
UNIT 7 RITUAL-I : A CASE STUDY FROM AFRICA

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7.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to

- describe the physical and social setting of the Ndembu of Zambia
- describe the Mukanda or circumcision ritual practised by the Ndembu
- summarise Victor Turner's analysis of Mukanda.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The first unit of this block made you familiar with major sociological theories dealing with rituals. This unit, as well as the next one, will deal with case studies which will help you to appreciate the crucial role that rituals play in human society, particularly tribal society. In this unit, we shall be dealing with a case study from Africa. You must by now be familiar with the work of Victor Turner. Turner studied the social structure of the tribal group known as the 'Ndembu' inhabitants of North-West Zambia in South-Central Africa. His extensive field work, conducted mainly in early 1950, culminated in a number of important monographs and articles.

In this unit, we shall concern ourselves with the book entitled *The Forest of Symbols : Aspects of Ndembu Rituals* which is a collection of articles and papers dealing directly and indirectly with aspects of the Ndembu ritual system. Turner has aptly named this work a 'forest'; and it is not within the scope of this unit to examine all the 'trees' in this forest. We shall primarily concern ourselves with Turner's detailed analysis of one particular ritual, namely 'Mukanda' or the initiation rite of boys through circumcision.

Before we describe 'Mukanda', it is important to familiarize ourselves with Ndembu society and understand the different kinds of rituals observed by them. This is what we shall do in the first section. In the second section, we shall describe Mukanda in some detail. The third section will touch upon some of the analytical points made by Turner in his study.

Before we move to the first section, a word of advice is in order. Many of the

names and much of the information you will read about in this unit will seem unfamiliar and sometimes confusing. You should therefore read this unit slowly and carefully. If you do so, you are bound to find Ndembu rituals as fascinating and interesting as Turner did.

7.2 NDEMBU SOCIETY

As has been mentioned earlier, the Ndembu inhabit the North-West region of Zambia in South-Central Africa. (They believe themselves to be the descendants of the great chief 'Mwantivanvwa' of Congo.) In many parts of Zambia, contact with the European and their customs resulted in a disintegration of tribal religions which stressed values like tribal unity, kinship ties and respect for elders. The members of different tribes were increasingly interacting in a non-tribal environment and participating in a modern economic system, seeking employment in new industries and services. Turner was fortunate enough to do his research amongst a people and in a region where the process of religious disintegration as described above was not taking place so swiftly and completely.

7.2.1 Geographical Setting and Economic Life

Turner did his fieldwork in the Mwinilunga territory, which was then inhabited by 18,000 Ndembu. These people were dispersed in scattered villages, containing about a dozen huts each, in an area as vast as 7,000 square miles. This area was mostly woodland, cut through by numerous rivers and streams.

The Ndembu have a subsistence economy. By that we mean that they produce just enough food for their needs. Women grow 'cassava' the staple vegetable food, in addition to finger-millet and maize which is used for making beer. Men hunt—hunting is a strictly male occupation and a number of rituals and taboos are associated with it. Let us now briefly describe the major structural principles along which Ndembu society is organised, namely, matrilineal descent and virilocal residence. This will help us go deeper into the heart of Ndembu rituals and religion. We will then be able to put our attention to studying the type of descent and rituals that are peculiar to Ndembu religion itself.



Tribal unity, kinship ties and respect for elders are the key religious values of
Zambian's tribals

7.2.2 Matrilineal Descent and Virilocal Residence

The Ndembu reckon descent from the female line. In other words, a child belongs to the lineage of his/her mother. This is known as matrilineal descent. In most societies with a matrilineal mode of descent, residence tends to be matrilocal. However, in Ndembu society, virilocal residence is the cultural norm, i.e. a male takes his wife to reside in his own village. This combination of matrilineal descent and virilocal residence results in certain complications.

Since a man reckons descent from his mother's line, he is entitled to a share in the property of his matrilineal kin, primary or classificatory. Simultaneously, he has the right to take his wife away from her kin to reside in his village. Thus, women, on whom the social continuity of villages depends, do not live in these villages but their husband's villages. Divorce and widow-remarriage are highly prevalent. So a woman is constantly shifting from village to village. Men try to keep their sons with them as long as they can, and the father-son-relationship is highly ritualised, as we shall see later. Competition results between maternal uncles and fathers for the mother and her children, owing to the strong 'patrilocal' tendencies in this matrilineal society. Spatial mobility of individuals, families and villages is very high in the Ndembu society. Villages are not stable, enduring groupings as they are in Indian society, for example. They are constantly being formed and dissolved. They are in a state of flux. Having briefly described the physical and social setting of the Ndembu, let us now acquaint ourselves with the major subject matter of this unit, the Ndembu ritual system. It is clear then that the whole concept and ideology of the Ndembu is quite different from societies in which the village is a stable unit of analysis, and not in flux.

7.2.3 Types of Ndembu Rituals

Victor Turner did 21½ years of fieldwork in Mwinilunga, during which time he observed, attended and gathered information about many Ndembu rituals. As he says, "It was an astonishing and enriching experience to note the contrast between the relatively simple and monotonous economic and domestic life of these hunters and cultivators and the ordered arrangement and colourful symbolism of their religious life." (Turner, 1967:87), Ndembu rituals are basically of two types according to Turner, namely : 1) life crises rituals and 2) rituals of affliction.

1) **Life-crises rituals** : These mark "an important point in the physical or social development of an individual such as birth, puberty or death." (Turner, 1967:7). In all types of societies, a number of rituals exist which mark the shift from one stage of life and social status to another. These 'crisis' ceremonies are concerned not only with the individuals around whom they are centered, but they also mark changes in various social relationships. To take an example from Indian society, the rituals of marriage mark a change in a person's social status. He/she is no more just a son or daughter, but a husband or wife. Relationships with parents, with siblings and friends undergo subtle changes as a result of this life-crisis ritual. The phase of irresponsible childhood and adolescence is over and the individual becomes a 'family man or woman'. Life-crisis rituals of the Ndembu include the initiation ceremonies of boys and girls. The form and purpose of these rituals differs with gender. Boys are circumcised (the foreskin of the male sex organ, (the penis) is removed) but the corresponding procedure, clitoridectomy (cutting off the female's clitoris) is not performed for girls. The initiation ceremony for girls called 'Nkang's' involves a day-long ordeal, during which the girl has to lie absolutely still for an entire day, covered with a blanket beneath a tree known as 'milk-tree'. Boys are circumcised collectively. Boys are initiated before puberty whilst the girls are initiated at the onset of puberty.

The main purpose of the initiation rite for boys is the inculcation of tribal values, hunting skills and sexual instruction, whilst the girls' initiation rites symbolise preparation for marriage and motherhood. Initiation qualifies a man to enter hunting cults and a woman to enter fertility cults. Whilst men's role as hunters is highly ritualised, women's role as cultivators is not emphasised. In a nutshell, initiation rites stress productive activity for men and reproductive activity for women.

However, one of the tribal values that permeates both the rites is that of respect for elders.

Activity 1

Identify any one life crisis ritual in your society. Describe the ceremonies involved and the changes they mark in the life of the participants. Write an essay of about 500 words and compare it, if possible with the essays of other students at your Study Centres.

2) **Rituals of Affliction** : Rituals of 'affliction' are roots in the major theme of Ndembu religious life, namely that; classes or misfortunes are associated with the activities of the spirits of the dead of "shades". It is believed that shades of dead relatives come out of their graves to trouble or afflict their kinsfolk because they (the shades) have been forgotten, neglected or displeased. Being "caught" or afflicted by a shade makes an individual, the centre of a great ritual gathering. If cured, one can become a minor "doctor" and later help to cure other similarly afflicted. As Turner says, "the way to religious fame is through affliction" (Turner, 1967 : 10). There are three types of applications identified by the Ndembu. These are as follows:

- i) A hunter's shade may cause problems in hunting;
- ii) A women's shade may cause reproductive disorders (like excessive menstrual bleeding, repeated abortions and infertility) in her kinswomen;
- iii) Shades of both sexes may cause illnesses like pains, shivering, loss of weight etc. to kin of either sex.

To handle these afflictions corresponding sets of rituals exist, namely, 'hunters cults' for i) above 'fertility cults' for ii) and iii) curative cults. Let us briefly describe these cults :

- 1) **The Hunting Cult** : As has been hinted at earlier, hunting is invested with tremendous ritual significance for the Ndembu. It is more than a mere sport or an economic activity, it is a calling. It is believed that a supernatural force "tells" a Ndembu youth that he is to become a great hunter through dreams about the shade of a hunter relative. These dreams are followed by bad luck at hunting, in other words, affliction. The afflicted hunter enters the hunter's cult through the performance of rituals. As his performance of rituals increases, his bad luck at hunting is believed to decrease, and over a period of time, he gains mastery in the art of huntsmanship. Mastery in huntsmanship is thus linked to greater and greater involvement in the performance of hunting rituals which the Ndembu believe confer increasing supernatural powers on the young hunter. This power it is believed, enables the hunter to "see animals quickly", "to draw them where is" and "to become invisible to them".
- 2) **Fertility Cults** : Turner attended a number of rituals concerned with reproductive disorders. His wife was often requested to assist in cases of difficult childbirth or abortions. The Turners observed that many women suffered from anaemia (lack of blood) and their diet too was deficient in protein, which is essential for good

health. However, the Ndembu attributed reproductive disorders to affliction by female shades who come out of the grave and 'sit' in the bodies of their female kin until placated by the performance of rituals. Most frequently the offended shade was held to be that of the women's maternal grandmother or the women's mothers who had been forgotten by the afflicted women. Turner regards this as highly significant. He explains that "...women, through whom succession and inheritance are reckoned, go to their husbands villages after marriage, often far away from their own villages, and may, in the course of time cease to remember their older kin on the mother's side who have died...being "caught" by a matrilineal shade serves as a sharp reminder that their own first loyalty is to their matrilineal villages and that they bear children not for their husbands, but for their mother's brothers and brothers "back home". (Turner, 1967 : 15).

- 3) **Curative Cults** : According to Turner, the 'Chihamba' and 'Kalemba' cults are the only thinly indigenous Ndembu curative cults. Other cults noted by Turner include 'Kayong'u', 'Tukuku' and 'Masundu' which have been borrowed from other tribes. In these cults, doctors administer medicines both to themselves and the patient, after which both undergo fits of trembling. The Tukuku and Masundu cults have become very popular in Mwinilunga, and are performed for patients suffering from tuberculosis (T.B.). It is believed to be caused by shades of Europeans and other tribals. As part of the treatment, European food is served, European dress is worn and European songs and dances are mimed.

Thus we see that for the Ndembu, ritual informs every aspect of life, right from individual life-cycles to illness and productive activity. Having gained an insight into the nature of Ndembu society and central importance of ritual, let us now move to the next section. This section will focus upon one particular ritual, already referred to earlier, namely Mukanda or the initiation of boys.

We have chosen the particular ritual because through it we can observe the various tensions and strains in Ndembu society. Simultaneously, we can also gain an insight into the forces of cohesion which make for tribal unity and solidarity. But before we begin, why not check your progress?

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) State whether the following are 'True' or 'False'.
 - i) Hunting is a strictly female occupation amongst the Ndembu.
 - ii) Clitoridectomy is performed to initiate Ndembu girls.
 - iii) Male initiation rites emphasise tribal unity and sexual instruction.
- 2) Complete the following statements :
 - i) In Ndembu society, matrilineal descent is coupled withresidence.
 - ii) Competition between ...and ...exists for Ndembu women and their children.
 - iii) The first phase of fertility rituals comprises of ... and ...

7.3 'MUKANDA'—THE RITE OF CIRCUMCISION

Before we get down to describing the Mukanda ritual, let us acquaint ourselves with the manner in which Turner defines and plans to study ritual. Turner defines ritual as "prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings as powers". In other words, the elements present in a ritual situation are certain prescribed ways of acting, the belief, that the occasion is 'sacred' or out of the pale of the mundane, profane world and consequently, the propitiation or calling upon of supernatural forces.

Box 7.01

What are the criteria Turner keeps in mind while studying ritual? He identifies three; the first is the external appearance. This is a purely descriptive criterion. The second is 'exegesis' or the interpretation of the external appearance offered by the participants themselves. The third criterion is the analysis of the anthropologist, which may at times contradict the analysis or integration of the participants. The anthropologist, Turner believes, is in a unique position. He has access to knowledge about the society under study which may not even occur to the members of the society.

Turner's treatment of the Mukanda ritual exemplifies the criteria outlined above. He presents Mukanda as a series of episodes based on his observations (external appearance) along with comments and exegesis of its symbolism by Ndembu participants.

Muckona, one of Turner's Ndembu informants, narrated to Turner the myth which is the foundation of the Mukanda ritual. The story is that once upon a time, a child was left playing in the grass by his mother, the sharp grass blades cut the foreskin of his penis! When the men of the village saw what had happened they completely removed the foreskin with a razor. The wound healed, and all the men decided to adopt the practise. Mukanda is thus a 'healing' process. Uncircumcised men are regarded as polluting because dirt gathers under the foreskin. A circumcised man is "white" or pure because what was once hidden and unclean is made clean and visible. **The social significance of Mukanda is the separation of the boy from his mother and his ritual identification with the father.**

As you have read earlier in the unit, Mukanda has a group dimension, i.e., a number of boys are circumcised together from a cluster of neighbouring villages which may range in number of two to twelve. As you have read earlier, villages have short histories. Vicinages are therefore highly unstable groupings, as villages often dissolve and disperse and may later get linked up with another vicinage. In each vicinage, at least two villages claim more superiority over the others. The struggle for prestige by a particular village headman may be won if he manages to organise a Mukanda ceremony. The successful staging of Mukanda helps a headman gain moral and ritual superiority over the others. Turner keenly observed the rivalries and scheming at work in the vicinage which made Mukanda more than just an initiation rite, but a trial for strength. We will not go into the details of these rivalries, but it must be kept in mind that a Mukanda ceremony has strong political undercurrents. Let us now read about the ritual proper.

A Mukanda performance is broadly divided into three stages. These are (1) 'Kwing'ija' or the stage of induction; (2) 'Kung'ula' or the stage of seclusion and (3) 'Kwidisha' or the rites of return to normal life.

Mukanda begins with a formal invitation to the Senior Circumcisor once the elders of the vicinage agree to perform Mukanda and the decision is endorsed by their womenfolk. The oldest and best developed of the boys to be initiated (the novices) is sent to the Senior Circumcisor. The boy, known as the 'Kambanji', abuses the Circumcisor thus, "old man...you have become lazy and your knife is now blunt. Nowadays you are no use at circumcising boys. Why should we call you to circumcise us at Mukanda?" (Turner, 167 : 186). Pretending to be very angry, the circumcisor tells Kambanji to inform the headmen of the vicinage that they are to make preparations for Mukanda. The 'Establisher', whose job is to organise supplies of food and beer for the 'Kwingija' or induction phase gets down to business. Mukanda has officially begun. From now on, the novices are to maintain certain food taboos.

7.3.1 The Stage of Induction

Before the rites begin, food and beer are stocked at the sponsoring village, and a camp-site is cleared for the novices and their kin. On the day before circumcision, the circumcisors set about preparing 'Ku-Kolisha' medicine whose ingredients are the leaves and bark scrappings of certain species of trees. Kukolisha is used in several episodes in Mukanda. Its most important ingredient is the bark scrapping of the 'chikoli' thorn tree. The chikoli tree has tremendous ritual significance; it symbolises the penis and masculine virtues of courage, hunting skills and endurance. Whilst the medicine is being prepared, the circumcisors dance and sing songs. The words of these songs reflect their power over the novice and the separation of the novice from his mother.

While the medicine is being prepared by the Circumcisors, the novices arrive with their kin. That night, all participate in a grand dance. The novices are carried by their parents as their feet are not allowed to touch the ground. Remember, they are at the centre of one of the most important rituals of their tribe, and thus have a very special status. Early the next morning (this is the great day that all have been preparing for), Ku-kolisha medicine is applied to the novices, their mothers and all the officials who will participate in the ritual. After being fed a big meal of fish and cassava prepared by their mothers, the novices go down the path to the circumcision site. They must pass through on the Mukula poles, symbolically enacting the shedding of childhood and entry into manhood. A Mukulu log is placed at the circumcision site. Small beds of leaves are made for the boys to lie on. As they are carried in, their mothers cry and wail as if at a death. Interestingly enough, the circumcision site is known as 'if wilu' or 'chifwilu', the place of dying. The circumcisors work in teams of three on the boys. After the operation, the boys are carried and seated on the mukula log and the blood from their cuts is soaked up by grass pads. Their penises are supported by strings so that they don't rub painfully against their bodies. After being fed sweet beer cassava mush and beans by their anxious fathers, they are lead back to the camp where their weeping mothers greet them. It must be noted that women are strictly forbidden from going near the circumcision site. Note how the world of men and that of women and infants is symbolically separated by means of these rites. Before we move on to the next two stages of Mukanda, let us revise what we have just learnt.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Staging 'Mukanda' is a trial of strength between Ndembu headmen. Explain in about five lines.

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- ii) Why is the 'Chikoli' tree used in Ku-kolisha medicine? Explain in about two lines.

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- iii) What are the main themes in the songs of the circumcisors? Give your answer in two lines

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iv) What does the entry into the 'mukula' gate symbolise? Answer in five lines.

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7.3.2 The Stage of Seclusion

The stage of seclusion normally lasts for a period of three to four months. However, in the particular Mukanda ritual recorded by Turner, it lasted only two months. Such long lasting rituals which take from 2-4 months to complete are very much an important aspect of Ndembu society. It also indicates to us that such tribal customs are very important for societal cohesion and specific role playing e.g. the role of a 'headman'. The building of the novice's lodge is the first part of this stage. The lodge is a crude structure built out of twigs and grass. Novices enter the lodge and eat and sleep in groups based on friendship rather than kinship. They are in the charge of a Lodge Instructor, who takes care of them, ensures that they maintain feed taboos. The secrets of the lodge may never be revealed, although this rule is being increasingly violated. Until the wounds of the novices heal, neither they nor their parents may consume salt. Parents must also refrain from sexual intercourse. Salt, semen, blood and intercourse are symbolically linked, it is believed that consumption of salt or indulging in intercourse prevent's the novice's wounds from healing. In the lodge, the values of discipline and obedience to elders are instilled into the novices. As Turner describes, "they had to maintain a modest demeanor, only speak when spoken to, fetch and carry as required at the double, and run errands". (Turner, 1967 : 236). Novices are given instructions by lodge officials and visiting elders. They are told not to steal or lie, or jeer at the aged, courage and hospitality are prescribed. When they have fully recovered both physically and psychologically, 'chikula' rites begin. 'Makishi' masked dancers representing the shades of dead chiefs of the tribe perform a dance. This dance symbolises the healing of the boys. Salt is then distributed to the parents who may now resume sexual relations. After the chikula rites are completed, the boys are taught tribal lore; riddles, proverbs, hunting dances and songs. They learn how to dance the 'ku-tomboka' war dance which each boy must perform at the end of Mukanda.

Activity 2

Try and collect some information regarding initiation ceremonies practised by any one tribe of India. Compare your findings with those of other students at your centre.

7.3.3 The Rites of Return

After their period of seclusion is completed, novices are decorated with patterns of white clay for their public appearance after Mukanda. This decorative disguise marks the fact that they are changed persons, especially for their mothers. They are no longer children, they have entered the adult, more moral, community. They are taken to their parents camp and greeted with songs and rejoicing. There is a night long dance in which the novices participate. This is a sight tabooed to women and uncircumcised children. That night, the boys are carefully dressed and decorated for the final grand celebration. The Lodge Instructor makes a final speech, commanding the novices to maintain food and sex taboos. The 'Ku-tomboka' dance then begins. **The performance of the boys is discussed and evaluated.** The boys then go back to their own villages where further celebrations will take place. The Mukanda officials are given their payment. Mukanda is over.

7.4 TURNER'S ANALYSIS OF 'MUKANDA'

To gain an insight into Turner's analysis of Mukanda, it is important to acquaint ourselves with the theoretical orientations that he brought into the field. One orientation could be termed that 'social structural' orientation. In line with this, he gathered data pertaining to the structure of the social system, namely, genealogies, political ties and divisions and the social characteristics of the ritual participants. The second orientation tilted towards unearthing the cultural structure. In this case, he collected details pertaining to the ritual itself, interpretations or exegesis of laymen and experts and also those items of secular behaviour that bore a direct relation with the ritual system.

Box 7.02

Turner's analysis of Mukanda locates ritual behaviour within its social context. In his words, "...it became clear to me that the events both in and out of a ritual context I observed at Mukanda were influenced by the structure of a field that included both ritual and social components". (Turner, 1967 : 262). Let us now briefly review some of the important points brought out by Turner in his analysis.

- 1) **Mukanda helps redefine parent-child relationships** : Mukanda modifies the mother-son and father-son relationships. In Turner's words, "...after Mukanda the relationships between occupants of these three social positions are guided by different values and directed towards different goals than those that prevailed before that ritual. From being "unclean" children, partially effeminised by constant contact with their mothers... boys are converted... into purified members of a male moral community, able to take part in the usual, political and ritual affairs of Ndembu society". (Turner, 1967 : 266). This helps to reshape links outside the family. Through the mother, a boy is affiliated to the matrilineal core of a village. Through his father, however he gets linked up with another village and wider social units like the vicinage, chieftdom and tribe. In Turner's words, "Mukanda strengthens the wider and reduces the narrower loyalties" (Turner, 1967 : 266). Although matriliney governs descent, Mukanda emphasises the unity of males, irrespective of matrilineal ties.
- 2) **Mukanda as a mechanism for restoring equilibrium in society** : Mukanda is usually called for when there is a large number of young "unclean" uninitiated boys "hanging around" the women's kitchens, prolonged attachment to the mother is regarded as dangerous and the boys are sought to be brought under the control of their fathers by ritually separating them from their mothers through Mukanda.
- 3) **Mukanda as a struggle for prestige** : As we have already seen, the holding of Mukanda and the obligations and duties. It involves, providing a mechanism through which rivals may claim prestige and assert their leadership. This gives them certain rights and privileges in any future event of religious or secular importance.

In a nutshell, the entire elaborate ritual of Mukanda is viewed as more than a series of ritually prescribed behaviours and symbols. It is seen by Turner in relation to and as reflecting the social setting in which it is embedded. Social structure and cultural structure are thus viewed by Turner in terms of their intimate interconnections. This is what makes Turner's understanding of ritual meaningful and insightful.

Check Your Progress 3

- i) What are some of the values imparted to the novices in the lodge? Use five lines for your answer.

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ii) How does Mukanda modify the relationships between parents and their son?
Use five lines for your answer.

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7.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt about the part that rituals play in the life of the Ndembu Zambia as described by Victor Turner. To begin with, you were familiarised with the physical and social setting of this tribal group. You learnt how the conflicting principles of matrilineal and virilocality made Ndembu villages highly mobile and unstable. You read about the two main categories of rituals; identified by Turner, namely, life-crisis rituals and rituals of affliction and their corresponding cults. You read about how the circumcision of boys ritually enacted a separation from the mother and an identification with the father and the male moral community. You saw how Turner studied both the social and the cultural structure of Ndembu society and showed how the two are interlinked. You studied Mukanda not merely as an initiation ritual, but an event which helped redefine parent child relations, which brought about social equilibrium and was used as a device for enhancing prestige.

7.6 KEY WORDS

Exegesis : Critical explanation as interpretation especially of scriptures.

Initiation : To admit an individual into a fraternity, and society.

Seclusion : To remove a person to an isolated or a private place.

Vicinage : The neighbourhood.

7.7 FURTHER READINGS

Evan, M. Zuess, 1987. 'Ritual' in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade, New York : Macmillan.

Leach, Edmund, R. 1961. *Rethinking Anthropology*, London : Athlone, 1968.
Ritual in *The International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, Edited by David. L. Sills. Vol. 13, New York : Macmillan.

7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) i) False ii) False iii) True

- 2) i) Virilocal
- ii) Maternal uncles, fathers
- iii) Treatment, dance.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Headmen of the villages in a vicinage compete with each other for moral superiority and prestige. By successfully staging 'Mukanda', a headman can claim moral superiority over the others.
- ii) The chikoli tree symbolises the male sex organ, the penis and the masculine virtues of courage, endurance and hunting skills. Hence it is used in Ku-kolisha medicine.
- iii) The main themes in the circumcisors songs are their power over the novices and the separation of the novices from their mothers.
- iv) Entry into the 'mukanda' gate symbolises the end of childhood and entry into manhood.

Check Your Progress 3

- i) In the lodge, the novices are taught discipline and obedience. They are told not to steal or lie, not to jeer at the aged and are taught to be courageous and hospitable.
- ii) Mukanda makes "unclean" children into purified members of a male moral community. No longer are they attached just to the mother and her matrilineal kin but are now in a position to get linked up with wider social units.