

**A MISSIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
OF SELECTED BEMBA PROVERBS
ON MARRIAGE**

by

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SUMMARY

Because many Bemba Christians do not experience the quality of life they thought would follow conversion, they are tempted to either settle for shallow, superficial religious experience, or, during times of crisis, revert to traditional religious beliefs and practices they know are inconsistent with their theological understanding.

In order to assist Christian communicators in their task of bringing the Bemba to authentic conversion and an experience of salvation that genuinely meets their needs, we have, in this study, tendered one strategy for reaching the Bemba *heart*.

This *heart*, identified as worldview, is the locus of a people's value system and it is where they bastion their most comprehensive idea of order. Because the heart, or worldview, is where reality is known, valued and ordered, it should be the focus of Christian communication that has as its purpose restoring people to comprehensive well-being, or restoration of peace with God, others, one's self and nature.

To this end, we have gathered 2,686 Bemba proverbs from approximately fifteen previously published sources, isolated roughly 200 proverbs on the theme of marriage, and have, with the assistance of seven Bemba informants, provided contextually determined translations, meanings, usages and teachings, *inter alia*, and have attempted, by means of employing Hiebert's critical contextualisation method (1985:188), to begin constructing a contextualised local theology of marriage which is the result of engaging in a dialogue between Bemba traditional values as expressed in their proverbial lore and related biblical values.

The process of contextualisation is incomplete because it is our contention that it is the responsibility of local Bemba theologians, not of foreign researchers, to construct a theology of marriage that is relevant to local Bemba needs.

Thus, this study does not attempt to provide theological answers to marital needs; rather, it is offered to Christian communicators for exploratory use as a beach-head for constructing a bridge across which both Bemba and biblical worldview values might be mutually enriched.

Key Terms

Proverbs, contextualisation, worldview, marriage, Bemba culture, Bemba values, salvation, conversion, intercultural communication, missiology.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RELEVANCE

1.1.1 General Relevance

A few years ago I heard two statements by Zambian Christians that launched me on a project of several years now. The first occurred when I asked the question, "Ba¹ Mwachinondo, do the church people really believe evil spirits can harm them?" Without apology or hesitation, he said, "Inside church they do not believe evil spirits can harm them, but outside they do." The second occurred while discussing African Traditional Religion in general and witchcraft in particular with one of our theological college students. I asked him, "Why is it, Ba Mbuya, that the local church people are both fearful of and affected by evil spirits while white people and missionaries are not?" He replied cryptically, "We have our spirits, and you have yours." The first statement admitted that some, if not many, Zambian Christians have learned to live with two antagonistic religious realities, one associated with church life and another associated with life outside the church. The second statement pointed out that difficulties with evil spirits, among other things, are conditioned by one's cultural context. Because of these two statements, and many more like them since, I have found myself compelled, as one sent to Zambia to communicate the gospel, to explore the relationship between traditional cultural values and Christian salvation.

1.1.2 Specific Relevance

I am a North American Christian missionary teaching at the Theological College of Central Africa in Ndola, Zambia. Our purpose at the college is training men and women to go out and be ministers of the gospel predominantly in Zambia, but also in other regions of Southern and Central Africa. One of our greatest concerns at the college is being relevant both to felt needs and to cultural values. One of the greatest needs we have had revealed to us is a need for a deeper, more genuine conversion² to Christian values within the Zambian cultural context.

The problem is many conversions to the Christian faith do not seem to have taken place at the deepest levels of being, not only in church members in general, but even among our leaders. While it is not my intention to judge the authenticity of another person's conversion, I am nevertheless

troubled by certain counter-productive behavioural patterns some church people recurrently manifest. While professing to be “born again” Christians, during times of crisis, they turn, not to God and the church for help, but to the pre-Christian ways they formerly employed in dealing with crises. This suggests that their conversion, though genuine in its initial intent, did not penetrate to the deepest level of personality. Their conversion was superficial yet apparently adequate for their needs so long as their sense of well-being remained intact. In times of distress, however, they revert to human ingenuity in some instances, and, in others, they may even seek assistance from traditional sources they know are clearly prohibited by their understanding of Christian doctrine. In other words, during periods of relative peace and prosperity, these people are comfortable with a sense of reliance upon God and the church, but during periods of extreme difficulty, they go back to the ways they *really believe* work (Simfukwe 1995:1). They have inadvertently developed a dual religious system (Schreiter 1985:148) in which they have divided and opposing loyalties. In their ambivalence, they are neither given wholly to God nor to what is antagonistic toward God. They try to maintain a precarious balance between two opposing resources. As a consequence, they risk being rejected by God because they are neither hot nor cold, neither with him nor against him; they serve at least two masters; they are idolatrous.³

Now, this problem can, and should, be dealt with by sound biblical teaching, and, in many instances, it is. However, we, as Christian educators, in the local church, the academy and the media, seem to be at least partially, if not significantly, responsible for this tendency toward idolatrous reversion to pre-Christian, and often anti-Christian, behaviour in times of crisis. Our teaching is often shallow lacking in poignant application, and our call to decision and commitment lacks the force of sincerity (perhaps because we ourselves do not believe what we are saying since the gospel has not penetrated *our* deepest level of being). We do not effectively communicate the gospel at the deepest level of personality, at the level where people treasure their most precious values (Hiebert 1985:46; Brown 1980:4b), at the level where they hold their view of how they believe “things in sheer actuality are” (Geertz 1973:127). This level, often called “worldview,” is where conversion must take place so that people are freed from vacillating loyalties to conflicting and often opposing value systems⁴. It is at the worldview level of human personality, not at the behavioural level, that people must be truly and permanently transformed (Van Rheenan 1991:90).

However, the question is, how do we communicate biblical values, the values contained in the gospel, at a people's worldview level? I suggest that we must find a window, an access point, into their worldview. One window into a people's worldview can be found and developed through an analysis of their traditional proverbial lore. Once we have sufficiently understood the nature of the window, we can then build communication bridges through the window between worldview values and biblical values. This communication bridge has a reciprocal dynamic; it serves, on the one hand, as a conduit for informing the gospel communicator of the deepest traditional values held by the people, and, on the other hand, it has the potential for effecting permanent and positive change in the recipients' belief and behaviour system.

After establishing the methodology employed, the theme under consideration and the limitations of this study, we will observe the theoretical framework which is offered and close with a presentation of Bemba proverbs on marriage that are being considered as bridge-points upon which we might construct a mutually enriching dialogue between biblical and traditional values.

1.2 METHODOLOGY: CONTEXTUALISATION

Under methodology, we will take a look at how and where we found the Bemba proverbs under consideration in this study, how we interpreted them and how we hope to evaluate them within the context of Christian communication in Zambia.

1.2.1 Collecting the Sources

1.2.1.1 *How it all began and what we found*

About a year ago, I became intensely interested in intercultural communication, worldview and proverbs all at the same time. This came about for two reasons. First, I was scheduled to teach a course on *Cross-Cultural Communication* and another on *Biblical Proverbs*. One of the course requirements I developed for the *Proverbs* class was for each student to go out and collect at least 50 proverbs from among their people group. Because our college is in a city, I told the students they could find proverbs from published collections if they could not find someone who could orally give them the proverbs. The students found hardly any proverbs collections were available. Second, because I was doing studies with the University of South Africa in the area of intercultural

communication, I became convinced of three things: (1) to be effective, the gospel must be communicated at worldview level (Van Rheenan 1990:90), (2) a people's worldview is one of the most difficult areas (if not the most difficult) to discover, especially for a cultural outsider like myself and (3) traditional proverbs provide one of the easiest⁵ and best access point into the African worldview (Chima 1984:57). Armed with these three assumptions, I set out to find as many Zambian proverbs as possible, primarily for myself, but also for my students. My goal was to learn something about Zambian worldview so that I, and my students as well, might become better communicators of the gospel. To my dismay, the proverbs were extremely hard to locate. I could find only one purchasable collection of Zambian proverbs published by Nyambe Sumbwa in 1993, and it aimed at the popular reader. Further scratching around revealed that many more were extant but physically difficult to acquire. So, to minimise my agony, I decided to focus only on Bemba proverbs, since it is the language group in which I live and work. However, the task was no easier. For months, I visited libraries, missions, schools, churches and individuals hoping I might be fortunate enough to find one good collection of Bemba proverbs in English. I found no exhaustive compendium of Bemba proverbs that gave translations, usages and other ethnographic details. Instead I found, and have in my possession, the following which I am editing and collating into what I believe will be the largest collection of Bemba proverbs in existence⁶:

White Fathers' Bemba-English dictionary, 1947 and 1991.

This dictionary, which has undergone at least two revisions I know of (1947, 1954 and 1991), contains approximately 800 proverbs in vernacular with English translations, but, since they are not compiled by themselves anywhere in the dictionary, they must be painstakingly excised page by page.

Icibemba na mano yaciko, 1963 [1955], by S. Mpashi.

Mpashi's work is all in Bemba and presents over 700 proverbs listed alphabetically. His comments are quite brief.

Amapinda mulyashi, 1958, by P. B. Mushindo.

This book, written in vernacular, contains a few proverbs discussed as a conversational

phenomenon.

Munshifika ku bwingi: Tapeelwa shina, Parts One and Two, 1968, by E. Hoch.

This collection is in two volumes and contains 1234 proverbs given in Bemba and are interpretively translated into English. Part One lists the proverbs alphabetically and Part Two arranges them topically.

Bantu wisdom, 1970, by J. T. Milimo.

Milimo presents 559 proverbs from ten Central African Bantu groups (Bemba, Chewa, Lala, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Sena, Shona, Tonga and Tumbuka). They are given in vernacular and are translated into English with a topical arrangement. Some explanations are included.

50 proverbs: Traditional and Christian wisdom, 1980, by W. E. Lane.

Lane offers 50 proverbs from nine Central African Bantu groups (Bemba, Chewa, Lala, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Sena, Tonga and Tumbuka). They are arranged topically and have explanations largely from a Christian point of view.

Beliefs and religious practices of the Bemba and neighbouring tribes, 1982, by E. Labrecque (translated by P. Boyd).

This booklet is an English translation of work done by Father Labrecque in the 1930's and contains 24 proverbs about God. Approximately 60 of the 103 pages of this booklet are devoted to marital issues.

Ubulungu tabupita pakafundo: Intulo yamapinda nensoselo shamano, 1982, by S. S. Mulenga.

Mulenga presents his material exclusively in Bemba and has arranged it in three sections of which only the first has over 230 proverbs all arranged alphabetically. Each proverb is followed by a paragraph of explanation.

Proverbs: Tools for worldview studies - An exploratory comparison of the Bemba of Zambia and

the Shona of Zimbabwe, Volume I. 1982, by Larry L. Niemeyer.

Niemeyer's work is an M.A. thesis in anthropology in which his discussion of proverbs rests primarily in Kearney's worldview universals. Appended to the thesis is 1286 Bemba proverbs drawn almost totally from Hoch's 1968 collection mentioned above; however, Niemeyer's collection differs significantly from Hoch's in that his translations are literal, not interpretive.

La saggezza di ng'andu, 1990, by U. Davoli.

Davoli's work is a blessing and a curse; on the one hand it contains 2105 proverbs, the largest collection of Bemba proverbs I have found, yet on the other hand it is translated into Italian. While it presents the proverbs in Bemba, their explanations are accessible only to an Italian readership. The first three parts of the book have the proverbs arranged topically while the fourth part has them arranged alphabetically.

The dancing elephant, 1992, by U. Davoli.

This book of Bemba folk tales in English contains approximately 70 proverbs. The proverbs are given in English in the text of the tales, but are footnoted in Bemba.

Zambian proverbs, 1993, by N. Sumbwa.

Sumbwa presents a collection of 249 proverbs by language group (Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi/Luyana, Luvale, Nyanja and Tonga). Each entry includes the proverb in vernacular, a literal translation, meaning, usage and implication/comment.

A Bemba grammar with exercises, s a, by E. Hoch.

The proverbs contained in this grammar text appears to add no new proverbs to what has already been given in the *White Fathers' Bemba-English dictionary* and *Munshifika ku bwingi* mentioned above.

The only work in the above list that cites published sources of Bemba proverbs is Davoli's *La saggezza di ng'andu* and Niemeyer's thesis. Below are some additional sources Davoli cites that I

do not possess and other sources of which I have only recently become aware (I do not have access to these collections, nor do I know how many proverbs are contained in them.); none of these sources are cited in the bibliography because I do not have sufficient bibliographic data:

A few Bemba proverbs translated and explained, 1965, by F. J. A. Girard.

Aus dem Sprichwörterschatz der Babemba (Zambia), 1932, by A. Feger.

Bemba oral tradition, part II, s a, E. Labrecque.

Favole, proverbi, detti, indovinelli..., 1950, by P. B. Rocchi.

Icengelo, a Bemba Christian Magazine, 1970-1990.

Ideology local and national: Bemba proverbs and Zambian humanism, 1981, by F. J. A. Girard.

Was ist Gott? Aus den sprichwortern der Babemba (Zambia), 1935, by F. Rauscher.

While there may be many more published sources of Bemba proverbs, those cited above are all I presently know about.

1.2.1.2 *The current status of the project*

The collection of Bemba proverbs I am working on now contains 2686 proverbs; however, the number will only decrease as the editing continues; there are many redundancies because of spelling and dialectal differences as well as inconsequential variants. After I collated all the proverbs, and the translations and explanations already available in English, I passed them on to five theological college students who know the Bemba language and culture. Their task was to translate and explain all the proverbs that needed it and to make any editorial changes they felt were necessary (sense, usage, punctuation, spelling, grammar, etc.). Now that they are finished, I will integrate all their contributions into one collection that will likely contain approximately 2200 proverbs.

We foresee the project consisting of six phases. Phase 1 involved collating all the information from twelve previously published sources. Phase 2 involved four theological college students in an editing and expansion of Phase 1. Phase 3 involved collating an additional two previously published sources with a completed Phase 2. Phase 4, completed during the first week of September 1995, involved five theological college students in a repeat of Phase 2. Phase 5, now in progress, involves collating the results of Phase 4 with one newly acquired collection of 1286 literally rendered proverbs,

and should be finished by February 1996. Phase 6 will entail a proof-reading and revision of Phase 5 by some other, older, Bemba, theological college students and, hopefully, will be completed by June 1996.

1.2.2 Interpreting the Data

The collection of Bemba proverbs on marriage, as well as the entire collection of almost 2,700 Bemba proverbs, is arranged alphabetically, and under each entry are the following codes which are followed by the appropriate information. The collection of Bemba proverbs on marriage, which may be observed in appendix D, exemplifies these codes.

1.2.2.1 *Translation*

The collection is arranged alphabetically, and under each proverb entry are the following codes⁷: **TL>** denotes **literal translation**. Because proverbs are speech acts that require the listener to decode the metaphorical components in order to understand the meaning and application, I have insisted on a literal translation so that the metaphors are evident. While literal translations are often awkward, incomplete and lacking in sense, they are nevertheless necessary in order to understand and appreciate the syntactical form of the proverbs and the underlying cognitive processes inherent in the language. By the word "literal," we mean just that. While Niemeyer claims that his translations are literal over against Hoch's "interpretive translation" (1981:270), as indeed they are generally so, our translations are literal in a one-for-one correspondence. In other words, each verbal unit is translated literally, word-for-word, and any implicit grammatical components are included in brackets. For example, many Bemba proverbs do not contain explicit verbs and articles. These are implied; therefore, they must be supplied in order to make grammatical sense in English. **TI>** denotes **interpretive translation**. I include this form of translation for two reasons: (1) it is often necessary to make common sense of the Bemba proverb in English, and (2) it is often the only translation offered in the source material I am using. Because I do not as yet have facility in Bemba, I must rely on previously published translations along with the insights and corrections my student informants provide. The translations given here are usually an edited synthesis of the various source contributions. In both the literal translation and the interpretive translations explanatory notes are

included in parentheses.

1.2.2.2 *Meaning*

M> denotes **meaning**. The meaning ascribed to each proverb is the combined result of previously published meanings and meanings formulated by my informants. While the previously published meanings come as they are, we have no idea whether context was a factor. However, my informants were asked to ascribe meaning from within a context in which the proverb has actually been heard, or from within a context within which the proverb might conceivably be heard. Additionally, the informants were asked to revise any previously published meanings they thought were erroneous or inaccurate.

1.2.2.3 *Usage*

U> denotes **usage**. Though proverbs can be used in a variety of situations resulting in any number of possible applications, we have nevertheless sought to articulate at least one usage event so that an appropriate context of application might be exemplified. For a project such as this one, usage is perhaps the most important aspect (Olson 1981:32; Arewa & Dundes 1964:1 in Salamone 1976:359). For this reason, I asked my informants to identify at least one occasion in which a speaker of the proverb might utter it. Usually the informant's comment here begins as follows: "This proverb is used to/when...." or "This proverb applies/is applied to...." For example, "This proverb is used to advise a young man who is over-eager about getting married," or "This proverb is applied to a man who has committed adultery."

1.2.2.4 *Implications*

I> denotes **implications**⁸ or, more specifically, what is being taught, especially in terms of traditional values being transmitted. As with usage, implications/teaching is very important. Here the underlying purpose of the proverb is identified. Implication/teaching/purpose attempts to answer such questions as the following: "Why does the proverb exist?" "What situation or need generated it?" "What is the intention behind its utterance?" "What response, cognitively, affectively or behaviourally does the speaker have in mind for the hearer?" Usually the comment at this point begins as follows: "This

proverb teaches/teaches the value of...” For example, “This proverb teaches the value of being loyal to one’s family,” or “This proverb teaches the value of being truthful.” The informants were cautioned to be careful with usage and teaching because they are so easily confused, and, if rushed into thoughtlessly, will invariably overlap so as to be indistinguishable. One way the informants were encouraged to avoid confusing U> with I> was to give at least one concrete situation in which the proverb is used; for example, *Basa basa : tabashisha bwino* is used (U>) either as a warning to someone who is about to rush into a task or is applied to a person who has already rushed into a task and is doing a sloppy job. This proverb teaches (I>), however, that a task should not be done so fast that it is done improperly; it teaches that, for a job to be done well, sound method and patience are required. It also teaches that quality is of higher value than speed. Again, a proverb may be used upon the occasion (U>) of the Cisungu ceremony (female puberty initiation rite, for example), but it teaches (I>) the value or importance of taking good care of the future husband.

1.2.2.5 *African proverbial parallel*

A> denotes parallel proverbs from other **African** languages. While this category is covered broadly by the term “African,” in actuality, what was originally envisioned here is inclusion of similar proverbs (1) from among the Bemba collection, (2) from among Zambian languages and (3) from among Central Bantu languages. While this category is often not used, for some proverbs, however, it becomes quite significant. Because some proverbs have many variants, and really do not require their own entry in the collection, we subsume them under the entry that seems to cover the range of variants best, or at least seems to exemplify what the range is trying to communicate.

1.2.2.6 *English proverbial parallel*

E> denotes **English⁹ proverbial parallel**. While this is not a significant component, it is nevertheless included primarily for the sake of making contact with an English audience.

1.2.2.7 *Biblical thematic contact*

B> denotes a thematic connection with **biblical material¹⁰**. Informants were encouraged to note any recollection of biblical material that seems to correspond with the proverb. While this was not considered as a significant component in the translation phase of the project, it was envisioned

as being of great significance later during the bridge-building phase (cf. critical contextualisation methodology, 1.2.3.2-4 below).

1.2.2.8 *Synonymy*

S> denotes **synonymy** (and includes synonyms, categories, key words, metaphors, etc.). This last category is being used so that, after all the proverbs have been described and explained, we can develop a quick reference system that can be developed into a topical index.

1.2.3 **Critical Contextualisation Methodology**

The method employed in this study is a slightly modified version of Hiebert's *Critical Contextualisation* model (1985:184-92) and includes some additional components from Schreiter's *Constructing Local Theologies* (1985). Instead of presenting Hiebert's four steps exclusively from a theoretical point of view, we will discuss them from within the context in which they are being used.

1.2.3.1 *Gather information about old marriage values as expressed in traditional Bemba proverbs*

We¹¹ have attempted to **gather as uncritically as possible** information about the old, traditional Bemba value system as it has been expressed in their proverbial lore (Hiebert 1985:186). Our gathering motive was conditioned by Schreiter's concept of listening to a culture so that it might open itself to us on its own terms (1985:28; 39-49). While the proverbs we collected were already written down and "safe," so to speak, from being tampered with by our agenda, we nevertheless, attempted to maintain a listening sensitivity by gathering any and all proverbs no matter how they were expressed or what was said about them; we accepted them as we found them despite the fact that significant inconsistency was found in both the appearance and translation of the proverbs. Because the proverbs gathered varied in the amount of explanation given, we used Bemba theological college students, and other local people, as culturally inside informants who provided additional information as well as clarification and correction of any proverbs that required it. Though the use of these culturally inside informants enhances the emic dimension of the proverbs collection, our work

is nevertheless etic (Harris 1976:341) in that the informants were required to speak within an etically established framework I set up (see 1.2.2 above).

1.2.3.2 *Studying biblical teachings that relate to traditional Bemba values on marriage*

We have **studied some biblical teachings** identified by the informants which pertain to the various marital issues that have emerged from studying the proverbs (Hiebert 1985:186). It was not our intention to study all the biblical material pertaining to the theme of marriage and its sub-themes, but to have the informants identify what biblical passages they thought spoke to the themes. Once these biblical passages were identified, the informants tried to discover the values and intentions expressed.

1.2.3.3 *Evaluate traditional Bemba values on marriage in light of biblical teachings*

We have attempted to **evaluate the traditional values** expressed in the proverbs in the light of biblical teachings that address them (:186-7). Based on the presupposition that biblical revelation has supra-cultural authority, we attempted to formulate evaluative statements about each proverb's meaning, usage or teaching that reflects its agreement or disagreement with biblical truth.

1.2.3.4 *Create a new contextualised Christian theology of Bemba marriage values*

We hope to **articulate a new set of marriage values** that (1) retains and affirms¹² what is consistent with biblical values and (2) redeems¹³ by means of reformulation of distortions what can be modified into a marriage ethic that has explicit Christian meaning (:187-8). This redemption attempts to identify the underlying need that gave rise to a given proverb and addresses it from a biblical point of view. While we are employing all four of Hiebert's critical contextualisation steps in the Bemba proverbs project, in this study we are only presenting our work up through the first half of the fourth step. In other words, in this study we will only go so far as to affirm the traditional values expressed in the Bemba proverbs we have selected for study. At a later date, we will conclude the exercise by applying the second half of the fourth step in which we will have biblical values confront traditional values with a view to reformulating the traditional values so that they reflect both an "authentic African identity" (Simfukwe 1995:1) and Christian values. We are not including this

final aspect of contextualisation in this study, because our methodology requires that it is the local theologians' (in our case, students from the Theological College of Central Africa) task to construct a local theology of marriage that is relevant to their individual contexts. Therefore, this closing aspect of step four cannot be done in this study; the local theologian can, however, take the insights gained from the ethnographic presentation of the proverbs and the questions posed in the bridge-point discussions and attempt to develop a tailor-made theology of marriage for a specific people in a particular context.

Finally, in the presentation of the proverbs below, the assertions are predominantly coming from my informants while the observations and questions are largely mine. I have restricted my comments to observations and questions only since I see myself as a facilitator whose task it is to assist Christian ministers in communicating with their people at the deepest level of personality and need; it is *their* task to answer the questions and thereby formulate a critically contextualised local theology of marriage that is relevant to the people's worldview and perceived needs.

1.3 THE THEME UNDER CONSIDERATION: MARRIAGE

1.3.1 Why the Theme of Marriage?

The theme of marriage has been selected for several reasons. First, marriage is one of the most important, if not *the* most important, social concerns for the Bemba. Most of Bemba life revolves around marriage and closely related issues (Ngulube 1989:13). Second, the Bemba, as well as other Bantu groups, are people who prize maintaining good relationships (Kaunda 1966:22), and marriage is one of the most important relationships one can have. Third, marriage is one of the areas of greatest social trouble, especially as the Bemba urbanise¹⁴. Dislocation from the rural and traditional environment of the ancestral home and relocation in the urban and highly westernised, multi-ethnic and multi-valued city have brought untold confusion about the roles and responsibilities in marriage (Epstein 1981:250). Fourth, partly because of urbanisation and partly because of traditional sexual practices, AIDS is devastating not just the population in general, but marriage in particular. Fifth, marriage is a universal phenomenon to which all cultures of the world can relate. Sixth, marriage is a significant biblical theme. Seventh, marriage is a biblical metaphor for the Church, and its interpretation as such has significant implications not only for the biblical

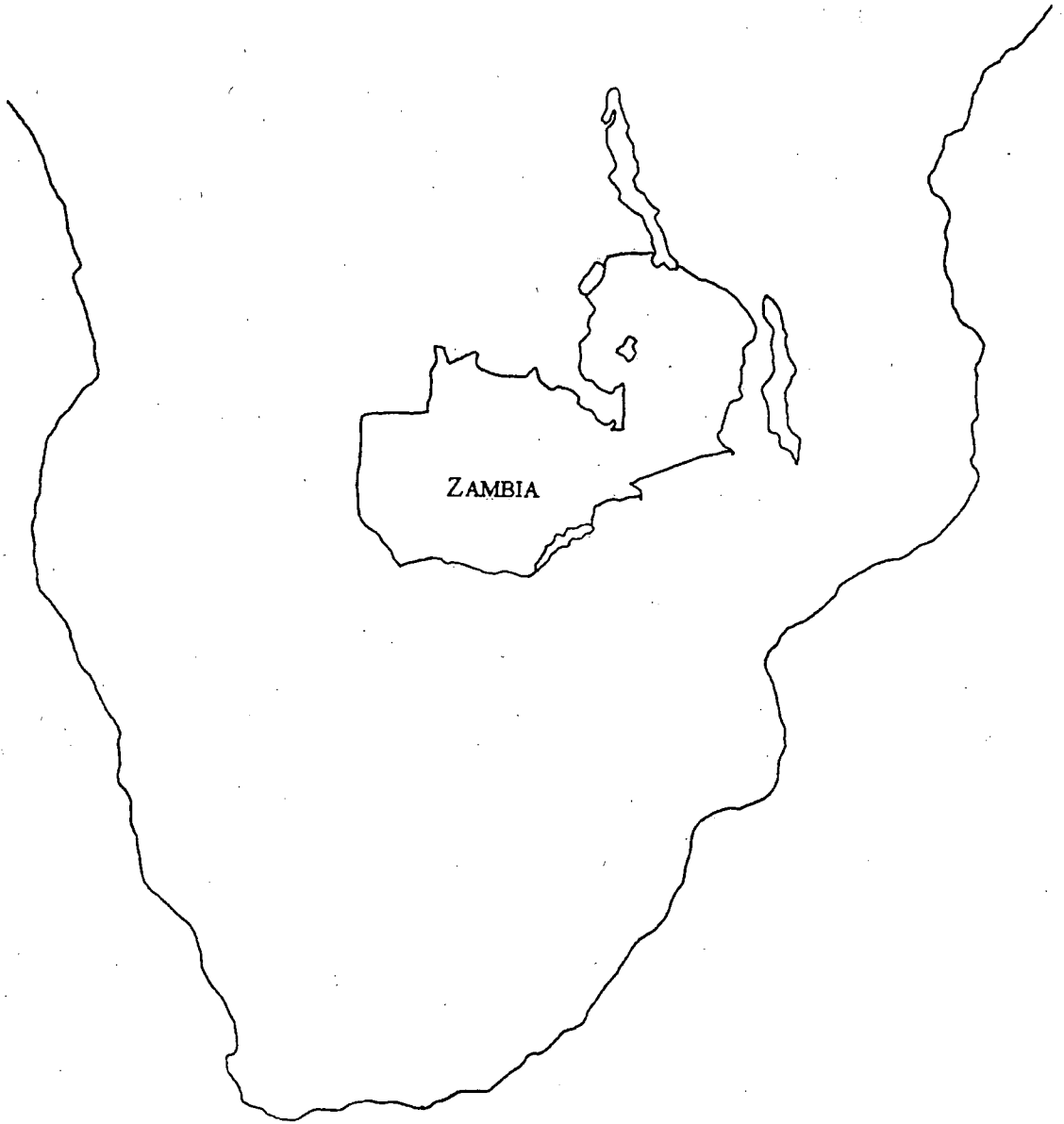
understanding of the Church, but also has a reciprocal impact on the Bemba Christian concept of what marriage ought to be. Eighth, marriage is a relevant topic for theological college students who are training for ministry, since marital issues and marital counselling compose one of the most significant needs in church life today¹⁵. While these are not necessarily all the reasons why the theme of marriage could be selected, they at least serve as a preliminary justification for studying the topic. In other words, marriage is a critical issue both traditionally and theologically.

1.3.2 Survey of Bemba Marriage

1.3.2.1 *The Bemba*

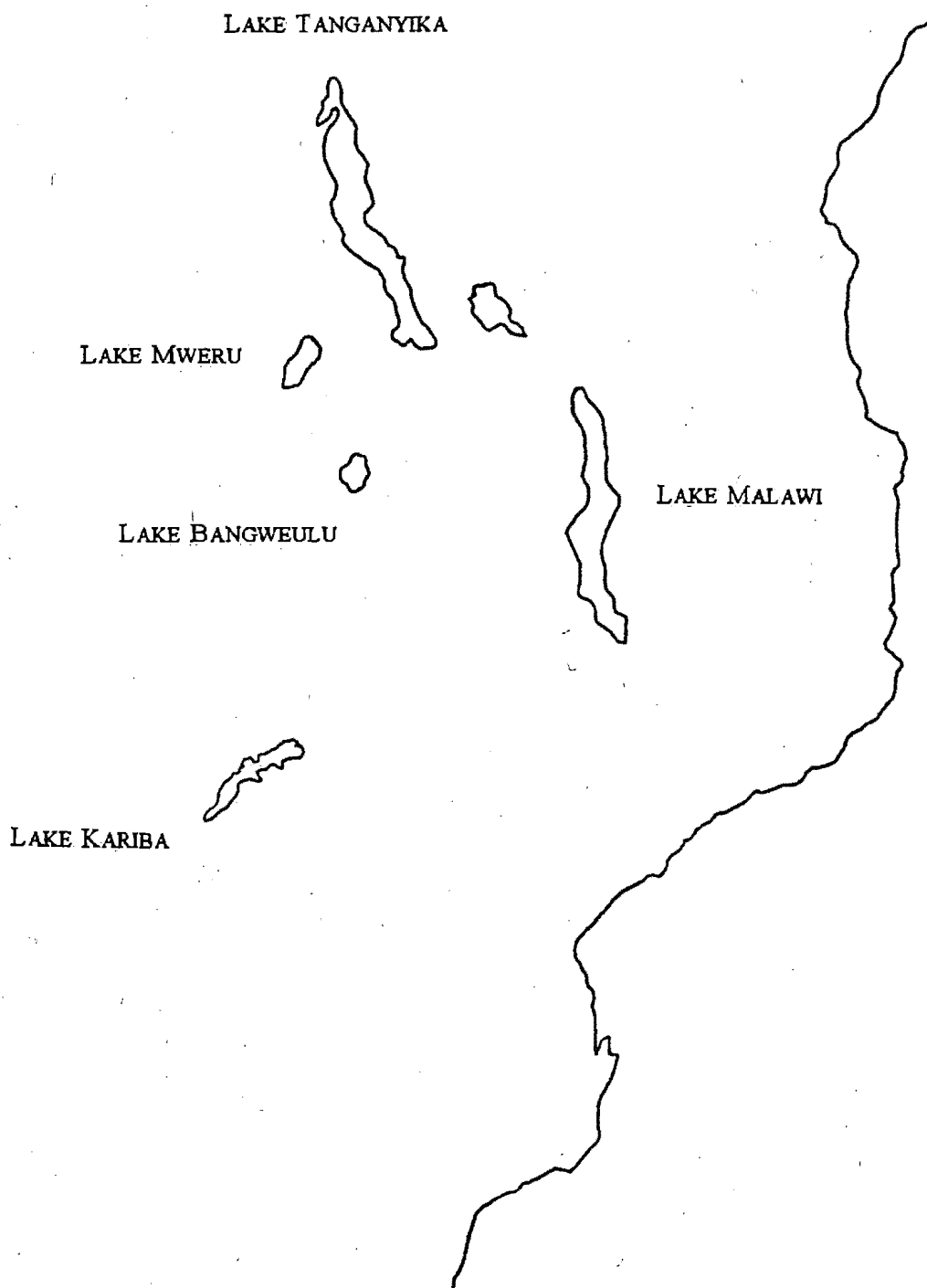
The Bemba are a Central Bantu people who dwell on a high plateau in North-Eastern Zambia (see Map 1, p. 20). While the Bemba empire formerly occupied most of the land between the four lakes, Tanganyika, Malawi, Bangweulu and Mweru (Richards 1968:164; see Map 2, p. 21), presently they occupy a much smaller area (see Map 3, p. 22). Though their tribal domain has shrunk from its former glory, the Bemba have extended their influence over the entire Northern, Luapula and Copperbelt provinces where Bemba is the dominant vernacular language (Kashoki 1990:132; see Map 4, p. 23). This spread of Bemba influence seems to be due largely to the high mobility of the men¹⁶ in search of employment, especially in the Copperbelt mines since they traditionally see themselves as warriors and not as farmers or pastoralists.

Though the Bemba trace their origin to the Luba empire to the North-west in Zaire, they found their way into Zambia through conquest. They are a matrilineal people with a proud military history.



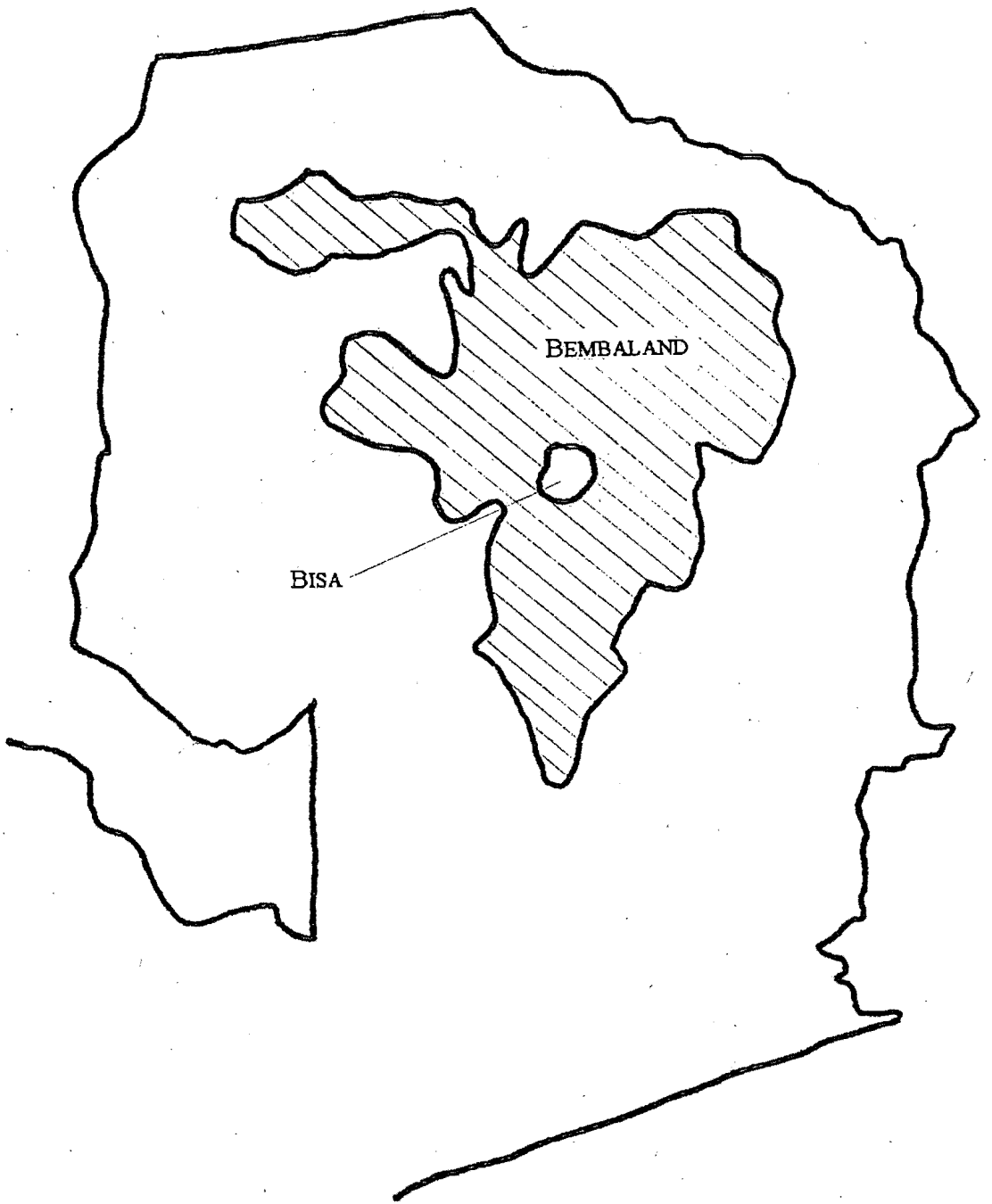
Map 1: Zambia in relation to the African sub-continent

Source: Redrawn from Funk & Wagnalls Hammond World Atlas 1983:57



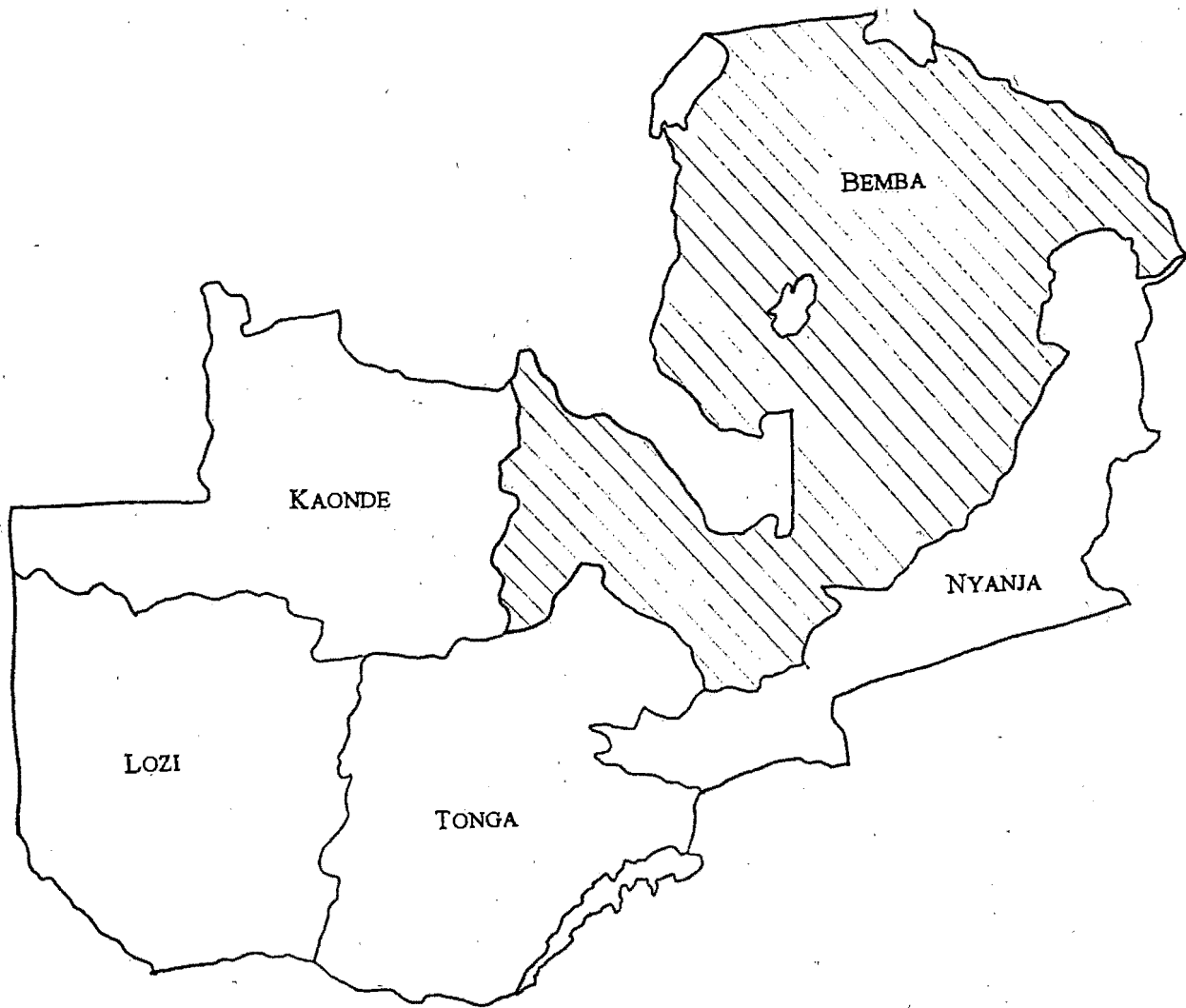
Map 2: The land between the four lakes

Source: Redrawn from Funk & Wagnalls Hammond
World Atlas 1983:57.



Map 3: The Bemba tribal area

Source: Redrawn from Coleson & Gluckman
1968:163.



Map 4: Dominant languages in Zambia

(The shaded area indicates the extent to which the Bemba language is the *lingua franca* and where Bemba is the vernacular language taught in the school system.) Source: Redrawn from Henkel 1989:235-6.

While the high plateau on which they live is well watered, the soil is poor. Nevertheless, they grow finger-millet, maize, cassava, pumpkins, beans, peas, groundnuts, etc. Because of insect-borne diseases, cattle raising has never taken root. While the Bemba fish, the men prefer hunting. They employ the *citemene* method of farming in which tree branches are lopped off, piled up and burned. In the ash laden soil that results, they sow their seeds.

Chieftainship is a dominant institution among the Bemba, and a man's status is reckoned by filial proximity to the chief or by service done on behalf of the chief (Richards 1968:168). Chieftainship is an hereditary office from within the royal (crocodile) clan.

1.3.2.2 *Bemba marriage*

While traditional Bemba marriage generally involves mate-selection, marriage and children (Ngulube 1989:13-22), the following give a more detailed view of the entire process (cf. Chonooka 1986:87-100): **interest in marriage** (*icupo*), either by the young man himself or his family; **engagement** (*ukukobekela*) which includes bride-wealth (*impango*) negotiations carried out by the negotiator or go-between (*Shibukombe*) and the commitment gift (*insalamo*); **courtship** (*ukwishisha*) which includes visits to and by the families as well as the prospective husband (*Lumbwe*) working for the prospective wife's (*Nacisungu*¹⁷) family to prove his worthiness as a marriage partner; **consummation**¹⁸ of the marriage (*ukumutwala kuli wiba*); the **wedding** (*ubwinga*); **family expectations** in the form of respect, hard work on the part of the man, and, above all, producing children as soon as possible. The final stage in marriage before the couple begins their life together is **acceptance** by the wife's family and the decision by the man to take his bride from her family and **departure** to his family or elsewhere. After two or three years of hard work among his wife's family, and after producing two or three children, he will undergo the final ceremony in which he is allowed to enter and inspect his wife's parents' house for the first time (*ukwingisha*) and may, if he chooses, relocate to his family's dwelling place, but not before he makes the payment of respect and gratitude to his wife's parents (*umucinshi*).

1.3.3 : The Scope and Sub-themes

1.3.3.1 *The scope*

I have found over two hundred proverbs that directly or indirectly deal with marriage issues. They touch on such topics as adultery (including temptation to and consequences of), various marital troubles, fertility and barrenness, mate selection, in-laws, divorce and remarriage, care of husband, polygamy, polyandry, marital unity, widowhood, child custody, pre-marital sex, love, family resemblance, membership in a new family, pre-marital counseling and marriage agent betrayal. However, the scope of this study prohibits a treatment of any large number of these. Therefore, I am limiting myself to fifty-two proverbs my informants think are good examples for the critical contextualisation exercise.

1.3.3.2 *The sub-themes*

While many possible sub-themes could be pursued, in this study we will only look at engagement (including mate-selection and courtship), incest, children (including barrenness, impotence and fertility), family ties (including all sorts of expectations by the extended family, the clan and the tribe), polygamy, adultery (including fornication and immorality in general), divorce and fading flower (which can include all sorts of subjects related to marital aging).

While death, widowhood and widow cleansing (breaking of the spiritual bond between the deceased and the living spouses) are indeed part of the marriage continuum, I have found no proverbs that deal with them within the context of marriage; therefore, I make no presentation on these themes.

1.3.4 Presentation of Selected Bemba Proverbs on Marriage

Before we look at the proverbs that appear in the division of this study which is entitled *Selected Bemba proverbs on marriage*, let me say a few things about the presentation, namely the colon, the sources cited and the display.

1.3.4.1 *The colon*

Many of the proverbs in the collection are separated into two parts by a colon. Because proverbs are fundamentally speech acts (Yanga 1977:130) and not literary creations, we should make every effort to retain the speech act signals. The colon, in those proverbs that contain it, separates the opening formula or *prompter* from the *response* or completion¹⁹. While the prompter/response speech act dynamic can be utilised in many ways, one of the most popular is use in the classroom where the teacher says the first part of the proverb, or the prompter portion, and the student is to respond with the second part of the proverb, or the response. This way, proverbs are inculcated in the young as part of primary education. Furthermore, even when used by adults, the bi-partite speech act dynamic is employed. Rarely have I heard the speaker of a proverb say the whole proverb in the hearing of other adults. It is usually enough to utter only the prompter portion, and the audience either articulates the response or gives some other sign of recognition and understanding. This bi-partite, interactive dimension of proverbs as speech acts both exemplifies and reinforces the social and interdependent nature of Bantu communication in general and the Bemba in particular. In other words, learning is naturally a relational, participatory, face-to-face dynamic experience.

1.3.4.2 *The source citations*

Each proverb is endnoted so that the literary sources²⁰ for each proverb along with the names of my informants might be cited. These sources are given because the collection of Bemba proverbs from which those in this study were gathered is designed as a research resource for student use, and, for students to use it, they must have a ready-reference system by which to locate the original sources from which we gathered the collection. The literary sources are cited in chronological order so that one who is so interested may study the development of certain proverbs, and the informant sources are simply given alphabetically. Because the proverbs come from approximately fifteen different sources, there was no other way to cite the sources for each proverb except to include the source citation immediately with its corresponding proverb.

Most citations of biblical texts are endnoted to reduce the visual clutter.

1.3.4.3 *The display*

Six marriage themes are represented by eleven proverbs that are given as primary entries and serve as specimens for the themes. These specimens are followed by an ethnographic discussion which includes twenty-eight secondary entries that explain, clarify or amplify them. In addition, thirteen proverbs are given as tertiary entries in the end notes.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

This study is limited for two reasons. First, the prescribed size of this study (as a “dissertation of limited scope”) precludes a lengthy treatment of any of several components of the study. Second, because African proverb analysis makes contact with so many other academic disciplines, we had to choose a few analytic components from a wide range of possibilities that we felt suited our purpose. Following are a few limitations we experienced that, in the hands of another researcher, might be taken as a catalyst for further study in this field.

First, we cannot deal with the entire corpus of marriage proverbs (see appendix A, *Bemba Proverbs on Marriage*). Not all proverbs on marriage are included. Not all proverbs are incontestably on marriage. Not all proverbs are necessarily flawlessly translated and explained. The quality of the translation project in general and that done on the theme of marriage is only as reliable as I and my informants allow it to be, given our abilities. We must bear in mind the fact that most of the informants are under forty years of age, and have varying experience living in traditional settings.

Second, because many of the proverbs we collected already came with translations and meanings in print, some of my informants were reluctant to dispute their accuracy even though the translations and meanings were misleading. Because a significant number of the proverbs occur only in Davoli's collection which is translated into Italian, and since many of his proverbs are of recent origin, my informants had great difficulty translating them, not to mention assigning meaning, usage and teaching; consequently, most of the Davoli-only

proverbs are questionably translated and interpreted in spots.

Third, we cannot attempt to deal with all the themes represented in the collection of marriage proverbs since there are approximately 200 of them. As it is, approximately twenty-five per-cent of them have been employed in the section of selected Bemba proverbs on marriage; if we used one-hundred per-cent of the collection, the fifteen pages devoted to them would mushroom to approximately sixty.

Fourth, we could not analyse the metaphorical components. Additionally, the collection from which the marriage proverbs was taken does not, at this time, distinguish between proverbs, mere sayings and phraseological proverbs, etc.

Fifth, we cannot analyse the proverbs as speech acts within the context of our method, because we would then also have to analyse the biblical text as speech acts.

Sixth, the critical contextualisation methodology is intentionally incomplete due to dependence upon the local theologians for contextualised application. Consequently, the remaining portion of the fourth step must be left undone until a local theologian takes up the challenge to carry it through.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 SALVATION

2.1.1 Introduction

Conversion is the crucial theological term in this study, but, because *salvation* is the background against which conversion is understood, I will discuss my understanding of salvation in detail. Salvation is generally understood as a continuum progressing from a beginning point to eternity. This beginning point is conversion; conversion is the doorway to salvation. Conversion denotes that point in time when a decision is made to subscribe to and obey biblical values. Because one's understanding of salvation determines one's understanding of conversion, I must establish my understanding of salvation.

"The scope of salvation - however we define salvation - determines the scope of the missionary enterprise" (Bosch 1991:393). "Uncertainty in [the] realm [of soteriology] creates uncertainty in the entire system [of theology, be it evangelical, liberation or otherwise]" (Nünberger 1990:206). With such words, I have two opposite feelings. On the one hand, it is incumbent on me to develop certainty in my understanding of salvation. On the other hand, I do so with great trepidation, since it is neither within my capability nor the scope of this study to plumb the depths of salvation. Nevertheless, it is my intention to give *my* understanding of salvation within the context I find myself. Since I am a North American missionary attempting to communicate salvation to Africans in general, and at the Theological College of Central Africa in Zambia in particular, I will explain my understanding of salvation in four areas I feel are especially relevant to the missiological purpose of this study. Therefore, I will present a missionary's understanding of salvation. We will look at *Salvation as Restoration, Salvation and History, Salvation as "Comprehensive Wellbeing," and Salvation and Time.*

2.1.2 Salvation As Restoration

Salvation can be expressed in many ways. It has several conceptual cousins:

justification, adoption, reconciliation, redemption, righteousness, cleansing, sanctification, born again, pardoned, atonement, kingdom of God, eternal life, peace with God, etc. Conversely, salvation's opposite also has its relatives: destruction, damnation, separation, cast out, cast down, condemnation, cut off, defiled, accursed, depraved, unrighteous, wicked, foolish, hell, enmity, etc. In fact, a full discussion of salvation would involve all these concepts and more, but the size of this study precludes such an undertaking. However, let us begin where the Bible begins, with salvation as *Restoration*.

Before the so-called "fall" of humanity²¹, Adam and Eve were "rightly related" to *God*. This right relationship with God overshadowed, controlled and included a right relationship with *Self*, with *Others* and with *Nature* (Bethel Bible Series 1981:10-16). Before the fall, Adam and Eve were in a state of four-fold harmony: *harmony with Self* (they were naked and not ashamed), *harmony with Others* (implicitly, Adam and Eve cooperated in tending the garden and carried on a civil conversation with the serpent), *harmony with Nature* (implicit, in the curse upon Adam's relationship with the earth, that the earth yielded its fruit cooperatively and abundantly) and *harmony with God* (God walked and talked with Adam and Eve in the Garden, and it is implicit that the first couple did as the Lord commanded, at least up until the tempter came). In the fall, however, this four-fold harmony became damaged, distorted, indeed ruined when Adam and Eve, tempted by the deceiver, lusted after forbidden knowledge, sought equality with God and rebelled against his explicit command (:17-24). Nevertheless, despite their rebellion, God made a way for the fallen first family, and all generations to follow, to be restored to a right-relationship with the Creator, the self, others and nature. God took care of the immediate need of Adam's and Eve's sense of guilt by providing "skins for sins"²², so to speak, and he took care of all people's eternal need of cleansing and restoration by providing a "seed" through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed.

This future blessing, announced more particularly in Genesis 12:1-3, and fulfilled in the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of the Christ²³, is not restricted to the period of the new Covenant only. Restoration in terms of being rightly-related to God by faith has been available from the beginning²⁴. During the period of the Older Covenant, the people of God

were rightly-related to him through faith expressed in obedient participation in the rites, rituals and ceremonies and other activities that *anticipated*, that looked forward to, the future, better and perfect sacrifice made by Jesus Christ on the cross²⁵. In the era of the Newer Covenant, the people of God are rightly-related to God through faith expressed in obedient participation in the sacraments (remembrance ceremonies) and other activities that *recall*, that look back to, the historical manifestation of the Christ, the *Kerygma*. Salvation, in terms of being restored to a right-relationship with God has been available by faith from the fall of humanity. The Older Testament people looked forward to it²⁶; the Newer Testament people look back to it. We have experienced it together²⁷.

Salvation, thus understood, is a restored relationship between God and humanity. This restoration with God provides a return of harmony within the self, between the self and other people and between humanity and the natural world. The harmony that was lost in the garden was found on Golgotha.

Salvation as a restored right-relationship not only makes sense of both Covenants, it also makes sense of almost everything else in the Bible. It also resolves many difficulties, especially the “materialistic” understanding many evangelical Christians embrace. How often have I heard statements like, “I am saved,” “I have been saved” or “My salvation is secure in the Lord.” While all these expressions come from a correct understanding of biblical truth, they foster a “materialistic” understanding of salvation. These people begin to think of their salvation as a *thing* deposited, in a manner of speaking, in the heavenly vault. They also think of it as a thing that cannot be lost or jeopardized in any way because of their insistence on inviolable security. Furthermore, they think of salvation in contractual terms, like the stone tablets Moses brought down from the mountain. They think their salvation is carved in stone. They think of it as a contract that, once signed, is eternally secured in heaven and cannot be moved. Now, while the Bible teaches a doctrine of security²⁸, it has never taught a “materialistic” salvation. Yes, many people, in both Testaments, have thought and spoken of salvation in “materialistic” terms, but if salvation is carefully analysed, it is clearly seen as a *relationship* between God and humanity which is characterized by faith and rightness.

Furthermore, salvation understood as a right-relationship with God, self, others and

nature returns salvation, and related biblical doctrines, to the realm of relationships, not rules. In other words, the same people who view salvation materialistically also tend to live by rules instead of relationships. This is especially sad when seen in African societies which are by nature relational. People who hold to rules, laws, regulations and ordinances inadvertently devalue relationships. In their tendency to hold to the particulars of the contract, the rules, they neglect the weightier measures of the law, namely love, compassion, understanding, etc. In their zeal for the rule, they ruin relationships, the very relationships Jesus died to restore. These people forget that not only did faith come before the Law²⁹, but a right-relationship also came before the law³⁰. These people also forget that rules, in whatever forms we find them in the Bible, are intended to serve relationships; it is not the reverse. It never has been, and it never will be.

Salvation, then, biblically, and consistent with both covenants, is the state of being rightly-related with God. This right-relatedness to God directly affects, and ought to result in, a right-relationship with one's self, one's neighbors and one's natural world.

Salvation as restoration has a few significant implications for mission. First, the primary business of mission is restoring rebellious and broken humanity to a right relationship with God. "The authentic [and] essential task...of the church...is to restore men to right relationship with God...." since their basic problem is rebellion (Stott 1975:87). If it is the church's responsibility to be an agent of restoration, then it follows that is also the essential missionary enterprise.

Second, the missionary task of restoring right-relationships involves imparting an understanding of what these relationships are supposed to be. "Salvation includes a complete restoration of man as the image of God, made for communion with God, for fellowship with his fellow man, and for ruling over God's creation" (Padilla 1985:78), and though this restoration is largely eschatological, "it projects the final events back into history and fills the ethical actions of the present with eschatological significance" (:79). Right relationships are supposed to be in the image of God, as he intended them to be, reflecting him in every way, and right relationships, though completely fulfilled only in the *eschaton*, are supposed to give evidence in daily life and choice of that, as yet unrealized, future fulfillment. "The kingdom

that Jesus brings is the realm of salvation, in which the blessings of the Messianic age are available to the subjects in advance, a realm that men may enter now" (:74). Demonstrating right relationships with God, self, others and nature, in the midst of the fallen world order and its rebellion, is the most significant task of the church and mission, because it proves, before the fact, the reality of what is to come.

Third, salvation in terms of restored right-relationships, demonstrates those relationships in the mission of comprehensive deliverance. "From a New Testament perspective, the salvation (*soteria*) that the gospel brings is deliverance from all that interferes with the accomplishment of God's purpose for man" (:75). If God's purpose for humanity is restoration of all relationships, then it is the chief task of mission to remove, to deliver from, all hindrance to the restoration of these relationships. Salvation, then, is deliverance from the realm of rebellion, the realm of ruined relationships, and immediate participation in and enjoyment of the future, full and final eschatological fulfillment, now!

Salvation thus understood, is of particular relevance to communicating the gospel in Zambia. Zambians, as well as other African people, prize relationships. Yet they too have experienced the damaging effects of the fall. Consequently, they are in need of restoration at the very center of what they value most, namely relationships. One of the ways salvation is being understood in this study is as restoration of all sorts of relationships in general, and restoration particularly between people.

2.1.3 Salvation and History

"The Bible is the record of the acts of God [and] it is for the modern believer to understand the story of these acts, the salvation history in contemporary terms" (Newbigin 1986:48). Salvation history (*heilsgeschichte*) refers to

the series of historical events which are interpreted by Christian faith as specific acts of God to save his people.... The biblical story tells of a pattern of events in which God is active, stretching from creation to the consummation, with Christ's coming as the mid-point of time, the pivot of history (Ferguson and Wright 1988:612).

Genesis 1 and 2 give us the story of humanity as it was intended to be. Genesis 3 records the failure of humanity to live up to God's intentions. Genesis 4 through Revelation

22 records the story of God breaking into human history on behalf of his people, delivering them from all sorts of difficulties. We have salvation history given to us in three broad strokes: Divine Intentions (Gen. 1-2), Distortion (Gen. 3) and Restoration (Gen. 3:15-Rev. 22). Genesis 3:15 and 21, as well as 12:1-3 and other passages, announce the coming of the "seed" through whom all the families of the earth will be blessed. With the incarnation of the Christ³¹, the seed came³², making restoration possible for all who turn to God in faith.

Between the promise of a blessed seed through whom all might be blessed³³ and the fulfillment of that promise³⁴, lived a covenant people, a real historical people, who anticipated and looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. They were saved, rightly-related to God, by faith. During this Old Covenant period, God broke into human history, saving his people from various harms. He saved them from Egyptian bondage, from the Red Sea, from endless wandering in the wilderness, from starvation, from enemies, from anarchy, from themselves, from oppressors, from captivity, etc. During this era, God's salvation was primarily in terms of *rescue* from real, immediate and historical problems.

Between the fulfillment of the promise³⁵, or the first advent of the Christ, and his return, or second advent, live a covenant people, who remember, look back to the coming of the Messiah. They are saved, rightly-related to God, by faith³⁶. During the New Covenant period, God broke into human history, saving his people from various harms. He healed, he taught, he showed how to behave, and he preached, but above all, he paid the price for sin by dying on the cross. While this sacrificial act fulfilled that for which the Old covenant people hoped, and while his historical healings and other manifestations of divine benevolence blessed many, his ultimate purpose was to usher in the kingdom of God. The in-breaking of the kingdom of God, while extraordinary in itself, will be eclipsed by that final in-breaking into human history, the return of Christ and judgment. While God's intervention into history on behalf of his people took the form of rescue in the Old Covenant, it takes the form of *avoiding wrath* in the New Covenant.

Salvation-history has a few implications for mission. First, if God acts on behalf of his people by specific intervention to rescue them from harm, it follows that we, as God's people, in possession of his Spirit and his Word, should be agents of this same rescuing

intervention.

Second, if God chooses to act in history on behalf of his people generally, and chose to act specifically and decisively by incarnating his Son, then it also follows that we, as temples indwelt by God's Word and Spirit, should incarnate his intervening benevolence on behalf of his afflicted and oppressed people.

If God intervenes in human history to rescue from present harm and eschatological wrath, we should, as his agents of salvation, his agents of restoring right-relationships, be involved in the same mission. God's salvation is not some ethereal, disembodied, spiritual truth people have found to elevate themselves above the animal world. It is not merely a noble ethic, a divine principle or grand idea. God's salvation spans all times, locales, people groups and needs. God is a God who acts and is known by his acts. He acts in history on behalf of real, historical people. We should go and do likewise.

2.1.4 Salvation As “Comprehensive Wellbeing”

While it is true that salvation is the historical in-breaking of divinely initiated restoration, it seems evangelicals in the Western world have inadvertently prioritized restoration. This prioritization serves to fragment salvation and separates the beneficiaries of salvation into hierarchical groups. It is somewhat of a salvific caste system with humanity at the top and the environment at the bottom. This hierarchical structure cannot avoid influencing attitudes toward different racial groups within the human realm. In other words, restoration is usually thought of in the following descending categories: (1) God with the self, (2) self with itself, (3) self with others, and (4) self with the environment. In other words, God is at the top, nature at the bottom and people somewhere in the middle. Restoration of the individual with God is portrayed as more important than restoration of the self with the environment, and restoration of the self with its own psycho-spiritual self is more important than restoration with other selves. In non-western worldviews, this bifurcation of restoration is not as dominant. Rather, salvation, especially in terms of restoration, is understood as holistic, as all-encompassing, as vitally and integrally interconnected. In non-western worldviews, the hierarchical structure is replaced with a more horizontal understanding where

each of the four elements are essentially of equal value. And, consequently, no caste system arises in which some races are more important than others. Third World, or Two-thirds World³⁷ theologies, in their horizontalizing of these four groups, have elevated nature and others to equality with restoration with God and one's self. Thus it follows in Two-thirds World theologies that social and environmental restoration is more dominant than in Western theologies. Western theologies seem to have always given priority to restoration of the self with God (theological) and restoration within the individual self (psycho-spiritual). Indeed, all four domains of restoration are important, but arrangement into hierarchical echelons is unfortunate. Salvation in terms of restoration should be comprehensive and holistic rather than hierarchical (Nürnberger 1990:214). Salvation as the divinely initiated in-breaking of restoring right relationships must be characterized by "comprehensive wellbeing" (Nürnberger 1990).

Comprehensive wellbeing, as the goal of salvation, is divine in-breaking into human history for the sake of restoring human existence. The act of salvation, known in the Old Testament as *Shalom* and in the New Testament as *Soteria*, is the "divine response to specific needs,...experienced deficiencies in human wellbeing" (:206). This divine response takes the form of "restoration of human beings to safety and wellbeing" (:207), and this wellbeing is not fragmented, but is comprehensive, is the goal of salvation and impacts the whole of reality, including the natural world (:206). If comprehensive wellbeing is the goal of salvation, and is indeed biblical (:207-209), then why is it not the chief occupation of the church, not to mention mission?

Comprehensive wellbeing, for various reasons, has been embraced more readily by Two-thirds World Christians than by Western Christians. Why? Nürnberger suggests that the main reason comprehensive wellbeing has not been predominant in the Western church and its mission is because Western people have blundered in their application of divine revelation to needs specific to different cultures. In fact, Nürnberger implies that the problem is really one of cultural myopia or tunnel-vision, that the Western church has viewed the needs of the rest of the world through the grid, through the lenses, of their own experience. Individual forgiveness seems to be the primary focus for Western theology, yet it is interesting

that forgiveness, though a genuine biblical doctrine, is not predominant either in Jesus' or Paul's teachings (:208). Why then has forgiveness of sins "become the central and exclusive content of salvation in Western theology" (208)? Nürnberger suggests that this focus on forgiveness is itself a response, on the part of Western theology, to the specific need of escaping the situation of deep, social alienation experienced in Europe during the Reformation and preceding (:208). What Western theology has inadvertently done is rightly see salvation in terms of divine response to the European sense of individual alienation, but wrongly apply it to all other cultures as if it is the specific need they have as well. As well intentioned as this myopic view of individual salvation might be, it is nothing more than seeing others as one sees one's self, seeing others in one's own image with one's own peculiar problems.

If comprehensive wellbeing is the goal of salvation (:206), then it is the responsibility of mission to identify specific human needs in each culture and seek to manifest God's restorative divine benevolence in the midst of experienced human deficiencies. In other words, missionaries are to be agents of four-fold restoration in the midst of the specific and peculiar problems faced by the people they seek to serve. Consequently, the missionary must strive to identify the specific needs God has met in the missionary's culture, recognise their blinding influence, and view the new culture in terms of its own needs, no matter how much they might differ with that of the missionary's culture.

2.1.5 Salvation and Time

Salvation, as four-fold restoration of comprehensive wellbeing in human history, is conditioned by a temporal context. In other words, salvation is also related to time. Salvation is not restricted to one aspect of time; rather, it is related to all time. Salvation is past, present and future. Salvation's relation to each period of time is relevant to what is achieved in that period. In other words, salvation, as *justification*, is related to time past, "as an accomplished fact (Eph. 2:5, 8; Rom. 8:24; Titus 3:5)", as *sanctification*, is related to time present, "as a present process (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15)" and, as *glorification*, is related to time future, "as a future event (Rom. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:5)" (Padilla 1985:79). Salvation cannot be restricted to one time or significance only, "it is an organic whole...[and]...must not be

separated” (:79). Nevertheless, salvation in relation to time and function enlightens our understanding of how we should be going about being agents of restorative wellbeing in the midst of needy and broken people.

Salvation, in terms of past, punctiliar experience, is “freedom from judgment for sonship” (Stott 1975:103-04). In this context, salvation is, in terms of justification, propitiation and freedom. It frees the sinner from God's wrath against his sins, his guilt over sins and condemnation for being a sinner. Justification frees for sonship, for adoption³⁸ (:103-104).

Salvation in terms of present, processual experience, is “freedom from self for service” (:104-06). In this context, salvation is, in terms of sanctification, deliverance, present freedom, transformation and liberation. It frees the sinner from self-centeredness, slavery to self-determined values and desires. Sanctification frees for service to others for their sake³⁹ (:104-06).

Salvation, in terms of future and final experience, is “freedom from decay for glory” (:107-08) In this context, salvation is, in terms of glorification, deliverance and redemption, especially of our whole self, both body and soul. It frees the sinner from the wrath to come, bodily decay and death. Glorification frees from the cares and pains of this life for eternity with God, a new body and eternal life fully experienced⁴⁰ (:107-08).

While it is true that salvation cannot be fragmented into one or another of its three temporal components, yet in regard to mission, one is predominant. Salvation, in terms of justification and glorification, though integral parts of any missionary enterprise, is concerned with what amounts to un-repeatable events of the past and the future. One has already taken place while the other will occur sometime in the non-specific future. Therefore, one aspect of salvation remains that is of primary concern, not only for every believer, but more especially for mission.

Sanctification, whether one defines it as a process beginning with justification and culminating in glorification, or as a process punctuated with a crisis, remains as the life-long experience of the Christian. But how does this relate to mission? Since sanctification is being “set apart” from sin for service, and growing in Christ-likeness, it should be our primary task

as holy people to live out the life of Christ among people. If it was Jesus' purpose to free from sin for the service of others, we ought to be about the same task, namely liberating people from all sorts of bondage, including bondage to self, and setting them free to serve others. Speaking of those outside the power structures of Christendom, Costas agrees, "Salvation means...freedom to confess Jesus Christ in the service of outsiders" (1982:189). Calling upon people from Two-thirds World cultures to make private, individual decisions for Christ, placing the bulk of the emphasis on justification, is fragmented evangelism, and it is no wonder that later on when the evangelist visits the area of his "campaign" no believers can be found.

Salvation, for the missionary, is primarily a life-long process of being an agent of four-fold restoration of comprehensive wellbeing in the midst of people with very specific needs peculiar to themselves, and this mission will take years and perhaps a life-time, not a mere few hours or multi-media blitz.

2.2 WORLDVIEW

2.2.1 The Nature of Worldview

2.2.1.1 *Definition of worldview*

Simply put, worldview can be defined as "the way people see reality" (Hesselgrave 1991:197). Less simply put, worldview has been defined variously as follows: Worldview is composed of "the basic assumptions about reality which lie behind the beliefs and behavior of a culture" (Hiebert 1985:45); "Cultures pattern perceptions of reality into conceptualizations of what reality can or should be... The worldview is the central systematization of conceptions of reality to which members of the culture assent (largely unconsciously) and from which stem their value system" (Kraft 1979:53); "At [culture's] centre is a world-view, that is, a general understanding of the nature of the universe and of one's place in it" (Willowbank 1978:6).

While these are not the only attempts at defining worldview, they at least make a serious beginning. If we synthesise the salient features of each definition, those expressions that seem to be freighted with the greatest significance, then we might arrive at a potent

summary: Worldview is composed of the largely unconscious basic assumptions about life as it is and ought to be; these assumptions lie behind belief and behaviour and comprise a people's value system.

2.2.1.2 *Composition of worldview*

According to studies at Yale University, the component parts of worldview are in excess of 80 (Hesselgrave 1991:202). Hesselgrave, however, in basing his work on Redfield's tripartite configuration, chooses to select four components in order to construct a worldview model that serves the purpose of communicating Christ cross-culturally: supernature, nature, man and time⁴¹ (:202). Hiebert presents worldview in terms of three principal dimensions: cognitive, affective and evaluative (1985:46). Kearney presents seven of what he calls "worldview universals": self, other, relationship, causation, classification, time and space (1984:106). Brown, finally, in an attempt to synthesise Kearney, Hiebert and Kraft (and others as well), adds one more component part (probably taking the cue from Hiebert) making the universals eight in total: self, other, relationship, causation, classification, time, space and **values** (Brown 1980:4b). In this study, we will be focusing primarily on values because they are integral to all the other categories. In other words, we will be looking at how the Bemba value various aspects of reality as they perceive it.

2.2.2 **The Location of Worldview**

2.2.2.1 *Worldview as a component of culture*

While culture can be described and analysed in many ways⁴², Hesselgrave identifies seven basic components of culture that are relevant to communicating the Gospel cross-culturally (1991:164). While he does not identify them as such, they nevertheless fall into two clearly distinguishable categories; I call them *surface* and *sub-surface structures*. The surface structures of culture are identified as behavioural patterns, linguistic forms, social structures and media influence, while the sub-surface structures are identified as cognitive processes, motivational resources and **worldview**⁴³.

2.2.2.2 *Worldview as a component of the human psyche*

Worldview is the psycho-social gyroscope that gives a people a unique identity and preserves their way of life. Hiebert points out that at the center of any people's explicit belief and value system is an implicit belief and value system which is composed of cognitive, affective and **evaluative** dimensions. This implicit, but no less real, belief system he calls **worldview** (1985:46). Worldview is "the picture [people] have of the way things in sheer actuality are, the most comprehensive idea of order" (Geertz 1973:89; Dillistone 1986:115).

If a people's worldview is at their psycho-social center, and if it is the locus of their idea of "comprehensive order" (Geertz :89), then it is imperative that we begin to understand the Bemba worldview, because failing to do so is failing the most important task. Of all the dimensions of cross-cultural communication, worldview is the most central and crucial. However, it is also the most difficult to discover because of the depth at which it resides (Willowbank 1978:6). A person of a given culture has extreme difficulty acknowledging worldview, not to mention talk about it, because it is so woven into the warp and woof of the cultural tapestry that it is nearly invisible. Cultural outsiders are usually quicker at recognizing and articulating a people's worldview because they do not take it for granted. Interestingly, the very dynamic that gives order to our own culture is practically invisible to us, yet we seem to clearly see the ordering dynamic which is practically invisible to inhabitants of another culture. It seems providential that we need each other, from different cultures, in order to see and understand ourselves more clearly and profoundly.

2.2.3 **The Relevance of Worldview**

2.2.3.1 *Worldview and communication*

For authentic Christian conversion and salvation to be facilitated, the communicator of the gospel must speak in terms which are relevant to the recipient culture's worldview (Kraft 1979). Therefore, the communicator of the gospel must attempt to discover their worldview. The intercultural communicator needs to "locate those paradigms of thought in a culture which shape meaning" (Schreiter 1985:78). Since worldviews are largely implicit, "the missionary must search for forums where the implicit is made explicit and develop

methodologies for uncovering worldview meaning” (Van Rheen 1991:33). One of the ways a culture's worldview can be discovered, at least in part, is through a study of its “oral literature,” and their collection of proverbs is as good a place as any to begin, since “one of the most revealing clues to the mind of a people is in its proverbial lore” (Hamutyinei and Plangger 1974:13). Knowledge of a people's proverbs is a useful means for studying and interpreting them (Nyembezi 1963:xii, Olson 1982:32).

2.2.3.2 *Worldview and conversion*

Authentic Christian conversion and salvation must take place at worldview level for at least two reasons. First, the Word of God requires it. The Apostle Paul gives us, in his letter to the Romans, a paradigm of the process and purpose of Christian communication. The ultimate purpose of Christian communication is salvation, but certain things need to take place prior to salvation. By means of rhetorical questions, Paul lays out the process in Romans 10:15 and 17. The process begins with someone being sent to a people with a specific mission in mind, namely the mission of salvation. This sent-one, or missionary, is charged with proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. The people must be enabled to hear the good news of God's Word, yet this hearing is more than a mere aural phenomenon; they must hear at worldview level so that they might believe from the *heart* (a synonym for worldview?) and confirm this act of faith by calling out to the Lord for salvation. For a model of this process, see Appendix B, *The Heart of Christian Communication*.

Second, it is necessary to set in motion positive, spiritual growth (maturation). Growth implies a moving forward in the Christian life⁴⁴; it neither implies nor encourages backward movement. Authentic Christian conversion is necessary to prevent reverting to pre-Christian and anti-Christian ways of believing, behaving and evaluating, for, all too often, professing Christians, during times of crisis or rites of passage, revert back to the old, pre-Christian ways of behaving, thereby revealing their true worldview (Van Rheen 1991:33-34, 37), denying the validity of their profession and placing themselves outside the realm of responsiveness to God's providence and guidance.

2.3 PROVERBS AS WINDOWS INTO WORLDVIEW

2.3.1 Definition and Characteristics

While some scholars have formulated their definition of the proverb “from the isolated perspective of [their] particular folklorist approach, and each one naturally tends to omit considerations of other approaches” (Folly 1991:30), and “no definition of a proverb...has gained general acceptance” (Dalfovo 1990:9), I nevertheless feel that Dalfovo, as a veteran of over 30 years of paremiological studies in Africa, offers a definition that is not only thorough but may even serve as a paradigmatic definition for proverbs in all disciplines. Drawing from language dictionaries, Dalfovo's early definition of the proverb was “a short, pithy, fixed, popular, experiential, prescriptive, and usually allegorical sentence” (1991:45). After additional research into Lugbara proverbs and ethics, he modified his definition by reclassifying the seven components above into three larger categories which he calls origin, medium and message.

Proverbs are **experiential in origin**; they are generated from the home, father/husband/wife, mother/wife/woman, children, brothers, extended family, marriage, guests and foreigners, elders, magic, religion, friends, food, work, animals, death, discernment, evaluation, etc. The **medium** of proverbs is composed of both **material** and **formal attributes**. The material attributes are **brevity** (low word count per proverb), **pithyness** (memorableness, frugality, terseness, richness, thrust and wisdom) and **fixity** (static yet dynamic, dialectical variations) while the formal attributes are **popularity** and extent of **allegorical content** (range of metaphors). The **message**, which is generated from experience, can be **prescriptive** or **proscriptive**. If it is prescriptive, it offers such “approved traits to be inculcated and practiced” (:52) as courage, foresight, prudence, patience, moderation, kindness, truthfulness, cooperation, friendship, labouriousness, justice, etc. If, however, it is proscriptive, it points a finger, so to speak, at such “negative traits to be avoided” (:52) as shortsightedness, restlessness, rudeness, falsehood, selfishness, injustice, laziness, greed, pride, stubbornness, etc. Proverbs' experiential origin gives them **credibility**; proverbs are generated from common experience, and it is by means of personal experience that they are recognised. The experiential origin of proverbs also governs their **application**. Proverbs are

characterised both by **complexity** and **flexibility**. Because proverbs emerge from complex contextual experiences, they can in turn be applied to complex situational experiences. Additionally, proverbs are **dynamically static**; though they are “fixedly enshrined in tradition [with] meaning which is objectively and absolutely valid,” they are influenced by the situations to which they apply as well as by the dynamics of continued transmission from one generation to another (:52).

Having outlined Dalfovo's taxonomy of the proverb (:45-53), let me attempt to translate his findings into a workable definition useful to this study: The short, pithy, fixed, popular and usually allegorical proverb is situationally applicable because of its experiential origin, and either affirms or disaffirms certain attitudes and actions.

2.3.2 Proverbs and Worldview

2.3.2.1 *Proverbs encode and reveal worldview values*

Because proverbs encode a people's “philosophical outlook, religious conceptions and **worldview** [emphasis mine]...in a digestible form” (Brookman-Amissah 1986:75), they serve, if decoded properly, as an effective source for discovering the way they perceive and process reality and their place in it (Van Rheen 1991:33). They also reveal their **values** [emphasis mine] (Opoku 1987:58), philosophy, character, wisdom, beliefs, practices and soul (Nyembezi 1963:xii; Rattray 1914:5, 12; Dzobo 1973:13; Sumbwa 1993:iii; et al).

2.3.2.2 *Proverbs are the key to worldview values*

Proverbs reflect “even more clearly than other forms of folk-lore the deepest-set **values** of a people, showing the drives that motivate [moral] behaviour” (Herskovitz in Chima 1984:57), and reveal “some of the fundamental determinants” of that behaviour (Dzobo 1973:12). Proverbs “serve as **keys** [emphasis mine] to open the door into Africans' **view of the nature of reality** [emphasis mine], the meaning of life, and the foundation of their **value judgements**” [emphasis mine] (Chima 1984:55), and they reveal “African categories [pertaining to] concepts of man, society, the world and God” (Shorter in Chima 1984:53). While many other voices⁴⁵ affirm that traditional proverbs provide a window into African

worldview, the few quoted here should be enough to make the point.

Niemeyer (1982), has attempted to discover worldview values expressed in 1286 Bemba proverbs⁴⁶. Using three of Kearney's worldview universals (1984), namely self orientation, other orientation and relationship, Niemeyer has identified "several dimensions of world view for...the Bemba as revealed in the[ir] proverbs" (1982:236-42). They are outlined below:

SELF ORIENTATION

- Interdependent with others in a rigid hierarchy.
- Swept along in a forceful, spiritually encompassing stream of society - like a fish in a river.
- Little direct reference to individual capabilities.
- Prominent components of anatomy confirm orientation (mouth, eye, head, heart), - especially corporateness and status.
- Stomach is a private domain associated with status.

OTHER ORIENTATION

- Domestic unit (mother, father, children) is most prominent unit of reference.

CHILDREN

- Given greatest prominence among persons.
- Belong to community; emphasis upon the nature and function of children.
- No distinctive attention to either sex.
- Comparatively less care for children reinforcing independency, aggressiveness, and self-sufficiency.
- High parental status.

MOTHERS/WIVES

- Given high status.
- Wives are begrudgingly supportive of husband.
- Reciprocity occurs between mother and child.
- Mothers identified with country.
- All references to wife concern status.

HUSBANDS/FATHERS

- Status amidst conflict.
- Serious conflict over authority and affection.
- Maternal uncle threatens.

WOMEN

- Prominent in references.
- Tension with men.

MEN

- Significantly less prominent in proverbs.
- Camaraderie
- No identification with work.
- No enigmatic males.

ELDERS

- Very prominent.
- No attention to old women.
- Conflict with young is paramount with attention to conformity.
- Status related to children.
- Frequent references to wisdom of elders.

POLITICAL AUTHORITIES

- Chiefs are primary figures. Focus is on position/status/hierarchy.
- Associations with chief are important.

SPIRITS

- Part of community.

GOD

- Significant references that raise questions.

ACTIVITY-RELATED PEOPLE

- Given little attention.
- Slave/servant is paramount followed by hunter and doctor.

ROLE-IDENTIFIED PEOPLE

- Keen interest in these people.
- Personages given great attention, also friends and owner/masters.

RELATIONSHIP

- Complex and hierarchical.
- Highly valued.
- Characterised by tension.
- Important binary oppositions: stranger/resident; rich/poor.
- Stranger needs special attention; is tolerated amidst tension.
- Poor associated with rich and bad luck.
- Characterised by reciprocity.

While all these dimensions of worldview are reflected in one way or another in the selected Bemba proverbs on marriage discussed below, of particular interest are the dimensions on children, mothers/wives, husbands/fathers, women and men. Interestingly, while Niemeyer does not use the term “marriage” elsewhere in his thesis, it occurs nowhere in the table from which the abovementioned dimensions are outlined.

2.4 BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION

The presentation of the selected Bemba proverbs on marriage below will generally be according to the following pattern. After each main proverb entry an ethnographic description will follow in which additional proverbs will be presented to illustrate or clarify the main entry. Following the ethnographic description will be a bridge-point discussion in which the meaning, usage and teaching of the proverb are discussed over against biblical teachings on the same themes. During the bridge-point discussion, questions will be asked and suggestions will be offered to the local theologians who will, through them, be challenged to develop a new, local and contextualised theology on that particular sub-theme of marriage.

As was indicated in the fourth step of the critical contextualisation method above (1.2.3.4), we will not attempt to articulate a contextualised theology of marriage. That is to be done by the local theologians in their specific contexts. The best we can do is serve as catalysts to that end.

CHAPTER 3

SELECTED BEMBA PROVERBS ON MARRIAGE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, I will present each proverb with translations, meanings and other ethnographic details and follow it with a “bridge-point discussion.” We are calling it a bridge-point discussion because our aim is building communication bridges between biblical values and Bemba values. At this point, however, we are not ready to build the bridges, but rather we are attempting to establish, through observation and question, a beginning point where we may start laying the first foundation stones for the bridges which will be built later by local Bemba theologians.

3.2 THE PROVERBS

3.2.1 Engagement

*Abaanakashi : maafi yampombo*⁴⁷

Literally translated, this proverb says, “Women are droppings of a duiker,” and it means women are as plentiful as duikers' droppings. The duiker-dropping metaphor draws on the observation that, in the bush, when one comes upon duikers' droppings, they are in abundance. Duikers tend to use favourite places for leaving their droppings; therefore, when one finds some, one finds much more nearby. Furthermore, duikers' dropping are small pellets making their appearance seem even more numerous.

This proverb has two main usages which are essentially antithetical. Used positively, this proverb is given as advice to a young man who is either growing impatient in regard to his marriage prospects or has been rejected for marriage by a girl or her family. In this case, the proverb essentially says something like “Do not worry about finding a wife; they are as plentiful as stars in the sky, sand on the sea shore or leaves on the trees; you will eventually find one.” The eventuality of finding a mate⁴⁸ is affirmed by two other proverbs: *Takwaba icibolya ca bashimbe*⁴⁹ which literally translated says, “There is no deserted village of unwed people,” and interpretively translated says, “An old village site which was inhabited only by

unmarried people has not been found"; *Banamune : tabasha mpanga*⁵⁰ which literally translated says, "Marriageable young women do not leave the forest," and interpretively translated says, "Marriageable young women are found everywhere."

Used negatively, *Abaanakashi maafu yampombo* is employed by a man who is so unhappy with his wife that he feels it is necessary to threaten her either with divorce or by taking a second wife. According to this usage, the proverb means, "Because women are as plentiful as duikers' droppings, I can chase you away and find a replacement."

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

The usage of this proverb that serves as advice to the impatient young man appears to be consistent with biblical wisdom in that it affirms the value of patience⁵¹ and implicitly suggests that one should take the time to be cautious in selecting a mate⁵². The underlying need this proverb attempts to address is fear of failing to find a wife or fear of repeated rejection since it is the man who is compelled to risk his pride by making the marriage proposal⁵³. Does the Bible begin to offer help for this fear when it calls for humility⁵⁴, trust in the face of uncertainty⁵⁵ and casting of one's anxieties upon God⁵⁶ in joyful and thankful prayer⁵⁷?

The usage of this proverb that is employed by a disgruntled husband appears to be inconsistent with biblical principles of behaviour between a husband and wife. While the Bible does allow for divorce under certain circumstances⁵⁸, it does not encourage divorce simply on the grounds of unhappiness on the part of one or both of the spouses, and it certainly does not approve of extra-marital affairs⁵⁹. Does the Bible offer help to the husband who is unhappy with his wife's attitude or behaviour when it says one should make other people's priorities one's own priorities⁶⁰, or live a life of self-sacrificing love⁶¹, or "love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5: 25) or "love your wife as you love your own body" (vv. 28 & 33)? The underlying motive for the husband to threaten his wife with divorce, adultery or polygamy is most likely an attempt to change her behaviour by force so that it suits his desires. Whatever she may have done to elicit his threat, it seems clear that the two of them are not sharing their needs and desires with each other.

Is it possible that the “one flesh” (Genesis 2:24 & Ephesians 5:31) and the “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12) metaphors suggest to this couple the possibility and power of constructively sharing their most intimate feelings?

While the usage of this proverb as an encouragement for patience is affirmed by the Bible, the usage by the unhappy husband needs a redemptive touch, a radical reformation, a constructive and contextually relevant confrontation with biblical values. Our local theologians are presently grappling with this task.

Akaliimo ushishi : takatwalwa ku buko⁶²

Literally translated, this proverb says, “The little work you do not understand is not taken to the in-law,” and interpretively translated it says, “The small work you do not understand well should not be offered to your mother-in-law,” and means one should not boast of pretentious achievements, not to mention genuine achievement, since that boasting might bring trouble⁶³. This proverb is applied to a young man who is trying to do something in which he has had little or no experience for the sole purpose of impressing his potential in-laws⁶⁴. Customarily, before a marriage is approved, the husband-to-be goes to live with the family of the wife-to-be and undergoes a time of testing. During this time, his behaviour is observed very closely and one of the areas of greatest scrutiny is how he works. If he is an industrious worker, he will be approved; if, however, he is lazy, dull or incompetent, he risks disapproval, and the marriage may be called off⁶⁵. Hence the pressure to do well is great. Under these circumstance, some young men are tempted to make it appear they are more skilled than they really are. However the Bemba do not value pretense in these matters. As this proverb suggests, it is better to admit inability and endure the possibility of criticism and learn than to pretend to have expertise and embarrass everyone by failing.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

This proverb, though it can be taken several ways, applies to a young man who is over-eager to please his potential parents-in-law. When this motive is married to pride, it is a potentially humiliating experience for the Bible says, “Pride goes before a fall” (Prov. 16:18)

and “God opposes the proud” (Jm. 4:6). The Bemba value being conveyed here is that it is better to acknowledge one's ignorance in a task than to tackle it and have shameful results. What might the biblical proverbial statement “Humble yourself beneath the mighty hand of God and in due time he will lift you up,” say to an individual in such a circumstance?

The underlying motive here is to make people think more highly of you than they really should⁶⁶, and it reveals a desire to be important and recognised. Does the Bible speak to self-awareness and self-worth on the one hand and pride, pretention, hypocrisy and deceit on the other? How can the underlying motive for one who acts in such a way be redeemed?

3.2.2 Incest

*Amaso ya nkashi : tayafumya mutima*⁶⁷

This proverb literally translated says, “The pubic hair of your sister; it cannot make your heart flutter,” and means a young man cannot allow himself to become sexually aroused by his sister since he will not be allowed to marry her⁶⁸. However, while marriage to a sister is generally forbidden, it is on some occasions allowed as the following proverbs indicate: *Akasabi ukulya : e kunona*⁶⁹ which literally translates as, “For a small fish to eat a friend; it is fatness,” and means it is best to marry from among one's own clan (from among cross-cousins) to assure success and strengthen family ties; *Ing'ombe shupana : mwitanga*⁷⁰ which literally says, “Cattle mate in the stable,” and means marriage should take place between members of the same ethnic group (tribe); *Tuli Lunda : tupana umo twaishile*⁷¹ which literally translates as, “We are Lunda⁷²; we marry each other just as we came,” and means people will normally marry from within their own people.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

While marriage to someone too closely related is discouraged, some marriages between close cousins is allowed. What are the circumstances in which these kinds of marriages are allowed? Abraham married his “sister,” and Isaac married from among his own people (a cousin?). What does the Bible say about such marriages? Does it forbid, allow or stay silent on the issue? Though marriage too close is discouraged both in the West and in

Africa, how might marriage among one's "people-group" in terms of the church be dealt with? In other words, is this marriage within one's people-group a bridge-point for encouraging marriage within the faith, both as Christians and as members of a particular denomination?

3.2.3 Children

*Icifwaikwa mwifungu : lisenbe*⁷³

This proverb literally translated says, "What you look for under the bed is an axe," and means that the purpose of marriage is bearing children. This proverb is used to encourage couples to increase their family through bearing many children. As the following three proverbs illustrate, the Bemba, as do all Bantu, prize large families: *Akashama kali kamo : twasanguka twaba tubili*⁷⁴ which literally translated says, "The groundnut was alone; they became two," and interpretively translated says, "While the groundnut was once alone, now it has become two," and means the hope of marriage is having many children; *Ubula bumo : tabwisusha ng'anda*⁷⁵ which literally translated says, "One placenta does not fill a house," and means that there is always room in the home for more children; *Ubukulu bwa nkoko : masako*⁷⁶ which literally translated says, "The greatness of a chicken is its feathers," and interpretively translated says, "The feathers of a cock demonstrate its size," and means that, as feathers of a chicken add to its bulk, so too children add to the honour and respect given to parents.

According to Bemba tradition, if no children are born to a couple within an appropriate period of time, the marriage can be nullified. This proverb implicitly teaches that marital security is contingent upon having children as the following two proverbs illustrate: *Icikalilwa pa nsaka : musumba wa bwali*⁷⁷ which literally translated says, "That which let a few days go by at the rest hut is the large basket of nshima,"⁷⁸ and interpretively translated says, "Hope for food is what persuades a person to stay on at the rest hut," and means the hope of children keeps a married couple together; *Kukwata kana kamo : kutanganina na Lesa*⁷⁹ which literally translated says, "Having only one child is having the same task as God," and interpretively translated says, "Having only one child is contending with God," and means there is no security in having only one child because God could take it, leaving the family

childless.

In fact, having no children is a formula for poverty, as the following proverb attests: *Ing'anda ishibwelela mpango : ibusu*⁸⁰ which literally translated says, “A house without a lobola⁸¹ is poor,” and means a family without daughters will not receive the “bride-wealth,” primarily in the form of work done for them by the son-in-law-to-be, and will thereby be impoverished.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

This proverb falls short of the primary purpose of marriage as God intended it. The popular passage from Genesis 2 that says, “For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and will be united to his wife, and they will become “one flesh” (vs. 24) does not say that the husband and wife will automatically bear children. Therefore, the primary purpose is a “one flesh” relationship, not having children. However, Genesis also commands humanity to “be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth” (1:28). However, since humanity is to have “authority over the whole earth” (vs. 26), they are explicitly to so govern their lives as to be in balance with the resources they have available⁸².

Traditionally, one of the main purposes of marriage is having children. While the Bible speaks positively about children⁸³, how does the Bible dialogue with such a traditional value? Should the Bible simply affirm the Bemba value of large families regardless of the physical and economic constraints on them, or should the Bemba reconsider the tenacity with which they hold to the idea of having children until they cannot any longer? On the other hand, given the Bemba preference for many children because it provides future and financial security, should we consider reevaluating the view of biblical stewardship that advocates self-limiting the family so as to coincide with available resources?

3.2.4 Family Ties

*Icupo ecilipa mutwe : umukowa eo usesha*⁸⁴

Literally translated, this proverb says, “Marriage is the one on your head; the clan is the one you move,” and interpretively translated says, “You carry your marriage honourably

on your head⁸⁵, but your clan you move about commonly with the hand,” and means some women give greater honor to their husbands and their children than to their clan. This proverb is applied to a wife who ignores her clan relations in favour of her immediate family and teaches that clan relationships should be valued at least as much as marital relationships. In fact, according to Bemba tradition, failure to maintain good clan relationships can result in a terminated marriage as the following proverb suggests: *Wilabilila ku bantu bobo : icupo cibusa*⁸⁶ literally translated says, “Do not forget your people; marriage is friendship,” and interpretively translated says, “You should not forget about your people, because marriage is just a friendship,” and means married people should not neglect or abandon their relatives. While marriage can be perceived as a friendship that can be broken, family relationships cannot⁸⁷. This proverb is applied to a married couple as a warning against giving greater allegiance to the marital union than to the clan, and implicitly teaches that the priority should be reversed, namely the clans from which they came is a more vital entity than the spouse. It also teaches that a marriage can be damaged, if not terminated, when relationships with the extended family and the clan are not positively maintained. The following four proverbs illustrate some ways of maintaining positive family relationships: *We muko wandi : umucinshi waba mukawwa*⁸⁸ literally says “You my in-laws, respect is in the mouth,” and means respect for your in-laws is measured or judged by what you say to and about them and how you say it. This proverb is applied to a person who is found speaking disrespectfully about the in-laws and teaches that, because words are powerful, when talking to an in-law, you had better use your words wisely so as to avoid being perceived as rude or disrespectful; *Ubuko bwatinine insamfwe*⁸⁹ literally says, “The in-laws feared the ‘insamfwe’ (a tiny mushroom),” and means in-laws should never be too near each other. This proverb is applied to in-laws who, because of too close a proximity⁹⁰, have seen each other's weaknesses and mistakes, have become disappointed and are beginning to lose respect for each other. It teaches the traditional value that for in-laws to maintain a respectful relationship with each other, they should keep their distance, especially when a marriage is new; *Ku buko ni kwikoshi : bafwenako libili*⁹¹ literally says, “In-laws are the neck; they scratch it twice,” and interpretively says, “The in-laws are like the back of the neck; one scratches there many

times,” and means you must think twice (scratch your neck twice, to clarify the metaphor) before undertaking anything against your relatives if you want to be at peace with them. Also, a divorce should not make you become disrespectful to former in-laws; respect them as you did before⁹².

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

This proverb teaches the traditional value that you should not esteem your marriage more than that of your clan. Scriptures teach that our first loyalty should be to God, then to one another as husband and wife and then to others. Genesis 2:24 reminds us of the fact that there should be some kind of leaving in order to come together, but in the Bemba cultural context, we need to take into consideration that we also have responsibilities to other members of the clan. When the Bible says regarding the marriage union, “The two shall become one flesh,” does it indicate that the union is exclusively between the man and the woman alone, or can it include each of their families as well? Since the Bemba value corporate identity over individual identity, is it fair within the biblical framework to allow this corporate interpretation of the “one flesh” metaphor? However, the Bible also says the husband and wife will leave their parents when this union takes place. Does the leaving imply that the marriage relationship is now of a higher priority than the clan relationship?

Biblically, community is a powerful and necessary entity and is pictured for us in the Old Testament as the *People of God* and in the New Testament as the *Body of Christ*. How might the People of God/Body of Christ metaphor be enriched by the traditional Bemba view of corporate identity and interdependence? Conversely, how might the traditional Bemba community's grip on the newly weds be relaxed by a biblical view of marriage as a devotion and loyalty primarily between the spouses?

3.2.5 Polygamy

Ubula bumo : tabwisusha ng'anda⁹³

This proverb literally translates as, “One placenta; it does not fill a house,” and means it takes more than one woman to populate a family, as the following proverb affirms: *Nyina*

*umo : tafyala mwanda*⁹⁴ literally says, “One mother; she does not bear a hundred,” and means men should have as many wives as possible so that they might acquire an abundance of children. While desiring many children for the sake of security and strength, men often use the following proverbs to justify their desire to have more wives on the grounds of boredom and malnutrition: *Icakufwala cimo : cilatendusha*⁹⁵ which says, “One dress; it causes disgust”; *Ubwali bumo : bulonsha*⁹⁶ which says, “One food⁹⁷; it makes you thin”; *Umunani umo : ube cifukushi*⁹⁸ which says, “One relish⁹⁹; it is disgusting.” These proverbs indicate that seeing only one dress and eating only one kind of food all the time is monotonous, and the only way to avoid this kind of monotony in the home is to find another wife or two.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

While the Bible does not seem to have a problem with people having large families, indeed it often encourages it, does it have a problem with polygamy? In the Old Testament especially, some key figures have more than one wife. What is the OT value on polygamy? Does the New Testament continue the tolerance of polygamy, or does Jesus, Paul or others argue against it? Should a man be allowed to find additional wives if he is unhappy with his first wife's ability to produce children? Is barrenness a cause for divorce or taking another wife? Do we have cases of barren parents in the Bible remaining married?

3.2.6 Adultery

*Intekwe imo : icita icifine*¹⁰⁰

This proverb literally says, “One container of snuff causes one to sneeze,” and means having sex with one partner causes boredom. This proverb is used to encourage or excuse extra-marital affairs, and it implicitly teaches that variety¹⁰¹ in one's sex life is achieved by a multiplicity of partners. However, if one chooses to get involved in an adulterous affair, as the following proverb suggests, it should be done away from one's neighbourhood in order to preserve community harmony by avoiding being caught: *Ubucende maafu : batwalo kutali*¹⁰² literally says, “Adultery is dung; they always go far away,” and interpretively says, “Adultery is like faeces; one goes far away to relieve oneself hoping to keep it a secret,” and

means that, because adultery or fornication are as bad as faeces which cannot be kept near people because of the filth and smell, they must be committed far away from one's community. Fornication, which is later identified as adultery when it takes place with married people, is actually encouraged in young people as the following proverb illustrates: *Umvana wa ng'hvena : akulila kwitete*¹⁰³ literally says, "The young crocodile grows in the reeds," and means it is essential for young people to experiment with sex so that they learn about it for later life.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

While these proverbs evidently condone adultery for educational purposes so long as one is not caught, I wonder if the real intention behind them is to communicate to the spouses the necessity of variety in sexual experience between the husband and wife alone. If indeed marriage is viewed as largely for the purpose of procreation, and not primarily for pleasure, then the sex act between partners could become mechanical and emotionally meaningless. In these instances, either the wife or the husband or both could find themselves looking elsewhere for sexual excitement and satisfaction. Instead of sensitively and constructively discussing their problems, they are tempted to look somewhere else thinking that their needs will be met by someone other than their spouse¹⁰⁴.

Another underlying purpose of the proverbs is to avoid the relational confusion that is brought upon a community in which a man or a woman is having several affairs. A real dilemma is created by the implicit approval of adultery and fornication on the one hand and avoidance of discovery on the other. Furthermore, another Bemba value is that theft only takes place if one is caught, and theft is implicitly approved so long as it is not perpetrated against one's own people. Are these values all functioning together to implicitly encourage deception? What might the Bible say to this apparently approved deceptiveness?

Since fornication is traditionally approved as a form of sex education, and the Bible disapproves of fornication, what does the Bible offer in terms of the Christian community's involvement in the sexual education of our youth?

3.2.7 Divorce

*Imiti ili pamo : taibula kushenkana*¹⁰⁵

This proverb says, "Trees which are close together, do not fail to rub against each other (or squeak)," and means close proximity causes occasional misunderstanding. This proverb is selected as the first entry for the theme of divorce because divorce seems to be the potential result of a variety of issues that can be a cause of marital break-up. Following are several sub-themes which are subordinate to the theme of divorce.

*Icona ng'anda : tacifuma ng'anda ulaala*¹⁰⁶

This proverb says, "The one who destroys the house does not come from the house where you sleep," and means danger to a marriage usually comes from outside but nearby negative influence. Because of this danger, a couple must be alert and on their guard against such intrusions, especially those by "wolves in sheeps clothing," as the following proverb illustrates: *Icikupempula : e cikulya*¹⁰⁷, which says, "The one who visits you is the one who eats you," and means one's best friend may turn out to be one's worst enemy if the friend consumes too much food or takes sexual advantage of the host's wife. Tension may come to a marriage from in-law influence, as the following proverb suggests, *Capoota : ashile ng'anda*¹⁰⁸, which says, "Mr. It-hurts' left the house (or his wife) and went away," and means that, because the rule of the mother-in-law is greater than his ability to endure, the husband found it too difficult to remain with his wife and divorced her. Tension may also come as a result of gossip: *Icimpatanya : caikele pakati kanshila*¹⁰⁹, which says, "That which causes enmity sits between the roads," and means a married couple should be careful with how they respond to the divisive influence of double-tongued people who find delight in stirring up trouble in other people's lives. Whatever the origin of the negative outside influence, couples are encouraged to be circumspect both about their behaviour and the intentions of those who would influence their marital relationship, as the following proverb indicates: *Icupo kapapa ka kumulomo : kobulo mwine*¹¹⁰, which says, "Marriage is skin on cracked lips which is only peeled off by its owner," and means because marriage is personal, certain problems are so delicate they can only be dealt with by the spouses themselves. This proverb is also used to

advise people who are related to a married couple to avoid interfering in certain marital problems, because the couple must be allowed to work out the problems on their own. A married couple can only deal with the pressures that come from outside influence if they are alerted to their eventuality, as the following proverb declares, *Icishimya umulili mu ng'anda : cifuma ku mwinshi*¹¹¹, which says, "That which quenches the fire in the house begins from the doorway," and means outside influences can destroy a marriage. This proverb teaches that, though a married couple may hear or see destructive influences from outside their marriage, they do not need to succumb to the pressure.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

While the integrity of the marriage must be maintained, and while there certainly are areas that can only be attended to by the spouses alone, are there not areas where family or other influence would be profitable? It seems as though this set of proverbs would serve well as a discussion point for giving and receiving marital advice, especially on issues that the couple would naturally want kept confidential. It seems the most important factors that emerge here are (1) the desire of a couple to solve certain problems confidentially, (2) awareness of the source of potentially damaging influences, and (3) a willingness to seek out, find and listen to marital advice on sensitive issues that is sound and edifying.

What does the Bible say about divorce and its causes? Is divorce ever allowed? Does the Bible speak to the issue of giving or receiving marital advice? Are there any biblical passages in which marital advice is given?

Icupo ca musana : icamutwe caba na bene¹¹²

This proverb literally says, "Marriage is of the waist; the head belongs to the owner of it," and means marriage provides for physical intimacy, but does not allow physical injury. While this proverb teaches that no matter how close a married couple is to each other, they are individually responsible for their own lives and should not be at the mercy of an abusive spouse.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

What does the Bible say about inflicting injury on a spouse? While the Bible says, "Beat a child; surely he will not die" (Prov. 23:13) does it also imply that a wife can be beaten? It is customary for Zambian men to beat their wives for disobedience or any other reason they deem appropriate. In fact, some men say that if the wife is not beaten, she will seek it out as an affirmation that her husband loves her, since, they say, she will not feel wanted if they do not beat her periodically. Whether this is true or not, what does the Bible say about physical abuse? What situations provoke a spouse to inflict physical harm on the other? What underlying motive forces are at work in the husband or wife that drive them to hurt their spouse, either physically or emotionally? How might open and honest communication break down these tendencies to express one's desires in such destructive and counter-productive ways?

3.2.8 Fading Flower

*Icupo ca pa kubala cilila, "Nje, nje, nje" nga kale : cati cikokole calila "Fukutu, fukutu, fukutu" ngo muuba*¹¹³

This proverb says, "Marriage in the beginning¹¹⁴ rings like a bell, but when it grows old, it is like a furnace (that needs to be blown constantly to keep it hot)." While some young people are inclined to think that the beauty and strength of youth will never end, as the following proverb indicates: *Ulemekela amabele : uleti tayakakopoke*¹¹⁵ which says, "You are proud of your standing breasts as if they will not flap," they are encouraged to realize that the flower of youth and the brazenness of juvenile physical strength will fade, as the following proverb indicates: *Icupo ni ngolofwana ya mipeto ibili : umulume no mukasi*¹¹⁶ which says, "Marriage is a two-wheeled wheel-barrow, the husband and the wife" and means a husband and wife, as two wheels on a cart or wheel-barrow, are mutually dependent upon each other, and, if one is in need of assistance when they have problems, the other is expected to assist.

BRIDGE-POINT DISCUSSION:

While it is true that marriages tend to quieten down and exhibit less dramatic ups and

downs as they accumulate years, it does not necessarily follow that they become more problematic. If one sees ageing as part of God's design for human life, as indeed the biblical proverb intimates when it says, "Old men glory in their gray hair"¹¹⁷, then the emotions and handicaps commonly associated with ageing do not need to be seen as a sign of fading interest or deintensification of feelings on the part of the couple. Rather than seeing ageing as a signal of physical and emotional disaster, it should be seen as a sign of transformation. Indeed, if the couple has been communicating and growing old together graciously, the intensity of their emotional and sexual life can in fact increase if it is allowed to grow into something new and interesting. Does the Bible speak of the phenomenon of ageing? Does it speak positively or negatively? Is it silent? How do the Bemba view ageing generally? How does the process of ageing affect Bemba men's and women's attitude toward companionship and sexuality, not to mention procreation? Does the Bible allow a man to find a younger wife if he feels his former wife is too old or no longer desirable?

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

Schreiter, in his book *Constructing Local Theologies* (1985), says the following about the use of proverbs by Christian communicators in Africa:

Perhaps more African theology will be done via proverbs, which are important in communication in sub-Saharan cultures (:31) [and] perhaps theology in African villages could best be expressed in proverbs rather than in Bantu philosophy (:77). The natural forms of handing on the central messages of the culture - proverbs, old stories, and the like - are therefore legitimate vehicles for the developing of local theologies (:84).

In this study, we have accepted the validity of Schreiter's assertion that proverbs are "legitimate vehicles for the developing of local theologies," and we have attempted to begin communicating theologically by means of reflection upon Bemba proverbs rather than by means of the more Western approach which is characterised by abstract philosophising.

While my student and community informants assure me that we are beginning to plumb the depths of Bemba worldview, as yet we have no objective evidence that we have actually transmitted life-changing and culturally or personally relevant biblical values to people immersed in the Bemba worldview. Nevertheless, the Bemba proverbs project team is seeing, and some of us for the first time, that biblical and Bemba ethical values need each other in a mutually enriching dialogue. In other words, Bemba worldview values need affirmation where they agree with biblical values and confrontation where they radically disagree. On the other hand, the gospel communicator and biblical values need to be challenged to speak relevantly to the people's needs because both often come clothed in alien worldview values and theologies. We hope, as time passes, and the project progresses toward completion, that we will see some evidence of having built a bridge between biblical and Bemba values.

In closing, let me share two thoughts. The first was an embarrassing yet pleasant

surprise. In an attempt to gain an understanding of what a Bemba person thought the value of a proverbs collection is, I asked one of my colleagues, “What is the greatest value you think we will gain from compiling what will hopefully be the largest Bemba proverbs collection in existence?”¹¹⁸ I expected all sorts of theological, theoretical, sociological and anthropological responses; something lofty like, “The greatest value of the collection is that it represents raw resource material for probing the depths of the Bemba worldview and value system.” However, the answer was brief and to the point. He said, “The most significant value is **you** are doing it.” Simply put, my colleague was saying that the greatest value in his estimation is the fact that someone cares enough about Bemba traditional values to collect them and write them down for others to see and from which to learn. The second is a note I found scribbled in the back of the Bemba proverbs project workbook which was assigned to one of my informants. It says, “I saw the need for this exercise when I went to consult elders in town over some of the proverbs. They have forgotten many expressions, but if these were written down, then we would have a rich store of knowledge.” If we accomplish nothing else, at least we will get the proverbs written down and thereby available for those who want to remember and for those who want to communicate restoration of comprehensive well-being at the place where people need it the most.

4.2 WEAKNESSES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Because the weakness of a study often reveals areas in which others might want to do future research, I will present them together under one heading.

This study, because of its dependence upon local theologians for application, did not go all the way in developing a contextualised local theology of marriage. As was indicated above, it was never my intention to develop a local theology of marriage among the Bemba; it is the Bemba local theologian's responsibility to do that. Nevertheless, it would have been advantageous to this study if it had included at least one example of an attempt at contextualising a local theology on some selected theme, polygamy, for example, since it is such a sensitive and divisive issue in the Christian community.

This study has attempted to develop a theoretical framework that stands behind and

supports a missiological analysis of selected Bemba proverbs on marriage. Given the size of the study, various components were merely presented and explained but were not discussed within the context of divergent opinions, which seems to be a feature of many dissertations.

Because an analysis of a single genre (proverbs, for example) from only one people group (Bemba, for example) cannot properly assess cultural values (Dobson 1972:35-6 in Niemeyer 1982:56), it is necessary to do a comparative study. While Niemeyer (1982) indeed does such a study, comparing Shona and Bemba dimensions of worldview as expressed in their proverbs, it would have been advantageous for this study, as well as for future research, to have done a comparative analysis on bodies of proverbs on marriage from several Bantu peoples. For example, isolating one Bemba cultural value is worthwhile in coming to an understanding of them in that area, but a more profound appreciation would be derived if it were found that several contiguous people groups all shared essentially the same value.

My limitations as a researcher and the limitations of my informants and the previously published sources is a liability to this study. While we went to great effort in using Bemba people to isolate literal and interpretive translations, and contextualised meanings, usages and teachings, ignorance of certain "esoteric zones of sensitivity in African literature" (Abu Abarry 1978:6 in Niemeyer 1982:57) prevents the researcher from arriving at accurate translations and sound understanding of the "subtleties of word usage in the proverbs" (Niemeyer 1982:57). Perhaps this weakness could be overcome if the researcher were to use elderly informants.

Since the categories under which the various proverbs were presented and discussed were assigned by me as a cultural outsider, there is some doubt whether all the proverbs precisely belong to them. I have already found, through a discussion with an older Bemba informant, that many of the proverbs that have been designated as applying to marriage only do so obliquely and indirectly. In fact, many proverbs that are purported to speak to marriage can apply to a wide variety of situational contexts. Perhaps speech act theory can best serve us here with greater analysis of the context within which a proverb is spoken, the intention of the one who speaks, the proverb and the response enacted by the recipient of the proverbial utterance. However, if the proverbs were to be analysed as speech acts, and if the critical

contextualisation model were to be retained, then the selected biblical texts which speak to the values that emerge from the Bemba proverbs would also have to be analysed as speech acts since both proverbs and biblical texts are utterances, at least in their pre-literate forms, intended to elicit some sort of publicly understood response. This represents a fascinating area for further research.

Culture is a “system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life [worldview?]” (Geertz 1973:89). Furthermore, “the whole point of a semiotic approach to culture is... to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them (penetrate their unfamiliar universe of symbolic action)” (:24). So it seems that a semiotic analysis of the Bemba culture in general and Bemba proverbs in particular is an important task in the interest of relevant and intelligent Christian witness.

Because many proverbs come from folk tales, they are meaningless without an understanding of their generative context. For example, the proverb *Cimbwi afwile ntangalalo*¹⁹ which translates as, “The hyena died doing the splits” is meaningless unless one knows the story in which the hyena, upon arriving at a fork in the road and smelling something inviting down both paths, decides to go in two directions at once and thereby splits in half. It would be profitable to collect and study, as Clement Doke (1927) did with the Lambas of the Copperbelt in Zambia, all the Bemba folklore and especially those tales in which proverbs reside.

Following are a few other future directions that might be profitably pursued in regard to Bemba proverbs, worldview and Christian communication: further research on Bemba marital values, metaphorical analysis, proverbs for marriage counselling, creation of a potential methodology for using proverbs in sermons, Sunday school lessons and devotions, etc., sub-thematic analysis and further worldview values studies.

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NOTES

1. "Ba" is a term of respect prefixed to a person's name irrespective of gender. While the term is not exactly equivalent to "Sir/Madam" or "Mr/Mrs," they are the closest equivalents available. Generally, with married people, "Ba" is used with the surname, and with singles it is used with the first, or "Christian" name.
2. Conversion, as understood here, means a turning away from dependence upon anything or anyone else but God, and this conversion initiates the believer into what is commonly called salvation (*soteria*). All people are in need of salvation because they bear the scars of human disharmony engendered by Adam and Eve in the primordial garden (Genesis 3). As a result of Adam's and Eve's rebellion against God, all humanity through them experiences the loss of peace (*shalom*) with God, the loss of a sense of emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. Salvation, then, through Jesus Christ, is the restoration of "comprehensive well-being" (Numberger 1990:206) or a four-fold restoration of peace, namely peace (1) within the individual *self*, (2) between the self and *others*, (3) between the self and the *natural world* and (3) between the self and *God* (Bethel Bible Series 1981:10-16). Salvation, as the backdrop conversion, is discussed under 2.1.
3. Idolatry, as understood here, is a reliance upon something or someone else "besides," or "in addition to," God; it belies an attitude that God is inadequate. Apostasy, often confused with idolatry, is distinguished from it in that apostasy is a turning away from God; it is giving allegiance to and reliance upon something or someone "instead" of God. Apostasy is a categorical rejection of everything associated with God, and it is often the ultimate consequence of idolatry.
4. Rom. 7:14-25; 10:8-15, 17 & 12:1-2.
5. I say "easiest" because proverbs, though many, are quite brief in content when compared with myths, legends, rituals, songs and poems. I am not saying they are the "easiest" in terms of analysis, interpretation, understanding and application.
6. I have listed the collections by date of publication instead of alphabetically in order to give some idea of the historical flow of Bemba proverbs collection and publication.
7. See appendix for an example of a page from the collection.
8. The code word "implication" is used for at least two reasons. First, we originally wanted to use T> as the designator for "teaching," but in order to avoid confusion, since T was already employed as the designator for "translation," we felt we needed another designator. Second, Sumbwa (1993) appears to already have wrestled with this problem, and indicates what he understands to be teachings, among other things, with the designation "implications/comment." Since we feel Sumbwa's designation and the comments to which it refers correspond sufficiently to our intention, we felt obliged to use his idea, yet abbreviated to suit our code system.
9. By "English" we mean both British and North American.
10. Because of the similarities between traditional Bemba proverbs and biblical proverbs, we initially gave preference to biblical proverbial wisdom. However, as the project proceeded, we found many other biblical teachings had significant relevance for the issues that emerged from the proverbs; therefore, we abandoned the exclusivity of proverbial wisdom and used anything biblical.
11. In the discussion of methodology, the term "we" denotes a group of about six researchers composed of myself as a missionary teacher and five Zambian theological college students. Though I am the one responsible for this study, the research and results are the result of our team's work. In this project, I see myself not as a teacher or a teller, but as a learner and listener, as a facilitator whose primary function is enquirer and compiler. The goal is for our students, and others through their work, to become local theologians (Schreiter 1985) who communicate the gospel relevantly among their own people.

12. We retain what is consistent with biblical teachings based on the premise that God has made himself known to all cultures through general revelation (Romans 1:20, 25; 2:11-16; Acts 14:17) and he has not allowed that witness to be completely obliterated (Krafl 1979:218). In other words, evidence of God's influence for wholeness and well-being is found in traditional proverbs apart from any Christian evangelistic effort.

13. When I originally set out to accomplish this fourth step in critically contextualising Bemba proverbs, I envisioned three responses instead of the present two. I thought there would be proverbs that would be good, bad and ugly, or retained, rejected and redeemed. But upon further reflection, especially when trying to understand the underlying reason for a proverb's existence, I came to believe that no proverb, or underlying value or motive it reveals, is beyond the touch of redemption. In other words, no matter how bad a proverb may appear on the surface, within the motive for its creation is a hurt or a need that cries out for healing and wholeness, or a restoration of comprehensive well-being.

14. A. L. Epstein's book, *Urbanization and kinship: The domestic domain on the Copperbelt of Zambia 1950-1956* (1981) is almost exclusively devoted to this subject.

15. During the proverbs collection phase, several theological college students as well as a few local pastors expressed piqued interest in gaining access to this dissertation so that they might use relevant portions of it in their own marital counseling situations.

16. In 1968, as nearly half the men worked in the mines and at other industrial sites (Richards 1968:165).

17. *Nacisungu* is the term used to describe a nubile bride who has experienced her first menstruation. Following this first menstrual cycle, she is initiated into womanhood through the *cisungu* (Richards 1982) ceremony where she is introduced to the complexities and responsibilities of marital life.

18. The consummation of the marriage, which takes place the evening before the wedding, is both anticipated with great hope and feared. While the bride is expected to be a virgin at the time of this event, the greater significance of the ceremony falls on the man. During sexual intercourse, his value as a man is judged according to two parameters. He must demonstrate his *power* by having intercourse with his bride several times (once or twice is not enough while five or six times is greatly respected), and he must demonstrate his *potentiality* by the kind of sperm he produces. One way his power is proven is by the number of eggs his bride feeds him during the night (one for each act of intercourse), and his potentiality is proven either by his bride smearing his sperm over her thighs or by wiping up the sperm on a dark cloth after each act of intercourse and showing the wedding matron (*Nacimbusa*) the abundance and stickiness of the sperm. Traditionally, the Bemba, as well as other matrilineal people, believe that frequency of intercourse is a sure sign of potency. If the man fails to have intercourse enough times, or if his sperm is adjudged as weak and inferior, the marriage will be halted after that one night (cf. Ngulube 1989:18-20).

19. While I have found no specific terminology used to identify the two parts of the proverb or the colon that separates them, Prof. Mubanga Kashoki, Professor of African Languages, at the Institute of African Studies in Lusaka, Zambia has offered "prompter" and "response." Whether the colon and the two parts signify a formal method of proverb transmission is uncertain at this time.

20. Instead of saying *White Fathers' Bemba-English Dictionary* under each proverb contributed from it, I have simply abbreviated it with the initials WFBED.

21. Gen. 3.

22. Gen. 3:21.

23. cf. Gal. 4:4-5.

24. cf. Heb. 11:4ff.

25. Heb. 9:11-15; 10:1-4, 11-14, 19-22.

26. Heb. 11:13-16.

27. Heb. 11:40.

28. 1 John 5:13, e. g.

29. Gal. 3:15-25.

30. cf. Ex. 19.

31. cf. Jn. 1:1-18 and Phil. 2:5-11.

32. cf. Gal. 4:4-5.

33. Gen. 12:1-3.

34. Gal. 4:4-5.

35. Gal. 4:4-5.

36. Eph. 2:8.

37. While some prefer the term "Third world," I prefer the term "Two-thirds world" because I choose to place the emphasis on the Two-thirds world's dominance in terms of population in favor of the First and Second worlds economic and technological dominance. While the First and Second worlds may presently hold global dominance in their hands due to economic superiority, in time, dominance may shift to the Two-thirds world due to sheer numerical superiority.

38. Rom. 1:16-18; 3:24-26; 8:1-3, 14-17; 10:10; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10; Gal. 4:4-7.

39. 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; 3:18; Acts 2:47; Rom. 8:29; 1 Jn. 3:2; Mk. 8:35; Phil. 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 2:2.

40. Rom. 8:18-25; 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Pet. 1:5, 9; 2 Pet. 3:13.

41. Incidentally, it is interesting that this tripartite configuration exhibits significant correspondence to that **four-fold harmony** (cf. 2.1.2 above) in which God created humanity, and which was damaged in the fall (Gen. 1-3). According to this portrayal of the creation and fall of humanity, an individual in harmony with itself, others, nature and God. The difference between the harmony model found in Genesis 1-2 and Redfield's tripartite worldview model is humanity in terms of selfhood. Nevertheless, this is a minor divergence since people as selves compose humanity as a whole. Perhaps the essential question to ask here is, "How does the four-fold harmony/disharmony creation/fall paradigm correspond to the worldview paradigm?" and "What are the implications of this correspondence, if there is indeed a correspondence?"

42. Consider the following for example: "Culture is a way of thinking, feeling, believing. It is the group's knowledge stored up for future use" (Kluckhohn in Hesselgrave 1991:100); "The more or less integrated system of ideas, feelings and values and their associated patterns of behavior and products shared by a group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel, and do" (Hiebert 1985:30); "Culture is a design for living. It is a plan according to which society adapts itself to its physical, social, and ideational environment. A plan for coping with the physical environment would include such matters as food production and all technological knowledge and skill. Political systems, kinship and family organization, and law are examples of social adaptation, a plan according to which one is to interact with his fellows. Man copes with his ideational environment through knowledge, art, magic, science, philosophy, and religion. Cultures are but different answers to essentially the same human problems" (Luzbetak in Hesselgrave 1991:100); "That complex whole which includes

knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor in Shorter 1988:4); “A system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which human beings communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about, and their attitudes toward, life” (Geertz in Shorter 1988:5); “A set of symbols, stories, myths and norms for conduct that orient a society or group cognitively, affectively and behaviorally to the world in which it lives” (Schineller in Shorter 1988:5); “Culture is...essentially a transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a pattern capable of development and change, and it belongs to the concept of humanness itself” (Shorter 1988:5).

43. Interestingly, in Hesselgrave’s presentation, worldview, though it is the most difficult structure to discern, is considered first because he believes that the Christian worldview is foundational to any discussion regarding communication of the gospel cross-culturally.

44. cf. Phil. 3:12-16.

45. Barra 1960:Forward; Hamutyinei and Plangger 1974:13; Katowa 1991:3; Kraft 1979:234-5; Schreiter 1985:77; Van Rheen 1991:33, to mention a few.

46. Niemeyer used Hoch’s 1968 collection noted in this study. While Hoch translated the proverbs interpretively, Niemeyer indicates he translated them literally (1982:270).

47. Mpashi 1963:1; Milimo 1970:22; Davoli 1990:209; Hoch 1968:6; Bupe.

48. Impatience regarding marriage is also found in the girls as the following proverb illustrates: *Abaume ni nyanje : tabapwa kubuta* (Hoch 1968:6; Niemeyer 1982:271; Davoli 1990:210; Bupe) translated literally says, “Men are maize; they never end,” and translated interpretively says, “Young men are like maize; there is no end to them.”

49. WFBED 1947:149; Mpashi 1963:56; Hoch 1968:92; Niemeyer 1982:319; Davoli 1990:340; Mukwavi.

50. Hoch 1968:21; Niemeyer 1982:279; Davoli 1990:230; Bupe.

51. Gal. 5:22.

52. 2 Cor. 6:14. Also compare *Ukulengula kwa mupini : kwenendebwa* (Mpashi 1963:66; Hoch 1968:107; Niemeyer 1982:328; Mukwavi) which literally translated says, “Exploring for an axe handle is going and looking,” and interpretively translated says, “Spotting an axe handle means going to look for it in the bush,” and means, “Before you marry a girl, you should first think it over and make a proper investigation.”

53. While fear of failing to be married disturbs both men and women, it can be particularly intense for the man as the following proverb suggests: *Umwanakashi male : tayeta mpombo* (Mpashi 1963:82; Hoch 1968:130; Niemeyer 1982:342; Mubanga; Zulu) literally translated says, “A woman is millet that does not call to the duiker,” and interpretively translated says, “Women are like millet that naturally attracts the duiker,” and means that as a duiker is naturally attracted to and hungrily approaches a field of millet, so too men are expected to approach women regarding marriage. Women are not supposed to initiate marriage proposal.

54. 1 Pet. 5:6.

55. Heb. 11:1, 6.

56. 1 Pet. 5:7.

57. Phil. 4:4-7.

58. cf. Mt. 19, Mk. 10 and 1 Cor. 7.
59. Ex. 20:14.
60. Phil. 2:1-11.
61. Eph. 5:1-2.
62. WFBED 1947:390; Mpashi 1963:4; Hoch 1968:9; Niemeyer 1982:273; Davoli 1990:214; Chitatu; Mubanga; Zulu.
63. Compare the rather recent yet nevertheless proverbial saying, "Big boast, big roast."
64. Compare the English proverbs, "Don't bite off more than you can chew," and "Your eyes are bigger than your stomach."
65. The young man's fear is not unwarranted as the following proverb indicates: *Nkobekela : tecupo* (Simbaya; Zulu) literally says, "Engagement is not marriage," and it means that because engagement is not marriage, it can be broken off at any time. While this proverb implies a high regard for the institution of marriage, it nevertheless has the potential for exacerbating a spirit of fear in the man who wants very much to please his intended in-laws.
66. Rom. 13:3.
67. Mpashi 1963:9; Davoli 1990:223; Mubanga.
68. One of my informants told me that if he were to go to the United States, for example, and were to meet a marriageable woman by the name of Nambaya (Na- indicates a female of the Mbaya), he could not marry her, since he is a Simbaya (Si- indicates a male of the Mbaya).
69. Mpashi 1963:6; Hoch 1968:13; Milimo 1970:22; Niemeyer 1982:274; Davoli 1990:218; Sumbwa 1993:2; Bupe; Chama.
70. Mpashi 1963:25; Hoch 1968:57; Davoli 1990: Mubanga; Chama.
71. Davoli 1990:344; Chama; Mukwavi.
72. The Lunda are a neighbouring tribe that traces its history and migration along with the Bemba from the Luba of Zaire.
73. Mulenga 1982:22; Davoli 1990:247; Mukwavi; Chama.
74. Hoch 1968:13; Niemeyer 1982:275; Bupe.
75. WFBED 1947:108; 1991:62; Hoch 1968:101; Niemeyer 1982:324; Davoli 1990:352; Mukwavi.
76. Mpashi 1963:60; Hoch 1968:98; Niemeyer 1982:323; Davoli 1990:348; Bupe; Mukwavi.
77. Mpashi 1963:17; Hoch 1968:32; Niemeyer 1982:285; Davoli 1990:247; Chama.
78. "Nshima," also called "bwali," is a thickened mush made from boiled maize-meal and is the staple food of the Bemba.
79. WFBED 1947:1355; Hoch 1968:66; Niemeyer 1982:304; Chama.

80. Mpashi 1963:24; Hoch 1968:56; Niemeyer 1982:299; Chama.
81. "Lobola" is a fairly generic term used throughout most of Zambia and denotes the "bride-price" or "bride-wealth" that is paid to the parents of the bride.
82. Gen. 1:28-30 & 1 Tim. 5:8.
83. Ps. 127:3-4.
86. Chitatu; Zulu; "**Icupo wasenda pa mutwe : umukowa, eo wasesha ku minwe**" in Davoli 1990:241 which literally translated says, "Marriage you carry on your head; the clan you carry with your fingers"; Chama; Mukwavi; Mubanga.
87. Compare **Icupo walemene ng'ana** (Chama; Mubanga; "Icupo walemene nkata" in Davoli 1990:241) which literally translated says, "Marriage you make a head-pad," and interpretively translated says, "For your marriage, you make a head-pad for carrying a load, but, for others, you do not make such provisions."
86. Davoli 1990:407; Chitatu; Chama; Zulu.
87. Compare the English proverb, "Blood is thicker than water," which has essentially the same meaning.
88. Chitatu; Zulu.
89. Davoli 1990:348; Chitatu; Zulu.
90. Compare the English proverb, "Familiarity breeds contempt."
91. WFBED 1947:78; Mpashi 1963:39; Niemeyer 1982:304; Davoli 1990:281; Chitatu; Zulu.
92. Compare **Ubuko bwakale : tabuloba** (Bupe) which literally says, "Former in-law relationships do not become extinct," and means when you marry into a particular family, you enter an everlasting relationship. This proverb is used to encourage a man or a woman who once married into a particular family to continue relating positively with that family, and it teaches that a family bond is created in marriage such that even death or divorce cannot break it.
93. WFBED 1947:108; Hoch 1968:101; Niemeyer 1982:324; Davoli 1990:352; Chama; Mukwavi.
94. Mpashi 1963:52; Hoch 1968:85; Niemeyer 1982:316; Davoli 1990:331; Chama; Mukwavi.
95. Hoch 1968:30; Niemeyer 1982:283; Davoli 1990:244; Chama.
96. WFBED 1947:1042; Hoch 1968:102; Niemeyer 1982:325; Davoli 1990:353; Chama; Mukwavi.
97. "Ubwali" is a food traditionally eaten by the Bemba which is the result of boiling ground finger-millet. While it is not exactly the same, it is nevertheless similar to "nshima" eaten by most Zambians which is a thick porridge made from boiled maize-meal.
98. Hoch 1968:120; Chama.
99. The term "relish" here refers to whatever is served along with the boiled maize-meal, or finger-millet meal porridge and is usually eaten simultaneously with the meal. Relish can be meat, vegetables, fish, insects or anything else one chooses to eat.

100. Mulenga 1982:44; Davoli 1990:270; Chama.
101. Compare the English proverb, "Variety is the spice of life," which can also be used to excuse extra-marital affairs. Compare also *Ubwali bumo : bulonsha* which says, "Only one food makes you thin," *Umunani umo : ube cifukushi* which says, "One relish all the time is disgusting," and *Icukufwalucimo : cilatendusha* which says, "Only one dress causes disgust."
104. Mpashi 1963:59; Hoch 1968:96; Niemeyer 1982:321; Davoli 1990:346; Bupe; Mukwavi.
103. Mpashi 1963:81; Hoch 1968:130; Niemeyer 1982:342; Davoli 1990:386; Zulu.
104. Compare *Ing'andu ushilala : baikumbwo mutenge* (Mpashi 1963:24; Hoch 1968:56; Niemeyer 1982:299; Chama) which interpretively says, "The roof of the house in which you do not sleep is desirable," and essentially agrees with the English proverb, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." However, "Judging a book by its cover" usually reveals "All that glitters is not gold."
105. WFBED 1947:1049; Hoch 1968:48; Niemeyer 1982:294; Davoli 1990:265; Chabi; Chama; Mubanga.
106. Mulenga 1982:28; Davoli 1990:255; Chama.
107. Mpashi 1963:18; Hoch 1968:34; Niemeyer 1982:286; Davoli 1990:249; Sumbwa 1993:1; Chama. Compare *Icikumyangila : e cikulya* (Mulenga 1982:23; Davoli 1990:249; Chama) which says, "The one who kisses (or licks) you is the one who also eats you."
108. WFBED 1947:1123; Hoch 1968:24; Niemeyer 1982:280; Davoli 1990:235; Chabi; Chama.
109. Mulenga 1982:25; Chama.
110. Bupe; Chitatu; Zulu.
111. Mulenga 1982:27; Davoli 1990:253; Chama.
112. Mpashi 1963:22; Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:290; Davoli 1990:256; Chabi; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu.
113. Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:209; Davoli 1990:241; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu.
114. Compare *Icupo ca nomba : calowa ngo buci* (Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:290; Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu), which says, "Marriage in the beginning is sweet like honey," and means that while marriage in the beginning is new and exciting, when it becomes old, it may accumulate problems, infirmities and handicaps.
115. Davoli 1990:367; Chama; Zulu.
116. Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu.
117. Prov. 16:31; 20:29. You will notice that according to biblical proverbial wisdom, it is implicit that strength in one's youth is as normal, natural and admirable as gray hair is in old age.
118. You will recall that the collection in its present form contains 2,686 proverbs which will undoubtedly shrink to about 2,200 after all the editing is finished.
119. Davoli 1992:20

APPENDIX A

BEMBA PROVERBS ON MARRIAGE

1. *Abana ba kusanga (kusangilishanya) mu ng'anda : tabapwa mukamfu*

(WFBED 1947:1186; Hoch 1968:5; Niemeyer 1982:270; Davoli 1990:209; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "Children found in [the] house; [they do] not complete (have not reached) perfection."
TI> "If you marry a widow with children, treat those children well, even if they are not perfect."
M> Step-children are difficult to train. Also, because step-children are not always perfect, one needs to be prepared to accept them.
U> This proverb is used to express dissatisfaction over the behaviour or performance of step children.
I> This proverb teaches that it is both the parents' and the children's responsibility to change and improve despite the circumstances.
S> HOME, CHILDREN, WIDOWS, MARRIAGE, POLYANDRY.

2. *Abaanakashi ba kupa : nokusunako*

(Davoli 1990:209; Chama)

- TL> "Women you give; and leave[a] part."
TI> "Do not trust your wife."
M> Women cannot be fully trusted.
U> This proverb is used to warn men against entrusting too much to women.
I> This proverb teaches that men are superior to women
B> Cf. Hosea's wife.
E> "Never trust a woman."
S> TRUST, WIFE, MALE SUPERIORITY

3. *Abaanakashi : maafu ya mpombo*

(Mpashi 1963:1; Hoch 1968:6; Milimo 1970:22; Niemeyer 1982:270; Davoli 1990:209; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "Women [are] droppings of duikers."
TI> "Women are like a duiker's droppings."
M> This proverb is used in two opposite ways. First, because women are as plentiful as duikers' dung, a misbehaving wife can be replaced. Second, because women are as plentiful as stars in the sky, sand on the seashore, or leaves on the trees, a young man over-eager to get married should have patience.
U> This proverb is applied to young men who exhibit over eagerness to get married, or is used by a disgruntled husband to intimidate his wife or to justify his seeking another wife, or an affair because he is displeased with his wife's attitude or performance.
I> This proverb teaches that men are superior to women.

E> "There are many fish in the sea."

S> DIVORCE, MARITAL RESPECT, MARITAL OVER-EAGERNESS, WOMEN, MALE SUPERJORITY, DUIKER, FAECES

4. *Abaanakashi mukungo : wakwa shetani*

(Davoli 1990:230; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "Women; bundle of Satan."

TI> "Women are Satan's bundle."

M> Women cannot be trusted.

U> This proverb is used to warn men that women cannot be trusted in all things.

I> This proverb teaches that men should be careful in selecting a wife and should also be on their guard when it comes to trusting women.

B> Is this proverb implying that women are somehow used by Satan, or that they cannot be trusted because Satan is in charge of them?

S> WOMEN, SATAN, TRUST, BUNDLE

5. *Abaume ni nyanje : tashipwa (tabapwa) kubuta*

(Hoch 1968:6; Niemeyer 1982:271; Davoli 1990:210; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "Men [are] maize; [they do] not finish (complete or end) white (become white as in old or dead)."

TI> "Men are like maize; there is no end to them."

M> Because men will always be available, women should not feel compelled to rush to find one.

U> This proverb is applied to a girl who is over-eager to get married.

I> This proverb teaches girls to be patient in awaiting marriage

S> PATIENCE, MAIZE, MATE SELECTION, MEN

6. *Abikila amani : mu cisansala ca bene*

(Davoli 1990:211; Chama)

TL> "She lays eggs; in nest for others."

TI> "She lays eggs in someone's nest."

M> A woman is giving birth to another man's children.

U> This proverb is used as advice to avoid sexual misconduct.

I> This proverb encourages men to stay with only one wife.

S> EGGS, NEST, MARITAL FAITHFULNESS, ADULTERY

7. *Akabwe ka mushi : kaposa uuli ne nkashi*

(WFBED 1947:371; Mpashi 1963:2; Hoch 1968:7; Niemeyer 1982:272; Davoli 1990:212; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "[A] small stone of [the] village; [he] throws [it] who has [also a] sister."

TI> "A small stone in the village can only be thrown by him who has a sister (to give as payment for any damages caused)."

M> If one is up to mischief and is looking to cause trouble, he must be ready to make restitution for any damages caused (Formerly, when one was gouging out the eye of somebody, he had

to give his sister as a slave.)

- U> This proverb is used to settle a case in a local court that involves a situation in which one person has caused loss or injury to another.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of responsibility for one's actions and discourages mischief.
- S> MISCHIEF, RESTITUTION, SMALL STONE, SISTER, RESPONSIBILITY, VILLAGE

8. *Akabwelelo : kalalya*

(Mpashi 1963:2; Hoch 1968:8; Niemeyer 1982:272; Davoli 1990:212; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "The little [thing] returning; eats."
- TI> "Returning to a former abode does not bring good luck."
- M> A rearranged marriage does not bring the satisfaction one might suppose.
- U> This proverb is used as advice to a man who is thinking about returning to a wife he formerly divorced, without first considering the consequences of the return.
- I> This proverb teaches that it is best to avoid reconciliation with a former marriage partner.
- S> FAITHFULNESS, COMMITMENT, RECONCILIATION

9. *Akafupa utemenwe : e kakusha imicene*

(WFBED 1947:376; Mpashi 1963:3; Hoch 1968:8; Niemeyer 1982:272; Davoli 1990:213; Sumbwa 1993:12; Bupe)

- TL> "The small bone you love; [it] leaves tooth-space."
- TI> "A small bone you like to gnaw on could leave you toothless, or could widen the gap in your teeth."
- M> Excessive indulgence of something can turn out to be harmful; certain kinds of pleasure risk being followed by pain. Eventually an adulterer will be discovered and punished.
- U> This proverb is used to discourage over-indulgent people and warns an adulterer that if he persists in taking liberties with another man's wife, he will eventually get caught and suffer the consequences.
- I> This proverb teaches moderation in acceptable behaviour, and discourages unacceptable behaviour. It implicitly teaches that unlawful and inmoral behaviour, though temporarily pleasurable, will eventually turn bitter.
- E> "Every rose has a thorn."
"Every pleasure has its pain."
- B> "Do not look on the wine when it sparkles, for in the end it stings like a viper" (Prov. 23:31f).
"Bread eaten in secret is sweet, but...." (Prov. 9:17).
Compare "All discipline is for the moment not pleasurable, but in the end it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11).
- S> GLUTTONY, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, ADDICTION, ADULTERY, JUSTICE, BONE, TOOTH

10. *Akaliimo ushishi : takatwalwa ku buko*

(WFBED 1947:390; Mpashi 1963:4; Hoch 1968:9; Niemeyer 1982:273; Davoli 1990:214; Chama; Chitatu; Mubanga; Zulu)

- TL> "[The] little work you [do] not know; [it is] not taken to [the] in-laws."
"The little work you do not understand is not taken to the in-laws."

- TI> The small work you ignore, or do not understand well, should not be offered to your mother-in-law.
- M> One should not boast of pretentious achievements, or even genuine achievements, since that boasting might eventually bring trouble. Do not try to do something you cannot accomplish just to impress your in-laws.
- U> This proverb is used to silence those who boast about what they cannot do in order to impress the listeners. Also, it is used when a young man goes to help his wife's parents to do some work.
- I> This proverb teaches that our boasting should remain within the parameters of our achievements. Also, it teaches that when you are given a job to do by your in-laws that you have no experience in, it is better to politely say so than to attempt to do it and fail. This may cause you embarrassment. The proverb arises from the Bemba tradition which requires a man to go and work for his in-laws as part of the marriage bride-wealth.
- E> "Big boast; big roast."
 "Don't bite off more than you can chew."
 "Don't put more on your plate than you can eat."
 "Your eyes are bigger than your belly."
- B> "Pride goes before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).
- S> BOASTING, LYING, TRICKERY, IN-LAWS, WORK, PRIDE, BRIDE-WEALTH

11. Akasabi ukulya akabiye : e kunona

(Mpashi 1963:6; Hoch 1968:13; Milimo 1970:22; Niemeyer 1982:274; Davoli 1990:218; "Akasabi ukulya akasabi kabiye, e kunona" in Sumbwa 1993:2; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[A] small fish to eat a friend; [it is] fatness."
- TI> "It goes well for a fish to eat another fish."
 "For a small fish to get fat, it must feed on another."
- M> It is better to marry from among one's own family (from among cross-cousins) to assure success and strengthen family ties.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage polygamy.
- I> This proverb teaches that it is acceptable to marry a sister-in-law.
- S> FAMILY, FISH, FATNESS, INCEST

12. Akashama kali kamo : twasanguka twaba tubili

(WFBED 1947:437; Hoch 1968:13; Niemeyer 1982:275; Davoli 1990:277; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[The] little groundnut was one; [it] becomes two."
- TI> "The groundnut was single (when planted); now it has become two."
- M> The hope of married life is numerous children.
- U> This proverb is used to explain to a newly married couple that the natural consequences of marriage is bearing children.
- I> This proverb teaches that having many children is very important.
- A> Compare "Ubumi bwa lubalala : ni pa fipandwa fibili" (Mulenga 1982:79; Davoli 1990:349), which translates as "The life of the groundnut is between the two halves."
- B> "Happy is the man whose quiver is full of children" (Ps. 127:5).
- S> CHILDREN, GROUNDNUT

13. Akashishi kaingile mpundu : shicili ubuluba

("Ni kashishi..." in WFBED 1947:86; Hoch 1968:14; Niemeyer 1982:275; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "[The] little worm entered 'mpundu'; when [it was only in] flower."

TI> "The small insect enters the 'mpundu' fruit when it is still in flower."

M> The married couple began their troubles when they were on their honeymoon.

U> This proverb is used to trace the source of problems, and is used as a complaint about evil attitudes later in marriage that exhibited their symptoms early on.

I> This proverb teaches that a good beginning is a key to a successful marriage.

S> MARRIAGE TROUBLES, INSECT, FRUIT, FLOWER, WORM, MPUNDU FRUIT

14. Akatanshi kulolwa : bwato, no muntumo

(Mpashi 1963:7; Hoch 1968:14; Niemeyer 1982:275; Davoli 1990:219; Mubanga; Chama)

TL> "[The] first little thing you see; [it is the] canoe, and [then the] person [in it]."

TI> "The first thing to be seen is the boat; the man in the boat is seen later."

M> A husband sees first his wife and only sees the children she bears him later. Also, one should not despise anything because it may prove to be useful later on. Or, one's heart's desire is uppermost in one's mind.

U> This proverb is used generally as a reminder to keep priorities straight, and may be applied particularly to husbands or wives who may inadvertently be giving greater priority to people or relationships that should have less priority. For example, traditionally, a husband should give priority to his wife over the children and the same holds true for the wife.

I> This proverb teaches the value of proper priorities and encourages people to respect each person within the priority or relationship structure.

E> "First things first."

S> WIFE, PRIORITIES, BOAT, MAN, CANOE

15. Akoni : kekala umuti katemenwe

(WFBED 1947:472; Mpashi 1963:7; Hoch 1968:16; Niemeyer 1982:276; Davoli 1990:220; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "[The] small bird; [it] sits [in the] tree [it] loves."

TI> "The small bird perches on whichever tree it likes."

M> Freedom is common to all. Also, everyone has the right to have his own home. Or, one should not be forced to marry someone he does not like.

U> This proverb is used by a person who is defending his right to make his own choice in a marriage partner.

I> This proverb teaches that it is acceptable for a man to choose his own mate, even though traditionally the family has a significant part to play in the choice. Usually the final approval is up to the family.

S> FREEDOM, HOME, MARRIAGE PARTNER, CHOICE, SMALL BIRD, TREE

16. Akoni takesha mulemba : ninshi kaya

(WFBED 1947:821; Mpashi 1963:8; Hoch 1968:16; Niemeyer 1982:276; Davoli 1990:221; Mubanga; Chama)

- TL> "[The] little bird does not try its wing; it [merely] goes."
 "[The] small bird reduces [its] flight; then [it is] gone."
 TI> "A bird does not fail in flight; when it tries, it flies."
 M> If a person frequently goes to another village, he will eventually remain there. If a man gives too much attention to a woman who is not his wife, he risks being tempted to adultery or polygamy.
 U> This proverb is used to warn young men against too much familiarity with women.
 I> This proverb teaches that one must keep a distance from members of the opposite sex unless marriage to that one is certain.
 S> TEMPTATION, POLYGAMY, HABITUATION, PARENTAL INSTRUCTIONS, MORALITY, BIRD, FLIGHT

17. Ako usuulile : e kopile noko

(Davoli 1990:221; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[The] despised [man]; [he] marries your mother."
 TI> "The person you underrate may marry your mother."
 M> The man who becomes your father may be the one you least likely expected.
 U> This proverb is used to discourage discrimination.
 I> This proverb teaches the value of a person despite one's status in society.
 B> "Do not judge, lest you be judged. You will be judged by the same standard" (Mt. 7:1).
 S> JUDGMENT, DISCRIMINATION, MARRIAGE, PARENTS, STEP-FATHER

18. Amaafi yapipa : muka cinani

(Mpashi 1963:8; Hoch 1968:16; Niemeyer 1982:276; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] excrement [is] removed; by wife relish."
 "Wiping a child of excrement is the vexation of a spouse."
 TI> "The one who cleans up the mess is Cinani's wife."
 "One does not clean a soiled place for his pleasure."
 M> A man may abandon a nice woman if he is forced by necessity. Also, If you know that you are the only one to clean up the mess, then do it because there will not be another to do it for you.
 U> This proverb is used in situations where the only competent person is running away from responsibility.
 I> This proverb teaches the value of responsibility and taking initiative.
 S> NECESSITY, UNFAITHFULNESS, HUMILITY, LEADERSHIP, FAECES

19. Amaka ya bukota : tayapela apatali

(Hoch 1968:16; Niemeyer 1982:276; Davoli 1990:222; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[The] power of feminine; [does] not end far."
 "[The] strength of old age; [it does] not go far."
 TI> "Women are not strong."
 M> Women are the weaker sex and cannot do much.
 U> This proverb is used to protect women from doing rigorous tasks.
 I> This proverb teaches that women are, in certain areas, weaker than men.

- B> "The weaker vessel..." (1 Peter 3:7).
 S> WOMEN, STRENGTH, PROTECTION, CONSIDERATION

20. *Amaka ya buweka : tayapela apatali*

(Hoch 1968:17; Niemeyer 1982:277; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[The] power of alone; [does] not end far."
 "[The] strength of loneliness; [it does] not go far."
 TI> "One single man's strength does not go far."
 M> One man should not try to do what it should take several to accomplish.
 U> This proverb is used to discourage individualistic tendencies.
 I> This proverb teaches the value of cooperation and inter-dependence.
 S> MEN, STRENGTH, COOPERATION, INTER-DEPENDENCE

21. *Amaluba : yengi muno calo*

(Davoli 1990:222; Chama)

- TL> "Flowers; [there are] plenty in [this] world."
 TI> "There are many flowers in the world."
 M> There are many women in the world.
 U> This proverb is used to encourage young men to take care in choosing wives.
 I> This proverb teaches that, because there are many women from which to choose a wife, young men should be patient in making a final decision.
 A> Compare "Abaanakashi : Maafi yampombo" which translates as, "Women are as plentiful as ducks' dung."
 S> FLOWERS, WORLD, MATE-SELECTION, PATIENCE

22. *Amaso ya nkashi : tayafumya mutima*

(Mpashi 1963:9; Davoli 1990:223; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] pubic hair of your sister; [it] cannot make your heart flutter."
 TI> "The pubic hair of your sister cannot arouse you."
 M> Do not desire your sister, because you cannot marry her. Also, a man should not be suspicious of his wife when she is with her brothers.
 U> This proverb is used when brothers are being over-protective of their sisters who have reached marriageable age.
 S> PUBIC HAIR, SISTER, HEART, FAMILY, PROTECTION, INCEST

23. *Amenso ya caalo : yaba na mumfifi*

(Mulenga 1982:10; Davoli 1990:224; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] eyes of world; [they are] even in darkness."
 TI> "The eyes of the world are found even in the darkness."
 M> Do not take advantage of your friend's absence in order to run around with his wife, because "his spirit has remained to see whatever is done in his absence." Also, it is difficult to hide adulterous activity.
 U> This proverb is used to discourage someone from getting too close to someone's wife or

husband thereby risking adultery.

- I> This proverb teaches all people to avoid the temptation to adultery, because it will eventually be discovered.
- A> Compare "Amenso ya mukundilwa : yengi" (Mpashi 1963:10; Davoli 1990:245; Mubanga) which translates literally as "[The] eyes of one whose partner is fornicated; many," and means that because the eyes of witnesses to adultery are many, those who commit fornication or adultery will eventually be caught.
- B> "The eyes of the Lord are everywhere" (Prov. 15:3).
"Your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23)
"Everything is laid bare" (Heb. 4:13).
"You reap what you sow" (Gal. 6:7).
- S> ADULTERY, DISCOVERY, EYES, WORLD, DARKNESS

24. *Apaikomaile nondo : pali ubulema (ubuluba)*

(WFBED 1947:84; Mpashi 1963:10; Hoch 1968:19; Niemeyer 1982:278; "Apacemaile...." in Davoli 1990:225; Chama)

- TL> "Where [the] hammer repeats; there [is] handicap."
- TI> "Where the hammer beats repeatedly, there is a flaw (mistake)."
- M> When you recurrently hear the same criticism, it is probably because you have a problem in that area. A metal-worker, for example, does not pound the metal where it is already shaped; rather, it is beaten where the refinement needs to be done. Often a person is not angry without cause.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage a person to see and admit their faults.
- I> This proverb teaches that one should pay attention to advice repeatedly given.
- E> "Little strokes fell great oaks."
"Where there is smoke, there is fire."
- S> SUSPICION, HAMMER, FLAW, CHARACTER FLAW, ADVICE, JUSTIFIED ANGER.

25. *Banamune : tabasha mpanga*

(Hoch 1968:21; Niemeyer 1982:279; Davoli 1990:230; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "Mothers of mine; [they] do not leave [the] area."
"Marriageable young women do not leave [the] forest."
- TI> "Marriageable young women are found everywhere."
- U> This proverb is said to young men who over eagerly seek marriage.
- I> This proverb teaches that young men should be patient in mate-selection, because there are an abundance of women from which to choose.
- A> Compare "Abaanakashi maafi ya mpombo," which means, "Women are as plentiful as duiker's droppings."
- S> IMPATIENCE, MATE-SELECTION, WOMEN, FOREST, MOTHER

26. *Bemba : ali uo ufwilemo*

(Mpashi 1963:11; Hoch 1968:22; Niemeyer 1982:279; Davoli 1990:231; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "[The] lake; [it is] where you die."
- TI> "The lake swallows what dies in it."

"You should only drown in the sea."

- M> Despising what you have in favour of what you wish you had may cost you what you already have.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage contentment.
- I> This proverb teaches one to live within one's available means.
- E> "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
- B> The Parable of the Talents (Mt. 25:14-30).
- S> CONTENTMENT, COVETOUSNESS, MARITAL FAITHFULNESS, LUST, LAKE, DEATH

27. *Bepo mwanakashi : umwaume mubiyo, mwenda nankwe*

(WFBED 1947:51; Hoch 1968:22; Niemeyer 1982:280; Davoli 1990:231; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Cheat woman; man friend walks with you."
"Lie to a woman; your male companion, [you] travel with him."
- TI> "You can lie to a woman, but not to your traveling companion."
- M> You should not attempt to deceive a friend on whom you depend.
- U> This proverb is used to discourage people from starting fights they cannot win and encourages trust in a faithful friend.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of trust and faithfulness in friendships. While its main intention is not to approve lying to a woman, it implicitly suggests it.
- B> Does this proverb expose an undercurrent prevalent among Bemba men, namely freedom to lie to women?
- S> DECEIT, FRIENDSHIP, INTERDEPENDENCE, WOMEN, LIE, TRAVELING COMPANION, WALK

28. *Bunukule bucili ntutu : nga bwasaapuka tawakabunukule*

(Mulenga 1982:13; Davoli 1990:233; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Pick it up [while it is] still small; if [it] grows, you will not pick [it]."
- TI> "Pluck the mushroom while it is still bowl-shaped before somebody else sees it."
- M> When you notice your future son-in-law's unbecoming behaviour, you should break the engagement.
- U> This proverb is used to insure good marriages.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of parental responsibility over their children's marriages.
- E> "Better safe than sorry."
- S> PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, ENGAGEMENT, MUSHROOM, GROW, PICK

29. *Caikata Lumbwe : na mala mu mukoshi*

(Davoli 1990:234; 1992:167; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "It catches [the] bride-groom; with intestine in necklace."
- TI> "They caught their son-in-law with a gut necklace."
- M> The son-in-law was caught in a foolish act.
- U> This proverb is used to describe someone who is foolish enough to pay the penalty for some one else's crime.
- I> This proverb teaches that one should be circumspect about his associations; he should be

careful that he is not found in a situation where he may be blamed for someone else's misconduct.

S> SON-IN-LAW, GUT, NECKLACE, FOOLISHNESS

30. *Capoota : ashile ng'anda*

(WFBED 1947:1123; Hoch 1968:24; Niemeyer 1982:280; Davoli 1990:235; Chama)

TL> "'Chapoota'; leaves [the] house."

TI> "'Mr.It-hurts' left the house (or his wife, and went away)."

M> The rule of the mother-in-law is greater than the fellow's ability to endure. Also, because the man found great difficulties with his wife, he divorced her.

U> This proverb is used by a disgruntled husband as a justification for abandoning troublesome in-laws or wife.

I> This proverb teaches that there is a limit to what a person can endure at the hands of the family he marries into.

A> Compare "Cayansha ashile ng'anda" (WFBED 1947:25; Mpashi 1963:12; Hoch 1968:24; Niemeyer 1982:280), which translates as, "Mr. Cayansha (or 'that beats me,' or 'it is difficult') left his house to find fortune elsewhere."

S> DIVORCE, MOTHER-IN-LAW, ABANDONMENT, HOME

31. *Cinshe nafwa : no bukungilo*

(WFBED 1947:200; Hoch 1968:26; Niemeyer 1982:281; Davoli 1990:239; Chama)

TL> "'Chinshe' has died; with bait."

"The rat living in [the] anthill; [he] died on the bait."

TI> "The 'cinshe' rat was allured by the bait."

M> That to which you are tempted, may take your life.

U> This proverb can be applied to men who risk being allured into adultery or fornication through too familiar or careless contact. It is used as a warning against being allured by enticements because they can be fatal.

I> This proverb teaches that one should be aware that misconduct has consequences, and some of the consequences can have devastating results.

B> Prov. 1:8-22.

"You reap what you sow"(Gal. 6:7)

"You sow the wind, and you reap the whirlwind" (Hos. 8:7).

S> TEMPTATION, RAT, BAIT, DEATH

32. *Ciya tatwala : bunda bwa maluba!*

(Mpashi 1963:14; Hoch 1968:27; Niemeyer 1982:282; Davoli 1990:240; Chama)

TL> "[The] 'Chiya' [tree does] not bear [fruit]; [it only] flowers!"

TI> "The 'ciya' tree does not bear fruit; it is just a bunch of flowers!"

M> One should never judge by appearances.

U> This proverb is applied to a woman who is nice but barren.

I> This proverb teaches that outward beauty can be deceptive, and even more so if no children are born to a beautiful woman.

E> "Don't judge a book by its cover."

S> APPEARANCES, BARRENNESS, TREE, FRUIT, FLOWERS, JUDGMENT

33. *Fwaka : e mucila wa bucende*

(Davoli 1990:243; Bupe; Chama)

TL> "Tobacco; [it is a] tail for adultery."

TI> "Tobacco is the tail of adultery."

M> Some habits are a means to certain ends committed.

U> This proverb is used in reference to either a good or bad habit, but one which is used as a bridge to other evil acts. In other words, some acts are smoke-screens for others.

I> This proverb teaches that certain behaviours are symptoms of covert immoral acts.

S> TOBACCO, ADULTERY, TAIL, SMOKE-SCREEN

34. *Fyonse kweshabesha : mukashi wandi, njipikile sembe, ndye*

(Hoch 1968:28; Niemeyer 1982:283; Chama)

TL> "All 'Try, Try'; my wife, cook axe, I eat."

TI> "Everything can be tried; 'My wife, cook an axe, so that I may eat it.'"

M> You should not be afraid of trying out everything you can think of.

U> This proverb is used to encourage a wife to experiment in her cooking by setting before her husband new and unexpected relishes. It is also used to encourage childless marriages to seek treatment no matter how worthless it may seem to be.

I> This proverb teaches the value of determination and experimentation.

S> IMAGINATION, EXPERIMENTATION, INGENUITY, WIFE COOK, AXE, EAT

35. *Icakufwala cimo : cilatendusha*

(Hoch 1968:30; Niemeyer 1982:283; Davoli 1990:244; Chama)

TL> "[A] dress one; [it] causes disgust."

"One thing worn; [it is] tiresome."

TI> "One dress causes disgust."

M> Change is needed in everything.

U> While this proverb can be used to encourage change in a wide variety of ways, it has often be used to advise a man to get a second wife.

I> This proverb teaches that monotony is to be avoided.

S> MONOTONY, CHANGE, POLYGAMY, ADULTERY, DRESS

36. *Icakutinta cilaputuka : tulekele abene*

(Mulenga 1982:18; Davoli 1990:245; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "[That] which [is] pulled breaks; leave [it] to [the] owner."

TI> "What you pull in a tussle, will easily snap."

M> Do not force relationships or fight for children when separated. Whoever gets the children should be allowed to look after them, since they are equally yours.

U> This proverb is used to prevent separated or divorced parents from fighting over custody of their children. Also, it discourages forcing yourself upon another for the sake of friendship.

I> This proverb teaches the value of being sensitive of the feelings of others and regarding them as higher than yourself.

S> HUMILITY, FRIENDSHIP, DIVORCE, CHILDREN, PEACE-MAKING, TUSSELE, BREAK, PULL

37. *Icatwala ensa : na yambala cikamutwala*

(Mpashi 1963:15; Hoch 1968:31; Niemeyer 1982:284; Davoli 1990:246; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "What takes 'ensa' away; also 'yambala' [it will] take away."
TI> "What drives away the 'yensa' (locust) will also drive away 'yambala' (locust)"
"What takes an edible grasshopper where it belongs will also take the inedible one to the same place."
M> History repeats itself. Also, misfortune that befalls your neighbour, may also befall you. Also, people who divorce and remarry usually divorce again.
U> This proverb is used to discourage women from running away from their husbands.
I> This proverb teaches the value of perseverance and forbearance in marriage.
B> "God hates divorce" (Mal. 2:16).
S> REPETITIVE HISTORY; MISFORTUNE, DIVORCE, PERSEVERANCE, GRASSHOPPER

38. *Icifu ca ngulube : citemwa mwine (cilya uutemenwe)*

(Hoch 1968:31; Niemeyer 1982:284; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "[The] stomach of [the] wild-pig; [it is] loved by [its] owner."
TI> "He who likes, eats the stomach of the wild pig."
M> There is no accounting for taste. Also, regarding preference, you should not force people; you should allow freedom. Also, you should not destroy things you do not prefer; others may want them.
U> This proverb is used to encourage people when choosing a marriage partner not to be discouraged by the opinions of others.
I> This proverb teaches the value of the freedom of choice.
E> "One man's trash (garbage) is another man's treasure (glory)."
B> "Love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).
S> PREFERENCES, CHOICE, FREEDOM, PEER PRESSURE, MATE-SELECTION, PIG, STOMACH

39. *Icifu ca ngulube : kutupane ne ng'umba*

(Hoch 1968:32; Niemeyer 1982:284; Chama)

- TL> "[The] stomach of bush-pig; lets marry also barren."
TI> "Let those who love one another marry despite handicaps."
"Marrying a barren woman is like enjoying eating the stomach of a pig."
M> If a man so desires, he may even marry a barren woman. Where there is love, many handicaps can be overlooked.
U> This proverb is used to encourage a childless married couple.
I> This proverb teaches that, though having children is very important, love is equally important and is of sufficient reason in itself to marry.
S> LOVE, CHOICE, MARRIAGE, PERSONAL PREFERENCE, PIG, STOMACH, BARRENNESS

40. *Icifulo cisuma : cilakola*

(Hoch 1968:32; Niemeyer 1982:285; Chama)

TL> "[A] Place good; intoxicates."

TI> "A nice home makes one drunk."

M> A nice home or job can be so captivating that one behaves stupidly and loses them.

U> This proverb is used to warn a person against taking his home, family or marriage for granted; otherwise, he may lose them through presumption and over-confidence.

I> This proverb teaches that one should cherish the home and family and be watchful and alert.

S> DRUNKENNESS, HOME, FAMILY, PRESUMPTION, OVER-CONFIDENCE

41. *Icifupa waminine ubupangalume : na pa kuciluka, ubupangalume*

(Mpashi 1963:16; Hoch 1968:32; Niemeyer 1982:285; Davoli 1990:247; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "The bone [you] swallowed with great energy; even when vomiting, strongly."

TI> "You showed great effort by swallowing a big bone; now do the same by vomiting it."

M> Since you showed great effort when you acted foolishly, you should match that effort in suffering for your foolishness. Also, when you suffer the consequence of immoral behaviour (pregnancy or disease, for example), you should bear the pain of birth or swallow the prescribed bitter medicine.

U> This proverb is used to discourage immoral behaviour and is used to encourage people to take responsibility for their rebellious behaviour.

I> This proverb teaches the value of humility, remorse and responsibility.

S> SUFFERING, FOOLISHNESS, HUMILITY, RESPONSIBILITY, ADULTERY, FORNICATION, BONE, VOMIT

42. *Icifwaikwa mwifungu : lisembe*

(Mulenga 1982:22; Davoli 1990:247; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "What you look for under the bed, axe."

"[That] which [is] sought under [the] bed; axe."

TI> "What you look for under the bed in time of attack is an axe."

M> The purpose of marriage is bearing children.

U> This proverb is used to encourage people to multiply families through bearing many children.

I> This proverb teaches the value of child-bearing in marriage.

B> This proverb falls short of the primary purpose of marriage as God intended it. "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and will be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). This verse does not say they will automatically bear children. Therefore, the primary purpose is a "one flesh" relationship. However, Genesis also commands humanity to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (1:28). However, since humanity is to have authority over the whole earth (1:26), they are implicitly to so govern their lives as to be in balance with the resources available. The purpose of marriage is for two people to come together to share their lives and not necessarily to have children (Gen. 2:24). However, children should be looked at as a blessing from God, but this blessedness must be kept in balance with one's resources (1 Tim. 5:8).

S> CHILDREN, BED, AXE

43. *Icikalilwa pa nsaka : musumba wa bwali*

(Mpashi 1963:17; Hoch 1968:32; Niemeyer 1982:285; Davoli 1990:247; Chama)

TL> "[That] which [is] waited [for] at [the] rest hut; lump of 'nshima.'"

TI> "The hope for food is what persuades a person to stay on in a rest hut."

M> Hope is the poor man's bread. He who only hopes for food will die from hunger. Also, if you spend a lot of time involved in accomplishing a task, you know it is worthwhile. Also, the hope of having children keeps a married couple together.

U> This proverb is used to encourage a couple to stop wasting time and get on with having children. It is also often used to excuse divorce on the ground of childlessness.

I> This proverb teaches that having children is a natural expectation on the part of a married couple's family.

S> HOPE, HUNGER, FUTILITY, WORK, FOOD, NSAKA, INFERTILITY, DIVORCE, CHILDREN, MARITAL SECURITY

44. *Icikula, butala : ng'anda, taikula*

(WFBED 1947:492; Hoch 1968:34; Niemeyer 1982:286; Davoli 1990:248; Chama)

TL> "[That] which [is] big, grain-bin; house, not big."

TI> "The grain bin, that is what is important; the hut, it is not so important."

M> Even though a person has many children, he will be no better off if he has an empty grain bin.

U> This proverb is used to advise a man with a family to be self-sufficient, to produce enough food for the needs of his family.

I> This proverb teaches the value of self-sufficiency and discourages laziness.

B> "If he does not work, let him also not eat" (2 Thess. 4:10).

S> CHILDREN, PROVISIONS, GRAIN BIN, HOME, SELF-SUFFICIENCY, STEWARDSHIP OF FAMILY AND RESOURCES

45. *Icikumyangila : e cikulya*

(Mulenga 1982:23; Davoli 1990:249; Chama)

TL> "What kisses you; [it] eats you."

TI> "The one who kisses you can also eat you."

M> Your best friend can be your worst enemy.

U> This proverb is used as a warning advising a married person to be careful with their best friends, because they can cause the marriage to be destroyed. This proverb is also used to advise those in authority to be discreet with the information they share with those closest to them; they may find later that this so-called friend used the information to destroy them.

I> This proverb teaches that one should be cautious and guarded with certain people who are close relations, because their motives might be selfish and usurious.

A> Compare "Icilekumyanga : kukumina cilefwaya," which translates as, "What licks you often wants to swallow you," and "Icukupempula : e cikulya," which translates as "What visits you is what eats you," and both mean one should beware of fair-weather friends who are seeking to survive on your generosity.

S> KISS, EATING, FRIENDSHIP, MARRIAGE BREAK-UP, BETRAYAL, VISIT, LICK

46. *Icikupempula : e cikulya*

(Mpashi 1963:18; Hoch 1968:34; Niemeyer 1982:286; Davoli 1990:249; Sumbwa 1993:1; Chama)

TL> "What visits you; [it] eats you."

TI> "What visits you, is what eats you."

M> One's best friend may turn out to be one's worst enemy; they may take advantage of you. Also, the frequent visitor survives at the host's expense. Also, a false friend is material liability.

U> This proverb is generally used to advise caution with certain associations. People in leadership, management and marriage are especially vulnerable.

I> This proverb teaches the value of wisdom, discernment and discretion when dealing with people taking the initiative in seeking your friendship or acquaintance.

A> See "Icikumyangila : e cikulya" for comparisons.

E> "Beware of strangers bearing gifts."

Cf. the "Trojan Horse."

S> FRIENDSHIP, CAUTION, MARRIAGE BREAK-UP, EATING, VISITORS, DISCERNMENT

47. *Iciku tacipalamana : na mulilo*

(WFBED 1947:163; Mpashi 1963:18; Hoch 1968:34; Niemeyer 1982:285; Davoli 1990:249; Chama)

TL> "'Tow' [is] not [put] near; and fire."

TI> "One does not put 'tow' (worn out bark cloth) near the fire (because it burns too easily)."

M> This proverb is used in reference to a man who continues taking liberties with women pretending that there is no harm in it. The one who loves danger will perish in it. Also, do not expose yourself to temptation.

U> This proverb is used to advise young people to avoid getting too close to those of the opposite sex during the initiation ceremony.

I> This proverb teaches the value of avoiding the temptations toward immorality.

B> "If you live by the sword, you will die by the sword" (Mt. 26:52).

"You reap what you sow" (Gal. 6:7).

E> "If you play with fire, you will get burned."

S> DANGER, TEMPTATION, IMMORALITY, ADULTERY, TOE, FIRE, INITIATION CEREMONY

48. *Icilye fupa (nama) : cilekatilila*

(Mpashi 1963:19; Hoch 1968:36; Niemeyer 1982:287; Davoli 1990:251; Chama)

TL> "[That] which eats bone (or meat); [it] holds on."

TI> "That which eats bones (or meat), must keep hold of them."

M> If you want to succeed, you should keep your heart and mind on your work. Also, be serious in your engagement or people will think you really do not want to marry. Also, you must hold firmly to what you have or you may lose it.

U> This proverb is used to advise those who are married or are seeking marriage to be serious.

I> This proverb teaches the value of determination in building relationships.

S> TENACITY, SUCCESS, DETERMINATION, SERIOUSNESS, BONES, GRASPING

49. *Icimpatanya : caikele pakati kanshila*

(Mulenga 1982:25; Chama)

TL> "[That] which causes enmity; [it] sits between [the] roads."

TI> "The enemy sits between two roads."

M> You should be careful with "double-tongued" people, because they cause problems and divide friends.

U> This proverb is used as advice to friends or married people to be aware of the dangers of gossip.

I> This proverb teaches that indiscretion in speech is destructive.

E> "Loose lips sink ships."

S> GOSSIP, FRIENDSHIP, ENMITY, MARITAL BREAK-UP, ENEMY, ROADS

50. *Icintemwa : teti cibe lubali*

(Hoch 1968:37; Niemeyer 1982:288; Davoli 1990:252; Chama)

TL> "[That] which loves; [it does] not [be] outside."

TI> "Love should not be one-sided; it should be mutual."

M> Love should be balanced through reciprocity.

U> This proverb is used to encourage love not only in a first marriage, but also in a second marriage where one or both partners find their spouse already with children.

I> This proverb teaches that love is not unidirectional; it must be a reciprocal relationship shared among all the members of a family.

S> MUTUAL LOVE, OUTSIDE

51. *Icishimya umulilo mu ng'anda : cifuma ku mwinshi*

(Mulenga 1982:27; Davoli 1990:253; Chama)

TL> "What puts fire off in [the] house (at home); [it] comes from [the] doorway."

TI> "Something that quenches the fire, begins from the doorway."

M> Outside influences destroy a marriage.

U> This proverb is used to warn people already married or who are contemplating marriage to be aware of the potentially damaging influence from outside the marriage.

I> This proverb teaches that, though a married couple may hear and see destructive influences from outside their marriage, they do not need to succumb to it. It implicitly teaches the couple to develop good communication in marriage and to make every effort to have confidence in themselves.

S> FIRE, HOME, DOORWAY, MARRIAGE BREAK-UP, PEER PRESSURE, OUTSIDE INFLUENCE, COMPARISONS

52. *Icitekeneshe ng'uni : munsoli*

(WFBED 1947:1371; Mpashi 1963:20; Hoch 1968:39; Niemeyer 1982:289; Davoli 1990:254; Chama)

TL> "Twitter honey-bird; whistling."

TI> "That which makes the honey-bird twitter (sing), is the whistling."

M> If you want good service from people, then they must be treated well. Also, if you want

something bad enough, you should put your heart into it. Or, if you want to become engaged to a girl, you should try to win her heart; otherwise, if you do not try hard enough, she will leave you thinking you really do not like her.

- U> This proverb is used to advise a young man to be determined in convincing a young woman that he wants to marry her.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of determination and commitment in courtship.
- B> "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Mt. 7:12).
- S> COURTSHIP, DESIRE, HONEY-BIRD, WHISTLING, SING

53. *Icitemenwe nyina : no mwana (na bana)*

(WFBED 1947:735; Mpashi 1963:20; Hoch 1968:39; Milimo 1970:117; Lane 1980:3; Niemeyer 1982:289; Davoli 1990:254; Chama)

- TL> **"The one loving mother, also child."**
"[That] which loves mother; also child."
- TI> **"The one who loves the mother, must love her child[ren] also."**
- M> If a man or a woman enters a marriage and one or the other already has children, they should love each other's children as if they were their own.
- U> This proverb is said of one who wishes to marry a widow or widower who has children.
- A> Compare "Mununga : anunka notwakwe".
- I> This proverb teaches the value of caring for children even though they are not biologically yours.
- B> Whether as a marriage concern or not, a Christian should care about orphans (James 1:27).
- S> CHILDREN, MOTHERHOOD, ACCEPTANCE, WIDOWS, REMARRIAGE, LOVE

54. *Icona ng'anda : tacifuma ng'anda ulaala*

(Mulenga 1982:28; Davoli 1990:255; Chama)

- TL> **"[That] which destroys [the] house; [it does] not come from [the] house [in which] you sleep."**
- TI> **"The one who destroys the house does not come from the house where you sleep."**
- M> Dangers usually do not come from nearby.
- U> This proverb is generally used to alert people to the fact that dangers usually come from outside one's home. It is also often used particularly in reference to outside dangers to marriage.
- I> This proverb teaches that a marriage should be circumspect and cautious in regard to strangers.
- S> HOME, DESTRUCTION, SLEEP, OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

55. *Ico ubikilepo umutima : cikusha mu menso poko*

(WFBED 1947:1110; Mpashi 1963:22; Hoch 1968:40; Niemeyer 1982:289; Davoli 1990:255; Chama)

- TL> **"What you put your heart at; [it] leaves you in eyes sunken."**
"What you set aside for the heart; it leaves your eyes appearing sunken."
- TI> **"What you are attached to, if you miss it some day, you appear with sunken eyes (look rejected, grieved)."**

- M> When you lose that to which your heart is attached, you will feel sad and dejected.
- U> This proverb is used to advise people involved in immoral relationships to be prepared for the negative consequences.
- I> This proverb teaches that grief and loss are the inevitable consequences of immoral behaviour.
- A> Compare "Akafupa utemenwe."
- S> LOSS, GRIEF, EYES, IMMORALITY

56. *Icungwa lya kwiba : licila pa lyobe ukulowa*

(Mpashi 1963:22; Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:290; Davoli 1990:256; Chama)

- TL> "[The] orange of stealing; more than of yours sweet."
- TI> "The stolen orange is sweeter than your own."
- M> Some people think things acquired illegally or immorally are better than things honestly obtained.
- U> This proverb is used to discourage covetousness, dishonesty and theft.
- I> This proverb teaches that certain "forbidden fruit" may seem more attractive, but in fact it may prove disastrous or even deadly.
- A> Compare "Ing'anda ushiilala : baikumbwo mutenge," which translates as "A house where you do not sleep; you admire it for its roof," and means "You should not be allured by the outward appearances of things."
- B> "Bread eaten in secret is sweet" (Prov. 9:17).
- E> "The stolen apple is sweeter."
- S> THEFT, ENVY, COVETOUSNESS, ORANGE, SWEETNESS

57. *Icupo cabula abana : cibusa*

(Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage without children; [is] friendship"
- TI> "Marriage without children is mere friendship."
- M> Children are viewed as a means of marital consolidation; without children, a marriage can be terminated at any time.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage a couple to have children and also speaks against those who are barren.
- I> This proverb teaches that marriage without children is not marriage, and implicitly teaches that the measure of a successful marriage is in the number of children.
- B> "Blessed is the man whose quiver is full [of children]" (Ps. 127:5).
- S> MARRIAGE, BARRENNESS, FERTILITY, CHILDREN, FRIENDSHIP

58. *Icupo : cacila ulupwa*

(Davoli 1990:256; Chama)

- TL> "Marriage; [it is] more than [extended] family."
- TI> "Marriage is better than other family relationships."
- M> Marriage is the closest relationship a person can have; it is above all others.
- U> This proverb is often used as an encouragement to those contemplating marriage to consider the value of their marriage in comparison with all other relationships.
- I> This proverb teaches that marriage is at least equal to, if not better than clan relationships.
- S> RELATIONSHIPS, INTIMACY, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, MARRIAGE, FAMILY

59. *Icupo cambweshwa : tacipwa mukamfu*

(Mulenga 1982:28; Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage repeated (or returned to) runs short of (or does not finish) perfection."
"Marriage repeated; [does] not end."
TI> "A repeated marriage is not ideal."
M> One should not return to a marriage partner after divorce, because he is bound to encounter troubles
U> This proverb is used as advice to those who are separated, and discourages second thoughts after a divorce.
I> This proverb teaches against reconciliation in divorce cases.
A> Compare variant, "Icupo cambweshwa : akabwelelo kalalya" (Chitatu), which translates as, "Going back to marriage, you will be eaten."
S> DIVORCE, RECONCILIATION, PERFECTION, MARRIAGE

60. *Icupo ca mubiyo : cibashilo ca mupini*

(Mulenga 1982:29; Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage of [your] friend [is] shaving handle."
TI> "Your friend's marriage can be discussed while making a tool handle."
M> Other people's problems can easily be discussed while your's cannot. People often take other people's difficulties lightly while they make their troubles look very important.
U> This proverb is used to encourage people to take other people's marriage as seriously as they do their own.
I> This proverb teaches that one person's marriage is as important as another's.
A> Compare variant, "Umulandu wa mubiyo : cibashilo ca mupini" (WFBED 1947:146). Chitatu says "icupo" is a later substitution. While marriage problems may be the subject of gossip, the proverb originally had in mind problems in general.
S> SELF-CENTEREDNESS, LIFE TOGETHER, MARRIAGE, FRIEND, HANDLE, SHAVING

61. *Icupo ca musana : icamutwe caba na bene*

(Mpashi 1963:22; Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:290; Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage [is] of [the] waist (or back); [the] head belongs to [the] owner [of it]."
TI> "Marriage gives the right to conjugal love, but not to the life of the spouse."
M> While marriage provides physical intimacy, it does not allow physical injury.
U> This proverb is used to discourage abuse and brutality in marriage.
I> This proverb teaches that no matter how close a married couple is to each other, they are individually responsible for their own lives.
A> Compare variant, "Icupo musana : umutwe uli nabene" (Chitatu, who says "icamutwe caba" was a later addition).
S> INTIMACY, ABUSE, SEX, DOMINANCE, BRUTALITY, LIFE TOGETHER, MARRIAGE, WAIST, HEAD, OWNER

62. *Icupo ca nomba : calowa ngo buci*

(Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:290; Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage at new [is] sweet like honey."
TI> "Marriage in the beginning (or right now) is sweet like honey."
M> As a marriage ages, it develops more problems.
U> This proverb is used to warn newly-weds against thinking that all will go well throughout their married life.
I> This proverb teaches that the intensity of emotions decreases as a marriage grows older.
E> "The honeymoon is over."
"Life is not a bed of roses."
S> HONEY, FADING INTEREST, HONEYMOON, LIFE TOGETHER, MARRIAGE, SWEET, NEW

63. *Icupo ca pa kubala cilila, "Nje, nje, nje" : icela cati cikokole, cilila, "Fukutu, fukutu, fukutu," ngo muuba*

(Hoch 1968:41; Niemeyer 1982:209; Davoli 1990:241; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage at [the] beginning cries (or makes the sound of), 'Nje, nje, nje,' iron when [it] becomes old cries (or makes the sound of), 'Fukutu, fukutu, fukutu,' like [a] bellows."
TI> "Marriage in the beginning is like a bell ringing, 'Jing, jing, jing,' but later is it like a furnace bellows that says, 'Fukutu, fukutu, fukutu.'"
"Marriage is like iron; when it is new, it rings like a bell, but, when it is old, it wheezes like a bellows."
M> As a marriage ages, it gradually loses its original intensity.
U> This proverb is used to advise newly-weds of the danger of thinking their marriage will keep its initial emotional intensity.
I> This proverb teaches that all marriages inevitably develop difficulties, and it requires cooperative effort to make it successful and happy.
A> Compare variant "Icupo pa kubala cilila njee-njee nga kale : cati cikokole calila fuba-fuba ngo muba" (Chitatu), which translates as, "A new marriage is like a bell ringing, but when it is old, it is like a furnace that has to be blown constantly to keep it hot."
S> BELL, FURNACE, FADING INTENSITY, IRON, LIFE TOGETHER, MARRIAGE, BELLOWS, BEGINNING, CRY, RINGS

64. *Icupo kapapa ka kumulomo : kobulo mwine*

(Bupe; Chitatu, Zulu)

- TL> "Marriage [is] skin on cracked lips; only [the] owner peels [it off]."
TI> "Marriage is like dry lips; only the owner takes care of them."
M> Because marriage is personal, certain problems can only be dealt with by the spouses.
U> This proverb is used to advise people who are related to a married couple to avoid interfering in certain of their marital problems. It is also used in reference to a couple that is contemplating divorce.
I> This proverb teaches that people should stay out of other people's marriage business. If they interfere, they will cause unnecessary problems. There are issues which only the husband and the wife can rectify. Ultimately, the spouses have the power to end their marriage and cannot

blame the end of their marriage on the advice given by others.

B> "What God has put together, let no man put asunder" (Mk. 10:9).

S> MEDDLING, PRIVACY, LIFE TOGETHER, MARRIAGE, SKIN, LIPS, OWNER, PEEL

65. *Icupo ni ngolofwana ya mipeto ibili : umulume no mukasi* (*yaonaika, mwalakulana fye lyonse*)

(Davoli 1990:256; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

TL> "Marriage [is a] wheel-barrow of wheels two, husband and wife (when damaged, you pull each other always)."

TI> "Marriage is a two-wheeled wheel-barrow, the husband and wife who always assist each other when there are problems."

M> In marriage, the husband and wife are mutually dependent upon each other for correction.

U> This proverb is used to encourage a self-centered spouse to take the responsibility of looking after the other spouse. It is also used to alert newly-weds of the potential handicaps as a marriage ages.

I> This proverb teaches the value of marital interdependence.

A> Compare "Icupo ca matata (indimi shibili)," which translates as, "A marriage of two tongues," (Chitatu) and means a marriage is likely to break up if the couple is always having problems. This proverb teaches that a marriage where the couple is quarrelsome is likely to break up because both are out to explain problems about their partners instead of sitting together to solve the problems. This proverb is used as a rebuke to a couple who is always finding fault with each other.

S> INTERDEPENDENCE, WHEEL-BARROW, LIFE TOGETHER, COOPERATION, MARRIAGE, HUSBAND, WIFE, PULLING

66. *Icupo walemene : ng'ana*

("...walemene nkata" in Davoli 1990:241; Chama)

TL> "Marriage you provide (or make) [a] head-pad (for carrying a load)."

TI> "For your marriage, you make a head-pad (but for others, you do not make such a provision)."

M> Marriage should be treated with great care.

U> This proverb is used to encourage a couple to take marriage seriously. It is also used to rebuke a woman for giving greater honour to her marriage than to her clan.

I> This proverb teaches that marriage is to be both honoured and treasured.

S> FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, MARRIAGE, HEAD-PAD, PRIORITIES, HONOUR

67. *Icupo wasenda pa mutwe : umukowa, eo wasesha ku minwe*

(Davoli 1990:241; Chama; Chitatu; Mubanga; Mukwavi; Zulu)

TL> "Marriage you carry on head, clan [is] what [you] move at fingers."

TI> "Marriage you carry on your head (in a place of importance), but the clan you carry at your side with the hand."

"You carry your marriage honourably, but your clan you carry commonly."

M> Some women give greater honour to their husbands than to their clan.

U> This proverb is spoken to a wife who honours her husband more than she does her clan relations.

- I> This proverb teaches that clan relationships must be valued equally with marital relationships.
- A> This proverb communicates essentially the same message as "Icupo walemene ng'ana." Compare the variant, "Icupo ecilipa mutwe : umukowa eo usesha" (Chitatu), which translates as "Marriage is the one on your head; the clan is the one you move."
- E> "Blood is thicker than water."
- S> TOTEM, CLAN, HEAD, FINGERS, RESPECT, LOYALTY, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, MARRIAGE, HEAD, CARRY

68. *Ifikula bwangu : tafikokola kuuma* :

(Mpashi 1963:23; Davoli 1990:257; Chama)

- TL> "Those [that] grow fast; [they do] not delay drying."
- TL> "Those that grow fast, dry quickly."
- M> Anything done too quickly will not last; what endures is that which is planned well.
- U> While this proverb is applied generally to people who want to become involved in any kind of venture, it is applied specifically to marriage preparations.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of calm, patient and methodical planning in marriage.
- S> GROWTH, SPEED, DRYING, MARITAL PREPARATIONS

69. *Ifisosa abaanakashi fyabuwelewele : nombu uushiteshako cipuba*

(Mpashi 1963:23; Hoch 1968:42; Niemeyer 1982:291; Davoli 1990:259; Chama)

- TL> "What say women [is] foolishness; but [the one] who [does] not listen [to it is a] fool."
- TI> "Women's gossip is stupid, but stupid is the one who does not listen to it."
- M> You should listen to everything, no matter what the source, and choose from it only what is best and true. Also, the stupidity of women causes men to look clever(?).
- U> This proverb is used to advise men to listen to women, but with discretion.
- I> This proverb teaches that one should discerningly listen to all informants, though not everything needs to be accepted or believed.
- S> GOSSIP, WOMEN, SPEECH, CLEVERNESS, DISCERNMENT, DISCRETION, ADVICE

70. *Ifya baanakashi : filoca*

(also "Fya kumfwa ku baanakashi" in WFBED 1947:912; also "Ifya kumfwa ku baanakashi filoca" in Hoch 1968:43; Niemeyer 1982:291; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "What belongs to [the] women; burn."
"Things heard from [the] women; burn."
- TI> "A woman's gossip is harmful (or burns)."
"What is heard from women brings you trouble."
- M> If you are accustomed to taking all your advice from women, you will end up in trouble, because women have a weakness for gossip. The gossip of women is usually harmful.
- U> This proverb is cited to show women's deceptiveness.
- I> This proverb teaches that female gossip is an unreliable source of counsel, and also teaches men to be careful in how they deal with women.
- S> WOMEN, GOSSIP, BURN, ADVICE, DECEPTION, TRUST

71. *Ifya ku buko : fya fumishe (tunwine/tumbwile) kabundi amenso*

(WFBED 1947:78; Mpashi 1963:23; Hoch 1968:43; Niemeyer 1982:291; Davoli 1990:259; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "For [the] in-law; got out [the] lemur's eyes."
- TI> "Things of the parents-in-law made the lemur's eyes come out (stick out/goggle out)."
- M> One should cater to one's parents-in-law but not to the point of making one's eyes bulge out like the lemur's. One should not overdo what is done for the in-laws. Also, if you work for praise, you will over-tire yourself; work according to your abilities.
- U> This proverb is used as pre-marital advice warning against probing into other people's business.
- I> This proverb teaches that things done out of respect should be restrained; one should not be excessive.
- S> PARENTAL ACCOMMODATION, PARENTS-IN-LAW, LEMUR, EYES, WORK, EXCESS, BALANCE

72. *Ifya kulya bushiku : fitulikila ku malushi*

(WFBED 1947:1441; Mpashi 1963:23; Hoch 1968:43; Niemeyer 1982:291; Davoli 1990:260; Bupe; Chama)

- TL> "Those things you eat at night; [they] came out from vomit."
- TI> "What you eat during the night is discovered by the vomiting."
- M> Misdeeds committed during the night eventually "come to light."
- U> This proverb is used as a warning against doing things in secret, especially those that are immoral or illegal.
- I> This proverb teaches that, in general, things done in the dark are intended to be kept secret. If one is not ashamed of one's actions, then they can be done in the day-light. Things done under the cover of night are illegal or immoral.
- B> "Your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23).
"You are children of light; therefore, walk in the light" (Eph. 5:8).
"Deeds done in darkness...." (Eph. 5:11).
- S> JUSTICE, DISCOVERY, EATING, NIGHT, VOMIT, SECRECY, IMMORALITY, HIDDEN THINGS

73. *Ifya mu ng'anda ni mbusa : tabafifumisha panse*

(Davoli 1990:260; Chama)

- TL> "What belongs to house [is] 'mbusa' (small clay pot); [you do] not take [it] outside."
- TI> "Secrets of the home should not be discussed outside."
- M> Problems peculiar to the home should be kept in the home; they should not be taken outside.
- U> This proverb is used as advice to married couples and their families about family problems.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of family secrecy and confidentiality.
- A> Compare: "Ifya mu ng'anda : te fya kwasaukilwa mu lubansa" (Hoch 1968:44; Davoli 1990:260), which translates as, "Family affairs should not be made public."
- E> "Loose lips sink ships."
- S> SECRETS, CONFIDENTIALITY, HOME, PRIVACY

74. *Ifya ng'umba : filasasa*

(WFBED 1947:1032; Mpashi 1963:23; Hoch 1968:44; Niemeyer 1982:292; Davoli 1990:260; Chama)

TL> "[The things of [the] barren [woman]; get sour (bitter)."

TI> "A childless woman goes sour."

"Whatever a childless woman cooks goes sour."

M> Having no children produces a loneliness that is wasteful; with only one mouth to feed, plenty of food will only rot. Also, a childless woman develops a sour disposition.

U> This proverb is used to chide women who are barren.

I> This proverb teaches that loneliness and waste are the result of barrenness.

B> Barrenness is not unknown in the Bible (e.g., Abraham and Sarah in Gen. 16:1-2). Both in the biblical and Zambian context, people suffer ridicule and isolation because of being childless. Those without children can be pastorally comforted by being reminded that God can still be honoured and thanked no matter what the circumstance (Phil. 1& 4). Marriage with or without children is still marriage (e.g., Adam and Eve in Gen. 2:24 did not have children in the beginning).

S> WOMEN, BARRENNESS, LONELINESS, WASTE, SOUR, CHILDREN

75. *Ilyashi lya nsaka : taliuminwa mukashi*

(WFBED 1947:592; Hoch 1968:45; Niemeyer 1982:292; Davoli 1990:262; Chama)

TL> "Story of [the] rest hut; [do] not beat wife."

TI> "Idle talk in the public (rest) hut is not sufficient reason to beat your wife."

M> One must learn how to take a joke without getting mad over it.

U> While this is generally given as advice to people warning against taking action without proof, it is specifically used in reference to marital suspicions.

I> This proverb teaches the value of patience, discernment and seeking proof before acting.

E> "Look before you leap."

S> HUMOUR, WIFE-BEATING, NSAKA, TALK, PROOF, EVIDENCE, RASH JUDGMENT

76. *Imfula : taipelwa mpango*

(Hoch 1968:46; Niemeyer 1982:293; Davoli 1990:263; Chama)

TL> "Rain; [it is] not given [the] bride-wealth."

TI> "One does not give a marriage gift to the rain."

M> You cannot give an order to God. God sends the rain when and how he likes.

U> This proverb is used to describe natural phenomenon according to the traditional understanding of God.

I> This proverb teaches the value of God's sovereignty.

A> Compare "Lesa tappingulwa."

B> "God sends rain on the wicked and the righteous alike" (Mt. 5:45).

S> GOD, SOVEREIGNTY, COERCION, PROVIDENCE, MARRIAGE GIFT, RAIN

77. *Imiti ili pamo (ipalamene) : taibula kushenkana*

(WFBED 1947:1049; Hoch 1968:48; Niemeyer 1982:294; Davoli 1990:265; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "Trees near one another; [they] do not lack squeaking."
 "Trees near each other; do not fall short of rubbing each other."
 TI> "Trees which are near together, do not fail to squeak."
 M> Life in community naturally brings difficulties which should be borne patiently and courageously. Also, intimacy creates tension that must be tolerated patiently. Also, misunderstandings should not lead to hatred.
 U> This proverb is used to explain the inevitability of friction to marriage partners.
 I> This proverb teaches that it is normal to expect problems in a marriage or a community.
 A> Compare "Imiti ipalamene : taibula ukulila ng'wema" (WFBED 1947:1049; Mpashi 1963:28; Hoch 1968:48; Niemeyer 1982:294; Davoli 1990:265; Chama), which translates as, "Trees that are together will not fail to make squeaking sounds."
 S> CLOSE PROXIMITY, FRICTION, TREES, SQUEAK, PATIENCE, TOLERANCE, DIFFICULTIES

78. *Ine ndi mubu wa nkula : nkasubwa na bambi*

(Hoch 1968:51; Niemeyer 1982:296; Chama)

- TL> "Me, I am [the] ball of 'nkula' (redwood powder); I will be smeared (anointed) by others."
 TI> "I am the ball of 'nkula' powder; others will come and anoint me."
 M> Do not despise your spouse because someone else may marry her.
 U> This proverb is used by a person who is tired of the spouse and wants a divorce.
 I> This proverb discourages divorce.
 S> DIVORCE, POWDER, ANOINTING

79. *Ing'anda ishibwelela mpango : ibusu*

(Mpashi 1963:24; Hoch 1968:56; Niemeyer 1982:299; Davoli 1990:317; Chama)

- TL> "[A] house [that] does not get (return) bride-wealth; [it is] poor."
 TI> "A house that does not get a lobola (a marriage price), is poor."
 M> A childless family is poor.
 U> This proverb is used to chide a childless home. It is also used by an elderly relative as advice to a young married couple encouraging them to have children.
 I> This proverb teaches that a family without children has a bleak future.
 S> LOBOLA, BARRENNESS, NO CHILDREN, HOME, FUTURE

80. *Ing'anda ushilaala : baikumbwo mutenge*

(Mpashi 1963:24; Hoch 1968:56; Niemeyer 1982:299; Davoli 1990:317; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "They desire [the] roof for [a] house in which you [do] not sleep."
 "[A] house where you [do] not sleep, you admire [its] roof."
 TI> "The roof of the house in which you do not sleep is desirable."
 M> Eaves-dropping is unacceptable. You should not interfere with the affairs of other families. Also, one often gets the impression with certain couple's public behaviour that they have no problems. You should not be tempted to admire things for the way they appear outwardly only.
 U> This proverb is used as advice in marital counseling. It is used to discourage taking spouse, family and home for granted, and also discourages looking to another house or village for a

sexual partner.

- I> This proverb teaches that you should not judge another person's home simply on appearances. It warns against the danger of judging one's own marriage as inferior because one's neighbour's marriage appears to be without problems. It also teaches that no one is without problems.
- A> Compare "Ing'anda ushilala : tatateamo matwi" (WFBED 1947:1368; Davoli 1990:317), which translates as, "The house where you do not sleep; you should not listen," "Akashi (umushi) ushilaala : bakakumbwa (baukumbwa) insonshi ne mitenge" (Mpashi 1963:78; Hoch 1968:123; Davoli 1990:380; "...bakakumbwa insonshi ne..." in Sumbwa 1993:1), which translates literally as "The small village in which you do not sleep; you admire its roofs," and "Akashi ushilaala : bakakumbwa impongolo" (Mulenga 1982:7; Bupe; Chama; Mubanga), which translates as, "The small village where you do not sleep; you admire its gates."
- B> The Bible warns against judging by outward appearances (1 Sam. 16:7). While humanity is prone to make judgments based on surface factors, God judges the heart, or what is unseen to human eyes. In other words, God judges the intentions more strictly than the actions while humanity judges actions more strictly than intentions.
- E> "Do not judge a book by its cover."
"All that glitters is not gold."
"The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence."
"The way to hell is paved with good intentions."
- S> INTERFERENCE, EAVES-DROPPING, BUSYBODYNESS, TAMPERING, HOME, COMPARISONS, ENVY, ROOF, SLEEP, PROBLEMS, VILLAGE, GATES, JEALOUSY, PREJUDGMENT, MISJUDGMENT

81. Ing'anda ya buci balengilamo : icibi (cikali) kutumpamo munwe

(WFBED 1947:1028; Hoch 1968:56; Niemeyer 1982:299; Davoli 1990:267; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[A] house of honey you can enter; [but] bad [the] thing [is] to dip [the] finger."
TI> "One can enter a beehive, but taking honey is dangerous."
"You may enter into a hut where there is honey; what is bad, is to put your finger into the honey."
M> Entering someone's house is not forbidden so long as you leave his wife alone.
U> This proverb is used to advise people to respect the marriages of others.
I> This proverb teaches that people should avoid indulging in other people's affairs. It also teaches that the wife of another man is not to be touched.
S> ADULTERY, WELCOME, HOME, HONEY, BEE-HIVE, FINGER

82. Ing'ombe shupana : mwitanga

(Mpashi 1963:25; Hoch 1968:57; Niemeyer 1982:299; Davoli 1990:318; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "Cattle mate; in [the] stable."
TI> "The cattle mate in the stable."
"Cattle marry from the same herd."
M> Marriage should take place between members of the same ethnic group (tribe). Cousins can marry each other.

- U> This proverb is used to encourage cousins to marry each other.
- I> This proverb teaches that cousins can marry each other. There is a provision in the Bemba culture for cousins to marry each other in order to keep the family integrity and increase population of that family. It teaches that one should marry from one's own tribe.
- A> Compare "Akasubu...."
- B> While modern science and Western values prohibit marriage to close cousins for medical and genetic reasons, in the Bible Isaac did so (Gen. 24). What are the implications for Bemba Christians?
- S> ETHNIC PURITY, INCEST, FAMILY CONSOLIDATION, IN-BREEDING, KINSHIP, CATTLE, MATING, STABLE, COUSINS

83. *Ingulube ukuya mwibala : ne milile*

(WFBED 1947:958; Hoch 1968:51; Niemeyer 1982:296; Davoli 1990:317; Chama)

- TL> "The wild-pig to go in garden; and [that is the way it] eats."
- TI> "The wild pig enters the garden to eat."
- M> One who enters another's hut intends to commit adultery.
- U> This proverb is used by a person who suspects another of committing adultery.
- I> This proverb teaches that certain modes of conduct serve as signals of intention to commit acts of immorality.
- S> MARRIAGE, ADULTERY, PIG, GARDEN, EATING

84. *Ingulube yabulo mufyala : icena ne fwasa.*

(Mpashi 1963:31; Hoch 1968:51; Niemeyer 1982:296; Davoli 1990:317; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "The wild pig [that] has no cross-cousin; [it] romps with an anthill."
- TI> "The wild pig that has no cousin, will play with an 'ifwasa' anthill."
"The wild pig that has no cousin takes liberties with his sister or the child of his maternal uncle."
- M> If a man cannot find a wife, he may decide to marry his cousin. Also, those who commit incest are like pigs.
- U> This proverb is used to ridicule those who want to get married but have not found a marriage partner.
- I> While this proverb implicitly encourages incest, the underlying reason for it is to tease a man into finding an acceptable marriage partner.
- A> Compare the variant, "Ingulube yabula mufyala, icena ne nkashi no mwipwa" (WFBED 1947:958; Mpashi 1963:31; Hoch 1968:52), which translates as "The wild pig that has no cousin, plays with its sister or niece."
- B> While the Bible clearly teaches against incestuous relations (Lev. 18:6-18, 20:11ff), traditionally among the Bemba marriage to cousins was normal.
- S> COUSINS, INCEST, PIG, ANTHILL

85. *Injili yabula mwana : baimona lukasa kwifwe*

(WFBED 1947:962; Hoch 1968:52; Niemeyer 1982:296; Davoli 1990:324; Chama)

- TL> "[The] wart-hog without young; you see [the] foot-print at [the] water-hole."
- TI> "The wart-hog that has no young, you see its spoor at the water-hole."
- M> By the tracks at a water-hole, you can see that a person has no children to draw water for him.

In as much as it is worthless to chase a wart-hog that has no young, so too is it worthless to pay attention to a person who is childless.

- U> This proverb is used of those who are childless.
- I> This proverb teaches that barrenness is a disaster.
- S> BARRENNESS, CHILDREN, WART-HOG, SPOOR, WATER-HOLE

86. *Inkombe : taikata pa cinena*

(WFBED 1947:195; Mpashi 1963:31; Hoch 1968:52; Niemeyer 1982:296; Davoli 1990:326; Chama; Mukwavi).

- TL> "The messenger; [he] does not touch at groin."
- TI> "The marriage agent does not indecently touch the bride."
"One who is sent to arrange a marriage does not take liberties with the prospective bride."
- M> A servant should not arrange things for his own advantage. Also, you should be correct both in words and deeds.
- U> This proverb is applied as a warning to anyone who has been entrusted by another to serve as a mediator. It is also used to discourage manipulation and insubordination.
- I> This proverb teaches that one who has been trusted with a great matter should not act deceitfully and arrange things for his own advantage. While this proverb speaks of marriage and similar matters, does it have implications for politics?
- S> SELFISHNESS, MARRIAGE AGENT, BETRAYAL, BRIDE, INSUBORDINATION, MANIPULATION

87. *Intekwe imo : icita icifine*

(Mulenga 1982:44; Davoli 1990:270; Chama)

- TL> "Container of snuff one; [it] causes sniffing."
- TI> "One container of snuff causes one to sneeze."
- M> Having sex with one woman causes boredom.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage extra-marital relationships.
- I> This proverb teaches that variety in sexual experience is necessary and encourages adultery.
- A> Compare "Icakufvala cimo : cilatendusha" Hoch 1968:30; Davoli 1990:244), which translates as "One dress causes disgust," "Ubwali bumo : bulonsha" (WFBED 1947:1042; Hoch 1968:102; Niemeyer 1982:325; Davoli 1990:353), which translates as "Always eating the same kind of food makes a man thin," and "Umunani umo : ube cifukushi" (Hoch 1968:120), which translates as "One relish causes disgust."
- B> The Bible teaches that sex in marriage is restricted to the husband and wife only, and it is considered a violation of God's will to have sex outside the marriage (Ex. 20:14).
- E> "Variety is the spice of life."
"Absence makes the heart grow fonder."
- S> ADULTERY, FAITHFULNESS, SNUFF, SNEEZE

88. *Kalulu atumine nsofu : nimpeniko ako*

(Hoch 1968:61; Milimo 1970:60; Niemeyer 1982:301; Davoli 1990:275; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "[The] hare sent [the] elephant; 'Give me that!'"

- TI> "A hare sent an elephant saying, 'Give me that little thing!'"
- M> While it is most customary for elders to ask a young person to do something for them, it is also acceptable for a young person to ask the same thing of an elder.
- U> This proverb is used on the occasion of a marriage, or any other important event, when someone must send an elder on a mission.
- I> This proverb teaches that relationships are complementary.
- A> "An ant sent an elephant" (Tonga).
- S> RECIPROCITY, ELDERS, CHILDREN, ELEPHANT, MARRIAGE PLANS, HARE

89. *Kandekuya kuli mayo : ne busefwe nshila tala milale*

(Mpashi 1963:38; Davoli 1990:276; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "Let me go to my mother; I am 'busefwe', I have not gotten cracked."
- TI> "Let me go to my mother before I (the 'busefwe' mushroom) get cracked."
- M> Do not tolerate a husband who mistreats you so much that you lose your dignity.
- U> This proverb is used of a woman who suffers so much mistreatment from her husband or his family that she feels she has no choice but to leave.
- I> This proverb teaches that sometimes it is best to leave a difficult situation than to remain in it vainly trying to rectify it.
- B> Even though many Bemba traditional marriages are peaceful and stable, some suffer because of wife abuse. Many women who find themselves in such a situation opt for divorce. The Bible discourages spouse abuse when it admonishes the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:23-25). Spouse abuse is neither condoned by Bemba tradition nor the Bible.
- S> CHILD-BEARING, DIVORCE, MOTHER, MUSHROOM, CRACKED

90. *Kano nkope : ku waba nga mayo*

(Davoli 1990:276; Chama)

- TL> "Unless [I] marry; to whom [is] like mother."
- TI> "I should marry one who is like my mother."
- M> A wife who is loving and caring like a mother is rare.
- U> This proverb is applied to a person who cannot find a mate because he cannot find one who suits him.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of finding a suitable wife.
- B> "A good wife, who can find?" (Proverbs 31:10).
- S> MARRIAGE, MOTHER, MATE-SELECTION

91. *Kanye kulukunga : kutumfya umwana*

(Mulenga 1982:50; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "Go and pee behind; make stupid child."
- TI> "Go-and-pee-behind spoils the child."
- M> Parents have the responsibility to teach their children good behaviour.
- U> This proverb is used on such important occasions as initiation or marriage when parents are expected to teach their children what to expect in life.
- I> This proverb teaches about the dangers of laziness and irresponsibility.
- S> GOOD BEHAVIOUR, MANNERS, PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, URINE, CHILD, INITIATION

92. *Kolwe, muka cilende : apatile abafyashi bakwe*

(Hoch 1968:64; Niemeyer 1982:303; Davoli 1990:279; Chama)

TL> "Monkey, spouse of adultery; [it] hated parents his."

TI> "The monkey who married an adulteress hated his parents."

M> Some people are so blinded by their spouse's dishonesty that they even forget to consult their parents. When a man is married, he must not change his attitude toward his relatives.

U> This proverb is used by a parent or elderly person to describe a home where one of the partners is adulterous.

I> This proverb teaches a person to be cautious when choosing a marriage partner, and advises seeking counsel from the family. It also implicitly teaches that one should receive advice from the family regarding adulterous behaviour in one's spouse.

S> MONKEY, PARENTS, MARRIAGE, ADULTERESS, PARENTAL ADVICE, INDULGENCE

93. *Ku buko ni kwikoshi : bafwenako libili*

(WFBED 1947:78; Mpashi 1963:39; Hoch 1968:66; Niemeyer 1982:304; Davoli 1990:281; Bupe; Chitatu; Zulu)

TL> "In-laws [are] the neck; they scratch [it] twice."

TI> "The in-laws are like the back of the neck; one scratches there many times."

M> One must scratch his neck twice (think twice) before undertaking anything against his relatives if he wants to be at peace with them. Also, a divorce should not make you become disrespectful to former in-laws; respect them as you did before.

U> This proverb is used when one does not get along with one's in-laws. It is used when one in-law begins to treat another in-law disrespectfully.

I> This proverb teaches the value of maintaining good relationships with in-laws, because you may need them to do something for you one day. It teaches that you as a parent should not sever your relationship with your child's spouse's parents just because your children have divorced.

E> "Look before you leap."

S> IN-LAWS, RESPECT, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, NECK, SCRATCH

94. *Ku cupo : ni ku mibengelele*

(Mpashi 1963:40; Hoch 1968:66; Niemeyer 1982:304; Davoli 1990:281; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

TL> "In marriage at rays."

TI> "Marriage is like the rays of the sun."

M> Since you do not know what married life will bring, you should not burn your bridges with your family; otherwise, if your marriage fails, you will have no where to go back to. Also, you should not take your marriage partner for granted so that all goes well.

U> This proverb is used as pre-marital advice.

I> This proverb teaches that marriage should not cause a person to forget his family, nor to think that marriage is the best of all experiences.

A> Compare "Icupo wasenda pa mutwe : eo wasesha ku minwe," and "Icupo walemene ng'ana."

S> FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, PRESUMPTION, SUN, MARRIAGE

95. *Kulukose nga takuli bukungilo : utuuni tatuyapo*

(Mulenga 1982:51; Davoli 1990:282; Chama; Zulu)

TL> "[A] trap, if [there is] no bait; small birds do not go [there]."

TI> "A trap that has no bait is not attractive to birds."

M> A person performs best in things he finds appealing.

U> This proverb is applied to a woman who wants to get married.

I> This proverb teaches young women the value of making themselves attractive for marriage.

S> WOMEN, ATTRACTIVENESS, GOOD BEHAVIOUR, TRAP, BAIT, BIRDS

96. *Lumbwe ukuupilo (ukupa) mulanda : kuicikilisha*

(WFBED 1947:662; Mpashi 1963:43; Hoch 1968:71; Niemeyer 1982:307; Davoli 1990:289; Chama; Mubanga)

TL> "Bridegroom to marry from poor; [is] self-supporting."

"[The] son-in-law who marries a poor [girl]; [he] catches himself red-handed."

TI> "He who marries a poor girl must have the means to support her."

M> If you marry the daughter of a widow, you will become a polygamist, because you will have to care for your wife and her mother as well. Also, you will have to work very hard to support them.

U> This proverb is applied to a complaining son-in-law.

I> This proverb teaches that it is necessary to count the cost before marrying from certain families.

S> POLYGAMY, OPPRESSIVE WORK, POOR GIRL, COUNTING THE COST

97. *Muka mupwa : tasunta bwamba*

(Hoch 1968:73; Niemeyer 1982:308; Davoli 1990:296; Chama)

TL> "[The] wife of married; [she] does not go about naked."

"[The] spouse of a great man; [she] does not walk clumsily because of poor clothing."

TI> "The wife of a great man does not go about naked."

M> To marry a great man is to enjoy some privileges which are not enjoyed by others.

U> This proverb is used to describe the situation a woman will find herself in if she were to marry a great man. It is also used by parents or relatives to encourage those who want to marry to make an advantageous choice in a partner.

I> This proverb teaches the value of being associated with people of importance, wealth and influence. It teaches that if you marry a rich or well-fed man, you will become rich and well-fed yourself.

S> WIFE, GREAT MAN, NAKED, ASSOCIATION, OPPORTUNITY

98. *Mukolwe uko asalilo (asalo) bubenshi : eko akafwila*

(WFBED 1947:807; Mpashi 1963:46; Hoch 1968:74; Niemeyer 1982:308; Davoli 1990:296; Chama; Mubanga)

TL> "[The] cock where [it] pecks white ants; there [it] will die."

TI> "Where the cock pecks white ants, there it will die."

M> An evil doer will find his end in an evil act.

- U> This proverb is said of an adulterer who will meet his end by means of his evil conduct.
- I> This proverb indicates to an evil man the eventual cause of his death.
- S> ADULTERY, EVIL CONSEQUENCES, COCK, ANTS, DEATH

99. *Mu kulolekesha : e mu kutobolwa*

(WFBED 1947:627; Mpashi 1963:45; Mulenga 1982:56; Chama)

- TL> "In trying to see, you get your eyes stung."
- TI> "Looking too attentively made dirt fall in your eye."
- M> If you insist on having something you know is not beneficial to your welfare, it may cause you more harm than good.
- U> This proverb is used in marriage as a warning to let go of a persistent problem.
- I> This proverb teaches that when your husband beats you often, it is better to leave than stay on in the marriage vainly hoping for improvement. In the end, you may be irreparably harmed or even killed if you do not leave him.
- A> "Mu kulolekesha e mu kupofula" (WFBED 1947:627), which translates as, "One gets blind by staring too much."
- S> DIVORCE, ABUSE, CLOSURE, BREAKING-POINT, LIFE TOGETHER, SEEING, STING, EYES

100. *Mu ng'anda ya mubiyo : tamubikilwa buomba*

(WFBED 1947:53; Mpashi 1963:44; Hoch 1968:77; Niemeyer 1982:311; Davoli 1990:301; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "In [the] house of [your] friend; you do not put reserve."
- TI> "In your neighbour's hut, dainties are not set aside for you."
"In your friend's house, the night meal especially set aside for the husband is not given to you."
- M> Only a wife can take good care of her husband.
- U> This proverb is used by a marriage counsellor.
- I> This proverb teaches that a wife cannot be replaced.
- S> HOME, FRIEND, DAINITIES, SPECIAL MEAL

101. *Munshewwa : aile na mashinshi kwa ba nafyala*

("...na maafu kwa nafyala" in WFBED 1947:249, and "...mashinshi ku mako" in :850; Mpashi 1963:47; Hoch 1968:77; Niemeyer 1982:311; Davoli 1990:302; 1992:62; Mubanga; Chama)

- TL> "[The one] who [is] not told (can take no criticism); [he] went and excreted to mother-in-law."
- TI> "Mr. 'Don't-tell-me' who would not listen to advice, took faeces to his mother-in-law (and was shamed)."
- M> One who does not listen to advice will eventually be in trouble. One who cannot take being told the truth will eventually be brought to shame.
- U> This proverb is applied to a stubborn, disobedient child.
- I> This proverb teaches that one should listen to correction before any final decisions are made.
- A> Compare the variant, "Munshiumfwa ku bakulu : aile na maafu ku buko" (WFBED 1947:1486; Hoch 1968:78; Niemeyer 1982:311), which translates as, "He who does not listen

- to the elders' advice goes with faeces to his parents-in-law."
 S> ADVICE, FAECES, SHAME, MOTHER-IN-LAW, ELDERS

102. Nacimbusa afwele ngala : no kubwalabwala

(WFBED 1947:934; Hoch 1968:81; Niemeyer 1982:313; Davoli 1990:312; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] matron wears [a] feathered plume; [but she must] exert [herself]."
 TI> "The 'nacimbusa' (matron in charge of the initiation ceremonies) is greatly honoured, but she must exert herself."
 M> With honour comes responsibility.
 U> This proverb is used to advise people that honour and position do not come without an equal weight of responsibility. This proverb can also be used both as an encouragement and a warning during a time of congratulating a recently appointed or elected person.
 I> This proverb teaches that one who wants to be honoured must also take responsibility. This proverb implicitly teaches that if a person seeking honour, or one in a position of honour, acts irresponsibly, then they will be dishonoured.
 E> "No pain; no gain."
 "No guts; no glory."
 S> NACIMBUSA, RESPONSIBILITY, HONOUR, FEATHERED PLUME

103. Nanama tafyona : ku nsaka

(Mpashi 1963:51; Davoli 1990:313; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] female animal does not blow nose; at [the] rest hut."
 TI> "A she-animal does not blow its nose toward the 'nsaka' (rest hut)."
 U> This proverb is used by a husband who is upset over a noisy wife.
 I> This proverb teaches that women are to be submissive to men in all matters.
 B> "Women should receive instruction in silence" (1 Cor. 14:34ff; 1 Tim. 2:11ff).
 E> "Women are to be seen and not heard."
 S> WOMEN, SHE-ANIMAL, NOSE, NSAKA, SUBMISSION

104. Nga walya umuntasondwa : tawakaleke

(Davoli 1990:316; Chama)

- TL> "If you eat, do not taste 'muntasondwa'; you [will] not stop."
 TI> "If you taste a 'Muntasondwa,' you will not stop it."
 M> If a young person involves himself in sexual immorality once, he will always want more.
 U> This proverb is used to warn young people about the temptations that will inevitably follow indulgence in forbidden activities.
 I> This proverb teaches that one must avoid the first immoral act if one is to keep a moral reputation.
 S> SEXUAL IMMORALITY, TASTE, MUNTASONDWA, TEMPTATION, REPUTATION

105. Ni kalulu : wa matanda ayengi

(Hoch 1968:82; Niemeyer 1982:314; Davoli 1990:319; Chama)

- TL> "He is [a] hare; of mats many."

- TI> "He is a hare with many mats."
 M> A man who has many women cannot be trusted.
 U> This proverb is used of a man who divorces and re-marries from time to time.
 I> This proverb teaches that certain people are innately disloyal in marriage and cannot be trusted.
 S> DIVORCE, RE-MARRIAGE, HARE, MATS, TRUST

106. *Nine Kaengele : munshibwela minwe nkutwa*

(Hoch 1968:83; Niemeyer 1982:314; Davoli 1990:320; Chama)

- TL> "I am [the] 'clever hunter'; [the one] who does not return finger empty."
 "I am Kaengele (a mythological person); [the one] who never returned with empty fingers."
 TI> "I am Kaengele who never returned empty-handed."
 M> He is a clever man who succeeds in his efforts.
 U> This proverb is used by a clever hunter or scoundrel (an adulterer).
 I> While cleverness is generally viewed negatively, this proverb teaches that cleverness in certain situations is a virtue.
 S> CLEVERNESS, ADULTERY, HUNTER, FINGER

107. *Nkobekela : tecupo*

(Simbaya; Zulu)

- TL> "Engagement [is] not marriage."
 TI> "Engagement is not marriage."
 M> Because engagement is not marriage, it can be broken off.
 U> This proverb is used to comfort people who have experienced a cancelled engagement and reminds them of the truth that no marriage has taken place.
 I> This proverb teaches that a person should not take marriage for granted. While an engagement can be broken, marriage cannot. This proverb implicitly affirms the gravity and solemnity of marriage. It also shows how fragile engagement is.
 B> Jesus said, "Therefore, what God has joined, let no one separate" (Mt. 19:6). God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16).
 E> "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched."
 S> ENGAGEMENT, TERMINATION, COMFORT, CONSOLATION, GRAVITY OF MARRIAGE

108. *Nyina umo : tafyala mwanda*

(Mpashi 1963:52; Hoch 1968:85; Niemeyer 1982:316; Davoli 1990:331; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Mother one; does not bear [a] hundred."
 TI> "One mother cannot give birth to a hundred children."
 M> All people are related(?).
 U> This proverb is used to encourage men to have as many wives as possible so that they might acquire an abundance of children.
 I> This proverb teaches that strength is important to a community; the bigger the family, the stronger the community.
 S> MOTHERS, UNITY OF ALL PEOPLE, MANY CHILDREN, POLYGAMY

109. Pakwakana ubunga nasofyala : tapaba nsoni

(Mulenga 1982:69; Davoli 1990:332; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "When sharing [a] meal with [the] father-in-law; there [is] no shyness."
TI> "There is no shyness when sharing a meal with your father-in-law."
M> When you have a wife whose behaviour is not good, you should get rid of her even if her parents are good to you.
U> This proverb is applied to a married woman who behaves indecently.
I> This proverb teaches women to be decent in their dressing and to be thrifty in their spending. It also teaches them to look after their husbands very well.
B> "Let not yours be the outward adorning..." (1 Pet. 3:1-6).
S> DECENCY, THRIFTINESS, DIVORCE, BEHAVIOUR, DIVORCE, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, SHYNESS, MEAL, FATHER-IN-LAW

110. Pali icatunka inkuli : umuswema tauibutukila

(Mulenga 1982:68; Hoch 1968:86; Niemeyer 1982:316; Davoli 1990:332; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "There is [that] which tempts 'nkuli'; 'muswema' does not run on [its] own."
TI> "Some one must have moved you to come and insult me, because the 'muswema' (a type of snake) does not run without being prompted to do so."
M> If a child insults an elder, it is because someone has sent him to do so. Also, if your wife begins to be disrespectful toward you, then you know that there is another man promising to marry her.
U> This proverb is used as advice to a man who is having problems with his wife.
I> This proverb teaches the value of being alert to the influences of others on one's children and spouse.
S> INSULTS, ELDERS, CHILDREN, INSTIGATION, ADULTERY, UNFAITHFULNESS, SNAKE

111. "Pita uko" : te mubiyo wa nshila?

(WFBED 1947:1106; Mpanshi 1963:53; Hoch 1968:87; Niemeyer 1982:316; Davoli 1990:334; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Pass there; [is] not friend of journey."
TI> "'Pass over there'; is this the way a man talks to his companion on a journey?"
M> A married couple should travel together throughout the journey of life. Also, those who live together should work together. Married couples should stay together for life.
U> This proverb is used to encourage people to take an interest in helping others - showing by example.
I> This proverb teaches the value of exemplary behaviour.
S> COMPANIONSHIP, COOPERATION, COMMITMENT

112. *Shetani nga afitwa ukumone co alefwaya : atumako umwanakashi*

(Mpashi 1963:54; Hoch 1968:90; Niemeyer 1982:318; Davoli 1990:336; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "Satan, when fails to see what [he] wants; [he] sends [a] woman."
TI> "When the devil fails to get (or get) what he wants, he sends a woman."
M> A woman has power to make things happen.
U> This proverb is usually used in reference to a weak-willed woman because it is believed that women easily succumb to evil.
I> This proverb teaches the value that women are the root of all evil. It also teaches that women cannot be trusted.
S> DEVIL, WOMEN, TRUST

113. *Shilunga fye (nama) : shibwelele teeko (shibwelela kwiteko)*

(WFBED 1947:668; Mpashi 1963:54; Hoch 1968:90; Niemeyer 1982:318; Davoli 1990:336; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "They hunt only [animals]; they return to [the] lair."
TI> "Beasts wander about in the forest (for food), but they always come back to their lair."
M> Sooner or later, a wandering person comes back to his home.
U> This proverb is used to encourage people to respect their home village and their wives.
I> This proverb teaches that, though a man may have many girl-friends, he still respects his wife.
B> The prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32).
S> WANDERING, HOME, BEASTS, FOREST, LAIR, MARITAL RESPECT, HUNT

114. *Shilwa nabanyina(bo) : tashilwa nabaana*

(Mulenga 1982:72; Davoli 1990:336; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "They fight with mothers; they do not fight with children."
TI> "They fight with the mother, not with the children."
M> When a husband and a wife are fighting, they should not involve their children.
U> This proverb is used to advise a man and a woman who come to a marriage with children already to avoid quarreling in front of the children.
I> This proverb teaches that children should be kept away from marital quarrels. This proverb implicitly teaches that the children should not be punished along with their mother.
S> QUARRELS, CHILDREN, FIGHT, MOTHER

115. *Tabuca bumo : alubwile nkashi yakwe*

(WFBED 1947:127; Mpashi 1963:55; Hoch 1968:91; Niemeyer 1982:318; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "'He-who-bides-his-time'; surrendered sister of his own."
TI> "Mister 'Tabuca bumo' ('he-who-bides-his-time') delivered (redeemed) his sister (from slavery)."
M> All obstacles can be overcome with perseverance and patience.
U> This proverb is used by women to avoid an adulterous relationship.
I> This proverb teaches the value of patience and consistency.
A> Compare "Taifyala mulumba naiminina."
S> PERSEVERANCE, PATIENCE, OBSTACLES, ADULTERY, SLAVERY

116. Taifyala : mulumba naiminina

(WFBED 1947:833; Mpashi 1963:56; Hoch 1968:92; Niemeyer 1982:319; Davoli 1990:339; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "[The animal] does not give birth; hunter standing."
TI> "The animal does not calve while the hunter is looking."
M> According to the Bemba custom, a woman should not say "no" to a man contemptuously, but respectfully.
U> This proverb is used as a polite way of getting rid of a pesky and bothersome person. It is also used by a women to get rid of someone who is enticing her to commit adultery.
I> This proverb teaches the value of respecting another person's feelings even if his feelings are misplaced.
S> TEMPTATION, ADULTERY, RIDDING OF A PEST, ANIMAL, CALF, HUNTER, RESPECT FOR OTHERS FEELINGS

117. Takalya mpande : ikonkelelo lushinga

(Mulenga 1982:73; Davoli 1990:339; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Does not eat neck ornament; what to follow [is] fibre."
TI> "A man follows purity and good conduct in a woman."
M> Though a woman may be ugly, what counts is virginity and good behaviour.
U> This proverb is used to discourage spouses from divorce on the grounds of loss of interest in the other's attractiveness.
I> This proverb teaches the value of purity and good behaviour in young women.
S> PURITY, GOOD BEHAVIOUR, MATE SELECTION, ATTRACTIVENESS

118. Takwaba cibolya : ca bashimbe

(WFBED 1947:149; Mpashi 1963:56; Hoch 1968:92; Niemeyer 1982:319; Davoli 1990:340; Mukwavi)

- TL> "There [is] no deserted village of unwed people."
TI> "An old village site which was inhabited only by unmarried people has never been found yet."
M> One who has never married always has a chance of finding a mate.
U> This proverb is used to encourage those who are worrying about never getting married.
I> This proverb teaches that marriage is always possible; one should not lose hope of finding a mate.
B> "It is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Cor. 7:9).
S> MATE-FINDING, VILLAGE, PATIENCE, MARRIAGE

119. Tapafwa noko : apesa umbi

(WFBED 1947:321; Mpashi 1963:57; Hoch 1968:92; Niemeyer 1982:319; Davoli 1990:340; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Do not die mother; [there] comes another."
"Your mother cannot die [and] another come."
TI> "She who took the place of your mother is not worth your mother."

- M> One should love his mother and care for her, because no one can ever replace the love and care a mother gives.
- U> This proverb is used to rebuke adult children for not giving care and attention to their mother or both parents.
- I> This proverb teaches people to appreciate their mothers while they are still alive.
- S> MOTHERHOOD, MOTHER-IN-LAW, DEATH

120. Tucibweseshu uko bacibashile ; ilinkolobondo

(Mpashi 1963:58; Davoli 1990:343; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"Let us return where [it was] carved; sculpture."**
- TI> **"Let us take it where it came from, this sculpture."**
- M> When one divorces his wife for unexpected bad behaviour, he takes her to the parents.
- U> This proverb is used by a man who returns his wife to her parents saying, "This is just similar to a wife."
- I> This proverb teaches parents the value of teaching their daughters proper marital behaviour.
- S> DIVORCE, BAD WIVES, UNTAUGHT WOMEN/WIVES, SCULPTURE

121. Tuli Lunda : tupana umo twaishile

(Davoli 1990:344; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"We [are] Lunda; we marry how we came."**
- TI> **"We are the Lunda clan; we marry each other just as we came."**
- M> People will normally prefer to marry from within their own people group.
- U> This proverb encourages people to marry within their own tribe.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of marrying within one's own people group because it strengthens ethnic unity and stability.
- B> Though this proverb is used to promote tribal marriages, which often tend to cause trouble in certain churches, it can be a good bridge-point for communicating the value of marriage between Christians (1 Cor. 7:39).
- S> LUNDA, CLAN, MARRIAGE

122. Ubucende maafi : batwalo kutali

("...maafi: tuoso kutali" in Mpashi 1963:59; Hoch 1968:96; Niemeyer 1982:321; "...maafi: banya ukutali" in Davoli 1990:346; Bupe; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"Adultery (or fornication) [is] faeces; they take [it] away."**
"Adultery [is] dung; they [always] go [far] away."
- TI> **"Adultery, like faeces, must be done far away."**
"Adultery is like dung; one goes far to relieve oneself (hoping to keep it a secret)."
- M> Because adultery or fornication is as bad as faeces which cannot be kept near to people, it must be committed far away from one's neighbourhood. It should also not be the subject of boasting.
- U> This proverb is used to advise spouses, especially the man, to behave and not to cause confusion by having extramarital affairs in nearby places or with women who are close to his wife. It is also used with a person who is boasting of having an adulterous affair.
- I> This proverb teaches men and women to treat marriage with respect. It also teaches that

sexual immorality can bring great confusion among people. Does this proverb imply that unfaithfulness to one's marriage partner is all right so long as the unfaithful act is done far away?

- A> Compare "Amenso ya caalo : yaba na munfifi," which translates as "The eyes of the world are found even in the darkness," and "Amenso ya mukundikwa : yengi," which translates as "The eyes of witnesses are many."
- B> "Marriage should be honoured by all and their marriage bed kept pure" (Heb 13:4).
"You are the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).
"Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14).
- S> ADULTERY, SECRECY, FAECES, FORNICATION, PURITY, BOASTING

123. Ubucenjeshi bwa mpelembe : ulukasa luli panuma

(Hoch 1968:96; Mulenga 1982:75; also "Ubucenjeshi bwa kambili : icifulukutu cili panuma" in :74; Niemeyer 1982:321; "...bwa mpelembe, cifulukutu pa..." in Davoli 1990:346; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "[The] cunning of [the] antelope; [the] foot [is] behind."
"[The] cleverness of [the] roan antelope; [it is] that which struggles and kicks (as a wounded animal)."
- TI> "The cunning of the roan antelope precedes its fall (leaves foot-prints behind)."
- M> Even though you try to escape, the woman you committed adultery with will help to apprehend you.
- U> This proverb is applied to an adulterer who tries to escape but is caught later.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of being accountable and responsible for an adulterous affair.
- B> "Pride goes before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).
"Your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23).
- S> PRIDE, CUNNING, ESCAPE, ROAN ANTELOPE, FOOT-PRINTS, EVIDENCE, WITNESS, ADULTERY, RESPONSIBILITY

124. Ubuko bwakale : tabuloba

(Bupe)

- TL> "In-law relationship-former, does-not-extinct."
- TI> "Old in-law relationships do not end."
- M> When you marry into a particular family, you enter into an everlasting relationship.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage a man or a woman who once married into a particular family to continue relating positively with that family.
- I> This proverb teaches that a family bond is created in marriage such that even death or divorce cannot break it. Because of this on-going relationship, one can still help relatives of a former wife or husband when the need arises. This proverb teaches that it is possible to continue living in harmony with people even though a marriage has ended due to divorce or death.
- S> FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, IN-LAWS, ENDURING RELATIONSHIP

125. Ubuko bwatinine : insamfwe

(Davoli 1990:348; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "[The] in-law feared; [the] 'insamfwe.'"
- TI> "The in-laws feared the 'insamfwe' (tiny mushroom)."

- M> In-laws should never be near each other.
- U> This proverb is applied to in-laws who interfere in the life of a newly-wed couple.
- I> This proverb teaches that in-laws should respect each other. In fact, tradition requires that in-laws should not live together, or do things together, especially when a marriage is new. The reason is that the closer you are to in-laws, the more mistakes you notice. This may destroy your respect for them. Therefore, when you meet on the road, leave way for them.
- E> "Familiarity breeds contempt."
- S> IN-LAWS, RESPECT, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, MUSHROOM, FEAR

126. Ubukosa kanwa : tabuteka ng'anda

(WFBED 1947:79; Hoch 1968:97; Niemeyer 1982:322; Davoli 1990:348; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"Strong mouth (insolent talk); does not rule [a] house."**
- TI> **"One cannot live with a person who is always brawling out others."
"Insolence does not govern the home."**
- M> If you are the one who always must be right in the home, things cannot be peaceful.
- U> This proverb is applied to a couple that is constantly differing.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of listening and understanding at home.
- S> INSOLENCE, BRAWLING, HOME, PEACE

127. Ubukulu bwa nkoko : masako

(Mpashi 1963:60; Hoch 1968:98; Niemeyer 1982:323; Davoli 1990:348; Bupe; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"[The] greatness of [a] chicken [are] feathers."**
- TI> **"The greatness of the cock consists in its feathers."**
- M> As feathers of a chicken add to its size, so too do children add to the honour and respect given to spouses. The father of a big family is honoured.
- U> This proverb is used by a parent who was helped by his children.
- I> This proverb teaches that children are the pride of the home because they provide respect in society. Spouses aim at having more children because marriage without children is disrespected. It also teaches the value of family strength through numbers.
- B> "Sons are a heritage from the Lord... Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them" (Ps. 127:5). This view of God's providence inadvertently gives the impression that those with children are favoured by God while those who do not have children are cursed.
- S> HONOUR, CHILDREN, FOWL, ABORTION, FAMILY PLANNING, WEALTH, PRIDE, FEATHERS, GREATNESS

128. Ubukwebo bushimoneka : tabushitwa

(Mulenga 1982:77; Davoli 1990:349; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> **"Business [that is] not seen; [it is] not bought."**
- TI> **"The merchandise that is not seen cannot be marketed (sold)."**
- M> If you want to sell your produce, then take it to the market.
- U> This proverb is applied to a young girl who refuses to allow a young man to see and touch her breasts.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of marketing and exposure both for products and marriageable young women.
- S> BUSINESS, SAMPLING, MATE-SELECTION

129. *Ubula bumo : tabwisusha ng'anda*

(WFBED 1947:108; 1991:62; Hoch 1968:101; Niemeyer 1982:324; Davoli 1990:352; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Placenta one; [it] does not fill [a] house."
TI> "One placenta does not fill up the house."
M> There is always room for more children.
U> This proverb is applied to a man who wants many children from one wife.
I> This proverb teaches the importance of a strong family. It also implicitly teaches that for a man to have a large family, he will have to take on additional wives.
S> CHILDREN, LARGE FAMILY, PLACENTA, HOUSE, POLYGAMY

130. *Ubumi bwa lubalala : ni pa fipandwa fibili*

(Mulenga 1982:79; Davoli 1990:349; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "[The] life of [the] groundnut; [is] at shell two."
TI> "The life of a groundnut is between the two halves."
M> Marriage is made complete by two partners; they both have an integral part to play.
U> This proverb is used by the elderly to encourage newly weds to be mutually responsible in marriage.
I> This proverb teaches the value of mutual responsibility in marriage.
A> Compare "Akashama kali kamo : twasanguka twaba tubili" (WFBED 1947:437; Hoch 1968:13; Niemeyer 1982:275; Davoli 1990:277), which translates as "The groundnut was single when planted, but now it has become two," and means the natural hope of married life is having many children.
S> MARITAL RECIPROCITY, MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY, CHILDREN

131. *Ubuomba : bubike mpanda*

(WFBED 1947:99; Mpashi 1963:61; Hoch 1968:99; Niemeyer 1982:323; Davoli 1990:350; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Preserved; [is] reserved [by] diligent."
"Diligence in work put aside the evening meal."
TI> "The diligent housewife sets aside your evening meal."
M> A good housewife knows how to treat her husband well.
U> This proverb is used to encourage wives to keep special meals on hand for their husbands since they cannot eat their fill at a communal place. It is also used to educate young wives on how to look after their husbands.
I> This proverb teaches the value of looking after one's husband very well in order to keep the marriage secure.
A> Compare "Umulumbe kanye : balapapa" (Chama; Chitatu; Zulu), which translates as "A husband is a baby strapped on the back," and means wives should give all the care they can to make their husbands happy.
B> "A good wife, who can find?" (Proverbs 31:10).
S> GOOD WIFE, DINNER, ATTENTION TO NEEDS

132. *Ubusengusengu : bwatangulwile (kambaasa) akanwa*

(Hoch 1968:99; Mulenga 1982:80; Niemeyer 1982:324; Davoli 1990:350; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "[The] habit of changing; [it] divides [the] night-bird's mouth."

TI> "The night bird that kept on moving broke its eggs."

M> If you keep on changing jobs and wives, you will never gain wealth, or have children to care for you.

U> This proverb is used to rebuke men for frequent divorce and remarriage. It can also be used in a local court case in which a potential divorce is being discussed.

I> This proverb teaches the value of good planning so that one might accumulate wealth.

A> Compare "Ubunsengunsengu : bwabushishe ng'anse umukoshi" (Hoch 1968:99; Niemeyer 1982:323), which translates as "The habit of always changing deprived the crab of its neck."

S> JOB, WIFE, CHILDREN, PROSPERITY, EXCESSIVE CHANGE

133. *Ubuumba, bwa bushiku : bwaca, watumo mwana wa mubiyo*

(WFBED 1947:113; Davoli 1990:352; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "Sterility of night; [it] dawns, you send child of friend."

TI> "Sterility in a woman is felt at night; in the morning she sends another's child on an errand."

M> While she can find a neighbour's child to help in the daytime, a woman who has no children has no one to send on an errand when necessary at night.

U> This proverb is used to comment on the sad state of affairs for a barren woman.

I> This proverb admits to the difficulties faced by childless parents.

S> CHILDREN, BARRENNESS, WOMAN, NIGHT, DAWN, ERRAND, LONELINESS

134. *Ubwali bumo : bulonsha*

(WFBED 1947:1042; Hoch 1968:102; Niemeyer 1982:325; Davoli 1990:353; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "Nshima one; [it] makes you thin."

TI> "Always eating the same kind of mush makes a person thin."

M> Eating the same thing, or eating always with the same company, is not advantageous. Also, eating food from the same wife will make you thin.

U> This proverb is used to encourage husbands to have more than one wife so that they can eat a variety of food.

I> This proverb teaches the value of polygamy, that having more than one wife is right.

A> Compare "Intekwe imo : icita icifine," and "Icakufvala cimo : cilatendusha."

E> "Variety is the spice of life."

S> VARIETY, POLYGAMY, ADULTERY, FOOD, THINNESS

135. *Ubwali bwa kumako : tabatalalilikilako mwana*

(Mulenga 1982:82; Davoli 1990:353; Chama; Mukwavi)

TL> "Nshima of in-laws; you do not stop crying child."

TI> "You cannot stop your child from crying for food by putting confidence in them."

M> One should not rely on hand-outs: one should love his own wife.

- U> This proverb is applied to a man who is too shy to ask for food on behalf of his child.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of self-reliance and hard work.
- S> SELF-RELIANCE, CHILDREN, FOOD, HARD WORK, WIFE, CRYING, IN-LAWS, NSHIMA

136. Ubwali bwa mbusa : bwa kulya ukampwike

(Davoli 1990:233; Chama)

- TL> "'Nshima' of [the] small clay pot; [it] is eaten [by] who[ever] is clever."
- TI> "The food of wedding advisors can be eaten by clever ones."
- M> Some opportunities can only be achieved through craftiness.
- U> This proverb is used to advise a person to be resourceful.
- I> This proverb teaches that both positive and negative modes of resourcefulness are necessary, as the circumstances warrant it.
- S> FOOD, WEDDING ADVISOR, CLEVERNESS, CRAFTINESS, MBUSA

137. Ubwalwa kwasasa : mukumbwa ushiliko

(Hoch 1968:102; Mulenga 1982:82; Niemeyer 1982:325; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Beer sour; brewed absence."
- TI> "Sour beer desires the one who is not present."
- M> People covet what is out of reach, but are bored when it is near. This proverb describes a person who goes to drink sour beer but spits it out.
- U> This proverb is applied to a person who thinks there are no problems in marriage.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of making sober-minded decisions in marriage.
- S> COVETOUSNESS, DECISIONS

138. Ubwalwa bwingi : ubucende no lubili takuli

(WFBED 1947:116; Hoch 1968:102; Niemeyer 1982:325; Davoli 1990:353; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Beer plenty; adultery and fights absence."
- TI> "Plenty of beer prevents adultery and fights."
- M> Drunk people are too busy getting drunk to think about such things as fights and adultery.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage people to cover up their problems by getting drunk.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of drunkenness as an anesthetic for life's problems.
- S> DRUNKENNESS, REALITY AVOIDANCE, ADULTERY, FIGHTS, BEER, PASSIVITY

139. Ubwamba ushifwika : tabwimya mutima

(WFBED 1947:117; Hoch 1968:103; Davoli 1990:354; Bupe; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> [The] nakedness you do not dress; [it] will not arouse [the] heart."
- TI> "You can't lust for the nakedness you do not dress."
"Nakedness does not bother those who are not concerned about it."
- M> You can only be attracted to things you expended effort on. When you are foolish, you do not take things seriously.
- U> This proverb is used to discourage men from being attracted to women or things which do not belong to them. Also, this proverb is applied to a person who disrespects himself.

- I> This proverb teaches the value of being contented with what you have.
 S> NAKEDNESS, LUST, CONTENTMENT

140. Ukukwata kana kamo : kutanganina na Lesa

(WFBED 1947:1355; Mpashi 1963:66; Hoch 1968:66; Niemeyer 1982:304; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "To have child one; contend with God."
 "To have only one child; [it is] to do the same task as God."
 TI> "To have only one child is to contend with God as to whom will belong the child."
 "Having one child, you can overlook God."
 M> There is no security in having only one child, because if that sole child dies, none will remain.
 U> This proverb is used as advice during a marriage ceremony and discourages few children.
 I> This proverb teaches the value of having as many children as possible. It also teaches that a couple should not value the number of children over their value of God. This proverb also teaches that having no children denies the validity of the marriage as having a significant part in society.
 A> Compare variant, "Akana kamo : kutanganina na Lesa" (Mpashi 1963:4; Davoli 1990:215; Chama; Mubanga), which translates literally as, "One child is shared with God."
 S> CHILDREN, GOD, FAMILY, IDOLATRY, MARITAL SECURITY, BARRENNESS

141. Ukulengula kwa mupini : kwenendela

(WFBED 1947:254; Mpashi 1963:66; Hoch 1968:107; Niemeyer 1982:328; Chama; Mukwavi; Zulu)

- TL> "[The] spotting of [an axe] handle; to go."
 TI> "Spotting an axe handle means to go and look for it in the bush."
 M> If one wants to settle in a village or marry a woman, he must first go and see if it is possible or not.
 U> This proverb is used as advice to one who is planning marriage or courtship.
 I> This proverb teaches the value of planning ahead of a venture.
 S> COURTSHIP, AXE HANDLE, BUSH, PLANNING, SETTLEMENT

142. Ukuba kwa muko : kumwena ukafyala mwana

(WFBED 1947:805; Hoch 1968:111; Davoli 1990:361; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Being of in-law; to be seen bearing [a] child."
 TI> "To become a member of the family (or clan), the son-in-law must first beget a child."
 M> If a man does not produce a child, his wife can be taken away from him.
 U> This proverb is used to induce a son-in-law to get quickly down to the business of having children so that he might acquire the approval of his in-laws.
 I> This proverb teaches that having children is very important.
 S> CHILDREN, FAMILY, ACCEPTANCE, IN-LAW, FERTILITY

143. Ukupandilo muko icishololo : kano umwana nanaka

(WFBED 1947:226; Mpashi 1963:67; Hoch 1968:109; Niemeyer 1982:330; Davoli 1990:362; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Produce for in-law edible 'chishololo' larvae; unless daughter [is] humble."

- TI> "You supply your mother-in-law with delicacies (the larvae of the wood-borer) only if you are happy with your wife."
 "To produce a 'cishololo' (dainty) for your mother-in-law, means that her child (your wife) is well broken in (obedient)."
- M> There is no need to be good to your in-laws when their child is stubborn. One does not supply his mother-in-law with luxuries unless he is pleased with his wife.
- U> This proverb is used to advise the bridegroom against communicating to his in-laws that everything is all right in the marriage when in actuality it is not. It advises that he should not give his in-laws gifts if the wife is not obedient.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of wives looking after their husbands very well. It also teaches the value of being convinced of a thing before acting on it.
- S> IN-LAWS, MOTHER-IN-LAW, DELICACIES, WIFE, HUSBAND CARE, CHILD, DAINY, CERTITUDE, EDIBLE LARVAE

144. *Ukupe ng'umba : (kudemwa) citemwo mwine*

(Hoch 1968:111; Niemeyer 1982:331; Davoli 1990:363; Chama)

- TL> "To marry [a] barren [woman]; [it is] to love yourself."
- TI> "He who wishes, may marry a barren woman."
- M> Those who marry barren women should be ready to defend themselves with their reasons for doing so as it may bring isolation from others.
- U> This proverb is used to defend a man's choice to marry a barren woman, or to remain married to a woman who produces no children. This proverb is also used to defend a bad choice of a marriage partner.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of making the right choice in marriage, even if having no children is part of that choice.
- S> BARRENNESS, CHOICE, MARRIAGE

145. *Ukutangalila kubili : kwaipeye cimbwi*

(WFBED 1947:1354; Hoch 1968:111; Niemeyer 1982:331; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Stretching legs [on] two sides; killed [the] hyena."
- TI> "Stretching its legs between two roads killed the hyena."
- M> A reference to an incident in a fable in which the hyena, wanting to follow the scent on two different roads, splits himself in two. No one can do two opposite things at the same time.
- U> This proverb is said to a polygamist who, in trying to please too many wives, gets himself in trouble.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of concentrating on one task or one wife.
- A> Compare "Uwaikete fibili : afvile ku menshi" (WFBED 1947:321; Mpashi 1963:89; Hoch 1968:138; Niemeyer 1982:347; Davoli 1990:395), which translates as "The one who grasped two things, drowned," and "Uwaoba amato yabili : alashika" (WFBED 1947:119; Hoch 1968:140; Niemeyer 1982:349), which translates as "The one who paddles two canoes at the same time, will drown." Compare also "Cimbwi afvile : ntangalalo" (Davoli 1990:238; 1992:20) which translates as "The hyena died doing the splits." All these mean that going in two directions at the same time, or having divided loyalties, can be fatal.
- B> "No one can serve two masters" (Mt. 6:24).
- S> DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS, POLYGAMY, INDECISION, COMMITMENT, LEGS, HYENA, DEATH, STRETCHING

146. Ukuupila ntuntushe : na bana ni bantuntushe

(WFBED 1947:1466; Hoch 1968:111; Niemeyer 1982:331; Davoli 1990:363; Chama)

- TL> "To marry fat; also children [are] fat."
- TI> "He who marries the fat man's daughter, will also have fat children."
- M> Children take after their parents. Also, a woman who marries a fat man will become fat herself.
- U> This proverb is used to describe the results of a marriage to a wealthy man. It is also used by the relatives to advise a young man wanting to get married that his choice should be advantageous.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of marriage to someone who is economically superior.
- E> "Like father, like son."
"A chip off the old block."
- S> FAT CHILDREN, FAMILY RESEMBLANCE, MARRIAGE, FAT DAUGHTER, UPWARD MOBILITY, OPPORTUNITY

147. Ukwaye (ukwaile) nongo : ne miiko

(WFBED 1947:982; Mpashi 1963:69; Hoch 1968:111; Niemeyer 1982:332; Davoli 1990:365; Chama; Mukwavi)

- TL> "Where goes [the clay] pot; also [goes the] cooking stick."
- TI> "The pallet follows the pot."
"Where goes the pot; there goes the pallet (for mixing the mush)."
- M> Where the husband settles, there the wife settles also.
- U> This proverb is used to inform a wife that it is customary for the wife to follow the husband wherever he may choose to go. After a marriage between two Christians, it is usual for the wife to begin attending the husband's church.
- I> This proverb teaches the people the value of belonging and permanence in marriage.
- S> SETTLING, HOME, POT, PALLET, SUBMISSION

148. Ulemekela amabele : uleti tayakakopoke

(Davoli 1990:367; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "You are proud of breasts; you say they [will] not flap."
- TI> "You are proud of your standing breasts as if they will not flap."
- M> You should not be proud of your beauty, because it will fade with time.
- U> This proverb is used to rebuke beautiful and proud young ladies who are vainly imagining that they will remain attractive beyond their youth, or who are using their attractiveness to allure men to have sex with them.
- I> This proverb teaches that, though one might enjoy youthful beauty, it will fade with time, and it should not be relied upon later in life. This proverb implicitly teaches attractive people to be especially humble about their appearance.
- S> PRIDE, BREASTS, AGING, HUMILITY

149. *Ulutako : lwalile cibola*

(Mpashi 1963:71; Davoli 1990:371; Chama; Zulu)

TL> **"Buttock; ate impotent [man]."**

TI> **"The buttock ate the impotent man."**

M> The impotent man who sat in the company of women all the time was found to have impregnated one of the women who was married to another man.

U> This proverb is used to encourage women to be careful about apparently safe situations.

I> This proverb teaches that one should not believe everything that is heard.

E> "Don't believe anything you hear, and only half of what you see."

S> IMPOTENCE, BUTTOCK, EATING, ADULTERY, DECEPTION

150. *Umucende : tapoka ng'anda*

(Mpashi 1963:71; Hoch 1968:115; Niemeyer 1982:334; Davoli 1990:373; Zulu)

TL> **"[The] adulterer; [he] does not receive [a] house."**

TI> **"The adulterer does not get the house."**

M> A child born from adultery belongs to the man whose wife misbehaved.

U> This proverb is applied to a marriage that is on the verge of breaking up over marital unfaithfulness.

I> This proverb teaches that a third party to your marriage cannot break the marriage up. It is not the adulteress nor the child born of adultery that will break up the marriage; what will break up the marriage is the way the adultery is dealt with. It also teaches that, if the husband is having an affair, there is probably some kind of problem at home causing him to be unfaithful. If the wife is cautious in her reaction to the affair and acts with patience, care and understanding, she may be able to get at the root of the problem, deal with it and thereby salvage the marriage.

S> ADULTERY, CHILDREN, RECONCILIATION, HOME, MARITAL SECURITY

151. *Umuko wakale (uwakokola) : asanguke ndoshi*

(WFBED 1947:805; Mpashi 1963:72; Hoch 1968:116; Niemeyer 1982:334; Davoli 1990:297; Chama; Zulu)

TL> **"[The] In-law of old (for a long time); [he] turns [a] witch (or a sorcerer)."**

TI> **"An in-law of old standing is like an old witch (because it is impossible to get rid of him, he must be tolerated)."**

M> When you stay for a long time with someone, he may get tired of your presence.

U> This proverb is used when a person experiences misfortune in a visiting place.

I> This proverb teaches that a visitor should not overstay the welcome.

E> "Don't wear out your welcome."

"Guests and fish both stink after three days."

S> SON-IN-LAW, WITCH, VISITORS, OVERSTAYING THE WELCOME

152. Umulandu wa ciba : upingula uli ne mono

(WFBED 1947:145; Mpashi 1963:74; Hoch 1968:118; Niemeyer 1982:335; Davoli 1990:374; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] affair of [the] turtle-dove; [is] judged [by the one] who has [the] castor-bean."
TI> "The ring-necked turtle-dove's affair is settled by those who have castor seed."
M> One must have marriageable daughters in order to settle a match. Also, you should think over whatever you do so that you can be sure you have all the necessary means to accomplish a task.
U> This proverb is used for self-evaluation.
I> This proverb teaches that you must be credible to preside over sensitive matters. It also teaches that you should avoid getting involved in situations where you have no experience or knowledge.
A> Compare "Imbuto nce," "Ukupangila nsofu" and "Akabwa ka mushi."
S> TURTLE-DOVE, PROBLEM, CASTOR-SEED, CREDIBILITY, PLANNING, PREPAREDNESS

153. Umulume kanya : balapapa

(Chama; Chitatu, Zulu)

- TL> "Husband baby; you carry on [the] back."
TI> "A husband is a baby strapped on the back."
M> Wives should give all the care they can to make their husbands happy.
U> This proverb applies to a wife who likes to complain about her husband's behaviour or appearance.
I> This proverb teaches that a wife has the power to keep her husband at home and away from his friends. By keeping the house clean, cooking his favourite food, looking attractive for him, and keeping the children clean and well-fed, a man will happily stay at home. This proverb also teaches that a husband's best friend should be his wife.
A> Compare "Ubuomba : bubike mpanda" (WFBED 1947:99; Mpashi 1963:61; Hoch 1968:99; Niemeyer 1982:323; Davoli 1990:350), which translates as "The diligent housewife sets aside your evening meal," and means a good housewife knows how to take care of her husband.
S> HARMONY IN THE HOME, HUSBAND CARE, LIFE TOGETHER, BABY, BACK

154. Umunani umo : ube cifukushi

(Hoch 1968:120; Chama)

- TL> "Relish one; [it] is disgust."
TI> "One and the same relish causes disgust."
M> Change in diet is necessary to maintain interest in eating.
U> This proverb is used to describe any situation characterised as monotonous. It may be used by an elderly person to discourage a man from staying with only one wife.
I> This proverb teaches the value of variety in life, and can be used to encourage adultery or polygamy.
A> Compare "Umunona pamo : ukalifye linso" (Mpashi 1963:76; Hoch 1968:121; Davoli 1990:377), which translates as "Seeing the same thing all the time hurts the eyes."
S> RELISH, CHANGE, VARIETY, ADULTERY, POLYGAMY

155. Umuntu umo : tafwa lupango

(Hoch 1968:121; Niemeyer 1982:337; Chama)

- TL> "Person one; does not die bride-wealth."
"One person does not die from compensation."
TI> "One single person is not worth a bride-price."
M> One who hates everyone is not worthy of being cared about.
U> This proverb can be used to describe a man who has chosen a path to follow that his friends disagree with.
I> This proverb teaches the value of listening to and heeding the advice of others.
S> MAN, BRIDE-PRICE, HATEFULNESS, ADVICE, SELF-CENTEREDNESS

156. Umununko wanswa : umo

(Mulenga 1982:99; Davoli 1990:377; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "Smell of edible 'nswa' insect; same."
TI> "The smell of the 'Inswa' (insect) is the same."
M> Women are all alike.
U> This proverb is used to discourage men from divorcing their wives.
I> This proverb teaches that, since all women are essentially alike, a man should be content with the one he has and should avoid being allured by what appears to be a singularly unique alternative.
S> WOMEN, INSECT, SMELL, UNIFORMITY, DIVORCE

157. Umupini ukulangile (ukwebele) umwanakashi : libwelelo (ubwelelwa)

(WFBED 1947:121; Mpashi 1963:77; Hoch 1968:123; Niemeyer 1982:338; Davoli 1990:379; Bupe; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] handle shown by [a] woman; [it is a] return."
"[The] tool handle shown by a woman returns (is returned)."
"[The] handle the woman told you about [can be sought for] again."
T> "The handle of a tool a woman has shown you, will come back."
"The handle wood chosen by a wife is worth reconsidering."
M> A wise man also listens to what women tell him. Although women are not experts in male crafts, their advice is nevertheless helpful. Also, one should never say, "I do not need this," or "such a thing will never happen to me."
U> This proverb is used as advice to husbands to encourage them to listen to their wives' advice in order to avoid making mistakes, especially in matters where women have special insight.
I> This proverb teaches the value of interdependence. Men do not know everything in the world; therefore, wives should be consulted when the man must make certain decisions. Even though women are often despised, men should reflect on their advice.
B> "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph. 5:21).
S> LISTENING, WOMEN, ADVICE, INTERDEPENDENCE, CONSULTATION, SUBMISSION, LIFE TOGETHER, TOOL HANDLE, WISDOM

158. *Umushi ushili baice, taukula : umushi wa baice ulakula*

(WFBED 1947:878; Hoch 1968:124; Niemeyer 1982:338; Davoli 1990:380; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[A] village not of children, does not grow; [but a] village of children grows."
TI> "A village without children, will not grow, but a village with children will extend."
M> You should have many children.
U> This proverb is used to encourage a house to have many children.
I> This problem teaches that children are not only valuable to a family, but also to the village of which they are part.
B> "Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of children" (Ps. 127:5).
S> MANY CHILDREN, VILLAGE, GROWTH

159. *Umusu wa mwanakashi : taucila luputa*

(Mpashi 1963:78; Hoch 1968:124; Niemeyer 1982:339; "Imisu ya baanakashi : tauciluka luputa" in Davoli 1990:265; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "[The] urine of [a] woman does not surpass [the] mound (or ridge)."
M> "The wife should not try to out-speak her husband."
"The woman should capitulate in a dispute with a man."
U> This proverb is applied to a wife who is too talkative, defensive and outspoken.
I> This proverb teaches women to be submissive in a marital quarrel even if she is right. It is better to keep quiet than to continue exchanging words which may end up in physical abuse.
A> Compare variant "Umwanakashi tacilusha misu luputa" (Mpashi 1963:82), which translates as, "A girl does not urinate over a mound."
B> "It is better to be quiet and thought a fool than to open your mouth and prove it" (Prov. 17:28).
E> "Silence is golden."
"A woman is to be seen and not heard."
S> DISPUTES, SILENCE, ACQUIESCENCE, DOMINANCE, LIFE TOGETHER, URINE, WOMAN, MOUND

160. *Umutekatima : uwabushishe konge amabula*

(WFBED 1947:103; Mpashi 1963:79; Hoch 1968:15; Niemeyer 1982:339; Davoli 1990:381; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "Patience; deprived [the] cotton tree of leaves."
Laziness in answering a call; [it] deprived [the sisal-like] plant of leaves."
TI> "Lack of eagerness (ardour) deprived the cotton tree of its leaves."
M> Lack of ardour renders one inefficient in courtship. When God distributed leaves to the trees, the cotton tree was late through laziness, and so it was deprived of its leaves. Lack of zeal leads to insufficiency in service.
U> This proverb is used as a warning to the young man.
I> This proverb teaches that the young man must be serious in his pursuit of his bride during courtship or he may lose her.
S> COURTSHIP, TREE, DETERMINATION, LACK OF ZEAL, LAZINESS

161. *Umuti wa fikansa : kutalala*

(Mpashi 1963:80; Hoch 1968:126; Niemeyer 1982:340; Davoli 1990:382; Chama; Zulu)

TL> "[The] medicine of dispute; silence."

TI> "The best medicine is to stop a dispute with silence."

M> In marriage, it is only one person who speaks.

U> This proverb is used when there is a bitter exchange of words.

I> This proverb teaches the value of silence on the part of one party in order for a quarrel to cool down.

S> DISPUTES, SILENCE, SOLUTION

162. *Umwala wamoneka : taonaula lukasu*

(Mpashi 1963:81; Davoli 1990:383; Chama; Zulu)

TL> "[The] stone [that is] seen; [it] does not destroy [the] hoe."

TI> "The stone that is seen while digging does not break the hoe."

M> A problem that is noticed beforehand should be dealt with before it gets out of hand.

U> This proverb is applied to people courting.

I> This proverb teaches that a problem noticed and likely to persist should compel a person to discontinue the relationship, especially if it is progressing toward marriage.

S> STONE, HOE, DIGGING, COURTSHIP, EARLY WARNING, CANCELLATION

163. *Umwanakashi male : tayeta mpombo*

(Mpashi 1963:82; Hoch 1968:130; Niemeyer 1982:342; Mubanga; Zulu)

TL> "A woman [is] finger-millet; [it] does not call [a] duiker."

TI> "As a duiker goes for millet in a plantation, so also men go after women," or "Women attract men as millet attracts duikers."

M> A woman should not entice a man. Traditionally, men are supposed to take the initiative in proposing marriage to women.

U> This proverb is used to encourage a man to take the initial step in proposing marriage to a woman.

I> The duiker does not need to be invited to eat millet; it seeks out and eats the millet naturally. So too, the man is expected to take the first step in marriage proposal. This proverb teaches that women are neither to propose marriage to men nor are they to go to the house of a single man who is not a relative; otherwise, she will be considered as a prostitute. Homes of single men are avoided at all costs. If a girl is found to be pregnant, because of this proverb, among other things, it is automatically assumed that sex was the man's idea and he insisted on it, and, in all likelihood, he will have to pay damages to the girl's family because the pregnancy is always the man's fault.

A> Compare the variant, "Amale tayeta mpombo" (Mpashi 1963:8) which is merely an abbreviation of the above proverb and is used to indict a man in the case of pregnancy.

S> WOMEN, ENTICEMENT, ATTRACTION, ENGAGEMENT, PARENTAL INSTRUCTIONS, COMPANY WITH THE OPPOSITE SEX, DISCRETION, FINGER-MILLET, DUIKER

164. *Umwanakashi-ndema, cumbu : ukucolola kukontola*

(Mpashi 1963:82; Davoli 1990:384; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "Woman handicapped, potato; to straighten [it is] to break."
TI> "A stubborn woman is like a sweet-potato; to stretch it is to break it."
M> Leave a woman alone if her behaviour cannot be changed.
U> This proverb is applied to a woman who refuses to change despite the advice and disciplinary measures taken against her.
I> This proverb teaches that a wife who is stubborn, talkative and does not listen to the husband, even when beaten, is best left alone because in trying to correct her further, you may do more harm than good.
B> "Discipline a wise man and he will love you; discipline a fool and he will hate you even more" (Prov. 9:8).
S> CORRECTION, ADVICE, STUBBORNNESS, LIFE TOGETHER, WOMAN, SWEET-POTATO, BREAK

165. *Umwanakashi : tapikula cisumbe*

(Mpashi 1963:83; Hoch 1968:130; Niemeyer 1982:342; Davoli 1990:384; Chama; Zulu)

- TL> "[A] woman; [she] does not weave [a] big net."
TI> "A woman cannot make a big net."
M> A woman is in no way more than a man.
U> This proverb is applied to a woman who is seeking equality with a man.
I> This proverb teaches that women who want to stubbornly contest with men should be left to prove how far they can go on their own.
S> WOMEN, NET, INEQUALITY

166. *Umwana mwaume : butala bwa ku lukungu*

(Hoch 1968:129; Niemeyer 1982:342; Davoli 1990:385; Chama)

- TL> "Child male; grain-bin of veranda."
TI> "A son is like the grain-bin on the veranda."
M> A son leaves his parents when he gets married.
U> This proverb is used to remind parents of the customary practice of a male child leaving his parents' home when he is married.
I> This proverb teaches the inevitability of male children leaving home. This proverb also implicitly teaches that female children are more desirable because they usually remain with the family of the parents.
S> SONS, GRAIN-BIN, VERANDA

167. *Umwana wa ng'wena : akulila kwitete (ku matete)*

(WFBED 1947:1033; Mpashi 1963:81; Hoch 1968:130; Niemeyer 1982:342; Davoli 1990:386; Chama; Mubanga)

- TL> "[The] child of [the] crocodile; [it] grows among [the] reeds."
TI> "The young [female] crocodile grows up in the reeds."
M> You should get experience before you marry.

- U> This proverb is used as a way of excusing the immoral custom of allowing a young girl to sleep in her fiance's hut.
- I> This proverb implicitly teaches that young people should engage in immoral sexual activities in order to acquire experience they will use later in marriage.
- S> FORNICATION, CROCODILE, REEDS, IMMORALITY

168. Uwafyala : taliwa na mbwa

(Mpashi 1963:89; Hoch 1968:138; Niemeyer 1982:347; Davoli 1990:394; Chama)

- TL> "[The one] who bears [children]; [he is] not eaten by [a] dog."
- TI> "The one who begets children, will not be eaten by dogs."
- M> One who has children will not be forsaken by them.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage a couple to have many children.
- I> This proverb teaches that children are a valuable asset especially in that they will take care of their parents when they are old.
- S> CHILDREN, SECURITY, DOGS, EATING

169. Uwaikete fibili : afwile ku menshi

(WFBED 1947:321; Mpashi 1963:89; Hoch 1968:138; Niemeyer 1982:347; Davoli 1990:395; Chama)

- TL> "[The one] who held two things; [he] died in [the] water."
- TI> "The one who grasped two things, drowned."
- M> If one tries to do two opposite things at the same time, he may lose both.
- U> This proverb can be applied to a polygamist.
- I> This proverb teaches that being double-minded and split in devotion is dangerous.
- A> Compare "Uwaoba amato yabili : alashika" and "Cimbwi afwile ntangalalo."
- E> "Too many irons in the fire."
- B> "You cannot serve two masters" (Mt. 6:24).
"The double-minded man" (Jm. 1:7f).
- S> POLYGAMY, OVER-COMMITMENT, WATER, DEATH, ADULTERY

170. Uwaingila mu mushitu : tomfwa nswaswa

(WFBED 1947:1004; Mpashi 1963:89; Hoch 1968:139; Niemeyer 1982:348; Davoli 1990:395; Sumbwa 1993:4; Chama)

- TL> "[He] who enters [the] thicket (a grove of high evergreen trees in a swampy place); [he] does not hear sounds (foot-steps)."
- TI> "The one who enters the thicket, does not fear and turn back when he hears sticks breaking (he does not pay attention to the sound of foot-steps, because his attention is directed toward safety)."
- M> A person who starts something should finish it no matter how difficult or discouraging it may turn out to be. Also, he who marries the daughter of a noisy family is compelled to ignore the noise made by his in-laws.
- U> This proverb is used to encourage a married couple to keep working at their marriage despite the difficulties.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of commitment, courage and tolerance.
- S> COURAGE, DILIGENCE, COMMITMENT, TOLERANCE, THICKET

171. *Uwakana Musa : akana ne mpango shakwe*

("...ukumuluka ne nsomo shakwe shalabwela/...ne mpango shakwe balawesha" in WFBED, 1947:869; Mpashi 1963:90; "...shakwe balakana" in Hoch 1968:139; Niemeyer 1982:348; "...musa, ne nsomo shakwe shalabwela" in Davoli 1990:395; Chama)

- TL> "[The one] who refuses Musa (a legendary figure); [he] refuses also [a] bride-wealth which belongs to him (or fees for the traditional doctor)."
- TI> "The one who refused to plait Musa's (or the bridegroom's) hair, must give back what (or the bride price) he received in payment."
- M> The father who refuses to give his daughter to the bridegroom-to-be must give back the presents.
- U> This proverb is used when settling marriage disputes. It is spoken to the parents of the woman if they are the ones who desire the divorce.
- I> This proverb teaches the value of financial justice in the event a marriage agreement is voided.
- S> BRIDE PRICE, HAIR, PLAITING, JUSTICE

172. *Uwamabele : talangwa nshila*

(WFBED 1947:547; Mpashi 1963:90; Hoch 1968:140; Niemeyer 1982:348; Davoli 1990:397; Chama)

- TL> "[She] who has breasts; [she is] not shown [the] pathway."
- TI> "One must not show the way to an adult girl."
- M> If a man helps a young, unmarried woman, he is suspected of having fallen in love with her.
- U> This proverb is applied to a man who has expressed interest in a girl, or is said by a woman to a man who is showing her too much attention. Also, this proverb is said by a girl who is peeved because she is being treated like a child.
- I> This proverb encourages the man to be assertive in pursuing a girl for marriage.
- S> SUSPICION, FORNICATION, HELP, ADULT GIRL, FLIRTATION, UNFAITHFULNESS, MATURITY, BREASTS, WOMAN, ROAD

173. *Uwaoba amato yabili : alashika*

(WFBED 1947:119; Hoch 1968:140; Niemeyer 1982:349; Davoli 1990:397; Chama)

- TL> "[He] who paddles canoes two; sinks."
- TI> "The one who paddles two canoes (at the same time), will drown (or will sink)."
- M> A person cannot be committed to two divergent purposes at the same time.
- U> This proverb is used to discourage double-mindedness and divided loyalty in general, and discourages the temptation toward polygamy.
- I> This proverb teaches that one should not be committed to two divergent purposes simultaneously. It implicitly teaches that one should choose between divergent options and pursue only one.
- A> Compare "Uvaikete fibili afvile ku menshi," which translates as "The one who held two things, died in the water."
- B> One cannot serve two masters (Mt. 6:24).
- S> ALLEGIANCE, COMMITMENT, LOYALTY, AMBIVALENCE, ADULTERY, CANOES, DROWNING

174. *Uwauma nafyala : amumina limo*

(WFBED 1947:718; Mpashi 1963:91; Hoch 1968:141; Niemeyer 1982:349; Davoli 1990:398; Sumbwa 1993:7; Chama)

- TL> "[He] who beats mother-in-law; beats [her] once [for all]."
TI> "The one who beats his mother-in-law, beats her once and thoroughly."
M> Because he knows what he is in for, the son-in-law makes the best of beating his mother-in-law while he can get away with it, because it will cause his marriage to be broken.
U> This proverb is used in settling marital disputes. It is applied to the parents of the woman who are interfering in the marriage.
I> Judgment for an offense is not based on the damage caused by the offense as much as it is based on the nature of the offensive act itself. In other words, stealing is a serious offense despite the amount stolen. Also, lying is a serious breach of trust no matter how small the lie may be in terms of its direct consequences. One would not beat his mother-in-law, but, if per chance, he dared, he might as well beat her to death, because one blow is as bad as murder.
B> Sin is sin, no matter what the sin is (Jm. 2:8-13).
S> JUSTICE, MOTHER-IN-LAW, BEATING

175. *Wa bunga : tomwa*

(WFBED 1947:1490; Hoch 1968:143; Niemeyer 1982:350; Chama)

- TL> "[She] who has meal flour; [is] not beaten."
TI> "She who prepares meals (who has flour at hand), is not beaten."
M> A good housewife has nothing to fear.
U> This proverb is used to commend a good wife after she performs well on behalf of her husband.
I> This proverb teaches the value of a wife taking especially good care of her husband.
S> HOME-MAKING, COOKING, FEAR, MEAL, BEATING

176. *We muko wandi : mucinshi waba mukanwa*

(Bupe; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> "You my in-laws, respect [is] in the mouth."
TI> "Words show how much you respect the in-laws."
M> Respect for your in-laws is measured or judged by what you say and how you say it.
U> This proverb applies to an in-law who speaks disrespectfully to the other in-laws.
I> This proverb teaches that words are powerful. Therefore, when talking to an in-law, you had better use your words carefully and wisely so as to avoid being perceived as rude or disrespectful.
B> "Honor thy father and mother" (Ex. 20:12).
S> IN-LAWS, TONGUE, RESPECT, MOUTH

177. *Wilabala (wilatuka) utuka muko : taulalila*

(WFBED 1947:805; Hoch 1968:144; Niemeyer 1982:351; Davoli 1990:407; Chama)

- TL> "Do not insult [the] in-laws; before you enjoy."
"Do not strut in front of the in-laws; before you have cried."

- TI> **"Do not abuse your in-laws before you are married."**
 M> Prudence is always best no matter what activity one may choose to be involved in.
 U> This proverb is used as pre-marital advice to a young man.
 I> This proverb teaches that it is imprudent to offend or annoy your in-laws before you are married because the marriage may be called off.
 S> PRUDENCE, IN-LAWS, MARRIAGE

178. *Wilabilila ku bantu bobbe : icupo cibusa*

(Davoli 1990:407; Chama; Chitatu; Zulu)

- TL> **"Do not forget of people yours; marriage [is] friendship."**
 TI> **"Do not forget about your people; marriage is just a friendship."**
 M> When married, you should not neglect your relatives; while marriage is a friendship that can be broken, family relationships cannot.
 U> This proverb is used with a married couple warning them against breaking their family ties.
 I> This proverb teaches that one's commitment to family is greater than one's commitment to one's spouse. It also teaches the need for retaining family connections during significant times, e.g. funerals. This proverb also implicitly teaches that one's marriage can be damaged, if not terminated, if relationships with the extended family are not positively maintained.
 E> "Blood is thicker than water."
 S> FAMILY EXPECTATIONS, LOYALTY, NEGLECT, MARRIAGE, FRIENDSHIP

The Heart of Christian Communication

(Romans 10:9-15, 17)

Sends

Someone must be sent to a people in order to proclaim the word of God to them.



Proclaims

The one who is sent must declare the good news of the word of God in order for people to hear it.



Hears

People must be able to "hear" the good news of God's word, and this involves more than mere understanding of the words and concepts of the message. They must hear in the heart.

Purpose

One is sent for the purpose of saving people.

Verbal/External

Proclaiming the gospel and calling upon the Lord in faith are both outward, active and involve verbal articulation.

Volitional/Internal

Hearing and believing are both inward and involve the will. However, it is at this very point where authentic or unauthentic faith is born. It is also here, at the heart, that the communicator of the gospel must strive to help the listener to truly "hear" and believe. In order to do this, the proclaimer must speak to the listener at worldview level, the level of deepest values, emotions and thoughts.

Believes

For a people to call upon the Lord for salvation, they must "hear" what it is and must be instructed in how to respond in faith at heart level.



Calls

For a people to effectively call upon the Lord for salvation, they must first believe. Neither belief nor calling (each by itself) is sufficient for salvation. One must call from a heart that believes, at the deepest human level, in God's word and the salvation he offers.



Is Saved

One is saved, or declared to be "rightly-related" to God, self, others and nature, when one calls out to God in faith.