All of us know friends who married drunkards. These women are forced to brew beer. You can see smoke coming from their houses, the women dark with soot from the beer pots, their eyes as red as fire because of the smoke! See the crowds gathering at their houses and hear the noises! Some of the noise comes from the singing and dancing of those who are drunk, some of them covered in beer residue. Others actually fall asleep naked. Some beat each other to death with sticks, producing more chaos, as if these houses were filthy dens of hyenas or pigs.

**A LErrER TO THE BISHOP + 123**

Would any of you, friends, recommend such a life? Please try to accept mar­riage proposals only from those who are trustworthy and respectable. Take time to know the man before making a decision. Let those who are happily married be your examples. Well, certainly you have heard my opinion!

*Translated by Fulata L. Mayo*

***Mothers Union Members*A LETTER TO THE BISHOP**

Uganda 1934 Luganda

Members of the Mothers Union, sometimes referred to as the Married Ladies Association, in Buganda, wrote this letter to the Right Reverend Jaimeson J. Willis, the Bishop of the Native Anglican Church (N.A.C.) of Uganda, in 1934. The Mothers Union, founded' in the late nineteenth century, is an influential association of women in the Anglican faith, which stretches across the Common­wealth. In the Ugandan Church in the 1930s, the Mothers Union was finding new power and voice through the leadership of educated women graduates of Gayaza High School, Lady Irene College, Ndejje and King's College, Budo. Although the Mothers Union was and is traditionally regarded as an instrument for the promotion of spiritual and domestic values, such as the maintenance of marital harmony and the proper upbringing of children, the women strategists of Buganda quickly realized that it could take on wider social and political advocacy.

In this letter the women protest not only the patent immorality of the nomi­nated chief, but also, and even more vehemently, the political and judicial wisdom of keeping such a person within the administrative system. Their activism may also be seen in the keenness with which they followed the divorce suit against Mr. Senkonyo. The letter testifies to the women's understanding not only of the social and political system but of the levers of influence that can help them achieve their objectives. Aware that they had no sanctioned traditional channel for presenting their case to the Bugandan king, or *kabaka,* they decide to go through the Native Anglican Church, of which the *kabaka* and most of the aristocracy were, at least nominally, members. But they are prepared to go even further and plead their case before the superior colonial powers, represented by the provincial commissioner and the colonial governor.

**The British governor was the local head of the government in the Uganda Protectorate, dividing Uganda into four provinces, each headed by a British provincial commissioner. The Buganda Kingdom, one of the provinces, stood in a special, semi-autonomous relationship to the colonial administration, formalized by the Buganda Agreement in 1900. While confirming his recognition of the protectorate's authority, the *kabaka* continued to rule over his territory in much the same way as his ancestors had done before the advent of colonialism. His hierarchy, all male, comprised a network of administrators ranging from village and parish headmen through subcounty and county chiefs to a regional assembly and cabinet headed by a prime minister. The king personally appointed all county and subcounty chiefs, who acted as both administrative and judicial heads of their districts. This would explain the concern of the Mothers Union about the admin­istration of justice if Mr. Senkonyo became the head of an important sub-county. Each county and subcounty had its designation, like the "Mumyuka" and "Sabawali" mentioned in the letter, and had its own status, based on its traditional links and duties to the monarchy.**

**124 + THE FARLYTWENTIETH CENTURY (1900-1935)**

**Lusi Kafero, a ripe nonogenarian at the time of this volume's publication, con­firmed that the king rejected their petition and appointed Mr. Senkonyo despite such significant opposition.**

***Austin Bukenya and Florence Ebila***

**N.A. C. Mengo**

**August 29, 1934**

**Your Lordship,**

**We members of the Mothers Union of Buganda are writing this letter to you with humility to put before you these matters of painful and serious concern to us. We have received with serious note the news that His Majesty the Kabaka of Buganda has chosen his man, Mr. N. Senkonyo, the Mumyuka of Singo County, and promoted him to head the bigger and more important subcounty of Sabawali in Kyagwe County. This gentleman, however, does not deserve any more promotion; rather, he should be gradually phased out for the reasons given below**

**That gentleman was sued by his wife in the High Court at Kampala on grounds of adultery, mistreatment, and cruelty when he took to his home two other women, Naomi and Wanyana, with whom he ganged up to subject his wife to extreme abuse: The judge upheld the wife's complaints and granted a divorce and maintenance of twenty shillings per month, on these grounds. Truly, Your Lordship, we know these things well because we sent twelve of our members to closely observe the proceedings in this case. So, Your Lordship, what reason is there for the promotion of an administrator who was publicly found at fault in a case of that nature? How can an administrator of that kind fairly judge people who indulge in actions like those? If that man is not pro­moted, is there any great loss to the Buganda government?'**

**But if he Eas been selected just like any other person, we, as the mothers of**

**the nation, demand, Your Lordship, that you convey to the government these complaints of ours. For, Your Lordship, if such matters are not given serious consideration, it will be a matter of great disgrace. The nation will simply per­ish and all the hopes of Buganda will be dashed, never to be realized.**

**ALL 1ER TO THE BISHOP + 125**

**We, as the mothers of the nation, who are deeply concerned about our nation, humbly beg you, if you are unable to handle this matter, Your Lordship, to introduce us to the Provincial Commissioner, [of the] Buganda, or the Gov­ernor himself, before this gentleman is confirmed, so that, through our chosen representatives, we can further explain our feelings of pain and shame as a nation and as Christians. We are, Your Lordship, your respectful members of the Mothers Union, Buganda.**

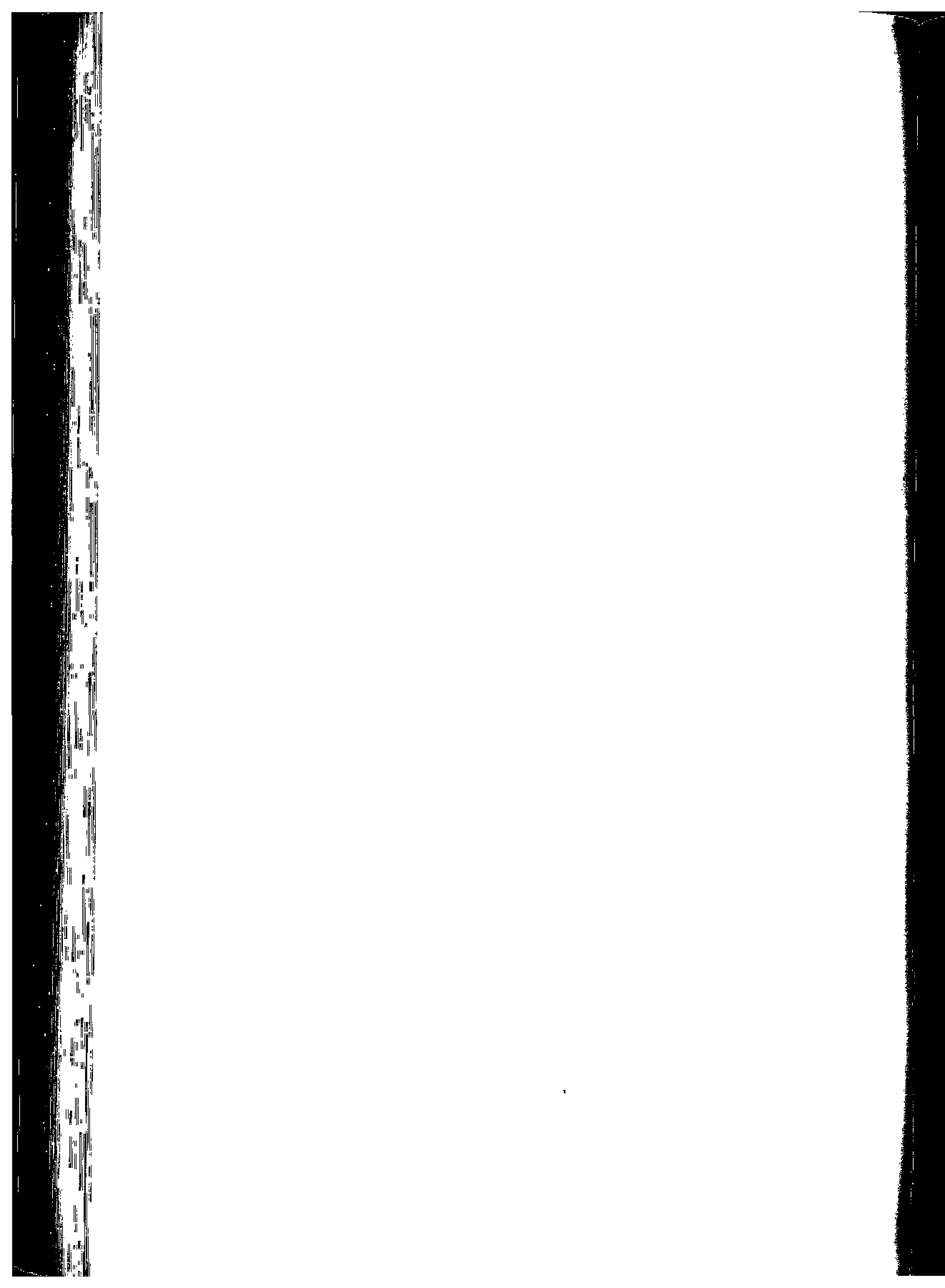
**Lusi Kafero Secretary of the Union at Natete**

**Everini Segobe Secretary of the Union at Kibuye**

**Tabisa Sonko Secretary of the Union at Kungu**

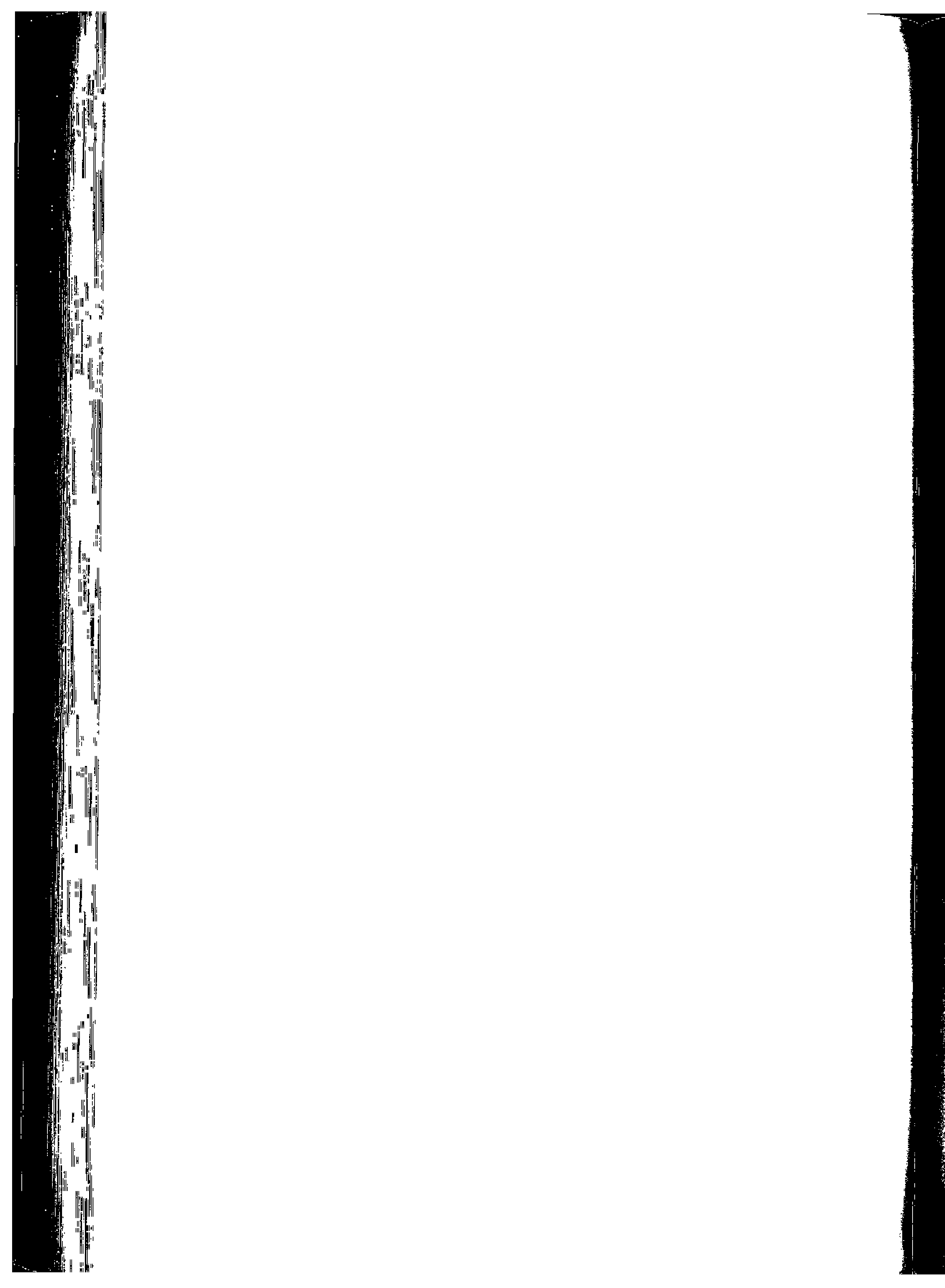
**Naomi M. Binaisa Secretary of the Union at Namirembe**

***Translated by Hilda Ntege Mukisa and Austin Bukenya***



**THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**(1936-1969)**



***Chauwa Banda*FIGHTING FOR MY CHIEFTAINCY**

**FIGHTING FOR MY CHIEFTAINCY + 129**

**Malawi 1936 English [Chichewa]**

**According to oral traditions, in pre-colonial times, women of the Banda clan served as priestesses in various parts of Chewaland. The main rain shrine was under Makewana at Msinja in Lilongwe district,'now the capital of Malawi. Other minor rain shrines were under rain priestesses such as Mwali in Dedza District, Matsakamula in Ntchisi, Salima. in Salima District and Chauwa Banda at Chilenje (Nkhoma) in Lilongwe District. Chauwa. Banda was a renowned priestess in her time. Members of the Banda clan, one of the two major clans of the Chewa people, referred to Chauwa as "Mother of the Banda." Birth dates were not recorded in pre-colonial times, but from extant texts, it can be deduced that she was probably born in the late 1800s. Chauwa Banda held both religious and political power, but delegated most of her political responsibilities to her brother, Mdzinga. When, in the late nineteenth century, the Ngoni invasions combined with the teaching of Christian missionaries to destroy Chauwa's rain cult, she continued to retain her religious office, even through the early years of the British, who established the Nyasaland Protectorate in 1891.**

**In the 1930s, when the British began to appoint Native Authorities (NAs), Chauwa Banda attempted to use her precolonial identity to assume power in colonial society. In 1933, however, the British recognized Justin Mazengera—a member of the other major Chewa clan, the Phiri—as Native Authority (NA) for Section Five of Lilongwe district, an area settled by various clans, including the Banda. Chauwa and her Banda sympathizers called for a separate Banda chief­taincy in the area because they claimed that, although the area had apparently been characterized in the past by the harmonious intermixing of various Chewa clans, historically the Phiri and the Banda had never ruled each other.**

**She was the first woman in Lilongwe to take advantage of the fluid nature of indirect rule, in which the traditional local power structure was incorporated into the British colonial administrative structure—to advance her interests. In 1929, Chauwa had contested Justino Mazengera's chieftaincy but had failed in her quest to be appointed principal headwomen. Though defeated in 1929, Chauwa did not give up. She revised her strategy and made another effort to become NA in 1936.**

**When formulating her strategy, Chauwa Banda must have been aware of two important points. First, that the colonial state used "history" to verify some Chewa ruling families' territorial claims in Lilongwe district. Second, that the support of village'headmen and women was crucial if one was to be elected NA. When the Banda demanded the colonial state's recogiiition of Chauwa as ruler of all the Banda of Nyasaland, they had been convinced that her history would sup­port their claims. Further, she appealed to members of her clan for support by emphasizing the importanceof women, especially mothers, in the economic and social organization of Chewa society.**

**In order to accomplish this, she invited a number of Banda NAs and village headmen and headwomen in Lilongwe to a meeting. From the invitation letter, it**

is quite clear that Chauwa wanted all the Banda in Lilongwe to recognize her as their "mother" and matriarchal ruler. It is also apparent that she wanted all mem­bers of her clan to see NA Mazengera as their enemy. In order to persuade the Banda elders to act, she addressed them as "her children," thus evoking the important religious and political positions she had held through her life.

**130 + THE Mtn-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

Following Chauwa Banda's letter is a portion of the speech she made at the gathering. In the archival records from which these texts were retrieved, it is noted that after this powerful speech, the chiefs, headmen, and men decided to send a petition to the Nyasaland government supporting her claim. Chauwa Banda spoke in Chichewa but the archival document is the work of a translator, probably a clerk of the period.

*Hendrina Msosa and Edrinnie Lora-Kayambazinthu*

To Chiefs: Casaba, Chamita, Chitukula, Masula, Kamgunda and Njewa

I am inviting you to a meeting to be held on Monday, August 18, 1936. The main agenda of the meeting is to bid farewell to you my children because Native Authority Mazengera is threatening to have me deported from this area. He intends to do this because I attended the Abanda meeting at Nathenje though I sent prior notification to both the Native Authority and the District Commissioner at the *Boma* [district administrative center]. Also, he maintains that he does not want my children, [who are] other Abanda chiefs, to visit me. Mazengera further informed me that, as Native Authority 9f this area, he has the right to appoint *Mdzinga* [chiefs]. This remark surprised me because, even during the time of our ancestors, it was unheard of for a Phiri to get involved in matters concerning a Banda chieftaincy. In addition, Mazengera stated that I should not have gohe to the *Boma* when the D.C. [District Commissioner] called Abanda elders to give an account of our history. He feels that I went there to back bite him. This is why he is expelling me from Chilenje, the land of my ancestors. As such, make plans to attend this important meeting so that you can appoint a *Mdzinga,* your uncle, before I leave this area. If you acknowledge that I am your mother, please attend the meeting.

Your mother,

Chauwa

Native Authority Mazengera sent for me on Sunday, the 9th of August 1936. His messenger found me unwell. I was suffering from headache and aching of feet. I told the messenger that I was unfit to travel any distance and asked him to spend a night at my village so•that we could set out for Mazengera's the next day. The messenger said, "The order that I have been given by N.A. Mazengera is that it does not matter you are sick. I must take you away from your village." While discussing this the sun set and the messenger mercilessly took me away from my village and made me sleep at Kunthole' village, a village that is about 800 to 1000 yards from mine. We arrived there after •dark. The next day,

**Monday, we set out for Mazengera's. Certain men of my clan followed me, some found me on my way, others just after 1 arrived at Mazengera's.**

**MODERN MARRIAGES + 131**

**I entered his court where a great number of people were sitting. N.A. Mazengera'said, "This is the very woman whom I want to see mostly. She is the woman who intends to take away my *nkbanju* [garment of chieftainship]. I warn you that you and your Abanda men should be aware. If you don't know me, you will know me now You went to Natherije and held a meeting of the Abanda, and again you went to the D.C. when the Abanda were called. What were you telling the D.C.? I know you meant to hold a secret detraction against me, therefore, prepare you and your men. I will make you eat hot chillies. I hear that your Abanda men are often visiting your village, such as Chimutu of Chi­wamba, Kalumba of Chitsime and many others. I don't want these men to come to your village at all. If they continue coming, know that I will collect Abanda of all sexes that are in my land and get them exiled to an unknown country:**

**I tried to explain the subject of the meeting at Nathenje. . . . My simple explanation was like to kindle a flame of fire in his heart, and he scolded me heavily. Being a woman, I feared greatly because when he was speaking he kept hitting the book on the table. One or two of my men tried to explain in the same manner but in vain. . . . He continued threats of doing away with the Abanda in his country. I am the descendant of Chauwa, the founder of the Abanda clan, and the order of Mazengera is rather hard for one living to observe,,unless in a grave where a person is buried alone.**

***Princess Kaiko Nambayo*MODERN MARRIAGES**

**Zambia 1936 Silozi**

**Princess Kaiko Nambayo is a descendant of King Lewanika of Barotseland, today part of the Western Province of Zambia, bordering Namibia and Angola. He was the person who, in 1890, signed an agreement with Cecil Rhodes of the British South Africa Company that allowed Rhodes to exploit Barotseland's resources, and later made it part of the colony ofNorthem 'Rhodesia. While guaranteeing the people of Barotseland protection from local enemies, the relationship also facilitated their use as a pool of cheap labor for domestic copper mines and for mines in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, while contributing little to the region's own development. British control did, however, offer some new educa­tional opportunities to women. These were extended early to members of the royal family,-including the Princess Nambayo, who had moved out of the rural area to live in Mazubuka, a city along the railroad line.**

**In October 1936 Princess Nambayo wrote a letter to *Mutende,* a multilingual African newspaper circulated through Northern. Rhodesia. Her letter addresses problems arising from the widespread migration of men to copper mining**

**towns to seek work and to live in urban areas. Not surprisingly, especially if they
  
were going to stay on where they were, they married women they met in the towns.
  
Hence, marriage between people of different tribes was apparently not uncommon.**

**132 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**In her letter, Princess Nambayo is displeased with what she calls "modern marriages" and especially intermarriage. She encourages young men to return to their villages to choose brides from their own tribes—hence, the analogy of the cow, the kraal, and the reference to a woman's pounding. (Pounding grain into meal was a major component of women's work.) She is equally critical of young women from Birotse villages who go to the city seeking wealthier husbands, and the men who are foolish enough to marry them.**

***Nalishebo N.Meebelo and Elizabeth Mfine***

**Modern marriages are surely very disgraceful. There are many women who have come (to the city] on their own, without their husbands, from the Barotse Kingdom, and it is apparently impossible that a woman who has come alone from her home village could remain married only to one man. When she sees people who are richer than her husband, she divorces her husband. Any man who marries such a woman, knowing perfectly that she came on her own from her village, should not be amazed when she divorces him too.**

**Have you men already forgotten these incidents? Why don't you go to your vil­lages to marry women who are better than those that you marry here in the city?**

**You ought to know that it is difficult to milk a cow when you have no idea which kraal it comes from. It is more or less the same as marrying a woman whose origins you do not know, as well as where she used to pound from.**

**Similarly, my fellow women and I should not disgrace our parents by practic­ing bad habits. We should not always seek to be married to rich people. Do not rush for riches only; do not place money above the value of a good human being.**

**Mukwae Kaiko Nambayo, Mazabuka**

***Translated by Nalishebo N Meebelo***

***Martha Kapanga and Mrs. E. Akapelwa Inambwae*LETTERS ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION**

**Zambia 1936, 1937 Silozi**

**Prior to missionary settlement in Zambia, young boys and girls in the village were educated iunder close supirvision by their parents, with input from the entire community. Children were taught the responsibilities of adulthood, including how to care for the young, and most girls were offered for Marriage quite early. Men of the village taught educational programs for boys, generally comprising skills in farming, hunting, fishing, and firewood gathering.**

**When Christian missionaries established schools in Zambia in the,nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they initially focused on educating boys in large numbers, due to social norms that subjected girls and women to performing household chores. Gradually, some women began to receive formal education as well.**

**LETTERS ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION + 133**

**Martha Kapanga, a teacher from Kasenga in northern Zambia, and Mrs. E. Akai)elwa Inambwae, a citizen of Barotseland in the west, wrote to the *Mutende,* an African newspaper for wfiat was at that time the British cofony of Northern Rhodesia, in 1936 and 1937 respectively. The *Mutende* was published monthly in English, Chibemba, Silozi, Cinyanja, and Chitonga, to provide news to all peo­ple. Women were encouraged to write to the editor.**

**Revealed in the two letters to the editor is the fact that some people of that period regarded areas wherepeople spoke different languages, dressed differently, and had dissimilar cultural practices as separate countries. Teaching was viewed not only as an important career but as a gateway to these other lands and cultures. Both of the letter writers seem to view this broadening of horizons, along with modernization in general and perhaps even Westernization, as positive, impor­tant to their country's future as well as their own personal enrichment. Kapanga seems awed by the ides, that she has h'ad the chance to "tread in a country where my great grandfather had never been." Inambwae extols the virtue of modern education for girls and of English'as a common language for the land's various peoples (as well as admiring the lighter *chitenge* or *ichikwembe* wrapper that women from other provinces of Zambia wore, over the heavy skirts ofBarotse­land, which she desribes as "many skirts at once"). One intriguing aspect of these letters is their relationship to current ideas and debates about globalization.**

***Nalishebo N Mabel°***

**1936**

**I am telling you fathers who can read *Mutende* to send your daughters to school to b**e**come teachers. In this way they can travel to other tribes. My father will never come to where I am now -teaching at Kasenga. I did not know that I would tread in a country where my great grandfather had never been. But through education I have done so. Never let your daughters stay iii one place. Girls also have their work to do for poor little Northern Rhodesia.**

**Martha Kapanga**

**1937**

**On reading *Ling'usa la Bulozi,* I was delighted to see that girls who had been educated at Mabumbu School had had a meeting in May.**

**I see that a ray of light is shining on the girls, of Barotse, because in meetings like this they gain strength, though I do not know for what reason they met; unless it was because boys are taught well but there is no progress in the educa­tion of girls; there should not simply be education for boys, but girls should be taught exactly like them; for women are the light of the village and the bringers-up of children. So they should be educated like men so that they may**

**become lights to lighten the darkness, and the Chief's country may grow up in new ways.**

**134 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**To convince you, my friends, we old Mabumbu girls when we go to other countries differ from local girls in two ways: (1)'Clothes. They dress better than we do by not wearing many skirts at once. (2) They speak English better than we do; I do not pine to know English myself but can see clearly\*that English is the thing which binds all the British Empire together. If one knows English one can converse with Nyanja, Tebele, or Kalanga people, with Europeans and other nationalities which I cannot tell you of, in this very English.**

**Mrs. E. Akapelvva Inambwae**

***Translated by Nalisbebo N Meebelo***

***Erusa Kibanda***

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**Uganda 1939 Luganda**

**There is no information about the author of this letter other than what can be gleaned from the text itself„The sender's address on the letter suggests that Erusa Kibanda lived in her marital hope in Mutur4dwe, a southern suburb of Kampala City. The pattern of Kiganda names in the letter further suggests that Erusa Kibanda and her violent brother, Masembe, like their father, Mr. Kahan, belonged to the Nseenene (grasshopper) clan. This group was particularly influential in Baganda society in the early decades of the twentieth century, one of their mem­bers being the long-serving regent and prime minister, Sir Apollo Kaggwa. Enisa's surname, Kibanda, is not from the Nseenene clan, and it is most likely her'spouse's.**

**The Western •ractict of Women calling tliemselves by their fathers' or hus­bands' names instead of their personal, clan names was introduced into Kiganda society through mission schools, especially those of the Anglican Church. The family's Anglican affiliation may also be seen in the English and Hebrew biblical names, Erusa (the Kiganda version of Jerusha), Zerida (Jerida.,h), Jeni ( Jane), and Mary. As was the practice at this time, Erusa Kibanda would have received a basic education at one of the mission schools. This accounts not only for her literacy but also for the quiet but firm confidence with which she denounces her brother's boorish conduct. A close relationship apparently existed betikeen Erusha Kibanda and her parents, despite the rather stiff formality with which she addresses them. She does not ask thtrii explicitly to do anything about the incident. She'informs them and expresses her abhorren'ce, appirently in the confidence that they will know how to treat her brother.**

**The warding about the transfer of the child from Erusa Kibanda's home sug­gests that Masembe's home was close to that of his sister. Of the two other places mentioned, Buwaya is near Entebbe on the shores of Lake Victoria, about twenty--five kilometers from Kampala, and Hoima is in the Bunyoro region, some**

two hundred kilometers west of Kampala. It was unusual that Zerida, Masembe's wife, should have undertaken what in those days would have been such a long journey. **It** is possible that Zerida was a native of Hoima or that she had relatives living there. It is also interesting to note that Erusa Kibanda had expected a writ­ten message from Masembe about his wife's visit to his sister's home, indicating that they were accustomed to communicating in writing.

**D61VIESTIC VIOLENCE + 135**

This letter, found in the Church of Uganda archives at Namirembe in Kam­pala, is written in a rather informal style, with little punctuation and lengthy uninterrupted sequences. For ease of comprehension, some of these have been broken into sentences in the translation.

*Austin Bukenya and Hilda Ntege Mukisa*

**Mutundwe**

**7.12.1939**

**To my parents, Mr. And Mrs. E. Kabali**

**I hope you are well, dear Father and Mother. We, too, are here but not doing very well, falling sick from time to time and losing some of our people. How are my sisters?**

**I am writing to you, Mother and Father, to tell you about a terrible incident at my home yesterday when my younger brother, Masembe, insolently stormed into my house and started a fight, beating up his wife and accusing me of wronging him by allowing his wife to go on visits to Buwaya and Hoima while she had a child nursing serious burns. Masembe just barged into the house and stood there without any consideration for or reference to us, the owners of the house at home. He would not even acknowledge that there was a man in this house to which Zerida, his wife, had come. Instead, he *just* started barking at *us* in the house in the middle of the night, treating all of us like rubbish.**

1. **When his wife was coming here, Masembe did not write me any letter to show how many days he expected her to stay. Even when he came here, he did not tell me anything about his wife's movement§.**
2. **I never sent for his wife to come and visit me. The visiting plans were made entirely between the two of them.**
3. **Namyenya, the child, was not badly burned, and anyway, it wasn't me but her mother who burned her with a lamp. Even by the time we lost our aunt, the child's burns were drying up, and she did not have any other illness or injury. In any case, I could not have abandoned a seriously sick child and just walked off. But I left even all my children, including little Jeni, at home. But when Masembe came over, he ordered Mary to bring Namyenya over leav­ing Jeni and the other children all alone.**
4. **From all this—Masembe invaded my house as if he was walking into aban­doned ruins, treating us with utter disrespect andtbeating his wife while we looked on helpless and dumbfounded—I think he treated me with such con­tempt because I am a woman. He wanted to humiliate and embarrass me, with everyone saying that my brother had staged a fight inside my house. If**

**I had been an elder brother of his, I think there would have been no peace between us. His wife has now left my home.**

**Well, that is it, my dears. Peace.**

**Your daughter,**

**Erusa Kibanda**

***Translated by Hilda Ntege Mukisa***

***Nellie Grant***

**LETTERS FROM AFRICA TO A DAUGHTER
  
IN ENGLAND**

**Kenya 1939-1963 English**

**Nellie Grosvenor was born in 1885 into an aristocratic and adventurous English family that was unable to manage money intelligently. The family sent her to Cheltenham Ladies College, which she left in 1901, with examination results that could have earned her admission into university, if anyone had thought of it. Soon after coming out formally into English society, she married Josceline Grant, also adventurous and imprudent. He had invested in a Portuguese East African diamond mine, which seems only to have ever produced three diamonds, all small enough to be set in Nellie's engagement ring. He then invented a type of motor cal= that earned the title "grunt and dawdle." Not surprisingly, it became necessary to leave the scene of disaster, and so 'in 1913, the couple sailed for British East Africa where they used their remaining capital to buy five hundred acres at Cha­nia Bridge (now Thika) at four British pounds an acre—a steep price in 1913—from a friend who had been at Eton with Josceline.**

**As described by their daughter, Elspeth. Huxley; in** *The Flame Trees of Thika* **and its sequels, the venture did not prosper. After Josceline Grant's diplomatic service in Europe during the war years and Nellie Grant's year-long course in agriculture at Cambridge, they returned to Thika but had to sell out in 1922, a friend of Nellie provided them with a thousand acres at Njoro, where they lived until 1963, when Nellie, then a widow, sold the fifty acres that remained at a low price to a cooperative of her former employees. She left the country and died in Portugal in 1977.**

**Nellie Grant was seen by her neighbors as somewhat eccentric. She was a member of the Makerere College Board of Governors and would invite students to spend a vacation on the farm. She spotted the talent of Tanzanian painter Sam Ntiru when he was a student and provided materials so that she could be "the first person to have an Ntiru in my collection." She would go to the cinema with her cook after they had finished their marketing. Sheywas always trying her hand at a new crop or a new handicraft project for the local women. Both Nellie and daughter Elspeth spoke Gikuyu.**

**The following extracts from her letters come from a volume compiled by**

**136 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**Huxley and published under the title** *Nellie: Lettersftom Africa* **in 1980. They tes­tify to the preoccupations of a farmer with weather and crop prices, recipes, and a round of committee meetings, together with the real dangers and frustrations of the Emergency period of revolt against British rule. Nellie, who had founded a school on her land and treated her "labour" well by colonial standards, exhibits a sense of betrayal at the Africans "defection to Mau Mau." But in her last entry, written after the first democratk elections and shortly before Kenyan achieved independence, she relates how she returned the "cock-a-doodle-do" of some pass­ing youths, the cock being the symbol of the Kenya African National Union (KANU).**

**LETTERS FROM AFRICA TO A DAUGHTER IN ENGLAND + 137**

*Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye*

***15 September 1939***

**Had about a hundred Kikuyu in the sitting room today to listen to the weekly broad-cast. They certainly enjoy it. Govt. is starting a Swahili paper from tomor­row called Baraza. :the Secretariat burnt itself to ashes Tuesday night, and all the early records were lost.**

***17 October 1939***

**We're in the throes of the worst drought since '18, and some say worse than '18. Production is sinking like a stone, we shall presumably have to import food to feed the swarms of militaires, and not a whisper of any plan to keep production going at all, let alone increase it. Truly a strange, strange war.**

***16 March 1953***

**The "villagizatiorr scheme has been suddenly and violently put into force to the utter disruption of all Kikuyu labour. The govt. made one scheme for farms of whatever size, which couldn't have been sillier. The result here was that all Kikuyu labour would have been squashed up like sardines. .. . My chaps all said that they would be photographed and finger printed but that they would** *not* **live like 'sardines. . . . Personally I think the Kikityus are so pushed about and harriedind worried that they just listen to the last chap who comes along. . . If only it would rain I believe they wbuld settle down, as they would literally dig themselves in and couldn't bear to leave the sprouting maize if they could see it spiouting. . • On the Hodges' farm in Sabukia the labour all went overnight, leaving their maize, turkeys, clothes, and every single thing; the Hodges will be** prictically **bust this year as all their maize and pyrethrum is lying out unpicked; no one has been kinder or better to their labour than they have.**

***7 October 1953***

**Would you believe it? Njoro settlers Asscn. are asking Bishop Beecher to
  
address a meeting and bring an educated African with him. This was my
  
suggestion. I pointed out that we had really better know a bit more about the**

**modern African than we do and that the best way would be to meet a real one. Fixing the time of the meeting led to much talk—it couldn't be in the club house at 6 p.m. as usual because it wouldn't do for the educated African to see European ladies in the bar (really because one of the members thought he might get landed in the position of having to offer a "bloody nigger" a drink). I longed to ask why an educated African couldn't see this, as a long succession of uneducated African bartenders had survived the spectacle, but thought the company had had about as much as they could take for one day, so sweetly said what about an afternoon meeting and that was agreed. Leonard Beecher is very good value indeed.**

**138 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

***19 January 1954***

**Sunday was a great day on the farm as there was a circumcision for two girls, old Nganga (gardener)'s debutante and a very much younger sister of Mbugwa's. Nganga had repeatedly asked me to ask Dick Prettejohn for the loan of a skilled operator in his employment. I was naturally reluctant to counte­nance the ceremony, but in fact one has no legal right to prohibit it, and Dick agreed that it would be a very bad plan to drive it underground just now, espe­cially as it has so often lately been used as a cloak to oath-taking . .**

***12 December 1954***

**Mr. Humble came up yesterday with Bethel his no.,1 screencr, and coped with Mbugwa all over again, Humble says they have got the blackest things against Mbugwa through cross-checking—it seems till right into 1953 he was allowing [Mau-Mau] ceremonies to be held in *his but* here and was deep in it, he *won't* come clean . .**

***26 December 1954***

**I have withdrawn from any attempt to foster friendship, understanding etc. with the Africans after their defection to Mau Mau but must say came very near to it again when, on Xrnas,morning, Mbugwa staggered in with my morning cuppa and laid a huge box of potatoes on my bed tied up in (my) brilliant violet crepe paper. This is a very special sort of spud called *Mweri Umwe* [one month] which he knows I love and have looked for in vain for a long time now; he had got some and grown it specially for me. Disarming? Especially as this year I didn't giye anyone a single thing for Christmas .. .**

**There was one continuous bombing on Kipipiri for two days before Xmas, making the dogs bark here and shaking the, windows in Nakuru; nothing was said as to whether any of the gangs were inconvenienced on Kipipiri itself or not.**

***9 November 1958***

**Had twenty-two African ladies to see the veg. and have tea on Thursday, and it
  
did actually drizzle and spoil the garden trip, and we had to have tea indoors.
  
Mbugwa was superb. A Kipsigis lady said to me "How old are you?" I felt too**

**weak to go into the matter of manners, leading questions, etc., so said simply "Three hundred." Mbugwa came in at that moment, so I said to him: "You have known me for two hundred years, haven't you?" Withdut batting an eyelid he replied: "I think slightly more, madam." To my horror the lady took out a pen and started writing it all down.**

**LETTERS FROM AFRICA TO A DAUGHTER IN ENGLAND ♦ 139**

***22 May 1960***

**The drought has got simply terrific, grass all brown, people wilting and maize going at the rate of knots. Friday morning woke up to very low cloud, quite a fog, and bone dry like dry ice. Never seen it before. Then at 4 p.m. two thunder­storms met over this house. Torrents of rain and lots of hail which we could have done without. I was paying wages outside the kitchen door when a flash and a bang went off absolutely overhead and a horrid rending noise; don't know what was struck—something. Muchoka took to his hands and knees and fled round the corner—a new technique to avoid being struck by lightning, but any­way someone was as frightened as I was. We got 2.7 inches in about an hour—just a flash in the pan. No rain since.**

***13 June 1960***

**I have decided to say the school must go away. The teachers' houses want renewing, and the school buildings are very dicky. I started the school thirty-two years ago as a tiny thing, when I had a thousand acres and quite a labour force. I have now fifty acres, and there are a hundred and fifty-three children in the school of whom twenty come from this farm, three teachers, and everything expanding, and lots of other schools around.**

***20 May 1963***

**Well, the first elections are over, and only one DO [District Officer] coshed on the head. I" went down to Njoro on Sat. with a few chosen ones, others having gone at daybreak. About a thousand people there, representing about three thou­sand voters. Everything was very well done. I've never seen anyone better at his job than the little African in charge of my booth—so good-natured and unflustered—and a very tricky job checking up on everyone for hours on end. We all had to dip a forefinger into a bottle of indelible red ink; at the next election, another finger, and so on, so you can't vote twice, and we'll all have bloody finger tips for weeks. On the way some KANU youths made KANU noises at me, so I said "Cock-a­doodle-do" back at them, which left them guessing.**

***Zeyana Ali Muh'd*WARTIME IN ZANZIBAR**

**Tanzania 1940, 1943 Kiswahili**

**Zeyana Ali Muh'd was a primary school teacher in Zanzibar during World War II. One of the few women teachers at the time, she was a frequent contributor to the monthly journal** *Mazungumzo ya Walimu* **(Teachers' Conversations), which** *was* **run and published by Zanzibari teachers themselves. Most of the contribu­tions were from native Zanzibari teachers, although there were also many British teachers in the profession. The teaching profession then carried very high pres­tige; the teachers would have been considered the cream of the educated elite in their society.**

**Women contributors to the publication were, however, rare, partly because there were still very few women teachers, and partly because women were a bit wary about publishing under their own names. Several of them wrote under assumed names. The name of the journal truly reflected the contents. It was informal in style, and contributors discussed a wide variety of topics, including their travels, cooking recipes, noteworthy developments in their schools,** upcom­ing **events, cultural practices and their seeming erosion, proper behavior, and the like.**

**In the 1940 text, Zeyana All Muh'd discusses her "travels" in other parts of Unguja, the main island of Zanzibar. Jambiani, the village she visited, is located on the southeast coast and is now a major tourist attraction, its whole coast dot­ted with tourist hotels. At the time this text was written, however, it would have been occupied almost' entirely by the local community, with a few houses owned by town dwellers who would come on occasional visits. The distance from the city of Zanzibar to Jambiani is no more than forty kilometers, but the road was so bad that it took several hours to get there, which explains the writer's fatigue.**

**The Wahadimu mentioned in the text are indigenous inhabitants of the south and east of Zanzibar. They are thought to be descendants, of both the Shirazi from Persia and immigrants from the mainland. Remnants of Shirazi culture are still visible in the area, including a restored mosque nearly nine hundred years old.**

**The southeast is rather infertile, consisting of rocky terrain that supports only 'hardy crops. Apart from growing the crops'mentioned id the text, the men occupy themselves with fishing, and the production of coir, which is mentioned, is also a major preoccupation of the women. The life of backbreaking work described in the text—and especially the daily hardship of finding and hauling water—is com­mon to most women in rural Africa. The writer,,although a middle-class Arab woman who would not be directly familiar with any of these tribulations, never­theless empathizes with the Jambiani women. She attests to their cheerfulness, although it remains unclear whether their affect reflects their nature or their for­titude. In recent years, women of the area have had a more lucrative source of income in the cultivation of seaweed.**

**To the credit of the teachers, they managed to produce the journal even in wartime, when most goods** *were* **scarce. Unlike World War I, World War II saw no combat in East Africa (south of Ethiopia and the Sudan), but Zanzibar, like**

**140 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

other British colonies, was a source of soldiers for the empire and subject to the hardships of the wartime economy. The 1943 text is, in fact, precisely about wartime shortages, particularly relating to food rationing. The staple Zanzibar diet was (and still is) rice and foods made from wheat, and Zanzibaris used to consider maize meal as an inferior food,, associated with migrant laborers from the mainland. Even the universal *ugali* (the thick African porridge which forms a staple in most African countries) was in Zanzibar made from cassava flour, and not maize flour. During the war, however, the food shortages were so acute that even cakes and "pudding" had to be made from maize flour. People in rural areas would have felt this shortage more acutely, because the rationing was based on racial lines, with rations being meted out to the Asians, Arabs, and Africans, in descending order, using color-coded cards. The struggle over food rations was so fierce that many people of African origin attempted to be ethnically reclassified as Arabs, so that they could get full rations. One writer notes that the best recog­nised name of the war for Zanzibaris of that time was *"wakati wa mchele wa kadi,"* or "the time of rationed rice."

**WARTIME IN ZANZIBAR + 141**

The enthusiasm with which the program of cooking lessons was greeted also points to the effort to find new interesting ways of cooking "boring" maize meal. Cooking cakes and puddings on cooking stones could not have been an easy task, but for most Zanzibaris at the time it was commonplace. It is interesting that these culinary adventures came to be repeated in the 1960s after the revolution, when food became equally scarce, and residents could only make use of that which was locally produced.

*Saida Yahya-Othman*

**'TRAVEL AND LEARN**

On Tuesday 21st March, I went to Jambiani on a visit. I very much wanted to see the village. I arrived late in the evening, and was so tired that I could not manage to go round. The following morning I spent visiting the sights. I found the village very fascinating, full of charming and jolly people. Eggs and.milk were in plenty; big fish were available; and certain goods sold cheaply in shops. But the most harrowing thing was the scarcity of that important commodity, water. The water obtainable here was, more often than not, brackish, and if one needed nice drinkable water, untainted with salt, one had to go into immeasur­able difficulties to get it. So I asked some of the villagers, "Where Can one get nice water which is not brackish?" And they replied, "It is obtainable far from here in a hole in the rocks. Would you like to go there and have a look?" I replied, "Yes I would." So in the afternoon we paid a visit to the place. The road leading to the place is bad, very rocky. One had to move slowly and carefully to avoid hurting oneself from the sharp stones or by tripping over.

Also, one needed to wear 'shoes. Without shoes it was impossible. We walked for nearly an hour, and we finally arrived at the scene. We rested a while before descending into the cave.

Surprisingly, lianas [woody vines] grow in abundance there, and they assisted

people to make the descent into the cave. And the descent is quite treacherous, sloping down 30 feet into the cave. At the mouth of the cave there are huge trees, and the overhanging branches form a sort of canopy over the entrance. As a result it is rather dark and very damp inside the cave, and if one remains inside for long one tends to become short of breath. I think it is because there is a poor circulation of air inside the cave, and sunlight does not freely penetrate through. And it is for this reason, I think, that the cave is named The Shadow.

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In the recesses of the cave there is a small inner cave. That is where the water is found. The water does not seem to originate from a spring it is very still, and the level neither rises nor falls. But during the long *masika* rains the level increases and sometimes the water overflows. This is the water used by the vil­lagers for drinking and for cooking sweet dishes and brewing tea. But for savory dishes the villagers use the brackish water from the wells in their vicinity. They use this water also for washing and for other household needs. In Jambiani the houses do not have corrugated iron roofs (as is the case in Chwaka) so it is not possible to harvest rain water and preserve itin tanks for emergency uses. So we can imagine the plight of the people resulting from the scarcity of water.

Fetching water is done exclusively by women. In fact, the women there have numerous arduous tasks to *perform,* especially in the Hadim *farmsteads.* These tasks include fetching water, cutting firewood, cultivating the fields, and thrashing coconut husks. This in addition to the housework, the rearing of chil­dren, and other chores. In my view, cultivation is the most difficult of these tasks, because the women have to walk a fairly long distance to the fields, where they have to break the rocky soil in order to plant seeds. The crops which flour­ish in these areas are pigeon peas, maize, green gram, pumpkins, yams, sorghum, bulrush millet, beans, and cow peas. When harvesting draws near the peasant farmers and their families have to move from the village and set up camp in the cultivated fields to guard their crops from forages of monkeys in the day-time and wild pigs at night.

To conclude, I would 'say that the women in Jambiani work harder than the men. And yet if you happen to come across them on their way to their daily chores, they appear bright and cheerful, not spiteful and grumpy.

**COOKING LESSONS IN THE VILLAGES**

I think that many readers will be surprised that the 1942 issues of *Mazungumzo ya Walimu* have a few articles on cooking. Possibly many of us do not know the purpose behind the inclusion of these articles in the journal, and'what is being done in this regard in the villages.

In mid-1942 when there was scarcity of rice and there was need for eating maize meal instead, it behbved the women in G.G. School [Government Girls'] to go round in the villages to instruct village women on the various ways of cooking maize meal.

The administration, and that includes district officers, were receptive to the

**idea and therefore the undertaking was fruitful. Each district administrative officer came to know the day when he would be visited by the cooking instruc­tion group. He would then inform the various Ward Executive Officers under his jurisdiction.**

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**It was programmed as follows: At two in the afternoon on Wednesday the women teachers would leave for the nearby villages. And at 9:30 in the morn­ing on Saturday they would visit distant villages where they would remain till evening. The programme formally started at 11iangapvvani on Wednesday 17th June.**

**Instructions were given on the cooking of the following five dishes:**

1. **bread made from fresh corn**
2. **millet bread**
3. **meat balls made from meat and cassava**
4. **bread made from corn flour**
5. **pudding made from corn meal and dates.**

**When the teachers, including Ms. Purnell and Ms. Knowles, arrived they were met by 80 *women* students who had cooking *stones* on the ready in an open air place. One of the teachers came forward and addressed the gathering. After the preliminary introduction she went on to talk on the difficult condi­tions occasioned by the war and the scarcity of rice and other imported com­modities. And we have been sent here by the government, she went on to say, to assist you and show you how you can cope with the situation, now and in the days to come. Thanks to our glorious British government we get food. Food is necessary to life. Without food we cannot sustain life and living. Had it not been for the government keeping a watchful eye on shopkeepers, prices of goods would be deadly.**

**After the address, instructions began on the cooking of one of the dishes. The pot was placed on the fire; instructions were repeated again and again interspersed with questions and answers. Then another teacher followed with instructions on the cooking of another dish, just as the first one did. This went on until all the dishes were cooked, while the women were looking on with glee. Afterwards the food 'was distributed so that each of them could have a taste. Also distributed were buns we had brought with us from town.**

**Eventually, the teacher who had initially addressed the gathering gave a farewell address, thanking them all for their attendance. The women in turn also thanked us profusely. The gathering dispersed with joy and ululation.**

**These visits to the villages went on till the end of the month of Shaaban.**

**There were in all 10 visits. Some other villages, on hearing about our visits, asked us to visit them as well and we responded accordingly.**

***Translated by Abdulhakim Yahya***

***Elspeth Huxley and Margery Perham*LETTERS ON RACE AND POLITICS**

**Kenya 1942 English**

**Elspeth Grant Huxley was born in 1907 in London, the only child of Nellie and josceline Grant. Her parents left her behind briefly when they went to East Africa to repair their failing fortunes. Despite other separations, Huxley recalls a generally happy childhood in her series of autobiographical books, beginning with *The Flame Trees ofThika,* published in 1959.**

**After university studies in Britain and the United States, she married Gervas Huxley in 1930 and thereafter lived mostly in Britain. She was commissioned to write the life of the famous Kenya colonialist Lord Delamere, and in the preinde­*pendence years* produced a number *of* potboilers which, though not individually distinguished, gave interesting and sometimes surprising'insights into the mindset of the time. She and her mother, Nellie Grant, received official permission to live for some weeks in the Gikuyu "reserve," where white settlers were forbidden to occupy land, while Huxley gathered material for her novel *Red Strangers,* published in 1939. In the preface to that novel, she wrote, "The story of the coming of the white man is related as it was told to me by a number of people who were grown up at the time. But I am well aware that no person of any race and culture can truly interpret events from the point of view of individuals belongipg to a totally differ­ent race and culture. It was the consideration that, within a few.**

**years none will sur­vive of those who remember the way of life that existed before the white man came, that led me to make th6 experiment of this book" After the World War II, Huxley 'traveled widely in Africa, producing such thoughtful Books as *The Sorcerer's*** *Appren­****tice* (1948), *Four Guineas* (1954), and *The New Earth* (1960).**

**Margery Perham was also widely traveled** ih **Africa. She was a British scholar, a reader on colonial administration at Oxford, and** the **first fellow of Oxford's newly founded Nuffield College in 1939. In the course of investigative trips, she would sometimes visit a sister and brother-in-law in the colonial administration in Tanganyika and elsewhere. In 1941, she published *Africans and the British Rule,* and later became well known for her two-volume *Life of Lord Lugard* (1956 and 1960), *Colonial Reckoning* (1963), and the two volumes of *Colonial Sequence* (1967 and 1970). She also wrote the foreword to** the **East African edition of J.M. Kar­iuki's *Mau Mau Detainee.* In '1960 she was awarded the CBE, though all of her work suggests that she would not have liked to think of herself as a Dame Coin­mander of the British Empire. Though twelve years older than Huxley, she came from the world of the British intellectual left, and was clearly more sympathetic to the position of the native African majority in the colonies.**

**The single-minded correspondence between these two women, in letters dated 1942 amid -1943, was prompted by Perham and intended for publication. Their letters *were* published in London' in 1944 as *Race and `Politics in Kenya: A Correspondence Between Elspeth Huxley and Margery Perham. It* is extraordinary that the future of Kenya should have been thought of sufficient importance to allow the book's publication in that year, when wartime rationing of paper restricted publishers' output.**

***Marjorie Oludbe Macgoye***

**144 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

***Elspeth Huxley: Should the settlers be expropriated?***

**LETTERS ON RACE AND POLITICS + 145**

**22nd March 1942**

**Dear Miss Perham,**

**Thank you for answering my letter, and for explaining your point of view so clearly. To begin with, you suggest that a healthy state can't be built on a basis of rigid racial discrimination. I agree with that. But I don't agree that Kenya's feet** are necessarily set **on this path. For one thing, I don't see how such a state—a little South Africa, you might say, in a political sense—could possibly arise within the framework of the British colonial empire. The general principles and laws on which that empire is based simply wouldn't allow it. For another, I think Kenya has already passed far beyond the stage where such a rigidly repressive state** *could* **be organized, even if the most reactionary elements were given a chance to try.**

**You imply that settlers in Kenya wish to deny to Africans "the gradual advance in economic and political status to which they are successfully rising in those other parts of Africa where they have not a white colony sitting on their heads." The facts don't seem to me to support this. Does native education in Kenya, for instance, lag behind that in other African dependencies? Surely not. Africans are being taught skills and trades of,all kinds, and as a matter of fact the settlers have frequently prodded the Government in this respect. In politics Africans have their Local Native Councils which raise and spend their own taxes, they have a record of slow but steady advance. So far as I know the settlers have opposed none of this. On the contrary, they have often supported it. Therefore to suggest, as you seem to, that the Europeans want to sit on the Africans' heads and prevent advances seems to me to give an entirely false impression.**

**You say that you sympathize with those who distrust and fear the settlers' influence, and you explain why. I certainly can't agree with you that these critics are always on the defensive; on the contrary, they are always attacking the settlers' position, and the Kenya Government. One has only got to read the Parliamentary questions, for instance, to see that. But that's a minor detail. The main question, granting your fears and misgivings, is—what do you want to do about it?**

**It seems to me that there are only two alternatives. One is that the white pop­ulation of Kenya, settlers and traders and everyone but Government officials and perhaps missionaries, should go, leaving the country in the undisputed posses­sion of the native and immigrant Indian peoples. The other is that the whites should stay where they are. And if they stay, they must somehow or other be fit­ted into the, economic and political structure of a future East African state.**

**They go, or they stay. Look at the first possibility. They won't go voluntarily. But we live in an age of vast upheavals, of the tearing up of roots, of revolution and change. The settlers could be forced to go. They were, as you know, invited to Kenya in the first place by the Imperial Government, which spent time,**

**thought and even money, from 1903 to 1923, in attracting Europeans to the Kenya highlands and persuading them to take up land. The Imperial Govern­ment is responsible for the presence of these settlers. It wouldn't be impossible for the Imperial Government to announce that it had changed its mind, to with­draw its invitation, and to turn them out again. There would be difficulties, of course. There would be breaches of faith. But it would not be beyond the bounds of the feasible to compensate the owners of land and to arrange, perhaps, for them to take up new farms, if they so wished, in one of the Dominions.**

**146 + DIE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**I don't suggest that this would be a popular or an easy move. The Imperial Government would have to provide the money, and would probably have to use force to carry through the eviction. I only suggest that it isn't physically impos­sible, given the resolve. And it is, surely, the logical goal at which those who condemn the experiment of white settlement in Kenya should aim. If white set­tlement is wrong, let it be liquidated: that is the honest viewpoint, or so it seems to me.**

**But if, on the other hand, such a liquidation is found to be impossible, then only the second alternative remains. If the settlers are not to be turned out, they must-stay; and if they stay, a place must be found for them in the design of an East African future. The question at issue then becomes: what sort of place can, and should, be found for them, and what sort of attitude towards East Africa's future development would you wish them to adopt?**

**Now we've come to the fundamental point on which it seems to me that we disagree. If the settlers are there to stay, is it wise, is it even moderately sensible, to regard them always with this mixture of hostility and distrust? And to offer them no hopeful goal for their own future? You reject the goal that they worked towards in the past—s. elf-government. But you don't suggeSt any other. Is this negative approach likely to make them more amenable to reason, to encourage them to show moderation and liberality, to persuade them (if necessary) to mend their ways?**

**No, I can't help but feel that this attitude is both defeatist and sterile. It takes as self-evident things which are not necessarily true: that the interests of the settlers are at all points antagonistic to those of the natives; that, broadly speak­ing, all settlers have 'the same interests and ideas; that they can survive only by clinging to an island of privilege protected by a reef of racial discrimination; and that there's nothing to be done about it except to offer this blank wall of resist­ance and opposition to any** move **on the settlers' part.**

**I venture to doubt whether this attitude will lead to a fair or lasting solution to ally of Kenya's problems. An entirely new approach is, I think, needed.**

**Now I've aired my opiniorr, and perhaps you'll tell me where I'm wrong. The burden of my complaint is this: that the critics of Kenya affairs are often both defeatist and unrealistic. They believe that the evils of Kenya are due to the presence there of European settlers, but they don't propose any honest and practical steps to get rid of the element they deplore. And if they believe it can't be got rid of; then I think they are more defeatist still: for by their unremitting**

**attacks on the white population, by their constant opposition to any and all of the Europeans' aspirations, they drive the settlers more and more into a corner, they trample underfoot the shoots of co-operation, they scorch the chances of peaceful persuasion—in short, they do everything to antagonize and embitter the settlers, to force them on to the defensive, but nothing to understand, guide or persuade.**

**LETTERS ON RACE AND POLITICS + 147**

**For myself, I believe that the ills of Kenya (and Heaven knows they exist) are due, in the main, to other causes altogether, causes which this attitude of blam­ing everything on the settlers tends to obscure.**

**But before we go into that, will you let me know what you think? Would you like to get rid of the settlers and start again? Do you believe this could be done? And if you don't, what do you hope may be gained by this constant opposition and active hostility towards the settlers and all their works which, as I am sure you'll agree, is so often displayed by those who are planning from London and Oxford the design of a new African world?**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Elspeth Huxley**

***Margery Perham: Expropriation impracticable, but expansion undesirable* 30th March 1942**

**Dear Mrs. Huxley,**

**You ask me if I think it would be better to buy out and repatriate the settlers. I think in view of the policy followed by the small number of settlers of trying to obtain domination over the three million Africans, and the repercussions this policy, if pursued, is likely to have upon the even larger surrounding African populations, that it might have been better. But if it were possible at any time, that time has gone. It may sound very practicable in a study but it is the sort of thing no Government—or, since 1939, I should say, no British Government—is ever likely to attempt against the settlers' will. Especially as the Europeans in South Africa would almost certainly oppose it on general principles and as a weakening of their continental strength.**

**Also I fully agree with you that the settlers came upon the invitation of the British Government. Moreover, only a few years ago, a government, and that a Labour government; made a promise to the colonists upon this point. In their White Paper of 1930 they repeated the words of the White Paper issued in 1923 by the then Conservative Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Duke of Devonshire, on behalf of the Imperial Government.**

**"Primarily Kenya is an African territory, and His Majesty's Government think it necessary definitely to record their considered opinion that the interests of the African natives must be paramount and that if; and when those interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict, the former should pre­vail." That is clear enough and surely unquestionable. But the statement goes on to say that the interests of the other communities must be safeguarded. "Whatever the circumstances in which members of these communities have**

entered Kenya, there will be no drastic action or reversal of measures already introduced . . . the result of which might be to destroy or impair the existing interests of those already settled in Kenya." With this, which, of course, covers Indians as well as Europeans, the Labour government concurs and it seems to me to rule out completely the compulsory, wholesale repatriation of the Colonists.

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But is the alternative, as you seem to suggest, for the government to give way to the settlers' demands? This is where we must face our quite different views of the settlers. You write of the settlers as if they were unfortunate victims, who had been badly treated and werelikely to be victimized further. As I see it, the settlers have suffered nothing but occasional criticism—for the criticism is by no means a ceaseless chorus—which has had little effect except to encourage the government ,to maintain certain fundamental defences in the interests of the African majority. The settlers ,have, indeed, carried most of the outworks and are now the dominant party in the country. It is not the British government or people who have been the aggressors. They have been rather sluggish defenders. The settlers whom you see as a rather pathetic group under attack, I see as a highly organized, ceaselessly alert group of shock troops, ready at any moment, when the defences are weak, by assault or by stratagem to seize the last inner stronghold of the constitutional citadel. The government therefore is right in its policy I would say, of no *more* surrenders, no *more* constitutional privileges, and, I would add, no more land or immigration for the settlers until a proper survey. has been made of the native economy and the native labour which 'must serve them.

It is for the settlers to call off the assault; for them to say if they will accept the system as defined by the Imperial Government. In recent years the govern­ment has in some ways consolidated and improved the positions it has put up in defence tof the other races. But I am not sure whether these defences are yet strong enbugh.

So when you ask me what the government should do about the settlers, I would rather say they should continue their policy of "thus far and no farther" to their advahce, and go on righting the balance in favour of the other races, and especially, of course, of the three million Africans. Any settlers who cannot accept this check to their attempt to dominate, which will do no injury at all to their personal security and prosperity, should move to a country where the con­ditions allow them the fall citizenship to which their tradition have accustomed them, but which Kenya conditions make impossible. No pledge was ever made—it could not constitutionally have been made—to them that they should have domination over the other races. They have already won, by their abilities, great influence. The onus, it seems to me, is now upon them, to show how their special position can be adjusted to the right of the other less privileged, less vocal groups, to advance in their turn:

To sum up, then, I can't accept the drastic "either-or" that runs through your

letter. These uncompromising alternatives are effective in argument but man's

**political life is not like that. There is a middle road for tithe settlers between domination and ruin. When you say "a place must be found for them in the design of an East African future," I reply that a place *has* been found for them, a very privileged, favourable and influential place, even if it falls short of their large and determined political ambitions. I do not understand you when you suggest in forcible terms that there is something oppressive or unnatural about the settlers continuing to occupy this place and it appears that in this I am shar­ing the view of the Government and people of this-country.**

**WHEN OGRES LIVED + 149**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Margery Perham**

***Miriam Wandai*WHEN OGRES LIVED**

**Kenya 1946 English [Luluhya]**

**Miriam Wandai was born at Butere in western Kenya in about 1913, into the family of a well-known, polygamous medicine man. She was already teaching in the part-time school for women and girls on the Church Missionary Society Mission Station at Butere when Miss Lee Appleby (who would later become deaconess) arrived there in 1931. Wandai became one of the first young women in the area to receive teacher training. She remained a devout Christian, close to the mainstream Anglican Church, for the rest of her life. Wandai chose never to marry—not because she felt a particular vocation to remain single, but because none of the proposals brought to her family came up to her standards. She repiat­edly had to pay dowry for her brothers to avoid being married off. In later life, she would say, "I praise the Lord for my old age and for my virginity."**

**By contemporary standards, Miriam Wandai was not highly trained, but many professional people remember the patience with which she taught them to read Qluluyia and Kiswahili. She worked in Butere, Kisumu, Nairobi, and Kericho. She was also in great demand as a speaker in Christian women's meetings far from her home. She built a house and shop in Butere for her retirement and died there in 1969. One of her brothers offered a burial site at his homestead, since members of the clan on whose land the Butere Church was constructed would not allow the churchyard burial she had desired.**

**The story of Shilikhaya and Nabwende comes from a volume of folk stories Wandai compiled for the Church Missionary Society's Highway Press, later translated into`English and published as *When Ogres Lived* by East Africa Educa­tional Publishers.**

***Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye***

**Ogres had eaten up all human beings in the land. There were, however, two peo-**
  
**ple who had survived the onslaught. They were brother and sister, who had suc-**
  
**cessfully stayed in hiding. The boy was called Shilikhaya and the girl Nabwende.**

**150 + THE MID-T wENTIeni CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**One day, as they sat by the fire in the evening, they talked about their future. Shilikhaya, now an energetic young man, said to his sister, "My dear sister. I am getting on in age. Should I want to get married, whom shall I marry, now that beasts have eaten up all the young women in the land?"**

**Nabwende thought about this for a while before saying, "Yes, my dear brother, I have also been thinking about this matter. It is quite clear to me that I too can­not get someone to marry me, since all the young men have been eaten up."**

**For many days, they thought about this question. At last they decided that the only way out was for them to wed each other. "We have no choice in this matter," they said. "We just have to wed each other."**

**They started to make wedding arrangements. Although there would be no other people to witness their marriage ceremony, they still wanted to have a proper wedding. Finally all the plans were in place.**

**But on the eve of their planned wedding, their house caught a mysterious fire while they slept. Shilikhaya was the first to wake up. The house was alight with bright flames and full of suffocating smoke. Quickly, he shook his sister into wakefulness. They-tried to run out of the burning house but failed. The fire had already engulfed the whole place, including the only exit from the house.**

**Sister and brother were eventually overcome and they collapsed in the hun­gry flames, as they struggled for breath. Soon the roof of the house caved in and covered them in a painful death.**

**Not long afterwards the rains came. Soon the whole place was full of fresh tendrils and other plants, pleasant to the eye. In the midst of this, a strange thing happened. Nabwende and Shilikhaya who had been killed in a house fire now sprouted into good to behold vegetables! Shilikhaya grew into *olusaaka* while Nabwende grew into *libokoyi.***

**Unknown to .Shilikhaya and Nabwende, there was another part of the coun­try where some other people had survived the Ogres' onslaught. Among these people, there lived a man called Omuliebi. Omuliebi was a polygamous man. Among his many wives was one by the name Omukumba. Now Omukumba was barren. She had visited medicineman after medicineman and diviner after diviner, but none of their prescriptions gave her a child. At last Omukumba gave up on child-bearing.**

**One day, Omukumba went out to look for vegetables to eat with her *obusuma* in the evening. It so happened that the rains had failed and the whole country was now dry and dusty. The only edible vegetable one could occasion­ally come across was a white shrub called *eshilietso.* Omukumba walked from place to place with her vegetable basket but found nothing, not even *eshilietso.***

**She soon realized that she had wandered too far. She was about to turn back when she discovered that she was in a deserted homestead. She noticed the left­overs of a house which must have been burnt down by fire.**

**Walking towards the remnants of the house, she was pleasantly surprised to see two stalks of vegetables dancing to the tune of the evening wind. It was a truly strange sight to behold in those dry days. "Oh my God!" Omukumba mar­velled. "Am I not in fok a truly satisfying meal! Who would have thought that such healthy *okusaaka* and *libokoyi* existed anywhere?"**

**WHEN OGRES LIVED + 151**

**She uprooted everything and carried it home in her basket. When she got home, she showed her vegetables to the other women in the homestead. They were all surprised to see such healthy looking vegetables in those lean days.**

**"Where did you get such good vegetables?" one • of them asked.**

**"Oh, out there, where I went searching," Omukumba said.**

**"I wonder whether someone could have grown such healthy vegetables!" another one ventured.**

**"I found them in the leftovers of a burnt house," replied Omukumba.**

**"They are too healthy," said another one. "They must have grown on the heads of the dead."**

**When Omukumba had finished cooking her vegetables, she tasted a little to see whether they were ready. She found that they were extremely bitter. She added a bit of water to them and boiled them a little longer. But when she tasted them again, she was surprised that they were even more bitter than before.**

**"I wonder what could be happening to my vegetables!" she said to herself**

**Omukumba called in two of her co-wives and related to them the strange story of the bitter vegetables. They advised her to remove them from the fire and keep them in her granary overnight. This, they said, would make the veg­etables less bitter the following day.**

**The following day, Omukumba went to her granary, very early in the morn­ing, anxious to see whether her vegetables tasted less bitter. When she uncov­ered the pot, she was shocked to see not her vegetables but two strange crea­tures, closely cuddled together.**

**She broke into strange sweat, wondering what was happening. "Oh my God! Have my ancestors cursed me? Or else, what are these strange happenings?" she Marvelled. Afterwards, her co-wives came to her and enquired about the veg­etables. "How come you haven't given us any of your vegetables?" they asked.**

**"Oh well, they're all finished," Omukumba said rather quickly. "Besides, you would not have liked' them. They were extremely bitter."**

**"Still, you should have let us give them a try. Aren't you just mean and selfish?" "No, I'm telling you the truth. None of you would have liked those bitter vegetables," she said, becoming slightly annoyed.**

**"How can we be choosers of what we should eat in these difficult times? Do we have vegetable gardens of our own?" said one of the co-wives.**

**The following day, Omukumba visited the granary once again. She was shocked to see that the strange creatures had now become two tiny babies—a boy and a girl. "This must be the work of the spirits of the dead," she said to herself.**

**All this while, Omukumba did not say a word to anybody about these strange things. She feared that if anyone should get to know about these things,**

**they would laugh at her and make mockery of her for having found little gob­lins in her cooking pot.**

**152 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**Once again Omukumba visited the granary. She saw that the children had grown bigger. They could hardly fit in the small vegetable pot! She also saw that the children were very good looking. "Perhaps it's the sun and our God, Wele, who have given me these children. Perhaps they would like to take the shame of childlessness from my face. Or maybe these characters are just the spirits of the dead sent to me by my dead ancestors to torment me."**

**While she reflected on this, the children smiled at her. Once again she saw how pleasant they looked. "Surely they have been sent to me by Wele and the sun." She fetched two giant calabashes and put one child into each.**

**On another occasion, she found that the children were now too big to fit in the calabashes. She saw how big and good looking they were. She desired to carry them in her arms and hug them. But she feared what people would say, should they see the children. What she feared most was the question, "Where did you get these children?"**

**She could hardly sleep at night. She spent the whole night turning and tossing, wondering what she would do. She longed to carry and bathe her two children.**

**The** *following day she secretly moved* **them from the** *granary* **into her house, where she lived alone. She put them in a huge pot in one of the innermost chambers of her house. She made a daily programme which allowed her enough time to attend to her children. She would always wait until there was nobody else about the place, then she would bring out her lovely children, bathe them, feed them, hug them and play with them to her satisfaction.**

**And so the years rolled on. Omukumba had found a perfect way of dealing with her lovely children without anyone else getting to know about their exis­tence. This way, Shilikhaya developed into a handsome young man while his sister, Nabwende, grew into a bouncing beautiful maiden.**

**One ddy, as an Ogre was passing close by Omukumba's house, he saw Nab­wende taking a bath behind her mother's house. "My goodness!" he said to himself: "Who would have thought that such a beautiful girl lived in this home? I must come back, some day, to ask for her hand in marriage."**

**Not long afterwards the Ogre turned himself into a handsome young man and came visiting Nabwende's home. He was warmly recei''ed by the young men in the home, who welcomed him into their huts,** *tsisimba,* **and chatted with him over this and that.**

**After talking on many issues and eating and drinking, the Ogre eventually came to the point that had brought him. "Good people, I wish to relate to you what has brought me here," he said.**

**"We are listening," his hosts answered.**

**"I wish to ask for the hand in marriage to one of the girls in this home," he went on.**

**Since the young visitor had so far impressed his hosts, they were pleased at these tidings. They thought it would be good for him to marry one of the girls.**

**In those days, girls did not have much say on whom they married. They simply married whoever their parents approved of. And so all the girls in Omuliebi's homestead were summoned together so that the visitor could say who among them he wished to marry.**

**Wiwi' OGRES LIVED + 153**

**After carefully looking at each of the girls in turn, the Ogre reported with disappointment that the girl he desired was not among those gathered.**

**"Oh, well," said his hosts, "These are all the daughters of this home..Perhaps you saw the girl you wish to marry elsewhere."**

**The Ogre went away a very disappointed person. But he came back after a few days to report that he had once again seen the girl he wished to marry. Everyone was perplexed. They did their best to convince the young suitor that he was mis­taken, but he would not listen to them. Eventually, fed up with him, they asked him to show them the house behind which he had seen the girl bathing.**

**"That one," he said, pointing at Omukumba's house.**

**Now everyone was convinced that this suitor was thoroughly mistaken. Or, perhaps, he was mad. "There is no child in that house," the owner of the home­stead said. "You must have seen a visitor."**

**But the Ogre insisted, "There is a boy and a girl who live in that house. I have seen them with my own eyes, more than once."**

**"My friend," said Omuliebi. "I think you are out of your mind. Ever since I married the woman who lives in that house, many years ago, she has never had a single child. Quite honestly, I don't understand what you are talking about. I think you need help. You must be sick."**

**Meanwhile Omukumba was getting worried. She moved closer to the Ogre and rebuked him saying, "Young man, why have you come here to make mock­ery of me? Am I the only barren woman on earth? Please, stop there. Enough is enough."**

**For several nights thereafter, Omukumba could not sleep. She kept on turn­ing and tossing, lamenting at her ill fortune. "Oh my God!" she said. "After many agonizing years of childlessness our God, Wele, remembered me. But now comes this troublesome young man. What does he want of me!"**

**But the Ogre didn't give up his quest for the beautiful Nabwende. Every few** *days* **he would** *come* **over and** *renew* **his request. But he always met the same answer. Finally the owners of the home decided to ignore him altogether. This saddened and angered him greatly. He started thinking of the best way to pun­ish them so that they may at last give in to his request.**

**"If I should hide under the sea and dry up all the water bodies in the land and cause a terrible drought, it may just happen that mankind will suffer heav­ily that they will finally force this man to give me the girl I want?" he said to himself.**

**And so he got into the sea and settled at the very bottom. Soon, the sea started disappearing and the sun became increasingly oppressive and unbear­able. Rivers and lakes started drying up too. Even the smallest streams and ponds dried up. The sun became increasingly scorching and unbearable. All the**

grass dried up. Man and animal alike had nothing to drink. There was hardly anything to eat. Animals started dying in large numbers. The smell of death filled the air.

**154 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CEstrumr (1936-1969)**

People got very worried. They could see death staring them in the eye. They decided to do something about it They went to the greatest diviner in the land, Akamanya, to find out what they must do to overcome this catastrophe.

After consulting and communing with the mysterious world, Akamanya announced that the suffering in the land had been caused by an irate Ogre who had gone to stay at the bottom of the sea after failing to marry the girl he desired. The diviner reported further that the Ogre had once seen the girl bathing behind her mother's house and that although he had made repeated visits to her home, her father had insisted that he had no such daughter. And so the entire human race must perish because of the Ogre's wrath. When it became known who this man was, it was decided that a delegation should be sent to persuade him to give the Ogre. the girl he wanted. Much as Omuliebi tried to convince them that he had no such daughter, they kept on coming back to him to plead with him to take pity on them and their emaciated animals.

At last, fed up with the tragedy that had befallen his homestead, Omuliebi took one of his daughters and went with her to what had once been the sea shore. When he got there he sang in a tremulous voice

*Shill mwalo, shill mwalo Hamba, omukhana ngwuno Hamba, omukhana ngwuno Umbe khumatsi ing'omb e yinywe.*

which means

You who lives under water, you who lives under water,

Come, here is a girl Come, here is a girl Please give me some water for my cow.

But the Ogre replied:

*Oyo ni mulamwa Oyo ni mulamwa Nanga nahwende ing'ombe yinywe.*

which means

That one is my sister in-law That one is my sister in-law Give me Nabwende and the cow shall have water to drink.

**The man brought all his daughters to the Ogre, but he achieved nothing. With no more daughters left, he even brought his sons but the result was the same. Finally he decided to offer the Ogre his wives. Again the Ogre turned them all 'down. He even brought all his animals to the sea but he still achieved nothing.**

**WHEN OGRES LIVED 4. 155**

**Meanwhile it was getting drier and drier. People and animals were now dying in even larger numbers. Everyday was a burial day. Everyone was very unhappy with Omuliebi.**

**"What is wrong with this man?" they asked. "Doesn't he have a single grain of sympathy in his veins? Why does he let our people and animals die in hun­dreds everyday? Why can't he take his daughter to the Ogre and save us all?"**

**Some suggested that they should threaten him with death. "Let us go to him and tell him that we shall put him to death if he continues being stubborn. Maybe that way, he will give in and bring out this girl," they said:**

**Once,again they visited his homestead early the next morning. After much argument, during which Omuliebi tried to assure them, that he had no children besides the ones he had already taken to the Ogre, it was agreed that all his houses should be ransacked without further delay.**

**The assembled people divided themselves into, several search parties and soon the search was on. It did not take long for a team which had been assigned Omukumba's house to come out with a young man and a very beautiful girl. The children looked as if they were duplicates. Never before had the people of this land seen such dazzling beauty.**

**Everyone was dumbfounded. They confronted Omukumba's husband, seek­ing an explanation to all this. "Tell us," the leader to the delegation said. "Why have you been cheating us all this time, while knowing very well that you were hiding these two there?"**

**Omuliebi was completely lost for words. He did not know whether to mar­vel at the beauty of the two children, or at the fact that they had always lived in his home without the slightest knowledge on his part. He simply stared at Omukumba, wondering what she could have been up to all this while.**

**Eventually the people decided that the girl should instantly be taken to the Ogre. But her brother intervened saying, "No! She shall be taken to the Ogre tomorrow and not today."**

**He told them to take word to the Ogre that his new bride would be given to him in marriage the following day. "But tell him that the girl shall not be taken to him in the sea bed where he lives. He should instead come to the Eshikulu cliff where he will find his girl waiting for him."**

**Having waited for many long and dry months, they did not see why they should not wait for one more day. "What difference will it make anyway?" they said.**

**A messenger was immediately dispatched to the Ogre with the good news about his impending meeting with Nabwende the following morning. So pleased was he to receive the news that he decided to give people a little water. Soon clouds began gathering. Everywhere lightning started flashing and thun­der rolling.**

**In no time the place was awash with floods. It rained so heavily that even the oldest man in the land said he could not remember ever having seen such rain and so much water.**

**156 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**Early the following morning, Nabwende was led to the cliff where she would meet her new husband, the Ogre. She wept frantically, but her brother tried to console her saying, "Do not cry, my dear sister. 'Whatever eats you must eat me first."**

**And they walked on in the midst of the escort party to the cliff. Shilikhaya had fashioned a bow and made hooked, double-pronged arrows which he car­ried with him.**

**Meanwhile Omuliebi walked to the sea where he called out to the Ogre.**

**You who lives under water You who lives under water Come, here is Nabwende Please give me some water for my cow.**

**The 'Ogre was overjoyed to hear that they had brought him Nabwende, at last. He hurriedly rushed out of the sea, dancing and running about the place as if he was possessed. He did a little dance and threw his staff skyward. Immedi­ately, the heavens opened up and it was soon raining, more than the day before. The Ogre took no notice of the rain. He ran on up to the cliff to meet the girl he so much desired.**

**When the•Ogre was only a few metres away from Nabwende, Shilikhaya, who was hiding in an opening in the cliff unleashed the first arrow at him. It struck him in the back. As he slipped down the cliff he asked in surprise, "What has stung me? Where could it be hiding?"**

**All this time Nabwende was weeping uncontrollably. For the third time, the Ogre tried to climb up the cliff. This time round, the arrow gotlim squarely in the chest. He completely lost his grip and came tumbling down the cliff. Shi­likhaya shot more arrows into him. The Ogre was now unable to rise up. Even­tually,-he collapsed and died from his wounds.**

**Shilikhaya helped his sister down the cliff and led her back home. There, they found their mother almost dying of a broken heart. That same day, Omukumba moved away from Omuliebi's homestead with her children and set up a new home far away.**

***Translated by Barrack O. Muluka***

***C.M. binti Hassan***

**AN AFRICAN MARRIES A WHITE THROUGH MERE WORLDLY DESIRES + 157**

**AN AFRICAN MARRIES A WHITE THROUGH
  
MERE WORLDLY DESIRES**

**Tanzania 1946 Kiswahili**

**This Kiswahili poem discusses one of the major social issues of the colonial period in East Africa, that of interracial marriages.**

**Racial socialization or intermixing during colonialism was not acceptable-hence intermarriage often led to the alienation of:the couple from social contacts or tension with in-laws and relatives. Interracial marriages were also, inevitably, shaped by colonial-era racism. To begin with, the terms were one sided: foreign men, including not only Europeans but Indians and Arabs, married black African women, but African men could not marry foreign women. And as the author makes clear in her poem, African women and their relatives were likely -to be treated as inferior beings.**

**The poem appeared in a Kiswahili newspaper, *Mambo Leo,* a colonial periodi­cal established by the British government in 1923. The periodical did much to promote writing in Kiswahili. Like most Kiswahili papers then and now, *Mambo Leo* had a poets' page on which poets could publish their poems, usually debating pertinent issues of the day in true Kiswahili dialogic.tradition. C. M. binti Has­san's poem appeared in the September 1946 issue. When she writes, in the first stanza, "Today I wish you to consider this matter," she is inviting fellow poets to respond, and several did, supporting or opposing her point of view.**

**There is no available information about the author ofthe poem, nor have any other poems by her been located. Her full name is not given; we only have the'ini­tials C.M., followed by her father's name. But her address appears after her signa­ture: "NA. School, Nyonga, Tab/6ra." She may well have been a teacher at a pri­?nary school in Tabora. The poem is written in traditional tarbia quatrains, still the most popular Kiswahili verse form. This type of rhyming verse has sixteen syllables per line, divided into eight-syllable hemistiches (called *vipande),* and four lines per stanza.**

**This poem may be viewed in the context of black African awakening in the 1940s, exhibiting an increasing distrust and cynicism toward white colonists, and chastising those Africans who allow themselves to be coopted or mistreated by whites for the sake of material gain, or "mere worldly desires."**

***M.M. Mulokozi***

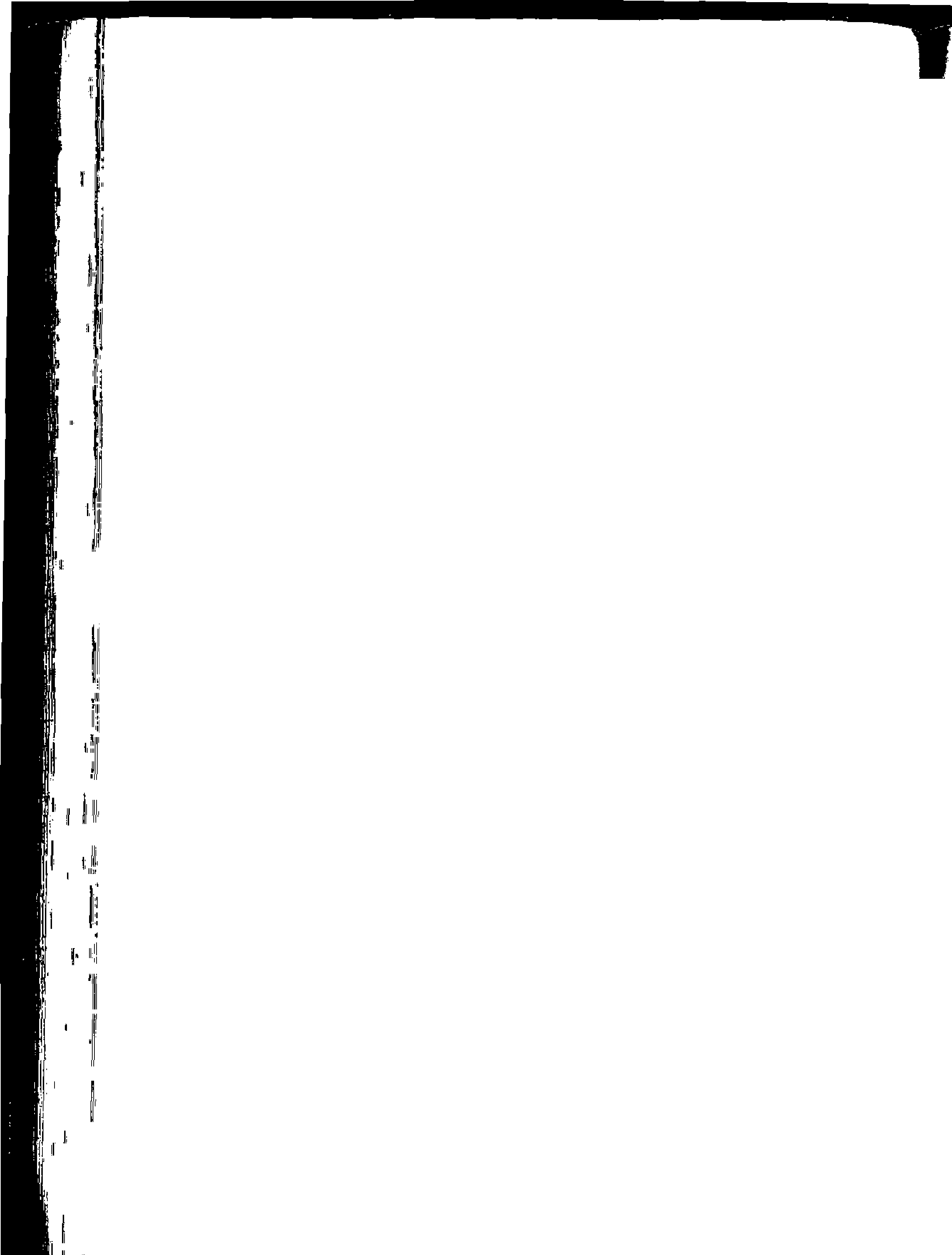
1. **Lots of greetings to you, Africans,**

**Christians and Muslims, all those in the city.**

**Today I wish you to consider this matter:**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **I have read in the gazette, I have seen the arguments Of these foreign people marrying Africans.**



**I thought it was curious that such acts should make sense:
  
An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

**3. The African women should never marry a foreigner. You pretend to be ticks with no brains in your heads. Better to eat jack-fruit, which is beneficial to the body. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

is

1. **To claim that the African cares little for his wife at home, That things go wrong because of wrangling in the households:**

**I am writing these things for you to keep in your minds. An African *marries* a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **You will see these shameful things in towns,**

**Especially acts by Arabs—they are unspeakable!**

**When the grandfather comes, he is invited only onto the veranda. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **You never see the father, the siblings, and the relatives. You stay indoors silent, gazing through the window.**

**This happens to us because of greed; we place ourselves in slavery. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **You say it is proper to get married; I do not oppose that. *One never questions what God* advises.**

**Now and even before, separation was never ordained.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **Try and go to India, there is no daughter of so-and-so. On the Asian continent, no daughter of so-and-so. Even in Russia, no daughter of so-and-so.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **You turn God, our Creator, into a fool**

**For having created different groups in the world. Comrades, if you are lost, you are shaming us.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **To marry an African is twenty times better.**

**He would bury your elders—that is what is important. When you prosper, you may forget your native culttire. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

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**158 + ThE MID—TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

1. **Let's say you are married to that foreign man And tea and coffee are not available**

**AN AFRICAN MARRIES A WIIITETHROUGH MERE WORLDLY DESIRES + 159**

**When your relatives come from home to visit you.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **In your mother's home it is an honor to invite guests into the store room: Can we say it is a good thing to be isolated like a baboon? Such occurrences are not hearsay—I have witnessed them myself. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**
2. **Visitors are made to sleep on mats in the shop,**

**While the hose sleeps on the bed and the *master* in the bedroom. The visitor's toilet is the bush—morning** and **evening.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **Neither your father nor your uncle is allowed in the sitting room. That's the sitting arrangement you wanted.**

**As a result you never see relatives coming to visit you.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **I want a learned person to respond to me in public. Let him or her not speculate but speak honestly with certainty. Say that you are after the goods in the shop.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

**16.1 have yet to see an African marry an Arab girl**

**Or a young African an Indian.**

**Do not merely argue; weigh the issues carefully in your minds. An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **The fault, you know, lies among parents in the homes: Filled with greed, they place us in bondage.**

**When you bear a child—to which country will it belong? An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

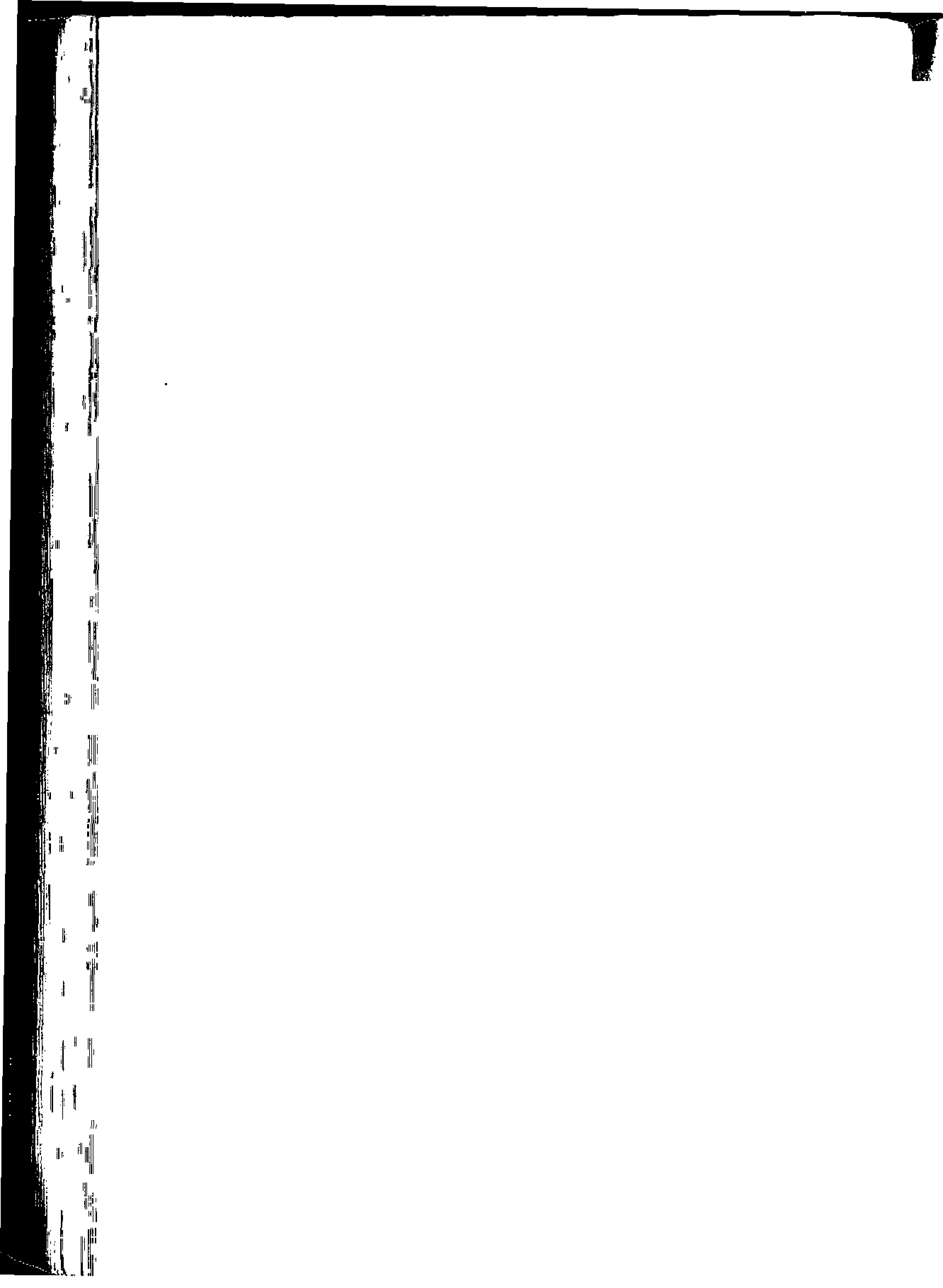
1. **If it comes to Africa, we say it is an Indian;**

**When it reaches India, they say it is an African.**

**Which tribe should it belong to, in which tribe be named? An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

1. **Greetings to all in Ujiji, all the youth in the town.** I **am not squandering my words—do weigh them carefully.** I **am expecting you to tell *me* the real truth.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

**20. Two numbers, twenty stanzas, I stop here in print. 1 am not a newcomer, though I am a visitor.**

**If I am attacked on the head, I will strike facial blows.**

**An African marries a white through mere worldly desires.**

***Mandated by Martha Q0170 and MM. Mulokozi***

***Nyense Namwandu***

**FIGHTING FOR WIDOWS' PROPERTY AND THE
  
RIGHT TO kEFUSE MARRIAGE**

***Uganda 1947 Luganda***

***Nyense Namwandu was* a subsistence *farmer* resident in Kalarna Village, in the Kyamuliibwa area of Kalungu County in Masaka District. Though a widow, Nyense Namwandu was still of childbearing age when she wrote her letter of complaint in 1947. She admits in her letter that she is younger than some of her late husband's children, including his son Ntonio, who wanted to take her as his own wife "on behalf of the clan.' Clearly, then, she had been married to Ntonio's father in his later years as a second, third, or even fourth wife.**

**The widow's two names are revealing. Namwandu is more of a title, a formal­ization of the widowed status of the woman, than it is a personal name;although it is often used as such. Nyense Namwandu probably used it deliberately to indi­cate acceptance of her widowed status and her refusal of Ntonio or any other man. Nyense, on the other hand, is a Lugandan form of Agnes as pronounced in French (just as Ntonio is the Lugandan form of Anthony). Nyense Namwandu had been baptized at a Catholic mission, run by the French-speaking White Fathers. Since literacy was a necessary requirement for baptism, Nyense must also have received a mission education.**

**Nyense Namwandu's strategy of bypassing the conspiring local chiefs, to make her appeal to a higher authority and to put her. complaint on the public record, testifies to the new awareness modern education had aroused in Baganda women. She knew that it would be difficult for the authorities to ignore or snub her plea, *especially* as she had put it on record, and kept a cop}' to boot. Her appearto the subcounty chief, a kind of medium-range administrator, signals that she is pre­pared to take her case to the highest levels of the administration if necessary. As it turned out, the case was decided in Nyense Namwandu's favor. She was neither evicted from het land nor required to marry Ntonio.**

**Though not frequently discussed, the practice of widow inheritance by a brother or a cousin of the deceased was, apparently, widespread in !Uganda soci­ety, as in many other African communities. The unusual twist in Nyense Namwandu's case is that the person seeking to inherit her was her stepson. Apparently, because of the polygamous nature of the society; sons *of the* deceased were sometimes allowed to inherit young widows who might not yet have had**

**160 + THE Mu-TwENnETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

**children. In Nyense Namwandu's case, however, she had had children with Nto­nio's father, so any *intimate* relationship with him would *be* clearly incestuous. Nyense Namwandu's analysis of the situation rightly identifies Ntonio's inten­tions as manifestly sexist and oppressive. He concludes that *she* has not had chil­dren with his father because her offspring are girls, whom the patriarchy does not regard as "real children.' Threatening to evict her from her home is obviously a ploy to force her into the liaison.**

**The officials whom Nyense Namwandu mentions as conspiring with Ntonio against her reside in the lowest echelons of the Baganda administrative hierarchy, preserved through most of the colonial period and beyond. They range from the village through the parish and subcounty to the county and ultimately to the regional supreme ruler, the *kabaka* or king. Above the *kabaka* was of course the colonial *administration,* replaced *in the* post-independence era by the central government.**

***"Justin Bukenya andAbasi Kiyimba***

**Kalamai Kyamuliibwa**

**Kalungu, Buddu**

**19th March 1947**

**To the Sub-County Chief**

**Dear Honoured One,**

**I am writing to you to make an appeal on the matter of my son, my late hus­band's son, Ntonio Zebalaba, who wants to evict me from the land which my late husband left me, because I have refused to marry him.**

**Ntonio says that since I had not produced a male child when my husband died, he should inherit me and I produce a male child for the clan. Although this practice was used among the Baganda of long ago, it is now not proper because female children are also people. Ntonio may be older than me, but my children are his true sisters, because they are his father's children.**

**Ntonio says that if I do not marry him, I should leave the land where my husband left me. Where should I go with my children?**

**We have sat through this matter at the court of the village and the parish chiefs, but they seem to be in support of him because he is their friend. That is why I have decided to 'appeal to you.**

**I am,**

**Nyense Namwandu**

***Translated by Abasi Kiyimba***

**FIGHTING FOR WIDOWS' PROPERTY . . . RIGHT TO REFUSE MARRIAGE + 161**

***Zand G*WOMEN ARE HUMAN BEINGS**

**Tanzania 1950 Kiswahili**

**This is a petition written by two prostitutes on behalf of a larger group, protesting the measures taken by local authorities in Bukoba, Tanzania, in the late 1940s, attempting to stop them from traveling outside the district. The petition, addressed to the District Comthissioner in November 1950, was a response to a two-year smear campaign against the Bahaya women, who had been traveling regularly to the urban centers of Kampala, Nairobi, Mombasa, and Dar es Salaam allegedly to serve as sex workers. These trips angered the conservative male estab­lishment, including the Bakama Council (the council of chiefs), who claimed that the women were harming the good reputation of the Bahaya community.**

**Prostitution on a large scale began in the region at the turn of the nineteenth century, following the establishment of colonial rule and its accompanying com­mercialization. Colonial *bomas,* or homesteads, had numerous single men who served as *askaris* (soldiers and police), porters, or casual workers, and these pro­vided a ready market for enterprising women prostitutes. White officials and traders, and *even* some missionaries, were also known to enjoy their services. The rapid rise of prostitution was facilitated by customs and laws that prohibited women from inheriting or owning clan land. Thus widowed or divorced women found themselves destitute, many resorting to prostitution as the only alternative left short of taking church vows.**

**By the'1940s; Bahaya women could be found in all large cities of East Africa. Many of these women returned annually to Bukoba laden with presents for their parents and relatives;and some with enough money to buy banana *shambas* (plots of land), build hodses, and even pay for the education of siblings and their own children. Stith economic success stories were seen as bad examples for other women, some of whom left marriages to work in prostitution.**

**The hostility of the male establishment toward these women prompted the measures taken against them. One such measure prohibited women to travel by steamer—the major means of travel across Lake Victoria. Those who broke this rule were stopped and sometimes abused at the port. The women reacted by mobilizing their vast East African network to oppose the measures. Women in Nairobi, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam, and elsewhere hired lawyers to defend their rights. Initially the District Commissioner supported the restrictions on women, but the Provincial Commissioner eventually ordered the district to withdraw its support because the actions were illegal. The women's protests succeeded, and the illegal order was rescinded in 1951.**

***M.M. Mulokozi***

**162 + THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1936-1969)**

Sir,

**WOMEN ARE HUMAN BEINGS + 163**

We women are human beings like the men. God created us all to assist each other, men and women. Now for about.2 years we see that we women are returning to slavery. You Europeans came to help us to completely finish slavery so everybody should get freedom.

When the men instituted the laws to forbid us to go abroad to find work to help ourselves and our parents, the law was brought to you and to our rulers to be accepted. But we were not called to any meeting to be asked why we go abroad rather than staying at home, and what problems sent us there. We hear our opponents saying that we go because of prostitution *(Umalaya).* This word is an insult to us. If we are called prostitutes, can a woman make herself a pros­titute on her own? First of all, is not a prostitute the man who gave us the money? . . . They do not think of that.

It would be better to forbid the men to travel, because they let their coffee plantations fall into decay or they sell the plantations which they have been entrusted by their fathers and go and make mischief. When we return home we buy the plantations of those scoundrels. The drunkards do not know how to take care of the plantations they have gotten from their fathers. The men do not know how to treat their wives well. When a man sells coffee he divides up the shilling in two parts—to get drunk and to give to someone who has done noth­ing for the money he gives away for fornication. Perhaps he sends you, his wife, to bring him his money order; if you refuse you will be beaten and chased away, because you do not follow orders. It is difficult to talk about our lives together with..our men. We endure for the sake of our children.

Now we ask you, sir, to give the order to our council that we may discuss with our husbands and parents. The person whom it is necessary to forbid to travel.may be stopped.,The one who has the right to go may be allowed, but do not despise us because we are women. Even if we are Women, our fathers and our husbands ought to thank us, because' the plantations we have bought would have been taken otherwise by foreigners like the Rwandese and tribes outside Bukoba.

We ask for your mercy to **meet** with you, since we are beaten and chased away at the harbour, as if we are animals. We are sorry when we see that women do not get the protection of our sacred government.

We are the humble and obedient Z and G, your children from Kiziba.

*Translated by Birgitta Larsson*

***Bibi Pirira Atbumani***

**TWO POEMS**

**Tanzania 1950s Kiswahili**

**Pirira Athumani was born at a fishing village near Tanga it} 1920, and passed away in 2002. Tanga is a Swahili town with a largely Islamic culture and a long tradition of literacy (in Arabic script) and literature. Many distinguished Tanzan­ian writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (including Hemed Abdallah and Shaaban Robert) lived and worked there. The German colonialists turned it into a center of the sisal industry. Tanga's now waning prosperity was based on this industry.**

**Athumani grew up in Tanga, but had no opportunity to go to school. She thus acquired literacy as an adult. She married several times, but did not have children. Like many other African women, however, she had ample opportunity to raise several generations of her relatives' and probably co-wives' children. Her poem "The Stepmother" is thus based on her own experience.**

**In many traditional tales, the stepmother is usually depicted as a demon, a tyrannical, cruel, and greedy woman..Hence the Kiswahili saying "Mama wa *kamba si* mama"—"The stepmother is no mother." Yet many children are brought up by stepmothers, and many have only fond memories of them. Athumani, her­self brought up by a stepmother, was to become a stepmother in turn. In this poem, Athumani directly addresses her listeners, and especially her fellow poets, arguing, against the traditional** stereotype **bf,the stepmother. The poem—in the traditional tarbia4ior 'quatrain form—falls within the Swahili sung poetry tradi­tion. Athumani might have sung it at public occasions or dance events, and other interested poets would have replied in the same mode.**

**In "Love Has No Cure," Athumani compares love to juju, or magic. The con­tent of the poem derives from the common belief in Africa that love can be induced, controlled, or maintained through the use of the occult. This widespread belief has often been a source of suffering, especially for: women. Seeking to ensure that they do not lose the affection of their lovers or husbands, especially in polygamous households, women sometimes squander their meager resources on the *waganga* (witch doctor, or traditional healer), who claim to have the love potions or medicine they need. Quite often, such women lose their husbands or lovers as soon as their dealings with the *waganga* are discovered. Likewise, some men also go to such doctors for similar reasons.**

**In this cynical and humorous song, Pirira castigates such beliefs and practites, claiming that there is no love medicine save the language one speaks to a partner. Athumani's view is;in her context, quite unorthodox and very progressive.**

**Athumani herself was married into a polygamous household, and for a time suffered utter neglect from her last husband, who favored his younger wife. She later left him, and by the time he realized his loss, it was too late; she was unwill­ing to return to him. Her experience may have inspired this poem.**

**The poem is in song measure; the lines are uneven and depend on the melody of the song. The short lines, comprising the solo and chorus, have eight syllables each.**

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Athumani has long been a renowned dance singer and storyteller with a very large repertoire. Her recorded songs are preserved in the archives of the Institute of Kiswahili Research at the University of Dar es Salaam.While these longs were recorded in 1991, they were composed earlier; "The Stepmother" is known to have been composed in the 1950s.

**Two Poi is + 165**

*MM. Mulokozi*

**THE STEPMOTHER**

**I begin in the name of Allah, I want to join the dance Nor have I any hindrance; please bear with me, you poets It is rice and coconut it pains me, chew on it:**

**Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**The heart of each is different; all stepmothers are not the same. Not all grab the income so that it goes nowhere.**

**That is only a practice of some—as of Mashaka and Kilokote: Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**.1 tell you, experts, leave jokes aside**

**Of the left and on the right, explore all.**

**It only happens with some people; it is not the case with all women: Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**I saw Wadia; she loved all the children,**

**Cooking for them, tea, meat, and bread,**

**And when a child cried, she would say, "Bring it here." Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**For instance, this Sofia, she should love all the children,**

**Yet she slaps the child on the head, the arms, and everywhere. By every means, reducing the child to a mere reed.**

**Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**Now let us turn to this Amina—she loves the whole group.**

**She pours her treasures into all the shops**

**Of the Banianis and the Chinese, so as to dress and adorn the kids fully. Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**Bye-bye, I tell you, let us not quarrel or dispute.**

**Now I put down the pen, for all the ink has dried up. Don't accuse me of fleeing; I am always here.**

**Not all stepmothers are bad; the heart of each is different.**

**LOVE HAS No CURE**

**Love has no cure, except on your tongue.**

**I warn you, end your arrogance or you will sleep alone.**

*Solo:* **If you are a healer,**

**Heal your uncle.**

*Chorus:* **If you are a witch, Bewitch your aunt.**

**You will use up all the herbs in destroying others.**

**We know you, we let you make a habit of it, and we let you squander your money.**

**Love has no cure, except on your tongue.**

**I warn you, end your arrogance or you will sleep alone.**

*Solo:* **If you are a healer,**

**Heal your uncle.**

*Chorus:* **If you can do magic, Spin it on your aunt.**

**You will use up all the herbs in destroying others.**

**We know you, we let you make a habit of it, and we let you squander your money.**

*Translated by M.M. Mulokozi*

***Communal*GIDMAY: FAREWELL TO A BRIDE**

**Tanzania 1950s Iraqw**

**The Iraqw people, thought to hay..e originally migrated south from Ethiopia, are concentrated in north central Tanzania. Gidmay is a traditional song that is sung to a bride by age mates from her village on the day they bid her farewell as she departs for her groom's home.**

**In the Iraqw community, a wedding ceremony lasts a whole week, and some­times longer. Preparations for the ceremony normally include painting and draw­ing on the walls of both the groom's and bride's homes with different colors, mostly white, black, and red. (White is obtained from ashes, black from soot or**

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charcoal, and red from ochre.) For several days and nights, various groups sing in praise or reproach of the bride or the groom, depending on which side the singers come from. On the groom's side, age mates and relatives, mostly young men, sing praise songs for the groom, such as, "You're a lion who has brought home a buf­falo," or, "You're a kite [or an eagle] and have brought home a chick [or dove]." On the bride's side, age mates and relatives, mostly young girls, sing songs like this one. They lament the bride's departure, provide some words of warning for the bride, and make a few sneering comments about the groom. The singers' insults are meant to be taken in good humor, and are sung with the knowledge that the groom will have praise poured on him when he gets back home with the bride beside him. The reference to the spider invokes the wish for the couple to bear many children. The Iraqw believe the spider is the insect which produces the highest number of offspring.

**GIDMAY: FAREWELL TO A BRIDE + 167**

Gidmay is the generic name of the song. Gidmay and Lanta stand for the bridegroom and the bride. In actual singing, these names are replaced by those of the couple.

*Martha Qorro*

1. Gidmay son of Da/ati, Gidmay the bulls are fighting. Gidmay the bulls are fighting, in the land of *Masabeda,* In *Masabeda* at the house of Tekwi Yawari.
2. Lanta, my dear, when I saw decorated walls, When I saw the decoration, **I** thought this was done for mere beauty,

Thought it was for mere beauty, but I realize it's because you are leaving.

1. Be strong; that you have to leave is your parents' decision. Be strong, even though you've been sprained while very young. You've been given away very young, the spider of true color.
2. Had I been your parents you wouldn't go there. I'm not your parents, what can we do?

My dear Lanta, be strong.

1. This distant stranger, why did you accept him?

Why did you accept him, this one with heels as rough as roof tiles? This one with rough heels, like those of salt lake warthogs.

1. You have accepted a stranger; you've already accepted him.

You've accepted a stranger, whose back is covered with dirt scales,

Whose back is covered with dirt scales, like that of a hyena from Gomm land.

1. The man you have accepted, The man you have accepted has a back covered with dirt scales.

His back is covered with dirt scales, like the earth-roofed house of the cold uplands.

1. This stranger, what does he like best? He is inclined to live on stale local beer, To live on stale beer made from scum.
2. The spider of true color, my heart has sunk.

My heart has sunk, until my sweat dried

If my heart has sunk so much, what about those of your parents?

1. Daughter of our father, cry in your heart,

For the stranger of that family has no brothers.

He has no brothers in our midst, as he comes from the Hadza tribe.

1. My dear girl, cry in your heart. Tell your father to give you a cow, To give you a pregnant cow to keep.
2. Life is to be lived carefully, not in a hurry. Living in the home of other people requires calm. Life is not to be hurried, it is one step at a time.
3. If you take life with lust, you will face those sticks long stored on the roof, The sticks full' of dust; you'll think they are for herding calves,

But alas! They are for teaching you a lesson!

1. My dear Lanta, I am going back home. I am going back home; I leave you in peace. I leave you in peace; be strong.

*Collected by Made Akonaay Translated by Martha Qorro and Yustf Lawi*

***Mama Mai*FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM**

Zambia 1950s Chimambwe

Mama Meli's story was taken down by her grandson, H.E. Silanda, in the early
  
1950s, when he was a university student. He viewed his grandmother's account as
  
a family history that could also serve a cultural purpose. In publishing it in the

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**original Chimambwe, Silanda sought to enlarge the corpus of literature in Chi­mambwe, a language he feared would be lost owing to the adoption of Chibemba as the vernacular language of schooling throughout the Northern Province of Zambia—then still Northern Rhodesia. Mambwe country, which straddles the Tanzania-Zambia border, was in the nineteenth century hard-pressed by the aggressive Bemba from the south and itinerant long distance traders, both the Nyamwezi from west central Tanzania and the Muslim Arab-Swahili from the Zanzibar-dominated Indian Ocean coast.**

**FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM + 169**

**Meli's story begins in a part of Mambwe country subordinated by Bemba chiefs, with her seizure as part of a penalty for a sexual transgression, adultery with a wife of the local Bemba chief, by her male relative. Her narrative of succes­sive transfers and experiences at the hands of various owners is marked by a sense of her family's notability. Mwenya, as she was known before her baptism as Meli (Mary), let her owners know that she was a "princess" likely to be retrieved once her important relatives knew where she was. This consciousness counters the generalization that slaves became completely estranged from their kin. The com­bination of her good fortune in not being taken away from her own dialect zone and her eventual return to Mambwe country and recognition by her family must both be taken into consideration when assessing the construction of the narrative. It is also important to recognize that her account of her slavery and liberation would have become practiced early in her life after slavery, as a protégé in the mission community.**

**The later part of the autobiography provides an extremely unusual portrait of a Zambian woman in the context of the progressive elite in the colonial situation. She became first socialized into a Western way of life within a missionary house­hold at the London Missionary Society's principal station in the region, Kaw­imbe. Then, upon her marriage to a Christian carpenter, she became subject to more traditionalist values. Following her husband's premature death during the influenza pandemic** of **1918, she lost control over herself; her children, and the conjugal property that was inherited by her husband's family. Finally, she trained as a community welfare auxiliary in a new program inaugurated in the mid-1930s. Upon returning to Kawimbe, where her son was a teacher, she became one of the first female elders in the church. She survived a quarter of a century beyond the closure of this autobiography.**

**After its translation into English in the 1970s, her narrative became accessible to a much wider audience of Zambian women, who have sometimes spoken of their shock of recognition, in particular upon reading of Mama Meli's experience of being stripped of everything by her deceased husband's heirs.**

***Marcia Wright***

**When we were at Nkulumwe I was only a small girl. Whenever the elders were seated together they talked about Ponde's warriors. Men at the *insaka* (the vil­lage meeting place) and women in small groups, near their homes, used to say, "Friends, can we not flee and seek refuge with the white people at Kawimbe? There we can live in real safety."**

**One day early in the morning people scattered, some going to get *masuku* in**

the bush because it was the period when *masuku* are ripe and fall from trees. Others had simply fled. Father had accompanied Mulama to Ndaela. My mother and I were still in bed because mother had a bad sore on her lower back. At dawn, mother sent me to ask for water from the house of Museo, Namwezi's grandmother. I took a cup. When I entered the house I found it empty and in disarray. *Masuku* fruit was scattered about, the bed mats were torn up and flies were buzzing all around. Then I thought to myself, where would the people of this house have gone? I searched the place and then ran back to tell mother all I had seen. She said to me, maybe they have gone to pick *masuku.* But I said it seemed strange that they would have destroyed their bed mats and scattered the *masuku* they had gathered only the morning before. Mother could not imagine where they had gone. As we were speaking, my elder brother's wife, Mulenga, came and beckoned to me. I went out and she whispered to me, "Tell my mother-in-law I would like to go into the bush to pick *masuku."* Mother agreed on condition that she first drew some water from the stream for us. Mulenga refused by shaking her shoulders and head, for it was not customary to speak to one's mother-in-law. Mother said, "Well, you may go, but come back early. Mwenya will fetch the water when the sun comes up."

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Later I picked up a gourd and went to Melu and said to her, "Let us go to the stream to fetch water." Because her house was nearer to the river, my friend poured the water into an *nsembo* (water pot) and returned to the river without me. By the time I came out of our gateway I saw my friend returning from the river. I told her, "My friend, why did you leave me behind?" Without answering my question, she said, "Hurry up, go and fetch your water, you will find me here." I ran quickly and drew some water. When I had partly filled my gourd, I heard shots. I lifted the gourd and ran up the bank. I heard my friend shout, "Mwenya, hurry up! Be quick, let's go!" I thought perhaps she had seen a python. I became frightened and thought it might catch me. I had gone a little way when Melu said, "Mwenya, hurry up! It's an army, run lest we die." We fled following the little stream until we reached the place where it joins the Nku­lumwe River. We went into an abandoned village. As we were about to hide in thick elephant grass we saw three warriors running after us. My friend said, "Let us run." We heard these people shout, "Halt! Halt! Or else we will shoot you down." We stopped and they captured us. When they saw people fleeing from the village they stood and watched. I thought these men were only scaring us. I did not know who they really were. Among the people fleeing the village, because they were at a distance, I only recognized Kazata who once lived at Mpanda Lyapa, and one woman, the wife of Nkunkulusya. This woman surren­dered herself to the warriors because they had already killed her child. When she reached them she said, "Go ahead, kill me too! I want to follow my child." But they only pushed her forward saying, "Move! You dog!" They then took us to the village where my mother was detained.

When we came to where they had left my mother we found she had escaped. For this they said to thesmelves, "Let her go, with such a terrible wound she

cannot walk far." When I heard that, I realized that they were talking about mother. I became very upset and put my hand over my mouth. We reached the gate. When I looked around I saw that the wife of my uncle Swata had been struck in her neck and killed. Her lameness must have been the reason. That is when I fully realized that these men were our enemies! When I looked over my shoulder I saw the severed head of uncle Kasinte, nearby. I shouted, "Ow! That is my uncle's head!"

**FROM SLAVERYTO FREEDOM + 171**

***Captured as Slaves***

Just then they rushed, herding us together. They were wearing quivers at sides. Some were wearing skins. They took pots and chickens from the village as loot and tied them up with bark string. The adults among us had to carry them. We went as far as the village where Namuzewo the wife of Kasengele lived. It was deserted. We crossed the Sambwe stream and reached Simutowe's village at Cimbili where Mpande, now the village headman at Chipundu, lived.

When we reached the foot of a small hill, mothers became completely exhausted because they were carrying very heavy loads and at the same time had babies on their backs. Our captors then separated babies from their moth­ers, tied them into bundles like maize and hung them up on trees. Babies remained crying hysterically while their mothers were led away. We then climbed another hill and came to the place chosen for our overnight rest. Hunger said, "(I'll be) wherever you go!" Our captors wondered how to feed such a large crowd. Their leader said, "Roast maize for them to chew." They roasted the maize and beans but gave us only beans. You should have heard the sounds that we made: *kukutu, kukutu, kukutu.* We sounded like goats chewing maize. After we finished eating our beans, thirst also said, "(I'll be) wherever you go!" We asked for water from our captors. They said, "Where have you seen water? You may as well drink your own urine." We spent the night with dry throats.

Next day with the sun almost above our heads, we reached chief Ponde's vil­lage. That was when hunger nearly devoured us. The only food they gave us was made of boiled leaves of.beans. One ,night, three days later, the older ones amongst us started to plan an escape. I started to cry and appealed, "You are not going to leave me behind, are you?" Ntawa said, "I will carry you on my back" Before cockcrow, Ntawa tied me to her back, and we slipped away. When day broke one of our captors found the house empty. He shouted, "The people have escaped!" They followed our trail and no sooner had we reached the thick bush than they caught up with us and threatened, "If you try to run we will shoot you!" We stopped still with nothing to say. Ntawa put me down. At this point they put all the older ones in yokes, with the exception of Zongoli and me, because we were young. They took us back to the village.

Two days later we were taken from the house where we had been held and put in a big house which had no verandah. It was very dirty, untidy and infested with bugs. It was horrible! All those confined in yokes were forced to sleep with

them attached to their necks. Since two persons were held by a single yoke it was very hard for them to turn at night. Whenever one needed to go outside, the other had to go as well, even if he did not want to.

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During the next two days the adults planned another escape, and we chil­dren wanted to go with them. They disapproved saying that it was our presence that had caused them to be recaptured. When we heard them say this we cried uncontrollably. I begged Ntawa, "My older sister, are you going to leave me behind?" She sadly told me, "Yes, I wouldn't have the energy to carry you and the grass is very tall." My friend Zongoli was slightly bigger, but she was ill and could not travel with them.

They then realised how difficult it was to move with yokes around their necks, and began to ask each other what to do. Ntawa said, "It is not difficult, I will show you what to do." Just as the cock crowed, they left. Ntawa helped them put the poles of the yokes on their shoulders and they formed a single line. (With Ntawa carrying the yoke of the last person, they left, walking on their toes like thieves fearing detection in the night.) When we tried to follow, they chased us back and we went into the house sobbing helplessly.

Three of us were left behind: Zongoli, Ntawa, and me. At daybreak, our cap­tors came and asked us where our people were. We simply told them, "They have left." The command was given to go after them. The Chief said, "If you find them, kill them all!" The 'men picked up their spears, bows and arrows and started to run. As they were leaving, they talked among themselves about the possible places where our people might be found. But in the evening they returned empty-handed.

Early the next day they divided us up among their people. We were absolutely famished. *Unable* to *withstand* the hunger, Zongoli picked up someone's excre­ment to eat. From that point on, I do not know what became of Zongoli.

***I Burn a Hut***

When *katila* (a type of early millet) ripened, the man looking after me, with his wife, three children and myself as the sixth person, moved to the gardens where we lived in huts. My job was to frighten away monkeys. During that time of year it rained continuously. One day one of the children gave me the task of drying *katila* near the fireplace. Because of the severe cold brought on by the constant rain, I put more wood on the fire to warm myself. The but was small and it sud­denly caught fire. I shouted, "Help! The but is on fire!"The woman and the hus­band were furious and they scolded me very strongly. The husband, mad with rage, seized me and almost threw me into the fire. But, thank God, the woman objected strongly saying, "Do not bring evil upon us. Don't you know that this person belongs to a Chief's family?"The man said, "You have been saved. But from now on you will eat only wild things you find for yourself:" Soon after that, I became very sick. When I became worse they took me and threw me into a pit, leaving me to die. After I had been there for two days a little boy brought me bits of pumpkin to eat. When I recovered they came and took me out of the pit.