. angustifolia* (Storrs 1979) (musasa) - tree. Powdered bark is used on leg sores and the roots decocted to make women fertile. [also musoyo]
Traditional Ila plant remedies from Zambia

*Brachystegia boehmii* (Sekeli 1999) or *B. longifolia* (Trappnell 2001) (mubombo) - tree with good timber for building. Bark makes intebe, string for bags and cloth. Medicine to treat dizziness and diarrhoea is produced. [also umbomba. Torrend (1931) equates it with musamba]

*Capsicum* species (manomba)\(^1\) - chilli. Oil is used to anoint the head (Price 1910).

*Cassia abbreviata* (mululwe) - tree. Wood is useful only as firewood. Root is used as medicine to treat leprosy and syphilis; it is deeply incised and decocted, to be drunk and also used as a lotion by patients. Infused and used in the mouth against toothache. Leaves are smoked in a pipe as a remedy for haematuria.

*Cissampelos mucronata* (lutende) - creeper used to make baskets. Liquor made from the leaves and roots is used to rinse the mouth to cure bleeding gums. Root is decocted and drunk as a remedy for cisyanzyati, pains after childbirth. [also itende]

*Clatia pulchella* or *Phyllanthus engleri* (mufweba-bacazi) - tree. Root-bark is smoked, and one good puff kills. Women prefer this means of suicide to hanging. 'Cooked butter is said to be the antidote (Price 1910). [also kamana, mufwebakwazi, simanifuko.]

*Combretum adenogonium* (mulama) - tree, good for firewood. Leaves are chewed to relieve colic. [also mukutabulongo]

*Combretum imberbe* (mubimba) - tree with hard wood. The white ash is used as flavouring with boiled tamarind. Root is decocted as a remedy for toothache and neuralgia. [see mulyanswi]

*Combretum molle* (kakukulama) - tree, good for poles. Leaves are pounded and decocted to wash wounds. [also mukukulama (Torrend 1931)]

*Combretum zeyheri* (muzyula) - tree. The long roots are used to thresh grain and sew baskets; they are cooked in insima and eaten as a cure for diarrhoea.

*Cordia goetzei* (kabangaluulu) - small tree with wood impervious to borers. Grows on termitaria and furnishes medicine. [also lubangaluulu]

*Crossopteryx febrifuga* (muleyambezo) - tree, useful for poles. Root is used as a remedy for haematuria; it is cooked in porridge and then taken out and put in a calabash of water, which is drunk at intervals, the porridge being eaten.

*Diospyros batocana* (mufumbo) - tree with edible *ifumbo* fruit. Wood used for spoons and basins. Root is decocted to make a body wash for lepers. Leaves are bruised in a mortar, soaked in water and rubbed on the cizengele rash. [also muntukusya]

*Diospyros mespiliformis* (mucenje) - tree that grows to a great height on termitaria. It produces edible fruit, good timber and medicine to heal burns (Torrend 1931), to stop

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\(^1\) η is pronounced like the 'ng' in 'singer', as distinct from in 'finger'.
purgating, and to cure skin eruptions. [also icenje, incenje. *Diospyros kirkii* (mucenje-kotwe) is much smaller and has no recorded use]

*Diplorrhynchus condylocarpon* (munto) - shrub. It produces long, flexible rods, much resorted to by girls at initiation. Sap is used for glue, and the wood makes shafts for axes, etc. Leaves are placed on the head to cure aches. It is used to treat stomach aches, and the roots are decocted to treat pneumonia, coughs and snake-bites, or used with lubabangwe roots to bless game-pits. [also muntowa, muto]

*Eminia holubii* (munkumbya) - root is used in brewing and in fomenting smallpox sores. [also munkumbya]

*Euphorbia ingens* (mulundu-ngoma) - timber makes drums, the sap makes fish-poison and is also used as a remedy against izuba, a venereal disease. [also mulubulwa, mutindili]

*Euphorbia tirucalli* (mubambala) - tree, readily grown from cuttings. Sap is said to cause blindness (Price 1910). [also mulota]

*Ficus sonderi / F. sycomorus* (bukuzu) - tree. Fruit is edible, the sap used in making drums. Root is decocted and the lotion applied to mafutamabi, a rash with sores on the chest. Fruit and leaves are used to stimulate lactation. [also ikuzu]

*Flacourtia indica* (mutimbamvula, Symon 1959; mutumbula, Mitchell 1963) - tree. Fruit is edible (Torrend 1931), and the roots used to confer immunity against snake venom.[see musikalilo]

*Friesodielsia obovata* (mucinga) - shrub bearing bucinga fruit. Used for witchcraft in making mufumbulo medicine. Leaves and roots are used to wash a newborn baby to make it strong. [also muntebwe]

*Hibiscus sabdariffa* (lukukwa) - Roselle. Fruit is edible, and the leaves soothing for coughs. Fibre makes string. [also mukungu]

*Hymenocardia acida* (mupazu-pazu) - tree. Wood is impervious to borers, but brittle; used in boys' initiation. Roots are decocted to make a lotion to rub on swollen cheeks; they are burnt and the fumes used in the treatment of bleeding from nose and mouth (see Fowler 2000 under miya). They are also crushed and placed in a horn at the doorway of a house to avert spells. [also mpazupazu, mumpelemphempe, mumpempe]

*Julbernardia globiflora* (mwanza) - tree. Medicine is made from it, and glue for fixing spear-heads. [also mwanzu, mutondo-muumba, muumba]

*Julbernardia paniculata* (mutondo) - common tree used for bark string and axe-shafts. Its flowering is a sign that is time to search for honey. Wood used for poles, firewood and charcoal (Derricourt 1985). Leaves are boiled and the steam inhaled to relieve colds.

*Lannea schweinfurthii* (Storrs 1979) or *L. discolor* (Sekheli 1999) (mubumbu) - tree, can be grown from cuttings; the forks are planted as supports. Bark and leaves are used to cure dysentery and fits. Root is decocted to treat smallpox and boils.
Lonchocarpus capassa / L. nelsii (mukololo) - tree used as firewood for chiefs. Roots are powdered and dusted on leprosy sores after fomenting them with mubumbwe root. Its presence is said to indicate good soil, and in the dry season it exudes water. [Torrend (1931) equates it with mukonono]

Maprounea africana (kamwaya) - bush. People wave it in the direction they wish clouds to take. Root is crushed and steeped in hot water and rubbed on the sores caused by yaws and syphilis; it makes a spell to cause one’s possessions to become invisible.

Markhamia obtusifolia (katoze) - tree, used for poles. Crushed root is put in a horn and placed on the roof to guard against witchcraft. It is cooked in porridge in the same way as muleyambezo as a remedy for haematuria. [also mufundula, mususunkwale]

Nymphaea species (mulilima) - herb. Stem is powdered and mixed with snuff, and root burnt and mixed with fat to make ointment for cibondo sores.

Pericopsis angolensis (mubanga) - tree. Roots are split, warmed at a fire, and rubbed on the penis as a remedy for impotence.

Phragmites mauritianus (lubu) - reed. Flowers are burnt and the ash mixed with fat as an ointment to treat bweele, scabies.

Phyllocosmos lemaireanus (mulumba-lumba) - tree. Leaves are boiled, and inflamed eyes bathed in steam.

Piliostigma thonningii (musekese) - tree with fibrous bark and edible pods, its presence said to indicate good soil. It is used in female initiation rites. Root is crushed and infused in hot water, then held in the mouth as a remedy for toothache. Fragments of root are worn under the arm to induce conception, and crushed into ointment and rubbed on the abdomen for the same purpose.

Plumbago species (kalutenta) - subshrub. Powdered root is used to treat cinzovwe, sores on the thigh.

Pterocarpus angolensis (mukwa) - tree widely used for furniture and fine joinery and hut poles. Bark and resin make fish-poison. Root is split, warmed, and rubbed on the penis as a cure for impotence. [also ibanga, umbanga; see also Xeroderris stuhlmannii]

Pterocarpus antunesii (mwangula) - tree with a hard heartwood, good for walking sticks. Leaves are edible, and elephants and cattle browse them. Roots are used to medicate wounds.

Rauvolfia caffra (mubimbi) - tree. Provides firewood, and charms to protect houses and people against witches.

Ricinus communis (mabono) - herb. Seeds burnt and the ash applied to mana, split heels. [also mubonantelemba]
Schinziophyton rautanenii (munoongo) - tree. Wood is light and makes paper-board. Animals browse the fruit and bark, which makes string for nets. Roots are used to cure stomach pain. Nuts tied round the ankles to relieve leg pains. [also mulubululwa; Torrend (1931) equates it with moongo and mulumbu]

Securidaca longepedunculata (mufufuma) - tree that makes charcoal. Roots are applied to the private parts of boys at initiation to cause growth, and infants bathed in a decoction for the same purpose.

Solanum tomentosum (ituntulwa) - subshrub bearing inedible intuntulwa berries; the roots are used as an aperient.

Strychnos innocua (kawi) - tree which bears pleasant fruit called mawi (Torrend 1931), and used as a laxative.

Strychnos spinosa (muzimbilili) - tree. Root is peeled and decocted, to be drunk by men to protect them against infection during sexual intercourse, and mixed with ibwantu beer to make a fomentation to treat iute, an abscess. The roots and leaves are used to cure snake bites. [also muntamba]

Syzygium guineense (sicisu) - bush with edible berries. Leaves are chewed to relieve abdominal pains.

Terminalia mollis (cilbubu) - tree. Roots are powdered, the outside added to food and the inside decocted and drunk as a remedy against diarrhoea. Also furnishes a cure for catarrh. [also muntumubuwa (Trapnell 2001)]

Terminalia sericea (kalunguti) - tree, wood used to make mortars, handles, etc. (Torrend 1931). Roots produce medicines to treat sores and stomach pains and to wash out the mouth. [also mwanzwa]

Terminalia stuhlmannii (mukonono) - tree. Roots are chopped and warmed over fire, then steeped in water and drunk by a woman in labour to release a retained placenta. If this fails, two leaves are inserted into the birth canal, and the midwife pulls it out by hand. [Torrend (1931) confuses it with mukololo]

Triumfetta welwitschii (sikantyo) - tuberous roots of this bush are crushed and rubbed into the midwife’s hands before she stretches the birth passage of a woman in labour. [also muyeye]

Vangueriopsis lanciflora (mufumo) - produces mafumo/masole fruit, which Torrend (1931) called "one of the most tasty in Northern Rhodesia". Powdered bark is used to ease the swellings in mumps. Roots is made into ointment, and used together with mulimbula to promote conception. Scrapings are rubbed into incisions on goitres and wens to cure them.

Xeroderris stuhlmannii (mulombe) - tree. Can be grown from cuttings. Light, open-grained timber with a dark heart, good for canoes, stools and joinery (Torrend 1931). Bark is cooked and the vapour used to steam the eyes of one suffering from lupwe, an affection of the eyelids; the decoction is also used as an eye-wash. Sap is used to treat scabies. [also
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namatuli (White 1962); Trapnell equates mulombe with Pterocarpus angolensis and muvwamalowa with Xeroderris stuhlmannii)

Ximenia caffra (munomba) - tree. Leaves are chewed as medicine for colic and for malaria, or crushed and decocted as a lotion to treat sibangulwa, swollen hands and feet. Root is shredded and soaked in hot water to foment snakebites. The red fruit, manomba, tastes like sour plums. [also luminanzoka]

Zanha africana (sangalwembe) - tree. Roots used as a remedy for haematuria, being rubbed into incisions on the patient’s head; as a remedy for lumbar pains it is rubbed into incisions in the loins. When made into ointment, it is used to treat cilowa rash.

Ziziphus abyssinica (mukona) - thorny tree exuding gum. Roots and leave make medicine for the chest. To promote menstruation, a decoction is drunk and an ointment made to rub on the abdomen. The timber makes long planks and the bark makes bags (Price 1910). [also kankona, mukwambanziba, mungwamalembe, mutantwasokwe]

Unnamed Plants
Uses are derived from Smith (1906-1913) or Smith & Dale (1920), unless otherwise indicated.

cibumbwe - root used in treating syphilis. It is mixed with water and applied to foment the sores, which are then dusted with powdered musyensye root.
cibwebwe - tree whose roots are used as medicine. The scrapings are rubbed into cuts on the body to cure fainting.
cikalamatanga - root of a bush; it is powdered and sniffed as a remedy against nasal catarrh. [also cikalamatongo (Derricourt 1985)]
cikwangala - creeper; it is made into ointment or powdered and blown into the eyes, ears and anus as a remedy for madness.
cilalwe - tree. Leaves are chewed and the bitter juice squirted into the nostrils and ears of patients suffering from malaria.
cipezya-bazike - shrub whose root is used as a remedy for syphilitic sores in the same way as mululwe. Root is incised and soaked in water, the decoction being drunk and used as a lotion.
ciwayu - bush. Roots are cooked in porridge and then soaked in water; the solution is drunk by young girls as a remedy against masusu, a vaginal disease.
ikolankuni - tree. Roots are cooked with porridge and eaten to treat musana, back pains.
ingalulu - bush. Leaves are blended with sisymbwalwala leaves and decocted as a remedy for cakwiwe, diarrhoea with vomiting.
infwi - bush. Roots are soaked in water to make a lotion for bathing the eye to cure a stye.
inganza - tree. Root is scraped and rubbed into incisions in the chest of a patient with angina, followed by cupping.
kabwengwe - bush. Medicine made from leaves and twigs is used to wash out the eyes of someone attacked by the Spitting Cobra (Smith & Dale 1920).
kaluya - bush. Roots are scraped and mixed with fat to make ointment for bayubayu, body sores.
kamakamala - shrub. Roots are decocted and the liquor poured into the ears to relieve aching, and leaves used to treat diarrhoea. [also kamankamala]
kamampa - bush. Roots are mixed with fat to make an ointment applied to treat luvumwe, an open fontanelle.
kamanka-mala - shrub; leaves used to treat diarrhoea.
kanembe - tree root. To bring about conception, it is steeped in water and drunk every morning, or powdered and eaten in porridge.
kapolamunsi - plant with strong, vile smell. It is powdered and snuffed to clear a blocked nose; Smith (1906) testifies to its effectiveness.
kapululu - roots of a plant with a faint smell. Scrapings are smoked, and the powder rubbed into incisions before cupping, and in painful affections to expel the disease.
malumbwe - small tuber; peeled and eaten, or decocted and drunk, as a cure for chest complaints.
manyenye - plant with large red seeds; the roots used to cure possession.
matungabambala - tree. Root is cooked with meat and eaten by boys as a remedy against mafuta, a disease of the penis.
mompelempempe - bush. Roots are rubbed onto snakebites, and then roasted and the wound smoked. Leaves are decocted and the liquid squeezed into the eyes of someone attacked by the Spitting Cobra.
moobezuba - tree with long flexible rods that are easily broken. Leaves (mobezula) make stomach medicine (Price 1910).
mubangalala - bush. Leaves are used to foment jigger sores and snake-bites, and nicotine is then applied. [Sekeli (1999) equates it with kabangaluulu]
mubumbwe - roots of a small bush; used to foment the sores caused by leprosy, which are then dusted with powdered mukololo root. [possibly confused with mubombwe / musansa?]
mucokacimongo - bush; used as a remedy for epilepsy, the root is soaked in water and the solution poured into the patient’s ears. As a remedy for ulcers, it is decocted and the lotion applied. [also mulimbula, munsimbwe, mununkila, tagu]
mufwamba - tree root; decocted to produce an emetic.
mukulu-ufumbete - roots of a small bush, used in setting broken limbs. [also mununga]
mukwambanziba - see mukona
mulimbula - tree. Pith is decocted and drunk to promote conception. Root is used as medicine to cure epilepsy; also to stupefy an enemy. Root is also scraped and decocted to make a lotion for applying to silubilila patches on the skin.
mulwe - tree root; used to make a medicine to avert abortion.
mulya-lya - shrub; its roots are cooked in beer or porridge to stimulate the appetite in convalescence.
mumbala - bush. Peeled roots are put in water, then rubbed over bulangulangu, a body rash.
mundambi - bush. Leaves are decocted and drunk hot to treat quinsy.
mundumba - tree. Roots are cooked and decocted and the solution poured into the ears of a lunatic to sedate during a violent episode.
munembe - creeping bush. Fruit is edible. Roots are steeped in light beer as a remedy for haematuria.
mungunya - tree used for wattles. Leaves are bruised and put in water to make a lotion for shaving rash (cisubi). They are burnt with citulu root and fish-spears held in the fumes to bring luck. They may also be smoked like tobacco.
munsimbwe - tree root, a decoction of which is drunk to cure epilepsy.
mununkila - tree root. Powdered and put in a basket, and jerked into the eyes of one suffering from fits.
musambiza - tree. Leaves are rubbed on swellings.
musibampeyo - root of a small bush. Powdered and blown into the penis as a cure for male impotence.
musikalilo - tree. Root is ground up with the root of the mutumbulwa tree, and powder rubbed into gashes on hands and feet, to confer immunity against snake venom.
mutimbahula - tree. Root is decocted to make a mouthwash for the treatment of sore gums.
mutungambofu - medicinal root (Price 1910).
muvumbani - aromatic plant, used to repel mosquitoes.
muvungu - tree. Bark is decocted and used as a mouthwash to relieve toothache.
muvungamalowe - see Xeroderris stuhlmannii.
muyeye - root of a bush. It is decocted and drunk to relieve the pains of a woman in labour.
muzunda - parasitic tree, so called because it kills other trees; grown from cuttings. It produces medicine and fibre for dresses. Fruits are called intumba (Price 1910).
mwebezuba - tree root. Decocted and given to a baby suffering from kasema, a disease caught through suckling when the mother is pregnant.
mwinya-meenzi - tree with edible berries. Leaves are chewed and put in water to soften it (Torrend 1931).
namatuli - see Xeroderris stuhlmannii.
namwinya - tree root. Decocted and given to a baby suffering from kasema, a disease caught through suckling when the mother is pregnant.
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ngombi - root used as an emetic.
njamukupa - root of a bush; powdered as a medicine for yaws. Some is smoked in a pipe, and some blown into the nose.
sikakoto - bush. Root is cut up and cooked in porridge which is eaten to cure pleurisy, the fragments of root being discarded.
sikutwe - bush. Roots are burnt and drunk to relieve sore throats.
sisyumbwa-lwala - bush. Leaves are mixed with indululu leaves and decocted as a cure for diarrhoea.
tagu - root of a bush; used to massage the limbs of a one in a fit.
talantambwe - roots of a bush from which ointment is made to treat kasema, a disease of infants.

DISEASES AND MEDICINES

ABORTION - mulwe.
BACKACHE - ikolankuni, munto (Diplorhynchus condylocarpon).
BLEEDING - mupazu-pazu (Hymenocardia acida), museme.
BOILS and ABSCESSES - mubumbu (Lannea discolor), mungasia (Acacia tortilis), muzimbilili (Strychnos spinosa).
BURNS - mucenje (Diospyros mespiliformis).
CATARRH - cibubu (Terminalia mollis), cikalamatanga, kapolamunsi.
CHEST - malumbwe, mukona (Ziziphus abyssinica), munto (Diplorhynchus condylocarpon), sikakoto.

CHILDREN’S DISEASES - mufufuma (Securidaca longipedunculata), mukomba (Albizia glaberrima), mutungubambala, mwebezuba, sikotamukwa, tandabala.

COLDs - mutondo (Julbernardia paniculata).

CONSTIPATION - ituntulwa (Solanum tomentosum).

CONVALESCENCE - mulyalya.

COUGHS - lukukwa (Hibiscus sabdariffa), munto (Diplorhynchus condylocarpon).

CUTS and WOUNDS - kakukulama (Combretum molle), kamwaya (Maprounea africana), mwangula (Pterocarpus antunesii).

DIARRHOEA / DYSENTERY - cibubu (Terminalia mollis), indululu, kamakamala, mubombo (Brachystegia boehmii), mubumbu (Lannea discolor), mucenje (Diospyros mespiliformis), muzyula (Combretum zeyheri), sisyambwa-lwala.

EARS - kamakamala.

EMBROCATIONS - cipezya-bazike, mucokacimongo, mukomba (Albizia glaberrima), mulimbula, mululwe (Cassia abbreviata), mununya.

EMETICS - mufwamba, ngombi.

EPILEPSY - mubumbu (Lannea discolor), mucokacimongo, munsimbwe, mununkila, tagu.

EYES - infwi, kabwengwe (Sesamum spp.?), mompelempe, mulombe (Xeroderris stuhlmannii), mutungulumbula (Phyllocosmos lemaireanus), mutunga-bambala.

FRACTURES - mukulu-ufumbete.

GIDDINESS - cibwebwe, mubombo (Brachystegia longifolia), muntembwe (Baphia massaiensis).

GOITRES and WENS - mufumo (Vangueriopsis lanciflora).

GUMS - mukunku (Acacia nigrescens), mutimbahula.

GYNAECOLOGY - mukona (Ziziphus abyssinica), mufumo (Vangueriopsis lanciflora), musasa (Boscia salicifolia).

HAEMATURIA - cibanze (Boscia mossambicensis), katoze (Markhamia obtusifolia), muleyambezo (Crossopteryx febrifuga), mululwe (Cassia abbreviata), munembe, sangalwembe (Zanha africana).

HEAD - kamampa, munto (Diplorhynchus condylocarpon).

HEART - inganza.

IMPOTENCE - kanembe, mukwa (Pterocarpus angolensis), mulimbula, mufufuma (Securidaca longopedunculata), musibampeyo.

INDIGESTION - busuku (Uapaca kirkiana).

INSECTS - muvumbani.

LACTATION - bukuzu (Ficus sonderi/F. sycomorus).

LAXATIVES - ituntulwa (Solanum tomentosum), kawi (Strychnos innocua).

LEGs - mukunku (Acacia nigrescens), muvonong (Schinziophyton rautanenii).

LEPROSy - cipezyabazike, mubumbwe, mucenje (Diospyros mespiliformis), mufumbo (Diospyros batocana), mukololo (Lonchocarpus capassal/L. nelsii), mululwe (Cassia abbreviata), mutundu-maswe.

LUMBAGO - sangalwembe (Zanha africana).

MALARIA - cilalwe, munoomba (Ximenia caffra), sikotamukwa.

MENTAL ILLNESSES - cikwangala, cisomwe/mububa (Albizia versicolor), manyenye, mundumba, manyenye.
Traditional Ilal plant remedies from Zambia

MIDWIFERY – lutende (Cissampelos mucronata), mucinga (Friesodielsia obovata), mukonono (Terminalia stuhlmannii), mulwe, muyeye, mwebezuba, sikantyo (Triumfetta welwitschii).

MOUTH and GUMS – kalunguti (Terminalia sericea), lutende (Cissampelos mucronata), mupazupazu (Hymenocardia mollis), mutimbahula.

NECK – calupako.

NEURALGIA – mubimba (Combretum imberbe).

PAINKILLER – muyeye.

POULTICE – mungasia (Acacia spp.), mwande (Africania quanzensis).

PNEUMONIA – munto (Diplorhynchus condylarcarpon).

RASHES – bukuzu (Ficus sonderii/F. sycomorus), mufumbo (Diospyros batocana), mumbala, mungunya, sangalwembe (Zanha africana).

SALVES and OINTMENTS – cikwangala, kamampa, mukona (Ziziphus abyssinica), mulilima (Nymphaea spp.), tandabala.

SCABIES – lubu (Phragmites mauritianus), namatuli (Xeroderris stuhlmannii).

SEDATIVES – mundumba.

SKIN – mubonantelemba (Ricinus communis), mucenje (Diospyros mespiliformis), muliluma.

SMALLPOX – munkumbya (Eminia holubii), mutumbala (Lannea schweinfurthii).

SNAKEBITE – mupazupazu (Hymenocardia acida), mutinda (Strychnos spinosa), muntomba (Diplorhynchus condylarcarpon), munomba (Ximenia caffra), mutumbulwa (Fbcourtia indica), musambiza.

SORES – bukuzu (Ficus sonderi/F. sycomorus), cibumbwe, cipezya-bazike, kalunguti (Terminalia sericea), kaluya, kalutenta (Plumbago spp.), kamwaya (Maprounea africana), mulambalala, mubonantelemba (Ricinus communis), mucokacimongo, mukololo (Lonchocarpus capassa/L. nelsii), mukomba (Albizia glaberrima), muliluma (Nymphaea spp.), munkumbya (Eminia holubii), musasa (Boscia salicifolia), mutubetube (Acacia sieberiana).

SORE THROATS – sikutwe.

STOMACH – kalunguti (Terminalia sericea), mbebe, mulawana (Combretum adenogonium), munto (Diplorhynchus condylarcarpon), munomba (Ximenia caffra), munongo (Schinzophyton rautanenii), siciis (Syzygium guineense spp. huillense).

SWELLINGS – munomba (Ximenia caffra), mupazupazu (Hymenocardia acida), musambiza.

SYPHILIS – cibumbwe, cipezya-bazike, kamwaya (Maprounea africana), mululwe (Cassia abbreviata), talantambwe.

TONSILITIS – mambambi, sikutwe.

TOOTHACHE – cibanze (Bosica mossambicensis), mubimba (Combretum imberbe), mululwe (Cassia abbreviata), mukololo (Piliostigma thonnningarii).

VENEREAL DISEASES – cipezya-bazike, ciwayu, matungabambala, mulundu-ngoma (Euphorbia ingens).

YAWS – kamwaya (Maprounea africana), njamukupa, talantambwe.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Edwin Smith relates how he was rolling about in great agony, having been attacked by a spitting cobra, when a local doctor "brought some leaves and twigs of the Kabwengwe bush, which he soaked in warm water, and rubbed round the outside of the eye; finally he blew with his mouth into the eye itself [...]" the writer knows that almost instantaneously he got...
relief; the eye, which had been dry and hot, at once began to water profusely, the inflammation subsided, and the pain abated" (Smith & Dale 1920: 246). On another occasion, his nasal congestion was speedily relieved by sniffing a herbal prescription prescribed by a local practitioner (Smith & Dale 1920: 228).

A generation later, Dr Gilges wrote after many years of research into African remedies, "it would be rash to label them all as useless.... it may well be that to an enterprising pharmacologist some hidden values in our native flora might one day be revealed" (Gilges 1955: 402).

There are here several areas of research. Firstly, botanists willing to spend time in the Ila villages talking to the old men could gather with them specimens of the 66 unclassified plants listed above and determine their scientific names.

Secondly, there is a need for those with medical qualifications to observe local practitioners at work in the villages, as Gelfand and his colleagues did in Zimbabwe (Gelfand et al. 1985), and see for themselves how the diseases are treated and medicines dispensed.

Thirdly, plants and preparations with observed efficacy need to be analysed and processed by pharmaceutical experts so that their healing properties can benefit the sick in the world at large.

Fourthly, the extent to which local medicine is practised today in the Ila villages warrants investigation. It may be that it is already too late, and that the traditional arts of healing have died out with those who practised them. Already by the 1960s, the local doctors from Kasenga were buying their materials from the chemist at Choma, 160 km away, rather than gathering them in the forest. However, there is some evidence of a revival of traditional medicine over the last 25 years. One missionary writes "Since Independence, witch-doctors and medicines-purveyors and diviners have come to the surface again" (Rev. J.T. McCormack, letter to author 23 April 2001). Another missionary was introduced in 1993 to a village practitioner specialising in asthma, by whom two nurses at Mamba Mine Hospital in the Gwembe valley claimed to have been cured. He also tells of a senior civil servant in Lusaka who was cured of periodic depression by drumming at a village near Chalimbana, and of a revival of witchcraft and traditional healing reported by Thayer Scudder in the Lusitu Valley in the 1990s (Rev. Merfyn Temple, conversation with author).

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