

**THE USE OF SOME MARRIAGE LITERARY
FORMS IN THE 'NTHANGANENI' OF THE
TUMBUKA IN MPHAMBA AND KAPICHILA
AREAS OF LUNDAZI DISTRICT**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation of Luka Gondwe is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Literature by the University of Zambia.



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DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university.



Signature of student:

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Esnart Nakanyika, my wife.

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ABSTRACT

Marriage, as everyone knows, is a bond or a bargain full of complex issues. It is a transaction between two interested parties determined by the Jural or moral ordinances which bind it in its social setting. The traditional marriages among the Tumbuka fall under oral literature which if viewed critically lies in the field of Rhetoric with particular emphasis on oratorical and persuasive skills. These skills employ a wide range of figurative techniques of the language. Devoid of these techniques, the intentions of the suitor are always unsuccessful. The study therefore projects the vitality of the Tumbuka literary forms as used in the '*Nthanganeni*'.

0.1 INTRODUCTION

Most modern marriages today among the Tumbukas cannot be termed as marriages but as simply social pairings with loose terms of contract. This is because of the high divorce rates which have reached alarming levels and have become a source of worry and concern by the society especially those of the elders. It is this problem that has compelled the researcher to ascertain what has gone amiss causing this instability.

Looking at the problem at hand, several questions arise such as: for how long will this problem continue to compound the society? What has gone amiss that is causing such promiscuity and infidelity in modern marriages causing them to easily break? What role can elders play to mend such ills that have befallen the Tumbuka society today? Solutions to such questions can easily be found if people understand what marriage is and the literary devices used to constitute it. It is cardinal at this point to look at what marriage is supposed to be.

Marriage is the legal union of man and woman which has existed in various societies since time immemorial. This is some kind of relationship building which gives reciprocal rights and obligation between a man and a woman from different social, religious, economic, political or cultural backgrounds, but now bound together in a conjugal relationship which continues even beyond the life time of individual spouses. It is an institution not dependent on procreation but on heterogeneous sexes who agree to live a co-operate but orderly social life which could at times be chaotic if individual spouses do not reach an aggregate behaviour befitting both. Central to their agreement is the mode of communication used. The man, who in most societies stands to initiate such a talk, uses rhetoric to influence and manipulate the intended female audience.

Such a stimulating talk, even by the female respondent, is central to the social contract under negotiation in their well-set physical, social and psychological environment. The study seeks to examine the validity of some rhetorical techniques used by the Tumbuka in the 'nthanganeni'.

'Nthanganeni' can be defined as an institution for the Tumbuka marriage negotiations. The term 'nthanganeni' is a term whose origin is from a blend of words 'nthanga na ine' literary meaning (my age-mate) though this does not mean age mate in years of one's birth but refers to any person you start marriage with. Today the term 'nthanganene' or 'nthanganeni' refers to a bungalow where girls sleep and where boys go to negotiate marriage. Basically, it is for a certain age group who have attained marriage age. It is an institution which deals with the operations of the Tumbuka oral literature and its aesthetics. Having defined marriage and the institution of 'nthanganeni', it is cardinal to define 'rhetoric'

Rhetoric deals with methods and techniques of persuasion and oration so that the listener can be enticed to respond in a desired way as planned by the speaker who initiates such a talk. It must be borne in mind that the Tumbuka have various forms of oral expressions. It must further be noted that to comprehend these forms one must reach a certain stage not only definable by age but also by one's accumulation of wisdom and one's mental faculties because candidates of this institution relied more on symbolic and literary interpretations of the language forms than depend only on the floating meaning of the language. In this institution this level does not make sense as sense comes through excavation of deeper meaning of the oral literary forms used which are interpreted and an answer given in an act of speech reciprocation of the

contenders. These oral forms as already alluded to, differ from every day discourse as these are stylized, have an order of expression and are aesthetic in nature. The 'verbal acts' used influence the decision of the targeted lady. These arts also deal with the whole range of the Tumbuka people's activities and experiences in their well-set physical and psychological environment. They are used within the cultural, social, economic, political and historical contexts of the Tumbuka people.

One must be aware that the Tumbuka language used in this institution has stages through which one must pass. In the first stage, one must understand the physical environment and its tools. The second stage deals with the symbolic order expressed through language and how this relates to humanity or human body parts. The last stage is the interpretation of how these environmental tools represent human parts or parts of the hopeful lovers.

Looking at these stages and the complexity of each stage, only a mentally alert, mature, a verbally initiated and one who has understood the use of and meaning of the tools found in the environment and how these relate to male and female body parts can qualify for participation in the 'nthanganeni'. 'Nthanganeni' therefore, is an institution for psycho-analytic test. Among the Tumbuka people, marriage is the product of one's oral performance and success in this literary institution where literary elements take pre-eminence. This entails that those who choose to go into this mental-testing institution must have well-developed minds, the necessary commitment, must have purified language which is not commonly used and their physical, facial and other idiosyncratic physical display must be well organized. This means that for the Tumbuka, issues of marriage are complex and marriage is not for

the weaklings or verbally impaired. For such people, other methods were employed but this is outside this discussion.

Having looked at the Tumbuka traditional marriages and their complex nature, it is a fact that just as it was difficult to constitute it so it was to undo it hence its stability. The physical, psychological and literary conduct in the 'nthanganeni' were the traditional marriage ingredients for its stability.

Unfortunately, history has revealed that the use of literary forms in marriage persuasion has since 1945, at the close of the World wars, been slowly dwindling and eventually dying down in many Tumbuka dominated areas because of great intensification of modern influences upon the Tumbuka who have experienced the colonizing impact of alien political, religious, economic and educational organisations of the modern schooling system which have shaken the foundations of its community life. Young people who are supposed to learn this literary wisdom from the old have been taken away to modern schools, religious and economic institutions where they have been imparted with an alien excruciating form of community life and that boys and girls, the hopeful candidates of the 'nthanganeni' now can meet anywhere. The social distance between the heterogeneous sexes, which was once the community emphasis, has been undermined to the detriment of the Tumbuka culture. This has resulted into a wide-spread disintegration of the once intact social bonds and sanctions of the Tumbuka society whose social codes and conduct that acted as social control valves for the youth, is now history to our ears.

Furthermore, many individuals today aspire to marry but do not know the rhetorical techniques and devices that are employed. This has been overlooked, kept hidden and un-thought of and yet marriage is in most cases a product of such literary devices. It is a plain fact that wrong or unorganized presentation would not bring the desired results and hence no marriage would take place. It is this figurative and symbolic language that influences the partners. The partners, usually a male, has to speak persuasively and committedly in a symbolic language that will evoke a response from the intended partner, and at the same time, he has to withhold the whetting of his sexual appetite as this environment is a different one demanding social distance of the involved contenders.

The other problem today is that boys and girls propose love to each other without the input of elders in the early stages of their marriages lacking adequate guidance as the young have various places where they meet. These uninstitutionalised places are normally places like markets, colleges, cinema halls, buses and indeed many places unknown to their folks. At times modern lovers do not even make their physical presentations but use phones. The situation has become complex and incomprehensive to the old. Bell, (1988: 14) talking to her daughter registers this cultural alienation by the youth when she says:

"I simply can't understand these girls of today"

This entails that marriage has been misunderstood by our modern youths, for marriage in an African sense involves the rearrangement of the social structure of persons in their institutionalized relationships. This involves the creation of the new social group not only between aspirants but involving a panorama of other relations who by virtue of marriage automatically get involved. This is the reason why every relative becomes

concerned and has the desire to be involved in the choice of a partner as well as in the method of negotiations which will not flout their cherished and intact social norms. The experienced old folks had an input. They encouraged transparency and no dark corner meetings oblivious to them. Old methods are envied as boys and girls met in an authorised place called 'nthanganeni' where they displayed their literary forms which measured their literary qualities. Marriage that resulted from this institution evoked community interest and children procreated out of this belonged to the society hence there was combined responsibility of child rearing and care. Really such an arrangement cannot breed street kids the society is faced with today.

0.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Youths today are culturally alienated from their traditional base. This has created a problem for the society in that youths marry without adequate preparations. It is discovered that the nearer one is to the boma, the less stable his marriage is. This is because those in urban or peri-urban areas have overlooked traditional culture, ethics, guidance and following of the traditional norms, although, even in villages the element of dilution is also prevalent but in varying degrees compared to those in the Boma. Instead of getting advice from traditional practitioners, some advice is got from radios, television and any other modern forms of the media. There is in some places and with some old people a reversal of roles. Some old men and women have tended to respect the young because of attaching wisdom to book knowledge.

The study seeks to propose that our youths should be at any early stage be apprenticed to such a literary genre and scenario by the experienced old folks because their methods had didactic advantages and produced more lasting marriages than modern

ones. Furthermore, studies in the past have not emphasized much on the role literary forms have played in marriage stability.

0.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is to show the power of and the role literary forms play in marriage negotiations in the 'Nthanganeni' among the Tumbuka of Lundazi district in Mphamba and Kapichila chiefdoms.

0.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of the study is to get an insight into how the Tumbuka used to negotiate marriage in the traditional past in their 'Nthanganeni'. This in-depth study will help in assessing its virtues and, vices if any, so that our modern youths are availed to methodological alternatives even before they decide to enter into marriage negotiations. The following therefore stand to be the specific objectives:-

To examine some of the literary forms used in the 'Nthanganeni'

To examine the role literary forms played in marriage stability.

To establish the attitudes modern youths have over the old method of marriage negotiation.

To clearly describe what these literary forms are.

To resurrect the forgotten and advantageous culture.

To remind those ignorant of the old culture get to know about it.

0.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the research to be conducted effectively, a number of research questions were formulated and used to probe into the set subject area. The following were some of the guiding questions.

- (a). How did boys who reached marriageable age approach the Nthanganeni where marriage partners lived?
- (b). When they were in the Nthanganeni, what was the sitting arrangements?
- (c). What was the procedure of deliberations in the Nthanganeni?
- (d). How did the youth learn the literary forms they employed in this institution?
- (e). Was there the unsuccessful ones?
- (f). What was the fate of the unsuccessful ones?
- (g). What could have been the reasons for their failure to succeed?
- (h). What role did literary forms play in marriage stability?
- (i). What are the youths attitude towards traditional marriages?

0.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant in the sense that it will fill in the literature gap in researches done on the traditional marriages that has not emphatically and specifically looked at the significance of literary forms as used in the Nthanganeni of the Tumbuka. The study will further benefit the society in their assessment of one's mental growth even before one can decide to enter into marriage negotiations.

0.7 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

The study will employ the psychoanalytic literary theory, the method with the symbolic order of the language. Psycho-analysis as described by Sigmund Freud, the originator (1922 :11) is

"A method of medical treatment for those suffering from nervous disorder"

This type of therapy liberates a human being from his neurotic symptoms, inhibitions and abnormalities of character. It also looks at dreams and tries to interpret them.

Dreams according to Sigmund Freud (1900:122) are looked at as:

"A fulfillment of a wish"

He further looks at dreams as the outcome of a restricted mental activity. This restriction makes the mental activities go into hibernation which is called the 'unconscious'. Lacan, in David Lodge's book 'Modern Criticism and Theory' (1988:79) has developed a dictum stating that:

"The unconscious is structured like a language"

in that just like the words of the languages stores information so is the unconscious which can be reactivated and meaning extracted with such extricable linkages between dreams and languages. David Lodge (1988:413) comes up with a striking discovery and says:

"It is a striking truth that literary analysis, like Freud's dream analysis, does No more less than disclose a life in images or words that has its meanings, and strange linkages are more obvious than the coherent design they seem to flee from".

With this we see literary historians also trying to infer from the past a state of mind which is quite different from our own, that its texts can be understood only by the initiated few from whom an act of 'historical sympathy' is required to understand this distant era. Psycho-analysis, therefore is used in literature to recreate meaning through transformation of our understanding. The aim of psycho analysis is to lay bare the truth behind the symbolic representation of dreams and literary language.

It must be noted that dreams do not use proper nouns and so is the figurative or symbolic language. Both are after something more universal and in a familiar language. Hartman (1988:417) stresses this point when he states that:

“ The dream’s mode of expression remains distinctly vernacular”

This means that one can dream in a familiar language. This method has a high degree of localization, hence the importance of this method in this research which permits interpretation, and it is a plain fact that interpretation is in most cases thought-evoking. Hartman (1922:417) further looks at the sacredness of the power of interpretation be it in a dream or in a figurative language when he makes a statement that:

“ Not the dream is holy but the power of the interpretation as it methodizes and universalizes itself”

Looking at psycho analysis’ power of interpretation we get reminded of the story of Joseph (1986:360 in Genesis 36 V5 – 19 when his brothers said in verse 19:

“ Here comes a dreamer”

His fame was not due to the act of his profane dreaming but because of his interpretive genius. This statement means that we are greatly indebted to Fred’s school of thought which will remain the food for thought not only to the current generation but even for the generations to come. The critic today has a great task.

David Lodge (1988:419) makes this discovery and says:

“It is generally the task of the critic to uncover euphemism in any sphere:

Literary, Psychological, political.”

This will provide psycho-therapy through speaking as the case is in our area of study. In interpretation of marriage language, every participant is on alert for linguistic clues be it a simple joke or any other utterance. Talking of mental alertness David L. Sills (1968:1) observes that even:

“Understanding a joke is an intellectual achievement.”

We see in the traditional marriage institution there seems to be over sensitivity by participants. This is so because of the physical difference of man and woman in this arena of social-tug-of war. He`le`ne Cixous quoted in David Lodge’s work (1988:291) views this difference and says:

“There is ‘anatomical difference’ between man and woman ...both man and woman spend time learning marriage ethics. For man he spends time learning persuasive language in order to win a lady for a woman has a high degree of ‘libidinal economy’ than man’s ‘masculine economy’.”

Furthermore, He`le`ne (1988:292) states that:

“We can no longer talk about ‘woman’ than about ‘man’ without getting caught up in an ideological theatre where the multiplication of representations, images, reflections, myths, identifications constantly transforms, deforms, alters each person’s imaginary order and in advance, renders all conceptualization null and void.”

In this school of thought, the psycho analyst has to listen carefully for subtle linguistic clues that will help him see beyond the literal meaning. Emphasis as stated is put on the interpretation of the complex symbol system of the language which the interpreter unfolds to get the required literal meaning. This is because as Keith M. (1996:31) Says,

“Literary works are notoriously condensed, and much of the work of the literary critic involves unfolding the rich and multiple implications of the content of the literary work. Literary works tend to rely a great deal on Figurative language that in various ways (metaphor, metonymy, symbol, allegory) displaces meaning.”

The interpreter of literary forms is therefore involved in a mental activity to interpret meaning. The Tumbuka employed much of such literary symbols in their marriage propositions in the ‘Nthanganeni’ where contenders had to show their psychoanalytic maturity by struggling to persuade and convince each other. In the process some are casualties because of lacking convincing strategies leading to their failure to convince ladies. Talking about a similar struggle, Steve Biko in his book ‘I write what I like (1978;14) points out that:

“A struggle without casualties is no struggle”

This entails that a suitor must brace for this psychoanalytic test otherwise he will remain a casualty of this linguistic impairment.

0.8 HYPOTHESIS

The use of literary forms in marriage persuasion among the Tumbuka has died down due to the effect of colonization, urbanization, introduction of new education system, external intrusion into the Tumbukaland, modernisation and westernisation, otherwise it is generally accepted that:

Traditional marriages were more stable than modern marriages.

0.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research had a number of limitations. The first being the difficulty in accessing the substantial number of old people still alive and who underwent traditional marriage process before 1950. Conversely the research had an overwhelming number of youths who came forward to be interviewed and I had to spread out the choice of ages. For example, I had to sample and choose a few who got married in the fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties, nineties and then twenties to see if there were variations as regards difference in times of marriages.

Distances between villages within the chiefdoms posed to be a problem. In certain villages people went for other business activities and interviewing them was like wasting their time.

Financial constraint was another problem. The two research assistants and I depended on borrowed bicycles and so we could not cover all the villages in the two chiefdoms. The villages we covered were some of the strongholds of the activities under research.

The other limitation was that most old people who got married in the forties, thirties and before these stated time periods spoke with anger and disappointment with the turn of the practice thereby giving a lengthy talk some of which was quite unnecessary to the subject under study. The questionnaire provoked them into other revelations causing us to realise that more research was needed in other areas of traditional concern.

On the exact number of marriage breakages after 1950, respondents could not give the exact number but quite innumerable, and on the marriage breakages that might have probably occurred before 1950, all respondents could not remember any and said that there were none.

0.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study has concerned more on the forms used from the time boys approached a designated village with a concentration of deliberations that took place in the 'Nthanganeni' to the time they left it. Then it has touched on the language used in reporting to parents after an agreement had been reached. The study has not included the literary language that was employed thereafter.

0.11 OPERATION DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Jaha (plural 'Majaha')- | - | A boy or boys looking for girls to marry. |
| Kubala | - | Means to 'shine'. |
| Kubumpha | - | refers to 'bluntness' |
| Kusweka | - | A word meaning 'to be broken'. |
| Literary Forms | - | These are oral or written works of art which deal with embellishment of art works through use of rhetorical devices like metaphor, simile, allusion and other devices to enable the hearer interpret the hidden meaning. |
| Marriage | - | The legal union of man and woman as husband and wife. |

For the Tumbuka, marriage extends to the family or clan one is married to or from.

- Mbeta - refers to a mature girl of marriageable age
- Msoti - A Tumbuka word meaning a 'female chicken'.
- Ngilazi - refers to a mirror
- Nthanganeni - A term used for a house where girls sleep and where Boys go to negotiate marriage.
- Rhetoric - Deals with methods of persuasion and oration so that the listener can be enticed to respond in a desired way as planned by the speaker who initiates the talk.
- Ubale - A word which mean 'relationship'.
- Udzi - This word is used in reference to a 'sewing cotton'.
- Zingano/sindano - This is a sewing needle
- Chibuya - A disgraceful term referring to a lady who has returned from marriage for one reason or the other.
- Sororate - A girl who replaces her elder sister as a wife to the brother- in-law after the sister dies. The Tumbuka call her 'Shazi.'
- Levirate - A man who marries his sister-in-law after a brother dies.

0.12 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The structure of the dissertation therefore lies in the introduction which has dwelt on the nature of the problem, has set objectives, raised research questions, discussed the theoretical framework and other topics of interest.

The first chapter discusses the literature review on the literary forms and their persuasive nature at world level before this is narrowed down to the level of the Tumbuka tribe.

The second chapter looks at the location and physical background of the Tumbuka people which the research is interested in.

Third chapter is devoted to research methodology and data presentation after fieldwork where data was collected.

The fourth chapter will analyse the data and discuss any other information associated with the analysis.

Chapter five will seek to conclude the discussion and offer recommendations before bibliography and other related items are appended to it.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of literary forms on negotiations, especially on marriage, have great impact upon the decisions of the marriage contenders whose final resolve is dependent on one's verbal performance. This chapter presents a review of associated literature on marriage negotiations and how effective this can be through use of rhetorical devices. It looks at world scenario of negotiations and reviews on how other people have succeeded in the same area. An attempt will be made on the theoretical explanation of its success.

Charles Calder (1998:29) defining Rhetoric explains that:

“Rhetoric is the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever. The orator would speak today, to an expectant or critical audience, a political assembly, a court of law and has to employ the most effective methods of appeal in order to persuade his hearers to vote or act in the way he desired.”

There are three models of persuasion that affect any audience. These are the ‘ethos’ which deal with the integrity of the negotiator, the ‘Pathos’ which is the arousing power of appropriate emotions and the ‘logos’, a reference to the speaker’s rational or logicity of his speech. Following this Calder, (1998:29) draws deductions by stating that:

“since rhetoric exists to affect giving of decisions, the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief, he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind.”

This entails therefore that the author of such a communication has some kind of purpose and through rhetoric he seeks to accomplish the set purpose but through persuasion in order to convert his hearers to a view opposed to that which they previously held. This means that the negotiator must be one adorned with literary language that can easily appeal to the girl in the case of marriage negotiations. He must be brave, refined, sweet-speaking, and be able to captivate the audience. He must know what he wants to say, and must be aware of the topics, formulae to be used, and other patterns of discourse. To emphasise on such speech adornment for the purposes of persuasion Cicero (1971:246) said:

"I can think of nothing more agreeable to the brain and ear than a speech adorned and embellished with wise thoughts and fine language."

When we look at Cicero's view, it is clear that to be a successful negotiator, the speaker must be conversant with the everyday language of the society and not to be estranged by the people's ordinary life and customs for the speaker quite often makes reference to such linguistic, and social environment where he draws literary symbols which he uses to convince the girl. Such an act dictates the seriousness of the speaker because the positive response from the girl depends on the authenticity of the man's speech. Furthermore, this is for the reason that when an agreement is reached, for most African societies, this becomes a communal meal as other relations are involved because in an African sense issues of marriage override the personal wishes of an individual. In this communal meal all must participate for marriage outlives the life-span of an individual. William (1956:15) further sheds light on a man's objective when accorded a chance to exonerate himself when he says:

"The physical and Psychological setting makes it clear that the speaker is claiming the attention of his audience and will shortly make some effort to influence and control them."

The girl with her personal aspirations which probably are satisfied by such a stimulating talk is able to give consent. William Muel cements this fact when he says:

“Men are moved to action or to change their course of action by something that touches them where they live.”

This can be sexual appetite, desire for children, desire for company, parental demand or any other psychological and sociological forces at work. The girl therefore can only give consent if she is shown that something she needs or wants is available but this is through language. Grube G. M. A. (1965:83) talks about the nature of effective language and says:

“The language, to be effective should be lucid without being common Unusual words, on the other hand, give dignity to the language and avoid the common place, By unusual I mean strange words, metaphors, lengthened forms, anything contrary to common usage”.

This brings beauty of language and to evoke a positive response a beautiful speech is a matter of necessity. We know all men can produce speech but to beautify it is an art. Philodemus’ article in Grube’s book ‘The Greek and Roman’ (1965:2001) inspiringly says:

“Speech is a gift of nature but beautiful speech is a gift of art”

Under the subject on rhetoric, the persuader must be selective of the words. Not any word that comes should be used out one should search for words that are in the hiding. Fronto in Grube’s book (1965:222) is right when he says one must be able:

“to discern the place for certain words, their weight, rank, age and dignity, so that they should not occur in a speech as absurd as a drunken and turbulent banquet ... and when all these words have been investigated, examined, distinguished, then from the whole population of words, if I may so put it, just as when a legion must be levied in time of war, we do not merely pick the volunteers but conscript those of the right age who are hiding themselves, so when

we need words to defend us we use not only those who volunteer and occur to us of their own accord, but we bring forth those that are in hiding and hunt them out for service."

Fronto in this powerful analogy to the legion insists that in persuading one, words selected for use should not be obscure as to be unintelligible to the audience, but the use of words should be those that the audience cannot hope to be used and those which are the result of careful study and of a considerable knowledge of them. This entails that the persuader must show the skill of invention, of structure and of arrangement. These are qualities of a successful persuader. The speaker must discover the available means of persuasion. This avoids shame in defending oneself with words just as one is not shameful to defend himself with other means of defence be it in form of fighting instruments. Aristotle, one of the renowned rhetoricians, plainly makes such allusions when he declares that:

"There is no shame attached to defending oneself with one's fists, why be ashamed to defend oneself with words?"

It is important therefore that a rhetor or a persuader should be an accomplished man of high artistic values and who speaks of the truth. Peter Dixon (1971:10) quoting Plato's Phaedrus says:

"A real art of speaking ... which does not seize hold of truth does not exist and never will."

This truth must be pursued and seized not through an act of pleading and set speeches but by method of dialectics, question and answer and by the free play of the inquiring mind. To cement Plato's view the Socratic slogan which appears in Dixon's book (1971:10) states that:

"Virtue is knowledge, all man's intellectual effort must be bent and directed towards knowing the truth."

Truth and character can easily be revealed through speech. Both the truth and a lie, good and bad character all manifest through words as Naomi Mitchison (1962:342) points out when she talks of the importance of words. She says:

“words are the common currency of communication.”

This leads to the discovery that so powerful is the bearing of the faculty of speech on the capacity of human beings to overcome the natural difficulties of their environments. One of these difficulties is the difficulty involved in persuasion to gain marriage. The role rhetoric and other means of persuasion play need to be explored further otherwise human kind will remain non-achievers in whatever subject they venture in, in a bid to win.

At this point it is important to turn to the subject of marriage for rhetoric and marriage are inextricably linked. According to Meyer Fortes (1962:2):

“marriage is a lottery or it is a bargain full of thorny circumstances. It is a transaction between two parties.”

Marriage therefore is an arrangement which enables persons to live together and co-operate with one another in an orderly social life. Daryll Forde (1950:3) strongly rejects other definitions of marriage and ridiculously says:

“It is not sexual intercourse that constitutes marriage either in Europe or among salvage peoples. Marriage is a social arrangement by which a child is given a legitimate position in the society.”

For the purposes of this research, marriage is to embrace a wider sense than simply a relationship of man and a woman. It will mean also the relationship created between families of both a man and a wife, for in an African sense among other purposes for

marrying, is the reason of relationship building of clans. From the definition of marriage of whatever kind, there are certain factors which cause the contenders be completely drowned in persuasion. One factor is that they are the community ambassadors in relationship building. The other is indeed the internal tension operating in them. The lady has before her, several options to choose from. She can choose to stay single or be married, she has to decide as to which man of the several approaching her, to give consent to. Such a wide panorama of choices is what she is faced with. For a man, he has to choose, of the several women, who to approach and make his marriage intentions clear. To make such a decision is also an intellectual act. William Muel (1956:101) alludes to this as he points out that:

"Life is an endless process of arbitrating our own inner conflict."

Both the lady and the man therefore are compounded by external pressures and their own verves and libidos which for a man causes him to make marriage expeditions and for a lady to give consent to a man of her choice. Both contenders look for other qualities. Chondoka Yizenge A, (1988:69) adds to all this when he says a girl looks for a:

"display of certain behaviour befitting a mature person."

This maturity is reflected in the use of literary language which define man's mental growth and maturity. Viewing from several stand points, there is a striking discovery that marriage proposition is not easy. It is a tension of a well-matched social tug-of-war. Many tribes in Africa and the Tumbuka inclusive when young people attain marriage ages, they experience a strong sense of grip of an awakening sex instinct resulting from long years of being checked through a strong traditional inhibitions

right from their childhood. This is why when negotiating for marriage, a vital traditional social task, they become so engrossed in an act of persuasion so that they can graduate from the vain and painful years of gender isolation. For the girl, due to such experiences of isolation and being checked in her movements, she finds reasons for patiently listening and assessing the suitor. For the Tumbuka society, they recognise this rhetorical battle-field in the 'Nthanganeni' because the two youths have to pass over from the stage of gender isolation to gender unity by way of marriage. To reach this stage, both the girl and the boy must have passed the traditional lessons of social discipline. This is why when a boy (Jaha) approaches an elderly person in a village for the purposes of marriage negotiations, permission is granted for them to be pitched in the 'Nthanganeni' but after examining his method of approach. This involves choice of villages and girls of reputable character as approved by visitors who act as social inspectors and make recommendations. Kartz and Hill's articles in William M. Kephart's book (1966:311) looking at propinquity distribution said that:

"Marriage is normative i.e. mate selection is restricted by cultural considerations. Every individual has a field of eligible among whom he selects a marital partner and that the cultural group (nationality, social class etc) which comprise the field of eligible tend to be residentially segregated and that within a field of eligibles, the probability of marriage varies directly with the probability of interaction."

So mate selection is circumscribed by factors like age, marital status, propinquity, race, religion, nationality, social class and certain physical and mental traits as defined by the society. Looking at how normative marriage selection is, William M. Kephart concluded that:

"Marriage selection is a 'forced draw' of cultural requirements versus individual requirements leading into this draw."

We see that even if there are several girls of good characters, the suitor and his escortees will choose to go to one village and leave others to satisfy their desires.

David and Vera Mace (1978:25) plainly supports this argument by stating that:

“Even if we aspire to be loving persons, in the nature of the case we can’t love everybody. There are just so many people; and in the nature of the case they are not all congenial to us. So we build over relationship selectively and pick out small group of people with whom it is possible to become involved in ways that are mutually helpful and supportive.”

Having discussed on the power of rhetoric, and on marriage, and how these are intertwined, it is at this juncture vital to narrow down to the Tumbuka view of marriage and the literary language that go with it. The Tumbuka views marriage as the bringing together of all members of two distant clans as a result of the union of a girl (Mbeta) and her suitor (Jaha).

This is so because among the Tumbuka, marriage contract is signed not between two individuals who have agreed to constitute marriage but between two families whose clan members become united. The procreation of the children is looked at not from an individualistic point but as merely clan extension. Jomo Kenyatta in his book facing mount Kenya (1961:163) clarifies this point further when he says:

“On signing the matrimonial contract the marriage ceases to be merely a personal matter, for the contract binds not only the bride and bridegroom, but also their kinsfolk. It becomes a duty to produce children, and sexual intercourse between a man and his wife is looked upon as an act of production and not merely as the gratification of a bodily desire.”

The Tumbuka treat marriage as almost sacred. Of all the activities that take place in their land, marriage is the only thing where people come together to celebrate publicly before the two individuals can celebrate each other secretly.

Among the Tumbuka, the issues of marriage are very complicated. The first complication is similar to what Meyer Fortes (1962:63) alludes to when he talks of the similar complications among the Gisu tribe of Ghana. He points out that:

“The choice of a wife is not a selection purely on the basis of personal attributes, although they have their importance. The acquisition of a wife means, for a Gisu man, the balancing of various considerations. Some of them derive from the social structure, others from the economic system and others from the nature of political leadership.”

This is true of the Tumbuka whose choice of the lady did not depend on the facial adornment but on beauty of the heart. Yizenge A. Chondoka (1988: 14), talking of the Tumbuka marriage also adds:

“The emphasis was not on beauty or attractiveness of the girl. It was on other factors such as her conduct and behaviour, her family position in the society, her ability to work hard on land and so on.”

The other complication is the change of certain existing relationships particularly those of the bride to her family and the bridegroom to his family. New social relations are created not only between the husband and the wife, but also between the husband and the wife's family and the lady and the man's relatives and indeed many other relationships like the lady's family and the man's family. All the relationship groups have vested interest in the marriage and in the children that result from it. So to understand the Tumbuka marriage one must remember that modern English idea of marriage is recent and decidedly unusual as it is a product of a particular social development which thinks that marriage is an event which concerns primarily the man and woman who are forming a union on one side and the state on the other side which gives this union legality and in event of divorce it is the state alone which can guarantee it. The Tumbuka marriage does not base itself on this structure which does not guarantee security of the offspring in event of death of one or both spouses. It is a

contract between two bodies of persons, the kins of the woman and the kins of the man whose social licence though not written is binding and lasting. The man pays for the physical consummation of the bride. The man does not pay bride-price but bride-wealth because a lady is not a commodity of trade value. Peter R. Atekyereza (2001:51) talking of the Buganda angrily says:

“The institution of bride-wealth was the most concrete customary symbol of marriage covenant and security. The functional roles are reflected in the meaning of the property among various ethnic groups in Uganda.”

He further says (2001:51):

“Bride-wealth traditions among the Buganda are changing due to economic transformations and its consequences, inter-marriages and urbanisation. Money economy has undermined the symbolic importance bride-wealth played in marriage.”

What faced the Buganda is true of the Tumbuka as their traditions have responded to the tune of time. Today the terminology has changed from bride-wealth to bride-price. Traditionally money was not part of the bride-wealth. Money became a legitimate form of bride-wealth when the national and international monetary economy infiltrated the traditional subsistence economy. Payments of bride-wealth was and is still supported in remotest parts of the Tumbukaland. This cosmopolitan nature of marriage selection and procedures based on one's educational attainment, occupational patterns and values, exogamous marriages at the expense of endogamous ones and any other forms of liberalisms have reduced, if not transformed completely the oral nature or rhetorical techniques the Tumbuka employed in the past.

Use of literary forms in the 'Nthanganeni' is in most parts of the Tumbukaland no longer fashionable. Marriages are no longer secured. The Sororate and Levirate

systems where in event of death of a wife or her failure to produce children, a young sister was given. This was against the Tumbuka belief that ‘Nthengwa ni bana’ (marriage is children). Also when a husband dies his relative would inherit the woman (Levirate) to continue not only with child production but also care of the woman and the children left by the dead man. Arthur Phillips (1953:IX) lamenting on this sad situation says:

“Since the close of the first world war, there has been a great intensification of modern influences among African peoples. They have experienced the impact of alien political, religions and economic organisations ... which have shaken the foundations of community life.”

This has resulted into a wide-spread disintegration of the bonds and sanctions of African society before people could adjust to the new order.

The Tumbuka like other tribes, have faced another complication as regards organisation of the society. What we see is bi-structuralism. On one hand we have the traditional structure with the authority of the chief, headmen and family head and, on the other hand we have a political hierarchy comprising the District Commissioners and other related offices. This has affected the marriage language as well as the authority over marriage. The situation on the ground is that the modern generation have overlooked the golden past age structures and beliefs. This is why Heidi Grunebaum-Ralph (2001:202) gives an answer-begging question:

“Where does the past find its place?”

This research therefore proposes the reinvention of the past marriage codes and procedures and that their patterns should be memorials as well as commemorative to give proper directions to modern youths so that they value and appreciate the virtuous

past. Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2001:202) inspiringly warned those with the habit of forgetting and draining the past into historical dustbins by stating that:

“the past refuses to lie down quietly. It has an uncanny habit of returning to haunt one. Those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it.”

This literature review has looked at the power of rhetoric, at marriages, both traditional and modern ones. Though the two marriages are so linked like the Siamese twins, discovery has shown that traditional marriages had more advantages over the modern ones. Both the European, African and Tumbuka views have been reviewed. The research seeks to emphasise that among the Tumbuka, the overlooked institution of ‘Nthanganeni and its orality was key to the strengthening of traditional marriages. This is missing in modern marriages which lack assessment of marriage contenders even from the linguistic point of view. Chondoka (1988:166) critically makes a similar comparison when he talks of the marriages by stating that:

“It is a well-known fact that comparatively, marriages in traditional society are stronger than in our modern society in Zambia.”

The power of rhetoric and its golden past age therefore had some social advantages as seen on the subject of marriage. Stability factors of marriage are but the central issues explored and, the examination of the Tumbuka marriage forms are to be studied through employment of literary forms in the two chiefdoms where research was conducted.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TUMBUKA PEOPLE

The Tumbuka people are part of the Bantu speaking peoples located in Central Africa distributed between 11°S and 14°S and between longitudes 32°E and 34°E. This covers an area between Lake Malawi in the east and Luangwa river in the south to Rukuru river in the north 'see map 2'. The Tumbuka that are in Malawi are found in Kasungu, Nkhata bay, Mzimba, Rumphu, Chitipa and Karonga districts, while those in Zambia can be found in an area stretching from Lundazi through Chama to Isoka east in chief Muyombe's area of Northern Province 'see map 1'. The Tumbuka speaking people of Isoka include the Fungwe, Tambo, Lambya, Nyika, Yombe and Phoka of Nyika plateau 'see map 2'. The Malawi Tumbuka include Ngonde, Nyika, Sukwa and Lambya. The Tumbuka of Chama are closely linked with Senga, Bisa and Bemba. Rumphu Tumbuka are in close links with the Phoka and Ngoni. Those of Nkhata Bay are in close contact with Tonga, while those of Mzimba, Lundazi and Kasungu are in close contact with the Ngoni and Chewa. It is these contacts that have affected the Tumbuka way of life making them be subjected to different external influences that has affected their dialects and culture. The Tumbuka therefore is today not a pure linguistic group. G. Forture S.J. (1959:54) makes a similar observation when he says.

“ There are a number of names of peoples who speak Tumbuka and Tonga and they live north of river Dwangwa, south of the north Rukuru river, with the lake on their east and the valley of the Lwangwa on the west.

Tribal and clan groups speaking Tumbuka are the following: The Tumbuka, Kamanga, Henga, Hewe, Wenya, Nyika, Fungwe, Yombe, Phoka, Kandawire, Fulilwa, Nthali. For the location, the groups are in Northern Nyasaland and Northern

Rhodesia”

2.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The historical background of the Tumbuka show that they lived in clans. They were the first Bantu speaking peoples to occupy the areas between lake Malawi and Luangwa valley. On arrival, they found the Khoisan who were easily displaced. These short people were called by various names such as ‘Baƙafula’ meaning ‘black smiths, or ‘Mwani bonerankhu’ ‘meaning from where did you see me?’. This was because of their short height. Up to the eighteenth century, the Tumbuka were moving but still in their clan communities. Because of their movements, they had no single political system. Their unity resulted from the four major encroachments of the Lowoka traders, the Arab traders, the Ngoni intrusion, and the coming of the European missionaries.

The Lowoka came from East Africa. They were a Swahili speaking people who were attracted into Tumbuka land because of rumours of ivory. They then established a dynasty in Nkamanga area and introduced the Tumbuka to external trade and the Tumbuka began acquiring new foreign goods. The Lowoka political organization began to take root in the land and the Tumbuka who had no chiefs now began to have chiefs. The Lowoka were also influenced by the Tumbuka culture so that in the long run it became difficult to differentiate the Lowoka from the Tumbuka.

During the early nineteenth century, Arabs also came into Tumbuka land leading to the unsettledness of the Tumbuka society since these were slave traders. They led to the weakening of the power of chiefs as well as local leaders since they encouraged rivalries among local leaders over who was to deal with slave trade and ivory.

In 1870s the Ngoni, an offshoot of the Nguni speaking people also arrived in the Tumbukaland raiding the Tumbuka for food, women and cattle. Several Tumbukas were incorporated into their society. G. Fortune S.J. talking of the Ngoni influence among the Tumbuka says:

“The Angoni had a great influence on the life of these people which was disavowed to a large extent after the imposition of the peace by the British in 1896”

The Ngoni were a harsh group hence being labelled ‘Bazoba’ meaning ‘hardhearted’ people. Because of their cruelty the Tumbuka rebelled in 1880 at Hora mountains in Malawi and they were defeated. The defeat had far reaching consequences among the Tumbuka. It led them into subjectivity and brought about cultural and social changes strange to the land. Thomas T. Spear (1972:30) talking of Ngoni influence says .

“Many Tumbuka customs ostensibly disappeared during the Ngoni domination”.

Next were the arrival of missionaries. The missionaries that came into Tumbukaland were from Scotland, the ‘Free Church of Scotland’. These built mission stations in various places in Tumbukaland. Some of these were those built at Bandawe in 1881, Ekwendeni in 1889, Khondowe in 1894, Laudani in 1902 and chesefu in Lundazi in 1922. Many Tumbuka youths were conscripted into these missions as students and servants. As a result the Tumbuka were greatly influenced by missionaries leading to cultural and local education adjustment detrimental to their norms. Though the Tumbuka were already experiencing change even before the arrival of missionaries, this change was at their own pace and in their own ways. The greater changes were induced by the onset of missionaries who became agents of colonialism. These brought about social and cultural vandalism incomparable to local destructive

tendencies of tribal wars like those of the Ngoni. Professor G.K. Nukuya in emphasizing this argues that:

“Although the pre-colonial Africa societies were not completely static, whatever changes there were in their social system should be regarded as minor compared with those coming in the wake of colonial rule.....Colonial changes were brought about by governments and people from alien political, economic and social environments while before then the changes were effected by people and institutions from Africa whose ways of life were not different.”

2.3. ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE TUMBUKA

The Tumbuka lived by hunting and subsistence farming. They were also skilled iron workers. They made spears, bows and arrows, hunting nets made out of fibre extracted from barks of trees called ‘ukonde’, set traps and pits (mbuna). Later Arabs introduced guns and the Tumbuka learnt how to use them. Greater respect was accorded to hunters and other skilled men and women. Millet was their staple food and later maize was introduced by the Arabs. ‘Thrash and burn’ methods were used and later colonial administration introduced use of ridges which the Tumbuka call ‘Mizere’ of ‘Nthusi’. They kept cattle and goats in tsetse fly free areas even before the Ngoni arrival. Later on the Tumbuka did not favour keeping cattle for some safety reasons. According to Mr Msimuko interviewed in Lundazi at Matako village keeping of cattle was at one time out of favour as it attracted the Ngoni, wild beasts like lions and became a burden if they were to run away from the invading Ngoni and other ferocious beasts.

The Tumbuka economic activities affected their political as well as social

organization. Some of the tools, iron workers made, like spears, axes, hoes, arrowheads and knives were exchanged with clothes with the Swahili traders. Spears, hoes and Bangles became medium of exchange. Possession of these defined one's status in society. In marriage, these tools were accepted as a charge which the suitor could pay. After reaching an agreement between a boy and a girl, a bangle was demanded by a girl as a souvenir of their deal.

The Tumbuka are today well organized. They have a well-defined hierarchy. They have the chief at the top followed by the group of headmen who oversee a group of villages each. Then they have village headmen and family heads, usually these are males. The family is the smallest political and social unit. The village is based on kinship and each village has its own system of rule and administration.

The chief depends on the advice of indunas and group headmen. Headmen get pieces of advice from family members before any decision is made. The headmen are supposed to be approachable and friendly. Keeping of 'Ng'angas' (witchdoctors) was permitted in villages to punish sorcerers and safeguard villagers of bad omens.

Most Tumbukas in Lundazi are under either a Ngoni chief or Chewa chief while most headmen are the ones who are true Tumbukas. The only chief who is of the Tumbuka extraction is chief Mphamba who was installed merely for the purpose of indirect rule.

Chief Mphamba covers the Boma area while Kapichila lies in the South-Eastern side

of the Boma but before chief Mwase in the Eastern Province of Zambia. Chief Mphamba is bordered by chief Zumwanda to the West, Magodi to the North and chief Phikamalaza to the northeast. Pre-colonial situation in Kapichila shows the domination of the Tumbuka by the Chewa people. The Chewa in Kapichila were matrilineal while the Tumbuka were patrilineal thereby causing the dominated Tumbukas to be at cultural cross roads. Later these differences were buried due to inter-marriages which resulted into a mixed society.

The Tumbuka social and cultural transformation was not only due to encroachments but also due to their mobility. The world war of 1914 and 1939 affected them. Many were enlisted and on return from where they went to fight, they brought some new behaviour both good and that which was anathemic to the Tumbuka society. The introduction of money economy and imposition of tax on the male populace from 1900, made able bodied men to travel far and wide to South Africa especially to Johannesburg which in short was and is still among the Tumbuka popularly known as 'Ku Joni'. Today the term 'Ku Joni' refers to any urban town. Some went to Southern Rhodesia and to the coppermines of Northern Rhodesia to work in order to raise money to pay tax. On return, this migrant labour brought with them some strange traits thereby affecting the Tumbuka's cultural, social, economic and political behaviour.

The colonial government's introduction of 'Native authorities' and the 1930 ordinance led to the formation of the 'Tumbuka Native Authority' headed by a military personel. He was a colonel. He exerted political and economic control over the area. Up to today memories of this colonel among the Tumbuka especially of

chief Mphamba and Kapichila are still alive. Lundazi is sometimes called ‘Kanele Bokosi wanu.’ ‘Kanele’ is a corrupted term for a ‘colonel’ whose post box number was ‘one’.

2.4. THE TUMBUKA EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Tumbuka followed their own education system defined by age. For example, small boys and girls underwent micro-skills like tending goats, carving and wrestling which the Tumbuka call ‘Batobe’ and girls learned domestic skills like cooking and child care. Bigger boys performed macro-duties. The introduction of western type of education significantly affected the Tumbuka educational system. Children were taken away to schools whose syllabus was esoteric. Age of some one was no longer revered but one’s educational attainment was. Western type of education bred failures and passers thereby creating class system. The communal type of education was undermined. If there were failures in the Tumbuka traditional system of education, this was attributed to the whole society. Old people began to resist sending children to western schools as schools milked the society of the much needed labour. Following this, colonial government embarked on a serious campaign of forcing people to send their children to schools. While this is almost achieved today, the campaign has produced graduates who are loafers as their education does not help one to fit into his society but alienates one from it. Steve Biko’s novel ‘I write what I like’ (1978:70) re-echoes the old folks cry of the moral erosion western education has caused when he says:

“The attitude of some rural African folk who are against education is often misunderstood, not least by the African intellectual. Yet the reason put forward by these people carry with them the realization of their inherent dignity and worth. They see education as the quickest way of destroying the substance of the African culture. They complain bitterly of the disruption in

the life pattern, non-observation of customs, and constant derision from the non-conformist whenever any of them go through school. Lack of respect for the elders, in the African tradition, an unforgivable and cardinal sin”.

This educational tug-of-war still exists even today in the remotest parts of the Tumbuka land.

KINSHIP

The Tumbuka viewed kinship as paramount. This was organized either on matrilineal or patrilineal system. For the Tumbuka, Kinship was wide. It covered not only a biological mother or father. It encompassed a panorama of other relatives like uncles, cousins and aunts. These are called ‘Babale’ (Relatives). According to the Tumbuka culture, one has many fathers and mothers. The terms ‘fathers’ and ‘mother’ never are used in reference to one’s biological parentage. It covers all those born from the same parents as well as one’s biological parents. When one says ‘This is my father’ it was not enough to know one’s real parents because one had junior and senior father and mothers. The Tumbuka say ‘badada badoko’ or ‘bamama balala’, to define mothers and fathers. Such a social and cultural arrangement provided security in event of death of one’s biological parents.

Such an arrangement meant that children belonged to the society and hence there was combined responsibility of child rearing and care. Really such an arrangement cannot produce street kids the society is faced with today.

The physical, social, economic, cultural, historic, education and kinship backgrounds given are vital if the context of marriage negotiation employing rhetoric among the Tumbuka of chiefs Mphamba and Kapichila are to be appreciated.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The study basically employed the quantitative approach and minimally the qualitative approach to obtain data from respondents. The participatory learning approach was used where semi-structured interviews were used and interviewees were required to respond orally from the prepared in-depth-interviews (see appendix 2 questionnaire). My task and that of research assistants was to listen and write down oral responses received. This method enabled respondents to give responses freely and qualify their responses. This made them elicit authentic responses and made us get information that the questionnaire did not cover.

The target group of the study were the Tumbuka Speaking People of Chiefs Mphamba and Kapichila (see appendix 1, map 3 and 4) in Lundazi District as it was virtually impossible to include in the investigation all the Tumbuka people because of time constraints, transport bottlenecks and long distances between the Tumbuka occupied areas.

There were some forty informants that were strategically targeted. Twenty (20) were those who got married before 1950 through the institution of 'Nthanganeni' and twenty (20) who got married after 1950 who largely faced the advent of Western colonialism. This was done for the purposes of comparison. The interviewed were

either those still in marriage or those whose marriages were broken. Research was also conducted in libraries for collection of secondary data.

The two research assistants were given induction in research ethics so that we could scatter into villages and schools and collect information within the shortest possible time.

On reaching the village or school, the village headmen or family leaders or head teachers were approached so that we could be under their protection and be able to gain access even to those who might pose to be uncooperative. This is in line with Paul D. Leady's assertion (1989:151) when he says:

"To gain access to a site, the researcher must often go through a gate-keeper, a person who can provide a smooth entrance into the site. This individual might be a tribal chief in a community in a developing country, a principal or a teacher in a school or classroom, or a programme director in a shelter for the homeless".

Indeed this method worked to our advantage and respondents appreciated more as many people interviewed hoped that probably such work might effect therapeutic change to their communities as our interviews made people think and reach a realization that something had gone amiss with the Tumbuka modern marriages which resulted in their unstability. This was because our approach was cognitive-focused rather than emotion-focused. Furthermore, this was because we allowed our respondents to converse more than we did. Their value judgements and their frame of reference we -judiciously interpreted and recorded. Apart from all this, there was wide development of interpersonal relationship which both of us cherished.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT SUITORS AND LADIES

It is important to understand the background, the setting and the norms of the Tumbuka people as regards this subject before venturing into what transpires in the 'Nthanganeni'.

Among the Tumbuka, it was customary to marry from a distant place though not very distant. This was because those living very near were mostly relatives. Those who liked marrying from nearby were being crowned with a demeaning term of 'bamuzingilila khonde' or 'fukuta' which referred to lazy people with no time for sacrifice as regards transversing long distances to where reliable girls might have been.

The suitors at times knew the ladies they were to pay the visits while it was true that some did not know the girls and just went onto an expedition looking for them. Those who knew the girls might have known them either at a dance or at any other social gathering. The dance which attracted more girls were those which were conducted during the day to avoid any temptation that could lead to promiscuity if dances were to be conducted at night. The Tumbuka believed that darkness was pregnant with seeds of indecency. Such dances that were performed during the day were dances like Chidyake (Muchoma), Muganda or Chintali. As they go to watch these dances or to dance, they met each other. If girls who lived very far away were known it might have been because of their good reputation. The Tumbuka call good reputation as 'mbiri yiwemi'. Others were known after the initiation ceremony where girls were introduced to adulthood. This was called 'Chinamwali'. When this ceremony took place, it was alerting men that girls were now ready for marriage.

There were certain parameters young men looked for in a girl and her parents. Such behaviour could be respect for others and elders, a workaholic, a generous girl (Musungwana Wambura Uzukusi), beauty, the one who dances well and at times someone with a beautiful voice when she sings. A beautiful voice was among the Tumbuka an important qualification. This was backed up by a saying which went “para ndiwe muheni, umanye kwimba” (if you are ugly, you should know how to sing well). A good melodic voice was among the Tumbuka part and parcel of one’s beauty. To them beauty was a relative term since beauty denoted various areas. Girls looked for a boy of good morals, a boy with good skills like the skill of hunting. His parents must be understanding and must have no history of witchcraft. These were some of the reasons why some suitors undertook long expeditions to places where they were unknown. Such suitors were rarely accepted on their first visit or on their second visit. This was one of the reasons for the postponements of the discussions to give a girl ample time to research on the type of character undertaking this marriage expedition.

A girl was not permitted to meet a boy alone whether at a dancing party or not. Hugging, kissing and fondlings were not part of the Tumbuka vocabulary.

PREPARATION

Boys never went to the ‘Nthanganeni’ haphazardly. They made ample preparations both in terms of the language to use, through clothing to physical appearances to impress their lady candidates. Most visits were to be over the weekend as during the week all were expected to be drowned in their work activities. A gentleman who came during the working days could be interpreted to be a lazy fellow. Even during the weekends, expeditions were to be in the late afternoons and early evenings. Any

arrival, say after twenty hours, suitors were chased for they contravened social rules. Boys were to prepare in terms of dressing. If one did not have good clothing, people were generous enough to lend him so that dressing could not be a hindrance to his impeccable presentation. He was to bath well and be in his best bio-rhythms as he goes to this institution. Before 1950, people favoured wearing of white shorts and white vests as trousers were not common and that wearing of trousers could hide one's disabilities.

On arrival into the village, the boys could ask for girls' bungalow (Nthanganeni) mostly from elderly ladies. Apart from knowing the girls' hut, this was to register their presence in the village. The men could say 'tikupenjabamuzingilila thuli' meaning 'we are looking for those who round the pounding mortar' in reference to the girls. Girls got such a referral term because they were going round and round the mortar as they were pounding. Two or three girls could use the same mortar with their pestles. This work technique served as both-entertainment and for lightening of the work burden. Old women could then direct these men to the 'Nthanganeni' where they could go and sit on its corridors. On seeing them, girls knew their mission and so they could go to clean it even before greeting them. After completion of their cleaning, girls spread traditional mats called 'mpasa' inside their house but near the entrance where boys could be visibly seen. The bigger girls sent small girls to invite them in. While boys were in the 'Nthanganeni', girls were out to prepare themselves as sometimes these visits were made without prior arrangements so that girls could be squeezed up and be seen how they appear and behave in their natural environment. The girls preparation at times took quite long. After they were ready, girls came in

joining smaller girls and positioned themselves right inside at the back of the bungalow facing their male visitors.

Marriage expeditions were for those boys who were ready for marriage. If one was alone in his desire for marriage, he always requested for other male escortee to accompany him and assist him in this mental-testing literary struggle. In most cases the number could be two or three male visitors. At this stage, in most cases, no male or female knows his or her candidate for marriage.

The data presented below shows how the Tumbukas especially those from Chiefs Kapichila and Mphamba displayed their literary language for the purposes of persuasion for the sake of marriage. It must be noted here that the structure and language of presentation arising from this research may vary slightly from what others may expect or know. This is for the reason that the subject has a high degree of subjectivity. Its oral nature means that the subject stands to be universally improvised and no standard version is there as a norm from which one can refer to. The following are the procedures of their discussions as transpired in the 'Nthanganeni'.

PRESENTATION OF COLLECTED DATA

KAYOBOYELO KA MUNTHANGANENE PAKATI PA BANYAMATA NA BASUNGWANA

Ngati bakhara munthanganeni, basungwana nabakuperekezga babo nabanyamata, basungwana ndibo bakwamba kuyoboya: A pulikani sono:

WAKWIMILILA BASUNGWANA: Tibwerekaniko vibongo

WAKWIMILILA MUNYAMATA: Ine ndine Msimuko, zina lya myati
ndine Kababa, Aba mba Gondwe zina la
myati mba Kalulu, Aba uku mba
mwandila, zina myati mba zovu ndipo
aba kumazele kwane mba Zimba, zina la
myati mba Livwi. Sono timanyanenge
tose, nga imwe ndimwe banjani?

MUSUNGWANA: Ine ndine Nya Mtonga zina lamyati ndi
Anya Mtheliso, Aba uko mba nyalukhele
(Nyamusangechi), Abo niba Nyangwata
(Anyamaluba), Aba kumalyelo kwane
niba Nyazimba (Anyasimenti)

MUNYAMATA: Yayi taonga tamanyana tose.

MUSUNGWANA: Muli uli A Msimuko?

MSIMUKO: Ine nili makora waka kwene mutima ukunisuzya.

MUSUNGWANA: Muli uli a Kalulu?

AKALULU: Ine ninli makora kwene maghanoghano mbwe!

MUSUNGWANA: Muli uli a Zovu?

AZOVU: Yai nkavichi kangatisange ise, umoyo withu uli kwaimwe
ndipo ngwa Nkhumba

MUSUNGWANA: Muli uli Adada Zimba (Livwi)?

ZIMBA: Ise malinga kwacha umoyo ngwa Gwala-wala

MUSUNGWANA: Yebo. Sono apa mwati maso bii, mwenda makora?

MUNYAMATA: Ise tenda makora tikupenja 'bamuzingilila thuli', chomene

tapukwa Anyasimenti Anya Zimba

MUSUNGWANA: Oho! Mwabasanga kwene tilongolaniko ‘kambala tikanike kujaniko’. Panyakhe niti ‘tilongolani chibaza cha ndenge, ndenge zidekepo. Icho nkhwandula nchakuti’ mutibwereko phini tithorereko minga’

MUNYAMATA: Yebo! Kambala, ngilazi, phini, panyakhe chibaza cithu mba mwandila- (zovu) Aba ndibo nchandamila yithu iyo-yingakole mutenje.

MUSUNGWANA: Ngilazi talibona kwene likubala cha! Chibaza chinavibonga-vibonga ndege yingadekhapo yayi, phini yinu njaku bumpa. Mwakupitilirako tikuti mutigobokere mwaphura mwerelo lupokobalikutora kale, ndipo nchandamila iyi nja kuvunda.

MUNYAMATA: Kasi ngilazi pala njakubala cha! Asi tikusuka, phini asi tikunora. Sono amama nifumbeko ‘kasi Tuyuni pala bathira mwelero tulondapo vichi?

MUSUNGWANA: Tulondapo Lupoko

MUNYAMATA: Eya! Mwaneneska. Ndicho tizila chifukwa tikamanya kuti ni lose lipoko bakuluta nalo kunyumba yayi. Ndipo tuyuni kuti tulondapo lupoko lula batora kuruta nalo kunyumba yayi kwene lula bataya pamoza na mwelero. Asi nintheura?

MUSUNGWANA: Mwaneneska nadi

MUNYAMATA: Nga pala tingati ‘mutilongole kuseli kwa mailo’ kasi mungatilongole?

MUSUNGWANA: Yayi nchakusuzya chomene

MUNYAMATA: Pala mwatondeka kutilongola tifumbekoso. Kasi mungayanika ka Hiya panyakhe ka Hanki mumulengalenga?

MUSUNGWANA: Yayi chingachitike cha! Kwene naneso nifumbeko. Imwe muli kukhuni, mukhuni musi muli Nkalamu yikwaula mwau kulindila kuti mukhire, kuchanya kukhuni kuli nkhome. Imwe muli pakati, kasi mungachitechi?

MUNYAMATA: Amama icho chingaba chakusuzya kwene ndicho tizila kuti imwe na ise tibe ngati tapulikana tisange fundo pamoza pa ivyo vyonse vyayoboyeka. Sono apa mwanguti nchandamila njakuvunda ise tabikapo yipya.

MUSUNGWANA: Nchandamila yipya ni nji?
A Zimba a livwi.

MUNYAMATA: Nchandamila yipya tayibona, kwene mukizeso sabata yikwiza pa chisulo (Banyamata bakulayila nakuwelera kwabo)

KUKUMANA KWACHIBILI PA SABATA

MUNYAMATA: Ise na umo mukayoboyela kuti tize pa sabata muhanya uno, maso na maghanaghano ghabanga waka kuno. Sono tafika (Banyamata bakupereka buku umo babika uzi utuba)

MUSUNGWANA: Mutizomerezge tifumileko pawalo (Basungwana bakufumira pawalo nakuyoboyeskana ndipo bakulonjeza ba Gogo babo nakuba longola uzi utuba. A Gogo bakunjira mu Nthanganeni kuti babone a Zimba (Livwi). Pala kanyengo kapitapo kadoko bakuwelera kubasungwana pa walo apo tusungwana tudoko

tuchali na majaha mu Nthangeni. Ba Gogo bakuba phalira kuti musungwana azomele)

BASUNGWANA: (Bakuwerera munyumba nabo bakupeleka buku umo babikamo uzi utuba ndipo uyo wazomera wakuyoboya kuti “Lili badada nabaleka ine!). Ndipo musungwana mwimilili wakuti “Yayi mwamajaha muli muno nchandamila mwabikapo yikuzomelezgeka kuti yingakole mutenje” (waketengwa wakuleka kuyoboya nakulabiska pasi kwambula kulabiskana najaha lakhe pa maso) Pala bakana mubuku bakubikamo uzi ufipa.

MUNYAMATA: Ise tabonga chomene mwabanyithu. Sono ine nkupeleka chikhore chane ni ichi (mwanalume wakupereka ka ‘Hanki’ panyakhe kopala’.

MUSUNGWANA: Musungwana nayo wakupereka ‘Bangiri’

MUNYAMATA: Sono tikufumba kwakufikila ma Thenga

BASUNGWANA: (Basungwana bakufuma pawalo kuya kafumba kubalala kwakufikila mathenga. Ngati babamanyiska bakuwelera mu Nthangeni).

MUSUNGWANA: Mathenga bafikilenge kwa kavyala a Nyirenda

BANYAMATA: (Banyamata bakulayila nakuluta kwabo). Munyamata mwenecho wa nthengwa waku phalira a Gogo bakhe nayo mwakuti nabo bakakumane na ba papi bakhe kuba manyiska.

AGOGO BAKUPHALIRA BAPAPI BAMWANALUME

AGOGO: Adada Zimba, uko Amama, kasi chitotoka chithu mwakwenda-kwenda chasangako ka Msoti pamuzi wa Chipembere mwana wa Zyambo uyo wakuchemeka Eda (Nyasimenti). Sono nati pala mwazomerezga tisankhe uyo wangabathenga lithu.

AZIMBA: Yayi makani ngaweni. Takhuta nalo banja la Zgambo na kamusoti kabo ka Eda nako takondwela nako. Ise thenga libe muvyala wakhe chimbala kumwenda.

KUKUMANA KWA MATHENGA-LA KUCHANAKAZI NA LA KUCHANALUME

THENGA LA KUCHANALUME: Phephani a thenga banyane ba Bingiza Nyirenda, ine ndine chimbala kumwenda nafuna pa muzi wa chipembere nenda makora. Kasi puswe-puswe kuza kafika kuno kufumila kwa chipembere kwithu chifukwa chitotoka chithu khumbo zimba, uyo zina la myati ni 'Livwi' awiske ba mujitozge zimba, banyina ba Nyamtheto, chasangako ka Msoti kuno kwinu zina lakhe ni Eda Zgambo uyo wakuchemeka 'Nyasimenti'. Balikupulikana kuti bazenge nyumba naku panga banja.

THENGA LAKUCHANAKAZI: Yayi malonge ghinu ghawa muma kutu ghabantu sono munipeko nyengo nichimbire nikagwade-gwade kuba papi (Thenga likuluta kuya kafumba)

THENGA LAKUCHANAKAZI LAWELA: Yayi dada kumwenda tafumba musoti
ndipo wasomerezga kuti makani mwaza nagho nga unenesko.
Sono bapapi bakhe bakuti mwizeso mwezi ukwiza pa sabata
lachibili kuti tikakumane ku chibaya (Nipela mathenga
bakulekana uyu wakuya kwakhe na munyakhe kwakhe)

THE TRANSLATED VERSION OF THE DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE 'NTHANGANENI' BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS

The interpretation of the Tumbuka version of the data collected was done on the same day it was collected because meanings were still fresh in my mind and this was the best time to record it into English version. It must also be noted that some Tumbuka words do not have the English equivalence and to get round this problem an attempt has been made to give the associated meanings. The rules of syntax as dictated by English are also in some cases at variance with the Tumbuka ones and so interpretation is mostly semantically and not syntactically based. The following is the English version of the discussions as transpired in the 'Nthanganeni'.

ENGLISH VERSION

When all are seated in this house, boys, girls and their escotees, it is the girl spokesperson who begins to talk. Now listen:

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: Can you lend us your surnames?

BOY REPRESENTATIVE: My name is Mr. Msimuko whose mock name is a Tick.
This gentleman is Mr. Gondwe also known as the Hare;
to my right hand side is Mr. Mwandila popularly known
as Mr. Elephant, and the man to my left is Mr. Zimba

whose mock name is Mr. Chameleon. Now if I may ask also, what are your names?

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: My name is Miss Mtonga popularly known as Miss Mtheliso this one is Miss Lukhele known as Miss Msangechi my friend there is Miss Ngwata who is also called 'Miss Flower', to my right hand side is Miss Zimba also known as Miss Simenti.

BOY REPRESENTATIVE: Thank you for it is an honour to know each other.

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: How are you Mr. Msimuko?

MR. MSIMUKO: I am fine except that I am troubled by my heart.

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: How are you Mr. Hare?

MR. HARE: Fine except for the ubiquity of thoughts in me.

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: How are you Mr. Elephant?

MR. ELEPHANT: What can trouble me? My life is vested in you and it is like life of a pig.

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: How are you 'Father Zimba', the Chameleon?"

MR. CHAMELEON Ah! As long as the sun rises, my life is like that of a Gecko.

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: Thank you; you all look inquisitive (bii) Is your journey a friendly one?

BOY REPRESENTATIVE: Our journey is of a good intention, we are looking for 'mortar rounders' (bamuzingilila thuli) especially Miss Zimba (cement)

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: Oh! Here we are but first show us the millet so that we go to dry it at the drying place. What I mean is that you should 'show us the mirror for us to look at'. To go a little further I am saying 'show us the airport so that planes can land on it'. Gentlemen, in simple terms I am saying 'you lend us your pin so that we use it to remove thorns in our flesh'

BOYS: Thank you! The millet, the mirror, the pin or our airport is Mr. Mwandila, the elephant. He is our pole or our roof holder.

GIRLS: Thank you. We have seen your mirror but your mirror does not shine your airport has potholes so the plane cannot land on it. Your pin is blunt and cannot be used. Going beyond this, we are saying that what remains here is only chaff as millet has already been got. Furthermore, your roof-holder is a rotten one.

BOYS: If the mirror fails to shine don't we clean it? If the pin is blunt don't we sharpen it? Now, my dear mother, if I may ask you this question: 'what do birds follow where they have thrown chaff after millet is separated from it and taken away?'

GIRLS: Birds follow millet

BOYS: Good, you are right. This is the reason why we have come after realizing that not all the millet is taken away after winnowing. Birds also do not desire the millet that is taken away but the grains that are neglected and thrown into the bush with chaff.

GIRLS: You are very right.

BOYS: If I may further ask: "Show us the behind of yesterday? Are you able to show us?"

GIRLS: No, this can be a very difficult exercise.

BOYS: If you have failed to show us, can you respond to this other question: 'Can you dry your handkerchief in the air (mumulenga-lenga) after washing it'

GIRLS: No, this cannot happen but allow us to ask you this question: 'Imagine you are in a tree, on the ground just at the foot of the tree the lion is yawning and waiting for you to come down. Up in the same tree there is a dangerous snake. You are in the middle, what can you do?'

A BOY: Sister, this can really be a difficult situation but such a situation is what has befallen us all hence our coming so that you and us should put our heads together so that we come up with one solution to surmount this problem that has befallen us all. Now since you said our pole cannot hold the roof because it is rotten, we have replaced it with a new and a strong one.

GIRLS: Show us your new roof holder (pole)

BOYS: Mr. Zimba, the chameleon is our roof holder

GIRLS: Your new roof holder has been seen, but we request that you go back to your homes and come again on Sunday next week (Boys bid farewell and leave)

SECOND MEETING ON SUNDAY

BOY REPRESENTATIVE: Just as you commanded us to return today on Sunday, our eyes and thoughts were fixed or focused towards this place. We have as you said arrived and we are here now (the boys representative hands over a book in which a white cotton is put and girls receive it).

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: Can you permit us to go out meanwhile (girls go out to consult each other and inform their grandmother and this white cotton is shown to her. If a black cotton was put there, she is likewise shown. The grandmother goes in the 'Nthanganeni' to see and examine the suitor (Mr. Zimba). After a short while she returns to the girls outside while small girls who came as escotes remain in the room to keep vigil, to entertain and to keep suitors busy. The grandmother tells girls outside to give consent to this marriage proposal)

GIRLS: (They come in and sit. They also hand the book in which white cotton is reciprocatively put. At times they

can put black cotton. The girl who is to be married as soon as boys inspect the type of cotton (white) she shouts! 'Lili badada nabaleka ine! ('Oh! I have left my father'). Then the girl's representative says: "You suitors seated here, the roof holder replacing the old-rotten one is accepted and we agree that it can hold our roof. At this time the one to be married looks down to avoid looking directly at her suitor's face.

NEW HUSBAND: We thank you friends. I as a husband in the making to Miss Cement I hand over this sovenir (Chikhore) to her (The man hands over a handkerchief (Hanki or Hiya).

GIRL: A wife to be also hands over a bangle (Bangiri)

BOY REPESENTATIVE: Can you tell us where our Thenga (middleman) should go for the purposes of dowry (malobola)?

GIRLS: (Girls go out to consult elderly people like the grand parents. When told, girls go back into the 'Nthenganeni' to report)

GIRL REPRESENTATIVE: A middleman will land and discussions will take place at Mr. Nyirenda's place. He is my cousin. (suitors bid farewell and go back to their houses.

BOY REPRESENTATIVE: The owner of marriage tells a grandfather to meet his parents to inform them of this development.

GRANDPARENTS INFORM PARENTS TO THE BOY

GRANDFATHER: My son Zimba, and my daughter-in law, sitted there. Our cock in its movement found a hen at chipembere

village in Chief Mphamba's area, daughter to Mr. Zgambo whose name is Eda popularly known as 'Miss Cement'. If you are in agreement we should look for a middleman

Mr. ZIMBA: My father, this is good news. We are happy with the Zgambo's family and their daughter Eda. Our middleman should be his cousin chimbala kumwenda

MEETING OF THE TWO MIDDLEMEN-FROM THE GIRLS SIDE AND FROM THE MAN'S SIDE

HUSBAND'S MIDDLEMAN: My fellow middleman, Mr. Bingiza Nyirenda, my name is Chimbala Kumwenda from Chipembere village. My visit is a peaceful one. My rushing here (puswe-puswe) from Chipembere is because our cock by the name of Khumbo Zimba, whose mock name is Chameleon and his father Mr. Mujitozge Zimba, his mother miss Mutheto (restriction) has found a hen here in your village and her name is Eda Zgambo popularly known as 'Miss Cement'. These two have agreed to make a home and to begin an act of procreation.

WIFE'S MIDDLEMAN: My dear friend, your words have fallen on people's ears. Now allow me a little time to run

and kneel before parents (The middleman goes
out to ask)

THE FEMALE MIDDLEMAN REPORTS BACK

Comrade Kumwenda, we have inquired from the hen and the hen has agreed and confirmed the truthfulness of your message. Now, her parent's suggestion is that you should come next month on the second Sunday so that we go to meet at a kraal. (The two middleman leave each other, each to his village awaiting the appointed time).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter analyses the literary features of the language of the '*Nthanganeni*' collected. Before analysis is done it must be pointed out here that among the Tumbuka, marriage proposition was not easy as it required high linguistic skill by both the man and the lady. For the man, his marriage literary language should be a mixture of persiflage flattery and wit. The girl also even if on seeing the suitor she gets satisfied with him needs to have dribbling techniques to delay the process of negotiations because among the Tumbuka people it is believed that a girl who yields in too easily is a disappointment and may fail to keep the marriage intact for a long time. Furthermore, she is regarded as a whore for according to the Tumbuka culture, a whore may not want to miss this masculine encroachment opportunity upon her '*Nthanganeni*'. The literacy battle therefore is fierce and requires skilful handling and much thought. This entails that choice does not depend on the girl's external adornments only but also the psychological, physical cultural, behavioural and many other idiosyncratic requirements as per the demands of the tradition.

LITERARY FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE 'NTHANGANENI'

When all is set in the '*Nthanganeni*' in terms of human sitting arrangements such as escortee young girls, the suitors, bigger ladies, the girl to be proselytized and other

physical arrangements, serious business commences. In the first place it must be pointed out that the presence of escortees from both the man's side and that of the lady's are important. The young girls present are to be apprenticed so that in future when their time comes, they will have gained enough experience to contend a similar situation. This is a specialized school which imparts special skills which befits them and which cannot easily be discussed outside this environment. The escortees are there to assist the targeted friends in case he or she is quizzed with a situation he or she cannot handle.

Their presence also is for the purposes of transparency and discipline of the contenders. This means that contenders in the presence of escortees cannot fondle each other. Enough checks and balances are put in place. They also act as witnesses to the verbal transactions and agreement or negation that is finally reached at.

Next to speak is a girl spokesperson who begins by asking their male visitors: 'Timbwerekaniko vibongo' meaning 'lend us your surnames'. This is asking these male visitors to introduce themselves so that they are known. From this statement two ideas require deep cogitation. The first is the treatment of surnames as though they were objects and, secondly, the use of the word, 'lend'. The speaker uses analogy. Surnames, according to the Tumbuka culture, are like objects which can be lent out for a particular length of time and for a particular purpose and thereafter the owner goes with them to his or her home. Another thing which evokes our curiosity is why the speaker is interested in knowing surnames only and not first names. This is for the reason that the use of surname is a form of respect. When a lady is married, she is never married to 'John' but say to the 'Mtongas'. This provides security

because in event of death of a husband, the lady is inherited by either a young brother or an elder brother who bears the same surname and takes full responsibility including taking care of the children left by the dead brother. This is also true of the lady. This is why the Tumbukas after proving that the lady married is sterile or dies, a young sister is given to the man. The Tumbuka strongly believe in the Levirate and sororate system.

We also notice their system of greeting. After their surnames are known by the girls, they are greeted individually. This is because according to the Tumbuka traditions wholesome type of greeting is not favoured but people are individually greeted. This is against the belief that health is not communal but individually felt. It must be borne in mind that the youth do this because they are faced with a neat interplay between societal expectations and individual choice. This is to maintain cultural-homogony than a heterogeneous situation that would arise if youths were let loose in their deeds. If this was done chaos would ensue and social pandemonium would be the result. Men therefore reply to the greetings individually. Boys and girls, apart from their authentic names, crown themselves with mock names. Names such as Kababa (Tick), Kalulu (the Hare), Zovu (Elephant) and, Livwi (Chameleon) were during research discovered. The meanings of these names should not be literally understood.

A careful examination of these names will give the qualities of the individuals carrying them. Mr. Kababa (Tick) carries a name which when translated means that he is a man who does not easily give up. Once married, he will remain inseparable with the wife like the Tick and a cow. Kalulu (the Hare) is associated with trickery and cleverness. Elephant (Zovu) is associated with trampling on anyone who stands

on his way. To him nothing is impossible. The name 'Chameleon' (Livwi) reflects a man who cannot be taken for granted. He can change as the situation dictates. These mock names help the girls to choose the man of their liking. Boys therefore involved themselves in an act of allusion.

Girls also apart from their real names are known by other names. Some of the names that they use as learned from the data collected are: Anya Mtheliso (paralyser of men), Anya Musangechi (someone with a hidden character), Anya Maluba (Miss Flower) and Anya Simenti (Miss Cement). Interpretations of the meanings of these names reveal much of their character, appearances, what they can do, and their behavioural-patterns. One when man look at paralyses them (Anya Mtheliko), the other has her character not easily determined (Anya Msangechi). Another one has her appearance synonymous with the flower (Anya Maluba) and Anya Simenti (Miss Cement) once agreement is made it is as binding as the cement's intactness on the floor. These names reflect the genuineness of the characters and since boys may not have known them before, they are assisted in their choices by these qualities. The reader should note the bi-syllabic word 'Anya' placed before names of ladies. This is a term expressing feminine gender representing the word 'Miss', while a mono-syllable 'A' before men's names expresses masculine gender representing 'Mr'. With the mock names mastered, they become functional.

Men as they individually receive greetings from their female counterparts, answer to these greetings with a further additions of either the situation in which he stands entangled or by further mentioning a living thing with its peculiar characteristics.

When greeted as shown in this data collected the following were their answers, in addition to the words, 'I am fine'. The incremental technique is employed.

- (i) Ine nili makora kwene ntima ukunisuzga (I am fine except that I am troubled by my heart)

- (ii) Ine nili makora, kwene maghanoghano mbwe!
(I am fine, except for the ubiquity of thoughts in me)

- (iii) Yai nkavici kangatisange ise? umoyo withu uli kwa imwe ndipo ngwa nkumba
(What can trouble me? My life is vested in you and it is like life of a pig)

- (iv) Ise malinga kwacha, umoyo ngwa Gwalawala
(Ah! As long as the sun rises, my life is like that of a Gecko)

Examining all the underlined incremental lines, they are theoretical techniques meant to build tension and desire in the women. These reveal personal characters of the speakers and make ladies think of them credible. These are persuasive techniques which reveal their human character and, human character is one of the most effective means of persuasion one can possess. The girls begin to see their trust, rationality and their affectionalities. The ladies are involved in the surgical analysis of the men's employment of the science of thinking and how they differentiate it from the science of speaking. In other ways ladies test in men their

affection, dialectics and intelligence. With such an analysis they prove how each one responds to the test of his body, tongue and brain.

With the above steadiness and unsteadiness portrayed by these suitors, girls ask:
'Apa mwati maso bii, mwenda makora? (With the inquisition seen in your eyes, is your journey a friendly one?)

The girl's question reveals to the reader the general appearance of men and also their facial appearances which are eager to unravel the mission of their visit. This is shown by the girl's use of the idiophone 'bii' to emphasise the men's eagerness and their facial appearance which reveal their inquisition on the delay of the subject for which they are here. The men's reply"

"Ise tenda makora tikupenza 'bamuzingilila thuli', chomene tapukwa Anya Simenti Anya Zimba". (Our journey is of good intentions, we are looking for 'mortar rounders' especially Miss Zimba.

All what the men imply by 'mortar rounders' (bamuzingilila Thuli) are the women. This is against the Tumbuka practice where women or girls do the pounding of food in one mortar going round and round it and at times singing. This is to lighten the burden of work. Because of this practice women or girls are crowned 'mortar rounder' (bamuzingilila Thuli). The choice of the lady 'Anya Zimba' (Miss Zimba) is due to the satisfaction they have as a result of her descriptive qualities and the strict examination of the analogy chosen.

The linguistic battle does not end here. It is a see-saw game. Girls have known the one singled out on their part but are oblivious as to which man wants Anya

Simenti (Miss Cement), so the following figures of their speech are used. Girls say:

- (i) Show us the millet so we take it to the drying place (Tilongolaniko kambala tikanike kujaniko)
- (ii) Show us the mirror so that we look at it (Tilongani ngilazi tilabiskepo)
- (iii) Show us the airport so that planes can land on it (Tilonganiko chibaza cha ndege, ndege zidekepo)
- (iv) Can you lend us your pin to remove thorns in our flesh? (Tibwerekaniko phini tithorere minga?)
- (v) Show us the roof-holder to hold the roof (Tilongolani nchandamila iyo yingakole mutenge)

Here, we see the use of periphrasis to test the men's interpretive genius. All they want is to see the one who has been escorted. The girls' sayings need to be studied in detail as they form the core of this discussion. Above all, these circumrotating ways of their speech show their high degree of intelligence. They are able to relate their talk to tools or things found in their environment. The tools mentioned in their speech are symbolic. We agree here with L. Thorndike's definition of intelligence which appears in David L. Sills Book (1996: 421) looking at the girls' utilization of their immediate environment. Thorndike says:

"In general way every one knows what intelligence or intelligent behaviour is. We think of behaviour as intelligent to the extent that it is efficient and adaptive in handling a situation that the individual faces and to the extent that it meets the demands of the situation, in its novelty, complexity, and abstractness".

The girls here need to be understood in what they mean. Millet (kambala) (are the men while mat (Janiko) are the girls. We are aware that the mat (girls) does not move but the millet does from where it was harvested to the village where it is dried. Millet to be dried must be well-known so that one does not dry sorghum instead of millet.

When they say ‘show us the mirror to look at’, they are still referring to the man who in this case is their ‘mirror’ the object of their study and analysis. The ‘airport’ in this case is their male candidate and the ‘planes’ are the girls whose eyes want to land on this airport (man).

The ‘pin’ and the ‘thorn’ found in the ‘flesh’ of these ladies are ambivalent symbols. The ‘pin’ is a ‘man’ and the ‘thorn’ is a ‘lady’ and ‘flesh’ is the lady’s village environment. In short, the ladies are saying, “who is this man who wants the lady to be extricated from her parental environment?” The ‘pin’ could also mean the man’s organ which will be used to produce children (thorn) out of the flesh (womb of a woman).

The ‘roof holder’ is the man and the ‘roof’ is the marriage itself.

Following what girls have asked, that is, knowledge of this ‘pin’, ‘roof-holder’ or ‘mirror’, men will answer by stating that their ‘roof-holder’ is Mr. Mwandila, the Elephant. By this time qualities of the elephant have been examined. The general outlook of this elephant (Mr. Mwandila) have been studied. The girls’ response to the boys representation of the candidate who wants to marry Miss Cement (Anya Simenti) are:

- (i) The roof-holder is rotten (nchandamila njakuvunda)
- (ii) The mirror does not shine (ngilazi yikubala cha!)
- (iii) The airstrip has pot holes (chibaza chandege china vibonga-bonga)
- (iv) The 'pin' is blunt (phini njakubumpa)
- (v) You have found only chaff as millet has already been got (mwaphura mwelero lipoko balikutora kale)

These statements represent negation especially the word 'cha!' which in Tumbuka represents a strong denial. The girls are saying the man cannot guarantee marriage safety for a long time (the roof-holder is rotten) the glass does not shine symbolize the man's ugliness, the pot-holes on the airstrip symbolize how rough the candidate is to attract any sensible girl (vibonga-bonga), the bluntness of the pin shows that the man's mental sharpness is questionable and, the availability of only chaff as millet is taken away of refusing that the girl in question is already engaged and that is true even for the rest. This is to close up all lee-ways of men's arguments.

Men to show their persuasive power respond by stating:

- (i) When the glass is unshiny, don't we clean it with water? (Pala ngilazi yikubala cha! Asi tikusuka?)
- (ii) If the pin is blunt, don't we sharpen it? (Para phini njakubumpa, asi tikunora?)
- (iii) Where women have thrown chaff of the millet, what do birds follow? (Kasi pala bathira mwelero, tuyuni tulonda pochi?)

As we can see, these are strong questions to counteract the girls' analysis of Mr. Elephant (Mwandila). These are answer-begging questions which men probably think

will change the girls' decisions. They refuse to sharpen the pin as it is unsharpenable showing that some human qualities are inborn and there is little or nothing they can do to change such laws of nature upon him. As to the question asking girls what birds follow where chaff is thrown, they easily answer that birds follow millet.

This means that not all ladies in the village can be engaged or are already married. The men are the birds, 'chaff' is the village itself and 'millet' are the girls left after others have been married or engaged. The man contends that it is because of the left over millet that they are in the village. Girls give consent to this fact and to convince and confuse them more boys ask them further:

Can you show us the back of yesterday?" (Mungatirongola kuseli kwa mailo?). This is to further evoke their thoughts and to test their intellectuality. The girls respond by stating the impossibility of this. The boys quickly fire another thought-evoking question by stating:

"Can you dry your handkerchief in the air?"

(Kasi mungayanika ka 'Hanki' panyakhe 'ka Hiya' mumulenga-lenga?)

The boys are saying: 'Can our journey be so futile so as to return without tangible results? This is signified by the term 'mulenga-lenga (sky) to denote 'nothingness'. The girls' answer is that this cannot happen. The 'handkerchief' are the 'suitsors' and 'air' may also represent 'a village without girls'. Just as a Handkerchief needs a wire to hold it, boys have found themselves in this village because they want girls (wire) to marry.

Following this, girls bring in an enigma of a man in the middle of a tree with a snake up in the tree and a lion waiting down the tree. They ask boys what they would do. Boys acknowledge the difficulty of the situation and bear with the situation in which girls have found themselves in and they clearly state that the two vices require the two groups of men and women to put their heads together to surmount them. All of them have so far made no commendable progress. For girls to give consent to the chosen contender it seems virtually impossible and for men to return without achieving any tangible results will do no good to them. Both are at crossroads. To come out of this situation would provide psychotherapy to all. The 'snakes' and 'lions' are both images representing the bleak future and the unprogressive trodden past. They both symbolize loss.

The discussions have reached a crisis to both. The situation is not just a question of oratory but finding a solution. The situation has become intellectually demanding and anyone trying to speak risks being critically assessed. The puzzle is a test of what happens in marriage or the community when things reach a crisis. A way should always be found. The position of a man in the tree, the position of the snake and that of the lion will not make any progress. The boys spokesman bows in not as an act of defeat but as an act of finding a way forward which would probably sort out the insurmountable problem. He tells all:

'We have replaced the roof-holder 'with a new one. And this is Mr. Zimba, the Chameleon'

(Nchandamila tabikapo yipy ndipo ni A Zimba, a Livwi)

The girls seem to be satisfied with the replacement. The qualities of Mr. Zimba, the Chameleon, probably has won their hearts. It is therefore not the size of one's body or how small or clever one is which matters in society but how one responds to

demanding situations. The Chameleon easily adapts or fits the colour of the environment in which it finds itself. It does not contend and change the situation to fit it, but it fits in. The Chameleon despite its size can hold marriage in any situation because marriage is not always a bed of roses. It is the quality of flexibility that has yielded good results.

The ladies request the boys to go back to their homes and return the following Sunday. This is for the reason that girls especially the targeted girl must be given ample time to judge, consult and interpret the linguistic and literary operations of the suitor before any agreement is made. Furthermore, it is because even before the suitor's visit to her, she might have been under their study and scrutiny in terms of behaviour and other feminine requirements men look for and have been satisfied. But for her this is probably the first time she is meeting them and little does she know their behavioural and emotional climate. Up to this time, she has only relied on their literal presentability and facial dialectics.

If on the first meeting, she is not very satisfied but doubts of his rationality, and that she needs to find out more about him, she goes into an act of ironic refusal until the suitors retreat to their homes as she inquires from elders, especially the grandparents. A suitor can make up to three or four trips before final agreement or negation is made. Both agreement and negation are arrived at after a number of factors are analyzed. The symbolic presentation and analysis, his parents and clan's past history, the stability of character, degree of endurance and other physical and literary factors are but some of the factors she must be satisfied with before a decision is finally made.

These, among the Tumbuka are the necessary factors even for their future co-operate life.

The boys return for their second meeting. This time without much discussion. As they are seated, an inter-change of greetings are done. The boys' representative hands over a book in which a white cotton thread is put and girls receive it. The girls' request the boys to go out where they go to consult each other and consult older people. Before they return, the grandmother goes in the house and joins the smaller girls who were left entertaining their male visitors. The grandmother comes in to examine the suitor and then she goes out. White cotton is a symbol of agreement. The grandmother tells them to agree by reciprocatively putting in white cotton. If however, negation is the result, black cotton is put in. if the boys have changed mind as they went back home, they will put a black cotton thread in the book but never do they simply stay at home. This shows the trust that these people had to accomplish what they had started.

After all is done, this girl and her 'husband to be' exchange gifts called 'chikhore'. A girl gives her 'husband to be' a bangle (Bangiri) and a boy may give a handkerchief (Hanki). These sovenirs are symbolic. A handkerchief is a symbol of the 'sleeping mat' whereas a bangle, by its circular nature, and only one opening, is a symbol of trust. The only opening of a bangle signifies the only man she has agreed to. She will not open up to another regardless of the situation in which she may find herself.

The words 'Bangiri' and 'Hanki' are the corrupted words for 'a Bangle' and 'a handkerchief'. Their sounds are corrupted sound arising from the incorrect copying

of European pronunciations of the two words. The souvenir given to the lady is called 'Chikhore' which when literally translated means 'binding'. This marriage agreement therefore is a seal or a covenant arising from the long period of deliberations. Chikhore is like a lock where one will find difficult to access entry into the house.

The next stage is the choice of middlemen called in Tumbuka 'mathenga' who shall run errands between the girls' family and that of the man. Middlemen should be the accomplished men of their time with good oratorical qualities. In most cases these are their cousins. But the first person to report to the boy's parents about the girl their son has proposed are the grandparents but this is outside our area of discussion, but the most important point to bear in mind is the fact that agreement made in the 'Nthanganeni' is simply the first stage of marriage procedure. Next is the input by the couple's clans as demanded by the Tumbuka etiquettes. The two contenders however, from the time of their agreement are really in a state of euphoria.

NTHANGANENI BEFORE 1950 AND AFTER 1950

In life there are processes and procedures which must be trodden. This is true about the Tumbuka culture. Every procedure in marriage should be followed. Bakare Gbadamonsi's words are clear here in O.R Dathorne's book (1901:368) when he says: "The only way to reach the top of a palm tree is to climb it."

This is true of the Tumbuka marriage. The institution of '*Nthanganeni*' where marriage was negotiated as before 1950, and which is the practice in some remote areas, was a foundation and a symbol of relationship building organized from general to specific. This was manifested from the way marriage was negotiated. A suitor

never went alone. Both the man and the girl had escortees. Elders were involved in the process of marriage even before agreement was made. Even when agreement was made in the 'Nthanganeni', the two families had a final say. It was only when all these steps were exhausted could the suitor and her girl sleep together. Marriage drew the interest of the society. It was organized from general to specific. Today's marriages are vice-versally instituted through social isolation. Couples begin by having 'sexual taste' secretly before involving their clans and friends. There is too much individuality than communality now. The old have therefore laid their hands off and hence there is lack of supervision from the experienced old. As they are individually instituted so their demise comes through individual decision thereby undermining their stability. O. R. Dathorne (1901:368) is right when he says today's marriages are like:

"The tree breaks and birds fly"

This comes as a result of self-righteousness by the youth. It must be noted here that failure to follow traditional marriage syllabus breeds sorrow as the case is with our modern youths who have disembarked from the traditional vehicle to the modern disappointing vehicle with no clearly defined etiquettes. The Tumbuka society is moving from its evangelic virtue to kakangelic fate because its yough can no longer operate or manage to persuade one in rich symbolic and well-flavoured Tumbuka literary forms. Having observed the waywardness of the youths from this standpoint, one gets the conviction that there must be need for the Tumbuka society to labour to relate the rich past and weave it with the present and demonstrate a historic evolution of the modern Tumbuka. There must be need to reject the attempts by the powers that be to project and uphold an arrested image of the Tumbuka culture.

Indeed very few young people in the Tumbukaland today cherish the input of the old. They look at the old as having unprogress and out-dated ideas. Sarah Arber et al (1991:1) describe the old person from the youths' point of view as:

“.....someone who no longer enjoys a place in the mainstream of society and whose behaviour is abnormal”.

This is because the young are mentally colonized by western ideas. They are so eurocentric that they have even gone to the extent of forgetting that they are in Africa. The result has been syncretic way of doing things with westernization as a bigger controlling force. Their marriages have been built on wealth and on jobs. This entails that when wealth and jobs are finished, marriages are also finished.

The '*Nthanganeni*' based marriages before 1950 concentrated on knowing the partner well in terms of character, emotions, dialects and rationality, while modern marriages which do not go through this traditional institution concentrate on knowing whether the encroaching man has resources or not. Elderly inputs are anathemic to them. A few years in marriage are enough to make them to come out of it. Gabriel Banda, a Zambian reporter for the Post Newspaper of (June 17, 2005) writes that many fear marriage today and after work:

“Many dread going back home each day and instead wish for overtime work, going to drinking places or visiting. Stress builds up.”

The problem has been the deviation from the moral and ethical norms of the society. The old man, Mr. Phiri of Thabale Village in Chief Kapichila's area was asked as regards marriages in the present time in comparison to old times. He said:

“Banakazi balero mbanakazi cha! Pala wazomera kwa iwe ndiko kuti wazomeraso kubanyakheso”

When translated he is saying:

“Women of this generation are not trusted women when they agree to your proposal you will find out that they have agreed to other men”.

I then interviewed a young girl selling at Lundazi main market in Chief Mphamba’s area by the name of Mtonga Ethel who had a baby playing under her stand. When asked about modern marriages, she angrily told me that:

“Banalume lero mba satana mungapulikana, wakupa mwana mbwenu wakukuleka wekha ukusuzika na mwana”

Translating her words all she is saying is that:

“Modern men are satanic, you can make a building agreement but when you have a child he will leave you alone with your baby suffering”.

Looking at the two views by the two respondents, it is crystal clear that both the old and the young are disappointed with modern times of loss of ethical standards. This loss and disappointment of the youth’s failure to follow the traditional standing orders from the old is strongly echoed by Segilola, a lady with delicate eyebrows, in Darthrone, O. R’s book (1901:76) when in her laments in a letter to the editor of a magazine, she writes:

“Oh! What a life! What tears for my fate! What lamentation! What sighs at this stage of my life!

Anyone who is taught, let her learn

*Anyone who has the benefit of parental training, let her know that she is being given
an enduring legacy.*

See me now, the pitiful wretch!

My mother taught me, but I was incorrigible;

She warned me openly and privately but I chose to be deaf to her advice.

Here I am now, an orphan, crying tears for my stubbornness,

But my lamentations are belated for the good is no more.....”

Oh! My eyes are already full of tears as I write now:

Indeed Sengilola is lamenting on behalf of the whole young generation, the Tumbuka inclusive who have parents but are orphans, who seem to be enjoying but they are dying. This is due to people's movement from cultural, economic and social order to cultural, social and economic disorders hence, the resultant effects are moral and social decays of the modern Tumbuka society. People's manifestation of ethics today do not show metropolitan genesis but cultural crystallization resulting from several cultural blends of no identifiable origin. Having made such a realization, one should be compelled to turn around and look back as the future seems bleak. The 'Nthanganeni' before 1950 and after 1950 had significant differences. The further time passed from 1950, the less the cultural aroma the 'Nthanganeni' possessed until now no one can identify where marriage negotiations are done by our youths.

FUNCTIONS OF THE 'NTHANGANENI'

'Nthanganeni' had several functions. One of the functions was that of interpreting and analyzing one's mind through literary operations. In this institution the listener carefully listened to subtle linguistic clues that helped him or her read beyond the

literal meaning. There was too much emphasis on the interpretation of the complex symbol system of the language used by the speaker.

The '*Nthanganeni*' also functioned to introduce the young girls to the marriage scenario which would benefit them in their later lives.

The '*Nthanganeni*' was meant to strengthen the social behaviour and the traditional norms of the society so that continuity was guaranteed.

Other functions were that is served as a place where girls slept. It was an institution for the psychological and emotional release of accumulated tensions that had been building up for sometime due to the separation that the society inflicted between boys and girls. Furthermore, this institution served as the basis of the relationship between diverse clans who were earlier not related in any way. Because of this, conflicts between clans were unheard of. The '*Nthanganeni*' therefore played a vital role.

STABILITY FACTORS OF THE TUMBUKA MARRIAGES THAT PASSED THROUGH THE 'NTHANGANENI'

Before 1950, Tumbuka marriages were very stable. This was because of a number of factors discussed below.

One reason why Tumbuka marriages were durable was because of the process it underwent. The process was long and complicated. To end it the reversal of the process was to be followed and so couples opted to stay together than follow the long and complicated procedures. Furthermore, boys and girls married late. They were

not in a hurry to get married. They bided their time. For women, they did not get married until their breasts were fully developed and almost to their drooping stage. For boys, they could not be permitted until they had come to a full boyhood. This is because they followed instructions from elders who had already the experience of such a life.

Gabriel Banda writing in The Post Newspaper of (Friday, June, 17th, 2005) comments on this point when he says:

“Elders understood various factors that affected personality, behaviour and relationship. Directly or indirectly, individuals are trained by events and people around them. So the elders understood factors at play. They sought to help put together people whose personalities and attitudes could effectively work together”.

So the input of elders was one of the vital factors for marriage stability.

In even of a lady wishing to end marriage, this meant that all the animals a man paid must be taken back. Marriage, therefore, as seen, was made stronger by payment of cattle which the bride's family could also use for their marriages and if they were poor, it was difficult to refund. This would lead to many marriages breaking hence the best was to keep one marriage intact which would make others intact also. But if it was a man who decided to leave the wife, he would lose all the animals which the clan gave him to pay for his marriage. If in future, he wanted to marry again, the family would be unwilling to pay for him for a second time, so it was better to keep one's first wife.

The other factor was that if one decided to have his or her marriage terminated by any reasons whatsoever, this set wrong precedence on the whole family. This meant that in future anyone who would want to marry from that family he would be discouraged for they knew it was a clan that did not keep marriages.

The position of a divorced woman in the Tumbuka society was a strengthening factor of marriage. A divorced woman was termed 'chibuya'. This was a demeaning and embarrassing term. 'Chibuya' means someone who is unable to keep her marriage intact. Her social position was extremely low. Everyone shunned her in many events be it in a social function, because, she may contaminate others with her 'Chibuyaness'. Men would not marry her because they questioned her integrity. So every woman despite facing problems, opted to solve and keep her marriage intact because no one would marry her after her first marriage opportunity is squandered.

The high status the society gave to married people made people to aspire to marry and maintain their marriages. Marriage institution was respected as it represented people who had passed through the society's set curriculum. For example, they had been initiated, they had passed through the symbolic stage hence were able to comprehend or interpret situations, both literary and environmental. They are people who are able to defeat hunger and disease. They are trained to safeguard the tribal social codes. They are capable of raising up their own children. They understood the meaning of life and marriage. They had been tested in several ways and had graduated to join the society of elders and could be consulted by the new married aspirants because they had passed through all problems associated with marriage. The society or council of elders took pride in them and on important tribal or family matters they qualified to

offer their contributions. They knew how to respect their in-laws. This status given to marriage was in itself an incentive and a reason for marriage stability.

During research, for comparative sake, many old people were asked as to how many marriages got broken in their villages before 1950. Interestingly almost all of them could not remember any. When asked as to how many got broken after 1950, both the young and the old said that they were so many that could not remember them all. Marriages before 1950 were therefore more stable than those after this period because of the factors that were at play. This does not mean that the youth should not marry. They should continue to marry, but, perhaps William M. Kaphat's (1966:294) words can help to explain modern marriages when he states that:

“Cupid may have wings, but apparently they are not adapted for long flights”

Meaning that youths can continue to marry, but the durability of their marriages is not guaranteed.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Marriage among the Tumbuka is a complex social task because apart from it being a bond between the two opposite sexes, it is also the culmination of elderly input through the contenders' skilful use of literary forms and symbols drawn from their rich and complete environment. These are presented and interpreted in a tensely contested psycho-analytic session comprising girls (*mbetas*) and boys (*majahas*) in an authorized place called '*Nthanganeni*'. The literary genre used in this place is not commonplace. It shows one's mental age reached and it is mentally demanding. This literary language measures one's character, emotions, truthfulness, endurance and above all, his or her ability to come out of a demanding situation. These factors meant that those who decided to begin the process of marriage were ready for it. They were fully-grown, understood what marriage was, and the literary requirements for them to succeed. These qualities produced lasting marriages. They understood that marriage was not for sexual satisfaction only but also a societal requirement.

The factors discussed are lacking in the modern Tumbuka marriages. They are not modeled on traditional base but on movies. Modern youths fail to deeply understand what marriage is. They are also unable to utilize their physical, psychological and literary environment in which they live. The society is full of alienated physical,

economic and linguistic environment leading to the crisis. Furthermore, its citizens fail to understand its spiritual, material, intellectual, ethnical and emotional features which characterize their heritage. They have inherited a culture, which is not home-grown. Kwasi Wiredu, et al (1988:16) describes these youths as:

“people without chiefs and brooking orders from none”

So we see the crumbling down of the Tumbuka social structures that once stood intact. The Tumbuka mode of persuasion today is not the proto-type but of several cultural infusions. Factors that have contributed to this cultural erosion are not far fetched. The shallowness of the Tumbuka individual's feeling of tribal identify, their failure to deeply get involved in their traditional beliefs and practices which could govern their relationship to the community and their environment, the incessant demand of the western technological culture on the Tumbuka individuals, the individual's discovery of the destiny of their local culture amidst world cultures with strong and promising economic sustenance, the complexity of individuals due to exposure to several cultures resulting from their inter-mingling with other cultures, the creation of territorial boundaries at the expense of national boundaries and, urbanization, where individuals have learnt that local culture cannot inspire them are but some of the few factors that have led to the erosion of the Tumbuka marriage and other practices.

The Tumbuka society has therefore suffered disruption of the prohibitive connections and certitudes, which once created social bonds and fellowship that once prevailed in a rural setting. This has brought about frustration of the traditional authority as new political authority not commanded by the traditional base has developed thereby stunning the traditional authority who have remained hopeless of their cultural destiny after the urban and economic drain of their much needed ethics and its youths. The

traditional authority can no longer insulate its youths from foreign, social, economic and cultural encroachments.

The youths have also found themselves without traditional control. This is due to lack of authorized meeting places which in turn has led to uncontrolled mode of behaviour, uncontrolled marriages and new social-linguistic relations have arisen independent of the traditional base. New symbolisms and language have arisen unknown to the folks. Jonas Msimuko of Matakoo Village when asked how the young today propose girls for marriage said that there were many ways, but when asked to tell us one of the ways they would persuade a girl for marriage he revealed that a girl can be told that:

"Iwe mu girls nkhukumba kukukwatira ngati vinthu vakhala che!!"

Just from this sentence one can see syncretism at work which leads to binary oppositions between the young and the old or between traditionally accepted literary language and the modern one used by the youths. Unless these are reconciled, the language and its marriage stability will be affected. The instability of marriages today therefore represents a rupture of the biological, social and moral bonds. Modern marriages lack moral fibre that can hold them together because of failure to respect or reconcile with the old. Morrish (1972:39) sees the danger in such a relationship and says:

"When, the meanings of the father were no longer meaningful to the son, there was danger!...and when the meanings of the son remain unmeaningful to the father, there is danger".

The Tumbuka literary language which produced marriage is entangled in such a situation as most youth have taken their own way, while in Tumbuka traditional sense it is clear that to disrespect elders is to disobey authority that embodies and represents tradition. It is also to insult and contest the moral values that the tradition has laid down for long. While the youth refuse such a historical sacredness because they believe that culture is unstatic. It is made and not only transmitted. It is functional and linked to the present. It is not enough to preserve and transmit the past but to demonstrate its function in the present and how it would fit the future. Supporting the youths Ivor Morrish (1972:60) adds that:

“A virile use of symbolism will involve the creation of new symbols for new expressions of meaning in an environment which is not only changing, but is being understood at different levels and different depths. To remain uptight and inflexible in an era of rapid change is to lose an opportunity for understanding society and its relationships in the very process of transformation”.

While it is true that time, space, temper of the time and personality of a generation determine the effectiveness of their behaviour and institutions as the youths argue, it is vital to look at the merits brought about by these things. Furthermore, the old have a duty to see to it that the offspring they have introduced to this world live happily and are stable. Presently, the problem displeasing these folks in the Tumbukaland is the instability of their children’s marriages and their concern is not a shot in the wrong direction. The old have discovered that their youths when they want to marry, are driven by libidinal or sexual versus at the expense of many other factors which need testing before marriage is constituted. To correct the situation it has become

rather difficult as the once respected old people are no longer enjoying the obligatory respect that was accorded to them by the youth. Now, respect depends on one's educational attainment and how wide he has traveled. Traditional wisdom is currently a thing apart. B. Rajan (1965:120) quoting W. B. Yeat's work entitled the "second coming" pitifully laments in his poem the youths' failure to follow the traditional code of conduct when he says:

"Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the Falconer

Things fall Apart

The centre cannot hold

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world"

This means that the old people's wisdom which acted as the moral basis of order has collapsed and the Tumbuka society has remained open to foreign intrusions.

If marriages among the Tumbuka are to be resuscitated, therefore, the literary language, the advantageous traditional morals, the authentication of the institution of the 'Nthanganeni' and, the elders should play a role in the marriages of their children otherwise the Tumbuka will remain a people with borrowed morals, a situation which is not only demeaning but also embarrassing. Philip Rieff (1975:11 agrees with this view and states that:

"The highest for which we can hope is to become the truest object of our predecessors to come such an object implies no superiority".

The youth therefore must turn around and face reality for stability and development requires continuity of the vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following stand to be the recommendations arising from this research.

- (a) That youths from an early stage be introduced to a Tumbuka literary scenario as this produced lasting marriages the society was proud of.
- (b) That since society is in a state of rapid change and that the old have found themselves entangled in the modern situation they do not fully understand, they should exercise flexibility in order to blend some virtuous modern traits in order to foster progress.
- (c) That youths should understand and accept both the negative and positive situations they find themselves in, than brooding over a situation for a long time which at times may lead to committing crime. Something should be learnt from the rejected suitor in the '*Nthanganeni*' who continues escorting the 'chosen one' until his time comes.
- (d) That both the youths and elders should understand that no generation is flooded with vices only or virtues only. Both generations have something to learn from each other. This will foster stability of marriages and progress.
- (e) That the old must realize that they have undeniable duty to shape the destiny of those they have worked to bring to earth so that their offsprings live an improved and orderly marriage lives.
- (f) That the psycho-analytic type of examination of marriage contenders be employed still in marriage negotiations so that those who fail to satisfy such

intellectual conditions should have their marriages delayed until their pathos, ethos, and egos are fully developed to face such challenges of life than permit them to marry and have children from immature parents thereby generating a generation of low calibre citizens in society who fail even to understand and utilize the environment to their advantage and that of the whole country.

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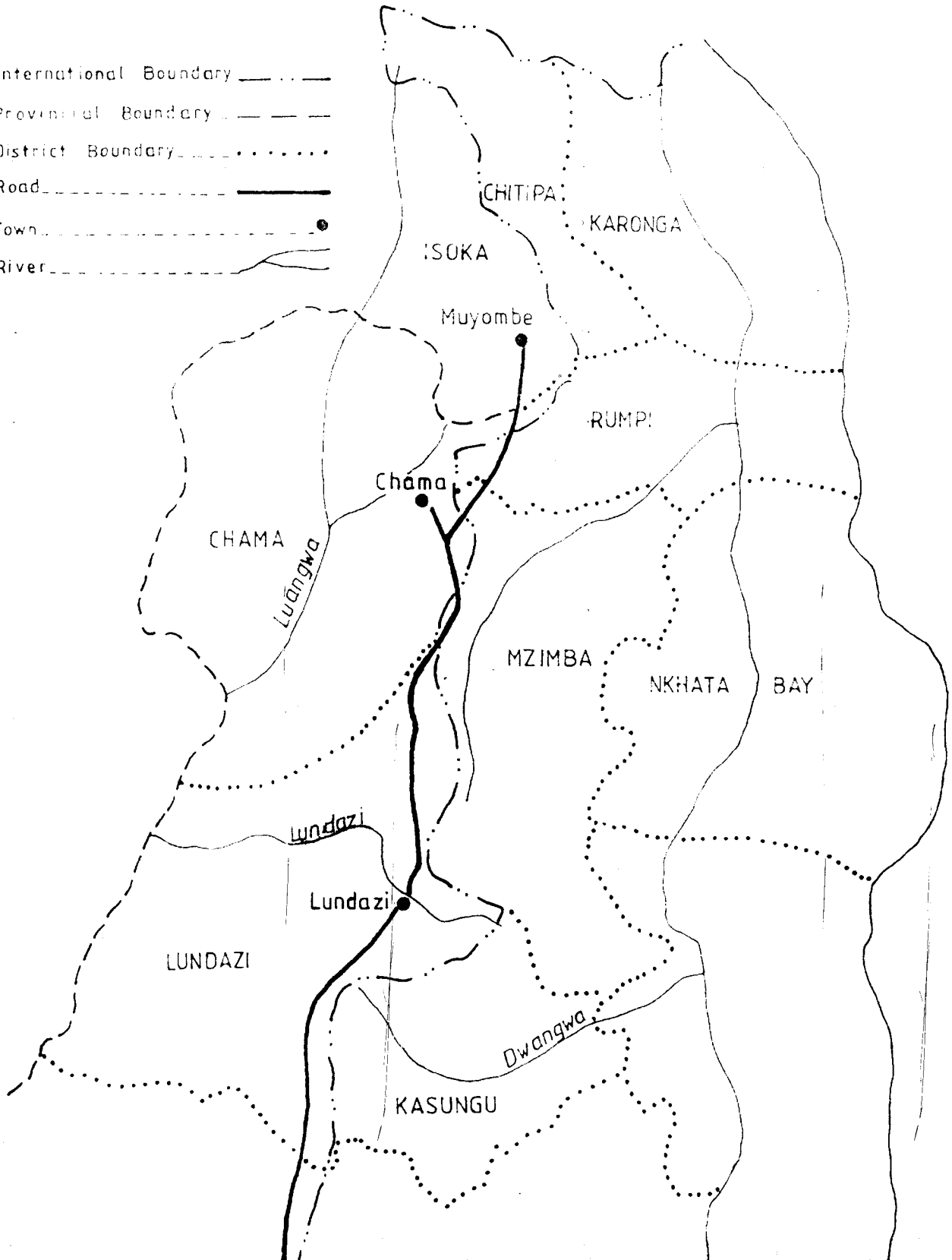
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APPENDIX 1

MAPS, 1, 2, 3 AND 4.

TUMBUKA AREAS

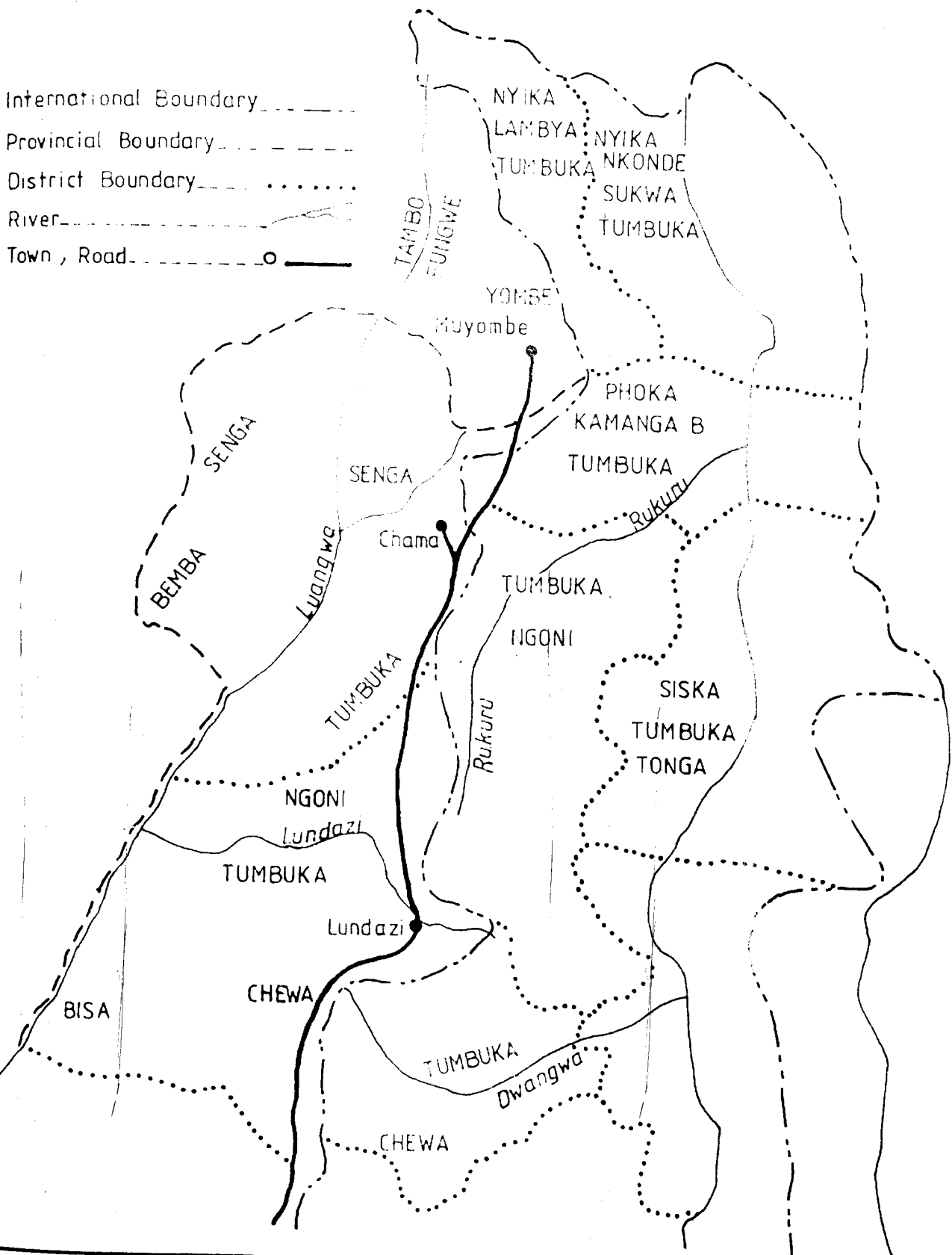
- International Boundary ————
- Provincial Boundary - - - - -
- District Boundary
- Road ————
- Town ●
- River ————



SOURCE: G. Fortune, S. J. The Bantu languages of the Federation, c Preliminary Survey, (the Rhodes-Livingstone institute, Lusaka, 1959, Number 14)

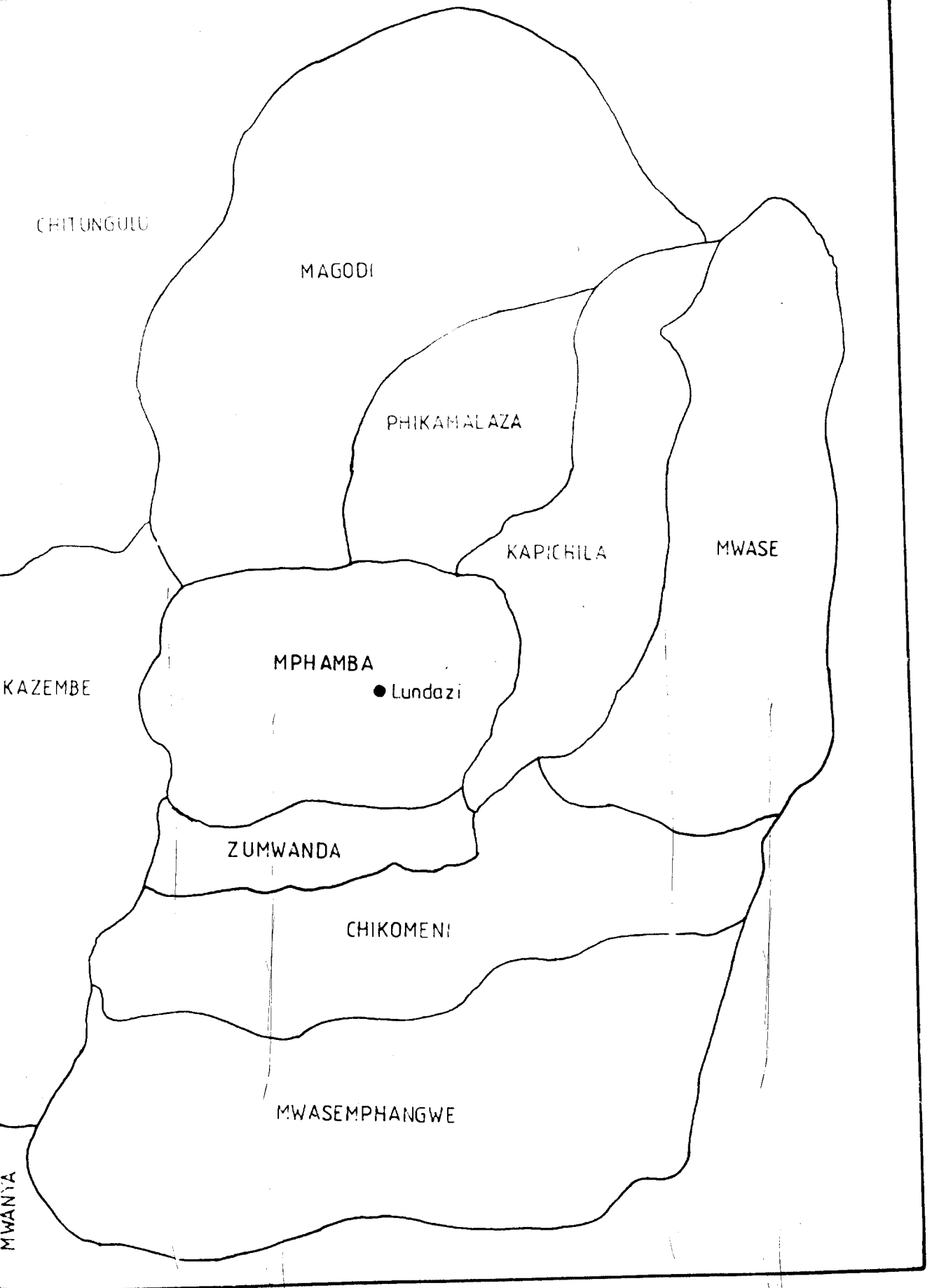
TUMBUKA GROUPS

International Boundary - - - - -
 Provincial Boundary - - - - -
 District Boundary
 River - - - - -
 Town, Road - - - - -



SOURCE: G. Fortune, S. J. The Bantu languages of the Federation, a Preliminary Survey, (the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Lusaka, 1959, Number 14)

CHIEFS IN LUNDAZI DISTRICT



APPENDIX 2

- STATISTICS ON RESPONDENTS.
- QUESTIONNAIRE

STATISTICS ON RESPONDENTS.

| MARRIED BEFORE 1950 | | MARRIED AFTER 1950 | | TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALES | TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES | TOTAL RESPONDENTS |
|---------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| FEMALES | MALES | FEMALES | MALES | | | |
| | 12 | 10 | 10 | 18 | 22 | 40 |

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE AND LANGUAGES

INTRODUCTION: My name is Mr Gondwe Luka. I have to conduct interviews in the Tumbuka language as used in the Nthanganene when people want to marry. I would be happy if you can be free to answer the question interviews I will ask you. The information you will give me is confidential. Only those of us who are concerned with the interviews will have access to it.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEWS

1. What is your name?
.....
2. What is the name of this village?
.....
3. When did you get married?
.....
4. Did your marriage negotiation pass through the 'Nthanganene'?

Yes []
No []
5. What could have been the possible meaning of the word 'Ntanganene'?
.....
.....
.....
6. If it passed through Nthanganene, what was the sitting arrangement between the mbetas (girls) and majahas (suitors)?
.....
.....
.....
7. Who initiated the speaking?
.....
8. State the whole procedure of speech as used in the Nthangawanene up to the end.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
.....
.....

9. I can see that you used rhetoric or figurative language, why did you use it?

.....
.....
.....

10. What were the meanings of the literary forms you used?

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)
- (v)
- (vi)
- (vii)
- (viii)
- (ix)
- (x)

11. From who did the youth learn these literary forms used in the 'Nthanganene'?

.....
.....

12. Were there unsuccessful mahajas (suitors) in the Nthanganene?

Yes []
No []

13. If so, what could have been the possible reasons for their failure to succeed?

- (i) Inarticulation of persuasive language
- (ii) Bad parental and personal testimonies
- (iii) Their physical and mental unaprightness
- (iv) Laziness
- (v) Their poor dressing
- (vi) Distance of their location
- (vii) History of relationships
- (viii) Level of education
- (ix) State other reasons

14. For the successful ones, what might have been the qualities for their success?

.....
.....
.....

15. What made jahas (men) to go to one village to look for the mbetas (ladies) and left other villages even though they also had mbeta?

.....
.....
.....

16. Did the use of literary forms contribute to marriage stability?

Yes []
No []

17. If it did, how did it contribute to stability?

.....
.....

18. If they did not why did they continue using them?

.....
.....

19. Which marriages are more stable, traditional or modern ones?

Traditional []
Modern ones []
Don't know []

20. What are the reasons for your answer?

.....
.....
.....

21. How do youths look at traditional marriages?

Primitive []
Stable []
Bad []

22. How do elders look at traditional marriages?

Very successful and lasting []
Successful and lasting []
Same as modern ones []
Archaic []

23. In this village, how many marriages were broken before 1950?

Many []
Very few []
Few []
Don't know []

24. How many marriages have been broken in this village from 1950 to present?

- Over 20 []
- Between 10-19 []
- Between 1-09 []
- No marriage breakages []

25. If the answer in 24 is more, what could be the possible reasons for the high rate of marriage breakages, today?

.....
.....

26. Do you have any other special comments as regards the use of marriage literary forms employed in the Nthanganene?

.....
.....
.....

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE