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SOME TONGA FIRST-NAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS Africa-Press – Zambia. Names have always been deeply tied to a person’s identity and heritage. In Africa, a person’s name is an important link to their society and helps to tell the story of their roots. One of the unfortunate influences of the westernization that occurred during colonialism is that some people abandoned their African names and became more inclined to European names. However, even in the face of this westernization, a lot of Africans still maintained the usage of African names as their first name because African names provide a sense of pride and cultural identity. Today we will discuss some Tonga first-names and their meanings. The Tonga people are an ethnic group found in the Southern part of Zambia and also in the Northern part of Zimbabwe. The Tonga people are believed to be the oldest Bantu settlers in Zambia. Tongaland comprises of the Valley Tonga who reside in a series of gorges near the Zambezi river and the Plateau Tonga who live in higher lands. They all speak the Tonga language “ChiTonga” but each region has its own dialect with some differences of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In Tonga culture, the naming of a child is a very important occasion. The Tonga people have many traditional first-names to choose from when naming a child and only a few of them will be discussed here. As is the case with many other African societies, the names given to children are usually based on the different circumstances and events that surround the birth of the child, these include; manner of the birth, happiness, fertility, bad occurrences, order of birth and so on. In some instances forenames are given to infants in memory of a dead family member such as a sibling, parent or grandparent. Sometimes the characteristics that parents observe from the child at birth also play a role in determining the name. For More News And Analysis About Zambia Follow Africa-Press From Chalo Chatu, Zambia online encyclopedia Jump to navigation Jump to search This is in no way a complete list of Zambian names and does not include all the tribes of Zambia. Names beginning with A Names beginning with B Name Meaning Language Gender Banji' We are many Tonga Beenzu Visitors Tonga Unisex Bupe Gift Chibemba Unisex Busiku Night Tonga Names beginning with C Names beginning with D Dalisani means “bless us” in Chewa Daliso means “blessing” in Chewa Names beginning with E Names beginning with F Names beginning with G Ganizani means “you must! think” in Chewa Names beginning with H Hachikoko means “harvest” in Tonga Names beginning with I Names beginning with J Names beginning with K Names beginning with L Names beginning with M Names beginning with N Names beginning with O Names beginning with P Names beginning with Q Names beginning with R Names beginning with S Names beginning with T Names beginning with U Names beginning with V Names beginning with W Names beginning with X Names beginning with Y Names beginning with Z References A study was conducted in the Eastern and Southern Provinces of Zambia to investigate the meaning of Zambian traditional names. A total of 323 respondents from a total of 26 villages were asked to describe baby-naming customs, identify traditional names and explain the meanings of the names, the circumstances of naming and whether the name is used to name females, males or both. All the information has been compiled and published into 142 page book that describes the naming customs of newly born babies and an identification of names from the Tumbuka, Chewa, Ngoni, Nsenga people of Eastern Zambia and the Tonga of Southern Zambia. There were a total of 571 traditional names from Eastern Zambia and 312 traditional Tonga names from Southern Zambia. The study was conducted from 1980 to 2000. One research field trip was made to Choma and the Gwembe Valley in 1988 and three trips to Eastern Zambia between 1980 and 1985. This was the time the author was working at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Zambia. During the 1993 field trip to Eastern Zambia the author was working at Bridgewater College. The book identifies ten most popular names from the surveys from the Eastern Province and the Tonga from Southern Province. For those who have pets, the appendix has a 2-page compilation of dog names and their meanings from Eastern Zambia. Ideally, the author would like the book to be made available at all maternity wards in hospitals in Zambia so that potential parents can use the book to choose baby names. You can buy the book from Book World Book store and at the Lusaka International Airport Book Store in Lusaka in the Capital City of Zambia. The book is also available in Lusaka at Cell Phone 095-576-1375. You can browse the book on Google. How do you pick a baby name? What is the story behind your name? It is every parent’s desire to have an explanation to give, but babies do not come with a user manual. One day the baby will ask “What does my name mean?” In picking a name for a baby, parents may consider who they are, where they are coming from and where they see their descendants in the future. id=”attachment_1237” align=”alignleft” width=”300″ caption=”Baby Names” Naming traditions and naming ceremonies play a decreasing role in the scheme of things as more people disperse into the diaspora, even if they decide to use African baby names. Kitiwe is a good example of a community from different tribal groups who have intermarried and mingled with people from other tribes and nationalities. The use of ethnic names is not so much an effort to fight against change, but rather a preservation of cultural identity that recognizes that every tradition has good things that a group can bring to the table as new communities are re-defined wherever they are re-located. The meaning and origin of African names has in the past been handed orally from generation to generation. Urbanization has interrupted this traditional oral information transmission. It is important to put in place a substitute way of transmitting that information forward into the future. We now have digital means of preserving the information and it is up to all of us to contribute to this growing record of our origins. The Internet makes it possible to get the information from different sites on the web. Selecting a Baby Name Traditionally, the elders were involved in this very important decision. Each occasion also provided a good opportunity to revise the source and meaning of traditional names, as the elders discussed name suggestions. The emphasis is not always on the meaning of the name. Some of the reasons people chose a particular baby name include: If you are Bemba and your spouse is Tonga, does the baby get a Bemba,Tonga or a Lozi name? Traditional beliefs An important ancestor’s name The name of someone involved in a life event (e.g. a rescue) Unique name Unusual name Popular name (eg. Obama) Are you expecting a new baby or are you just curious to explore? Here is a list of around 2,000 Zambian names. It will help you think about your options or answer your questions. The distinction between boys names and girls names is not always clear. It is common practice in most of the 73 Zambian languages for the same name to be used as a baby boy name or as a baby girl name. The list also shows whether each name is a male , female or unisex one. This is really a community project that requires your input to make it better. With your feedback, we will grow the list to include more information about the meaning of traditional Zambian names and their origins. To our knowledge, this is the largest publicly available collection of Zambian baby names. Due to the arbitrary nature in which political borders were drawn, Zambian names overlap with those of its eight neighbouring countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania). NAME COUNT: 2,088 (11 Nov 2010) If you are a mum to be or a dad to be, a name list is useful when you are considering whether to give your baby a traditional name or a popular baby name. This is a reference point for families who are picking a name for a baby, people with African names looking for the meaning of their Zambian name or just curious friends looking to learn the origins and meaning of a name they know. Learn about your own name and share your knowledge about the meaning of Zambian names and your knowledge of the origin of Zambian names. If you are an author who has written about Zambian names, have you considered re-publishing your book as an Ebook? This is a much cheaper option and easily done. It will ensure that your contribution is more widely available and will enhance the legacy you have already contributed to so significantly. Any body can participate here. In the comments box below tell us the meaning of your name or the name of someone you know. We value any information on the source of the name. If you would like your name to be included in the list of contributors, please include your full names, and indicate that you would like to be included on the list. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following: Hope Chitambo Calter Chris Muzyamba Henry Musialela Nasilele Joan Kats SOME TONGA FIRST-NAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS. Names have always been deeply tied to a person’s identity and heritage. In Africa, a person’s name is an important link to their society and helps to tell the story of their roots. One of the unfortunate influences of the westernization that occurred during colonialism is that some people abandoned their African names and became more inclined to European names. However, even in the face of this westernization, a lot of Africans still maintained the usage of African names as their first name because African names provide a sense of pride and cultural identity. Today we will discuss some Tonga first-names and their meanings. The Tonga people are an ethnic group found in the Southern part of Zambia and also in the Northern part of Zimbabwe. The Tonga people are believed to be the oldest Bantu settlers in Zambia. Tongaland comprises of the Valley Tonga who reside in a series of gorges near the Zambezi river and the Plateau Tonga who live in higher lands. They all speak the Tonga language “ChiTonga” but each region has its own dialect with some differences of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In Tonga culture, the naming of a child is a very important occasion. The Tonga people have many traditional first-names to choose from when naming a child and only a few of them will be discussed here. As is the case with many other African societies, the names given to children are usually based on the different circumstances and events that surround the birth of the child, these include; manner of the birth, happiness, fertility, bad occurrences, order of birth and so on. In some instances forenames are given to infants in memory of a dead family member such as a sibling, parent or grandparent. Sometimes the characteristics that parents observe from the child at birth also play a role in determining the name. Some of the common Tonga names are as follows: (1). LUBONO: This name means “Wealth”. This name was given to a child who was born to parents who had a lot of cattle. In Tonga culture, wealth was greatly associated to cattle. Because cattle wealth is something which everyone loves, giving your child the name “Lubono” was also a way to show that you love your child very much. (2). TWAULUMBA: This name means “We are thankful”. Parents gave this name to a child as a way of proclaiming that they were thankful to God for giving them a child. (3). LUYANDO: This name means “Love”. Parents gave this name as an expression of the love they had for each other and also for the love that they had for the child. A child with the name “Luyando” was seen as one that would promote love in the family. (4). CHILELEKO: The meaning of this name is “Blessings”. This name was given to express the fact that the family which has received a child has received a blessing. (5). LUSHOMO: This name means “faith”. This name was given to children as a way of acknowledging the importance of having faith. It expresses the faith that the mother and father had in each other and also the faith that the parents have for their child to grow up and become a successful person. It also expresses faith in God. (6). NSANZYA. This name is derived from the verb “Sanzya” which means “to wash”. The name is given as a declaration that the child who has been born has washed away any misfortune that the parents were going through. (7). LUUMUNO: The meaning of this name is “Peace”. This name was given to a child who was born at a time when there was peace or alternatively at a time when there was a need for peace. A child given this name was usually expected to grow up to be a calm and peaceful person. (8). NCHIMUNYA: This name means “the same as before”. In the cultural context, this name referred to a situation where the child who was born was of the same gender as the immediate older siblings. Parents gave this name as an expression of the fact they had received a child who was of the same gender as the one they had received before. (9). BULELO: This name means “Leadership”. In some instances parents gave this name to a child who they felt would hold a lot of leadership responsibilities when they grew up. (10). MUTINTA: This name originates from the word “Tinta” which means “To change”. This name simply implied that the new child had caused a change in the gender order of the children. For example if a couple had previously had 3 female children and then finally got a male child, they would name the male child “Mutinta”. In the same way if a couple had previously had 3 male children and then finally got a female child, they would name the female child “Mutinta”. (11). MALEELE: This name means “Miracles”. This name was given to a child who was born in a miraculous manner or who was born at a time when something miraculous was happening. (12). MUKOMI: The meaning of this name is “Conquerer”. Parents gave this name as a way to declare that their child will conquer any of the many challenges that life has. (13). MAINZA: This name means “rainy season”. This name was given to someone who was born in the raining season. The raining season was the time when agriculture was most active and so this name was associated with hard work. The implication was that a person who was named “Mainza” would be hard working. (14). MAPENZU: This name means “Problems”. This name was given to a child who was born at a time when the family was experiencing a lot of problems. (15). MPIMPA: This name means “one who packs”. The name is derived from the verb “Pimpa” which means “to pack”. This name is usually given in a case where a mother is giving birth to twins. The first born of the twins is given the name “Mpimpa” (16). BANJI: This name means “Many”. This name was usually given in cases when twins were involved. It would be given to the second born of the twins. During birth, there would be a case when the old women doing the delivery are not aware that the mother is carrying twins, after delivery a baby the women would realize that there is yet another baby to be born and they would encourage the mother to keep pushing and so the last baby to come out during a twin delivery would be called “Banji”. (17). BEENZU: This name means “Visitors”. Parents would name their child “Beenzu” in a situation where the child was born at a time when important visitors had visited the family. It was also believed that a person named “Beenzu” would grow to be a welcoming person who was kind and treated visitors well. (18). MILIMO: This name means “works”. In Tonga culture being a hard working person was a very important characteristic for one to have. Hardwork was usually associated with agricultural work and so if a baby was born at the time when people are preparing their fields in readiness for the rain season, the child would be named “Milimo”. Parents would give their child the name “Milimo” with the hope that the child would grow up to be a hard working person. (19). WATUPA: The meaning of this name is “He has given us”. The name was given to a child as a way of expressing the family’s belief that the child has been born to them by God. (20). MALILWE: The meaning of this name is “The time of a funeral”. This name was usually given to a child born at a time when there was a funeral in the family. (21). CHOOOLWE: This name means “luck”. Parents would give this name to a child born at a time when they felt that luck was on their side. For example if the child was born at a time when the family was doing very well financially, naming the child “Choolwe” would be a way of announcing to others that the family has been very fortunate in life and that the coming of a new child would increase that good luck. (22). CHEPELO: This name means “ghost”. A ghost refers to a spirit of a deceased person that those who are alive believe they can see or hear. Among the Tonga, ghosts were greatly feared. This name was given to a child who was born after the death of an elder sibling. The aim was to try and trick the spirit of death which was believed to be lingering around into believing that the new baby is not a baby but a ghost and so cannot be taken away. (23). CHIPEGO: This name means “Gift”. It was given as a way to acknowledge that the child who was born was a gift from God. It was a way of expressing gratitude for this wonderful gift. (24). LUBOMBA: The meaning of this name is “Mercy”. Parents gave their child this name as a way of appealing to the community to show mercy to the parents and their new baby. This name was usually given to a baby born to parents who were facing some life challenges at that particular time and needed help from the community. (25). LWHITO: This name means “a calling”. A calling is something which someone naturally does well. The reasons for giving this name is to proclaim that the success that the parents of the child have is as a result of the calling which God gave them. It could be keeping cattle, fishing or growing maize. This name expresses the fact that it is important to follow your calling. (26). BUSIKU: This name means “At night”. This name was usually given to a child born during the night. (27). LWEENDO: This name means “Journey”. This name was usually given to a person who was born at a time when the mother was on a journey. (28). MILANDU: This name means “Court cases”. This name was usually given to a child who was born at a time when the family or someone in the family was going through a court case or had just finished a court case. (29). TWAAMBO: This name means “Discussions”. The name was usually given when the child was born at a time when the family or community was involved in discussing important issues that could have been very contentious. Children born during a time when there were important issues being debated are the ones who were given the name “Twaambo”. (30). MIYANDA: This name means “Roots”. In traditional Tonga society, roots were very important because most medicines were made using roots. This name was usually given to a child whose mother may have had some complications during her pregnancy which required the administering of medicines. (31). SIBAJENE: The meaning of this name is “I did not find them”. This name was usually given to a child whose father died before the child was born. It was also given to a child whose mother died during labour. In some instances the name was given to a child whose grandparents (either maternal or paternal) died before the child was born. (32). BUUMBA: This name means “sadness”. This name was given to a child who was born at a time when there was a sad event in the family such as a funeral. (33). CHIMUKA: This name originates from the word “muka” which means “be late”, so “Chimuka” means “the one who has come late”. This name was usually given to a child whose gestation period took a bit longer than normal. For example in a case where the baby was born in the 10th month of pregnancy, the child would be named “Chimuka”. (34). CHABOTA: This name means “It is nice”. This name expresses the fact that the coming of a new baby is a good thing. Parents gave this name as a way of expressing their delight about the birth of their child. (35). LULEKELELO: The meaning of this name is “Forgiveness”. The name was given to a child as a way of declaring the need to foster a spirit of forgiveness in the family. These are just a small selection of some Tonga first-names. Feel free to comment in the comment’s section below on the other Tonga first-names you know and their meanings. (@Connected to History) #Culture #TongaNames #Heritage #Zambia #ConnectedtoHistory Zambia is a country rich in cultural diversity, with over 70 ethnic groups, each contributing unique names that reflect their traditions, values, and history. Many Zambian names come from Bemba, Tonga, Lozi, Nyanja, Chewa, and other languages, often carrying meanings tied to life events, spirituality, nature, and family. Here’s a curated list of 100 popular Zambian ethnic names, along with their meanings where available: Bemba Names 1. Akalya – It is not eaten 2. Balche – Young ones 3. Chibesa – Shelter 4. Chileshe – God’s grace 5. Chimuka – It has grown 6. Chisala – Prosperity 7. Chisomo – Grace 8. Kasonde – Accomplishment 9. Katongo – Togetherness 10. Lesa – God 11. Lusungu – Mercy 12. Mutale – To be calm 13. Mwansa – Praise 14. Mweva – Returning 15. Nachilima – The hard worker 16. Nkandu – Growth 17. Nkole – Harvest 18. Nsama – Creator 19. Temba – Trust 20. Twala – Responsibility Tonga Names 21. Batoka – Belonging to the Batoka people 22. Chilala – Rest 23. Chimuka – Dawn 24. Chipo – Gift 25. Daka – To nurture 26. Halwindi – Protector 27. Lishomwa – Abundance 28. Lubinda – Promise 29. Mubita – Traveler 30. Mutinta – A change 31. Nalucha – Freedom 32. Nchimunya – Peace 33. Ng’andu – Crocodile 34. Nkolola – Comforter 35. Ntanda – Star 36. Simba – Power 37. Simwanza – Defender 38. Twaambo – Vision 39. Yamba – Start 40. Zuba – Sun Lozi Names 41. Bupe – Gift 42. Iketekete – Strength 43. Inonge – Joy 44. Kabwe – Stone 45. Kalaluka – Eternity 46. Liamba – Kindness 47. Lubasi – Family 48. Lungowe – Blessings 49. Mubiana – A leader 50. Musiwa – A visitor 51. Mutelo – An adviser 52. Namaya – Generosity 53. Namuso – Heaven 54. Nawina – Victory 55. Nongoloza – Protector 56. Sitali – Calmness 57. Tukiya – Happiness 58. Wamunyima – God’s light 59. Wamuso – Belonging to heaven 60. Ziyanga – Wealth Nyanja/Chewa Names 61. Banda – A shield 62. Chibale – Kinship 63. Chikondi – Love 64. Chimwemwe – Joy 65. Chipo – Gift 66. Kondwani – Rejoice 67. Luse – Mercy 68. Madalitso – Blessings 69. Masuzoyo – Troubles 70. Mphatso – A present 71. Mwape – A servant 72. Nthanda – Star 73. Nyasha – Grace 74. Tambudzai – Be patient 75. Thandizo – Help 76. Thoko – Praise 77. Zanga – Mine 78. Zeru – Wisdom 79. Zikomo – Gratitude 80. Zina – Name Lunda/Luvale Names 81. Chingumbe – Blessing 82. Kabeya – Luck 83. Kapesa – A hunter 84. Kasongo – King 85. Kwesha – Endurance 86. Luvumbu – Bravery 87. Mbunda – Lion 88. Mbumba – Family 89. Mukanda – Knowledge 90. Ngandu – Strength 91. Nzovu – Elephant 92. Silavwe – Patience 93. Simukonda – Protector 94. Situmbeko – Blessing 95. Tandika – Start 96. Tshuma – Unity 97. Uliya – Eternity 98. Yaleka – Freedom 99. Yande – Mine 100. Zunga – Circle or community These names reflect Zambia’s linguistic richness and cultural heritage. Many Zambian names are deeply meaningful, often tied to significant life events, natural phenomena, or spiritual beliefs. Whether rooted in Bemba, Tonga, Lozi, Nyanja, or other Zambian languages, these names are a testament to Zambia’s vibrant identity and traditions.