



‘WITCH’ HUNT IN CONTEMPORARY TANZANIA

**Exploring cultural and structural factors leading to violence
against women in a Sukuma village**



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Master Degree Program in Peace and Conflict Transformation

MPCT 2002-2004



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Dedication

To all the elderly women who are labeled
'witches' worldwide
and to those who suffer with them and fight at their side



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Abstract

The presented work investigates root causes behind contemporary 'witch' hunt in Tanzania and is based on a four months research in the region Shinyanga in Tanzania.

For many years elderly women in Tanzania's north-western region have been victims of brutal collective violence, accused of being 'witches'. While some manage to flee, others are killed in their home villages. The perpetrator is the traditional police Sungusungu controlling the behaviour of women. Numbers show that this type of violence has increased after independence.

Socio cultural factors are assumed to encourage phenomena like 'witch' hunt or other kinds of violence against women. This research examines patriarchy as possible root cause and identifies three cultural factors legitimating patriarchy in the local context: Bride price, traditional knowledge in form of myths and religion, as well as customary laws of inheritance.

The findings support the theory of a causal chain from cultural, via structural to direct violence, the former legitimizing and justifying the latter. In addition my research indicates that an explicit gender perspective contributes to an additional and important aspect of Johan Galtung's conflict theory. Positive transformative steps in village will be presented.

TABLE OF CONTENT

MPCT 2002-2004.....	0
MPCT 2002-2004.....	1
1 INTRODUCTION TO THESIS	9
1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	11
1.2 OUTLINE OF THESIS	11
2 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND.....	12
2.1 MY RESEARCH AREA.....	12
2.1.1 Colonialism	13
2.1.2 President Julius Nyerere and Ujamaa	15
2.1.2.1 Ujamaa - villagisation.....	16
2.1.2.2 Sungusungu	16
2.2 MODERN AND TRADITIONAL LEGAL SYSTEM	17
2.2.1 Customary laws and institutions	17
2.2.2 Customary laws do not see the situation from a female perspective	18
3 DIFFERENT EXPLANATIONS AND FORMER RESEARCH	19
3.1 TANZANIAN CONTEXT.....	20
3.2 HOW DO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT VIEW THE SITUATION?	23
3.2.1 Dilemma 1 – Attitudes towards ‘witch’ belief often differ with central and local authorities.....	23
3.2.2 Dilemma 2 – Do central government promote killings through issuing ‘vyeti’ ?	25
3.2.3 Dilemma 3 – Central government’s ambivalence towards Sungusungu	26
4 WHERE IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ‘WITCH’ HUNT RESEARCH AND PEACE RESEARCH ?	28
4.1 PEACE DEFINITIONS	28
4.1.1 UNESCO’s peace definition.....	29
4.1.2 Johan Galtung’s peace definition.....	30
4.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	30
4.2.1 Conflict theory.....	31
4.2.1.1 Conscientization – making the conflict conscious	33
4.2.1.2 cultural violence	35
4.2.1.3 Structural violence.....	35
4.2.1.4 Direct violence	36
4.2.2 Human security	36
5 LIVING IN THE FIELD	38
5.1 ACCESS TO THE FIELD	38
5.1.1 Ukerewe island – Ship o hoi !	39
5.1.2 Changing focus.....	39
5.2 LIVING CONDITIONS.....	40
5.3 INTERPRETER.....	40
5.4 MY STATUS.....	41
5.5 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ORIENTED METHODS.....	42
5.5.1 Participant observation.....	43
5.5.2 Participatory learning in action (PLA).....	43
5.5.3 Informal conversations and semi structured interviews.....	45
6 SUNGUSUNGU - THE BIG BLACK ANTS IN VILLAGE.....	46
6.1 ORGANIZATION.....	46
6.2 BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES	48

7	SOCIO CULTURAL FACTORS LEGITIMATING 'WITCH -HUNT'	51
7.1	DEEP CULTURE	51
7.2	PATRIARCHY.....	52
7.2.1	<i>Institution of Bride price –legitimizing oppression ?</i>	<i>54</i>
7.2.1.1	Is Brideprice a tag?.....	55
7.2.2	<i>Traditional knowledge legitimizing patriarchy</i>	<i>58</i>
7.2.2.1	Myth legitimizing 'witch' accusations against women.....	58
7.2.2.2	Myth about supreme male ancestors.....	59
7.2.2.3	'Witch doctors' legitimate violence ?.....	60
7.2.3	<i>Customary inheritance law of 1963</i>	<i>63</i>
7.2.3.1	Sexist law	63
7.2.3.2	Customary laws avoided if discriminating women ?.....	64
8	CONCLUDING REMARKS ON MY PROJECT	67
8.1	WHICH POSITIVE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGES HAVE I SEEN ?.....	67
8.2	SUMMARY.....	70
9	APPENDIX	72
9.1	PLA IN PRACTICE.....	72
9.1.1	<i>Appendix 1. Duties of modern and traditional institution in village</i>	<i>73</i>
9.1.2	<i>Appendix 2. Power relationship between traditional and modern Institutions</i>	<i>74</i>
9.1.3	<i>Appendix 3. Conflicts seen from women's perspective in village.....</i>	<i>76</i>
9.1.4	<i>Appendix 4. Conflicts seen from women's perspective in Ukerewe island.....</i>	<i>78</i>
9.1.6	<i>Appendix 5. Map over good and bad 'witches' in village</i>	<i>81</i>
9.2	OTHER RELEVANT APPENDIX	82
9.2.1	<i>Appendix 6. My research permit</i>	<i>82</i>
9.2.2	<i>Appendix 7. Thematic areas for research.....</i>	<i>82</i>
9.2.2	<i>Appendix 7. Thematic areas for research.....</i>	<i>83</i>
9.2.3	<i>Appendix 8. Semi structured interview guide</i>	<i>84</i>
9.2.4	<i>Appendix 9. Land Act and Village Land Act</i>	<i>85</i>
10	LITTERATURE	86

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Maria's story

Maria¹ has not been to her village in Sukumaland in Tanzania since she was forced to leave it about two years ago. She had hardly been outside her village before that, just in a few occasions attending funerals and weddings in neighbouring villages. Her red shimmered eyes are filled with tears when talking about her former life in the village. "I lived a better life in my village", she says. There she even had two meals per day. Now she is content if she is able to eat once a day.

Maria is a woman between fifty and sixty years old. After Tanzania got its independence² she married an older man in her neighbourhood. She was his second wife of four. She remembers the jealousy and the quarrels between the wives; especially how the youngest were favoured and how much she disliked the youngest one.

"I am a widow", she says. "My husband died many years ago from HIV, when my children were small. I remember how the piece of land and belongings were taken from me by my husband's eldest brother ... just the day after we had buried him. But luckily his clan left me with a small piece of land, after long discussions and disputes, in order for me and my children to survive. I didn't have anywhere to go."

"I had two children only. They ran away from me long before I was chased away because it was bad for them seeing their mother being suspected[being a 'witch'] ", she says with gloomy eyes. "I remember how everybody in the village started to isolate me. My neighbours, my relatives, my children.....This happened a long time before they started to threaten me to leave All the villagers treated me like I didn't exist. Even when I was sick nobody were allowed to visit me. Even my children. And then they threatened me to leave"

The Sungu Sungu³ accused Maria of being a witch. They suspected her of killing people by using witchcraft. "They had suspected me of being a witch since Nyerere time⁴, but it took a long time to take action and to chase me away", she says. Until one day a man from the

1 Maria is a pseudonym as all the other names used in the thesis

2 Tanzania's independence was given from the British protectorate in 1961

3 Sungusungu is the traditional village police, which emerged in Sukuma land in 1982. I will return to this in the chapter two.

4 Julius Nyerere was President of Tanzania from 1962 – 1985. He will be returned to under chapter two.

Village, a clan member of her deceased husband, became very ill, and he needed someone to blame for the misfortune. He had been told from a male witchdoctor that a close family member had caused his illness or misfortune, and since Maria had been suspected of being a witch for many years, she was an easy target. "The sick man went to the traditional police and told them I had caused his illness. And the same day the man came together with the Sungusungu commanders stating; "This woman bewitched me", while he pointed at me with his finger".

"I knew what was waiting me then. I had seen many women being chased away before. Later that day they came to my house and asked me to take all the traditional medicine⁵ out of my house as well as all the dead people I was supposed to have bewitched and killed. A large group of men, maybe around twenty, all villagers, were standing in a circle around me with their sticks and masks. The masks made of animal skin covered their faces, so I didn't know who they were. They started to beat me with wooden sticks, about five to ten strokes, while asking how many people I had killed. I denied to have killed anyone, so they continued beating me and afterwards they put my house on fire."

"There were many old women or 'suspected witches' accused together with me. I think two full cars of them. If we had refused to leave the village 'voluntarily' the villagers would have known where we were hiding; they would have come at night, put a lock on the door and put fire on the house.and I would have died inside. So I went to Mwanza⁶."

Maria tells that her life has been very difficult after arriving the city. "Sleeping outside, begging on the streets and suffering from deceases", she says. "However..... there are many of us..... all of us are women coming from the same area.....so we support each other."

”

5 Many men and women are making traditional medicine which they make through mixing herbs found in the forest. Most Sukuma villages lack health clinics, and if they have a pharmacy with modern medicine many can not afford to buy it.

6 Mwanza is the third biggest city in Tanzania, on the southern edge of Lake Victoria. Many people, particularly women, who have been chased away because of witchcraft accusation in Sukumaland end up there in order to survive. Going through Newspaper articles from BBC news it seems like Mwanza is the 'Witch town' of Tanzania. I assume the reason is that it is difficult to survive in other smaller town in the area because of the difficulty of collecting enough money to buy food and less stigmatisation. In Mwanza there are some tourists and people who give them money through begging. Some do also get small jobs in restaurants, such as Maria who sometimes is cleaning dishes in an outdoor restaurant.

1 Introduction to thesis

For many years elderly women in Tanzania's north-western region of Mwanza, Shinanga and Tabora, known as Sukuma land, been victims of brutal killings due to accusations of being 'witches'. Some manage to flee, while some are killed in their home villages.

In Mwanza town I was able to meet Maria and some of the women who were labeled 'witches'. Neema was forced to leave after the death of her husband and another woman, Florida, was chased after six of her ten children had died, and the death of a neighbor was the last straw. The dreadful life conditions of the elderly women in the streets in Mwanza, made me curious to know how the 'witch' labeling and violence was legitimized and worked as a motivation factor behind writing this thesis.

Witchcraft belief has existed in Sukuma land for centuries though the violence surrounding it has increased sharply after independence.⁷ Many think witchcraft can explain disaster or misfortune, such as the failure of rain, a sudden storm on the lake, a death of a healthy person, a miscarriage, impotence and infertility. Even poverty or deceases, such as HIV/Aids, can be explained by supernatural power or witchcraft. To get explanations of the misfortune they search for a scapegoat to explain events they cannot otherwise understand or control.⁸

The fact that 'witch' killings are increasing in the area is alarming.⁹ However, I suggest that the numbers are just showing the 'top of an iceberg,' because I suppose many deaths are not reported. The fact that 'witch' hunt is present today, tells us there is a need for more research on the micro level in order to transform the practise and make preventive strategies¹⁰.

This thesis will not prove/disprove if 'witchcraft' exists or not, but rather investigate whether socio cultural factors encourage phenomena like 'witch' hunt or other types of violence

7 Wolfgang Behringer, 2004: 227. Behringer has written the book *Witches – and witch -hunt* a book on witch- hunts in Europe and Africa where he mentions Tanzania as one of 14 countries with severe 'witch' hunts world wide between 1950 - 2000. Others are Uganda, Angola, Benin, Angola, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Papa New Guinea, South Africa, Zaire/Congo, and Zimbabwe.

8 Men are sometimes accused of witchcraft, though the low status of women in society means that women are overwhelmingly the main target.

9 Through a Mwanza based radio station, it is reported 'five to ten suspected witch killings' every month for the past few years, and the news editor believes the problem is getting worse. Found in article Africa Eyewitness: Suspected witches murdered in Tanzania <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/386550.stm>. BBC News has many articles on the Tanzanian 'witch' problem. Look at "Tackling 'witch' murders in Tanzania <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2372907.stm> and "Aid schemes tackles African witch myth" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/1951053.stm>

10 Birgit Brock-Utne, 1989 says both micro and macro level analysis is necessary to identify direct violence as well as indirect or structural violence

against women¹¹. My study will also look at the perpetrators behind of violence, the traditional village police Sungusungu.

Patriarchy as a possible root cause for violence against women will be presented and I will identify three possible cultural factors legitimating patriarchy in the local context: The Bride price, traditional knowledge in the form of myths and religion, as well as customary laws of inheritance.

I will explore if the findings can support Johan Galtung's violence theory of a causal chain from cultural, via structural to direct violence, the former legitimizing and justifying the latter.¹²

I have mainly used analytical tools from Peace and Gender research in this thesis Johan Galtung (1996), Paulo Freire (2003) will be used, as well as gender specific knowledge from *Beyond inequalities – Women in Tanzania*, based on governmental reports, research and interviews with local NGO's.¹³ Analytic tools from feminist scholars as Birgit Brock – Utne (1989) and *Gender perspectives on peace and gender studies* by Karame/Tryggestad (2000) will be used.

Karame/Tryggestad also maintain an important challenge, to bring the two traditions; gender studies and peace, - and conflict studies more closely together. They say gender awareness as a concept is nothing new to those working in the fields of development cooperation. Their critique is that gender has not been mainstreamed in peace and conflict studies which could bring about a better understanding of the need for more holistic approaches to conflict prevention and management, both as an academic exercise and in terms of policy development.¹⁴

In this thesis I will look at the following four questions;

11 By the expression 'witch' hunt I mean; controlling, killing or chasing people (mostly women) who are thought to bring misfortune by using supernatural forces, such as black magic. 'Witch' hunt does not necessarily lead to 'witch' killings,' but can be seen as other form of violence.

12 Galtung, 1996

13 'Beyond inequalities'- women in Tanzania. 1997. The profile is written by Southern African research and documentation centre and Tanzania gender networking programme. Their statement that all elderly women are potential 'witches' in the Sukuma tribe is alarming.

14 Karame/Tryggestad, 2000: 10 -11. They also mention that it was not before the UN Women conference in Nairobi, in 1985, that personalised violence was stated as being a major obstacle to achieving peace.

1.1 Research questions

- (1) What are the underlying socio cultural factors leading to 'witch' accusation of women?
- (2) Can a causal flow from cultural, via structural to direct violence be found in 'witch' accusation and violence against women?
- (3) Is there a link between power and 'witch accusation'?
- (4) Can I see any positive transformation in the Sukuma village?

1.2 Outline of thesis

Chapter 1 The first chapter will work as an introduction to the thesis and four research questions will be presented

Chapter 2 Will give some contextual back ground which will help to understand and contextualise my empirical data which will be presented in later chapters

Chapter 3 Will present different explanations and former research on witchcraft in general and 'witch' killings in Sukuma land in particular. Three dilemmas and challenges the Central government is facing will be raised.

Chapter 4 My theoretical perspective will be presented.

Chapter 5 will deal with the practical methods I used in order to collect data for this thesis.

Chapter 6, 7 and 8 will mainly present my empirical data and findings from my fieldwork

Chapter 6 The traditional village police Sungusungu in the village will be explored

Chapter 7 Socio cultural factors are assumed to encourage phenomena like 'witch' hunt or other kinds of violence against women. This chapter will examine patriarchy as possible root cause and identify three cultural factors legitimating patriarchy in the local context: Those are the institution of Bride price, traditional knowledge in form of myths and religion, as well as customary laws of inheritance.

Chapter 8 Positive transformative changes and a summary of the main findings of my thesis will be presented

2 Context and background

Since this thesis is mainly based on empirical data on the micro level I will start to give some general features of the macro level.

2.1 My research area

This research was conducted in The United Republic of Tanzania located in South-Eastern Africa.¹⁵ Tanzania was formed in 1964 after Tanganyika and Zanzibar were united¹⁶. It borders Lake Victoria and Uganda in the north, Kenya in the north-east and the Indian Ocean in the east. Tanzania shares borders with Mozambique, Malawi in the south and Zambia in the south-west, and Lake Tanganyika, Burundi, and Rwanda in the west. The country includes the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, and other offshore islands in the Indian Ocean.

The village was placed in Sukuma land (Kiswahili Usukuma) which is the north - eastern part of Tanzania. Sukuma land comprises the administrative regions of Mwanza and Shinanga, to the south of Lake Victoria, and covers about 50 000 sq.kms¹⁷. It has a population of about 3,5 million people, of whom the majority are Sukuma. Sukuma and the Nyamwezi are the biggest of the 120 ethnic groups, each representing about one fifth of the country's population and both groups are speaking a Bantu language.

The village is placed approximately 135 kilometer from Bariadi¹⁸, the regional town in Shinanga, where Central authorities such as police, court and regional government are placed. The village can be described as this; A group of grass thatched mud houses, two streets crossing each other, cows walking along the road together with their shepard¹⁹ - paths, leading to houses and people's '*shambas*'.²⁰

If you take a closer look you will see the village consist of six streets, each street having their own village chairman, a primary school, a dispensary, a cotton factory, a Roman catholic church and a town centre consisting of some kiosks and a big open space where the weekly Wednesday market is organised. The village has no electricity, running water or a good

¹⁵ Tanzania is divided into twenty five regions. Each region is divided into a few districts, and subsequently divisions, followed by wards and village subdivisions

¹⁶ According a national population census report 2002 it says Tanzania from 1967 to 2002 has almost tripled it's population. 12.313.469 (1967), 34.569.232 (2002)

¹⁷ Simeon Mesaki in Abrahams, 1994: 47

¹⁸ Information got from a male informant 12 September 03

¹⁹ The shepherds are often young boys, normally between ten-fifteen years old

²⁰ Shamba is a peace of land in Kirwahili language

accessible road. During rainy periods, December till March, the road is closed. Cars were rarely seen, except on Wednesdays – the market day. Then big trucks filled with people, goats, fruits, hens, blankets, clothes, tomatoes, beans, sugar canes and other necessities came from Bariadi town or neighbouring villages, in order to take part in the big colourful market.

The village consist of 582 household including 3446 people²¹ Each household consist of an average size of 7,6 people²², and most families are patrilineal, which allows polygamy. Out of all families the Village Chairman considered 20 households to be rich, 234 to be middle class, while 328 households was in his opinion considered poor.²³

The Sukuma people in village grow cotton for cash, and food crops including sorghum, maize, and some legumes, which need a lot of rain in order to grow. However, the lack of rain is a big problem for the village which have been facing seven droughts between 1947 -1999, leading to famine and shortage of food, cf. appendix 5.²⁴ Sukuma people are also known for their large herds of cattle.

2.1.1 Colonialism

Before colonialism Tanzania (called Tanganyika at that time) consisted of small kingdoms, each with their own norms and justice systems. Each kingdom had their own chiefs, who was believed to have magic power.

However, when Africa was shared during the scramble in Africa in 1884²⁵, Tanzania became a German colony. Germans brought with them and imposed patriarchal values from above, using a 'direct' ruling system, where local chiefs lost all their power. Their role was banned and villagers' witchcraft belief was prohibited. Scholars write that resistance to colonial domination was strong, especially among the Sukuma people²⁶. This was also said by many of my informants.

As one old male said:

21 There were 1788 females and 1658 males in the village. 389 girls/394 boys 5 years. 440 males and 420 females between 6 -14 years . Information got from Village executive officer 5 September 03

22 National population consensus, Sensa 2002

23 According to a group discussion with 5 men 8 September 03 'rich' mean; A good house with an iron roof and a guesthouse, owning a kiosk in the village centre, owning hundreds of cows, have children with secondary school education, a bus or a truck, a cotton factory or a mais grounding machine. 'poor' ,the category for more than half of the households, means to have a house with grass roof, not have good land for cultivation as well as no cattle, goats or chicken.

24 Focus group discussion with elder men, September 04.

25 After the "scramble of Africa" in Berlin, Germany, where the whole continent was divided among European countries.

²⁶ Abrahams, 1994

*“ The Germans were horrible, they removed the power from our chiefs and used a dictatorship, always telling us what to do and think. They even sent us as soldiers to fight in the Second world war (in Burma). We didn't ask for participating in any war and some of our ancestors died... .. ”*²⁷

After the Second World war, until independence, the British ruled the area as a League of Nations protectorate with an 'Indirect ruling system'. In rural areas they adopted and created council of Headmen to rule the state where they gave men the positions as headmen and ruled through them.

One can assume the implemented male oriented power during colonialism can have been a contributing factor to the strong patriarchy we see in Tanzania and many other African countries today.²⁸ This is documented by many scholars writing it is known that in pre-colonial times African women enjoyed a great deal of formal and informal influences. Colonialism, however, enabled Europeans to impose their own gender biases by promoting all- male tribal authorities while an emphasis on ' African tradition' improved men's position politically, economically and socially, as well as culturally, at the expense of women.²⁹

Heidi Hudson writes in *“Gender Perspectives on peace and conflict studies”* (2000) that men modelled their style of leadership on those of their colonial masters – bureaucratic and centralised male control of public political power was therefore being viewed as the logical extension of the private division of authority where the man is the head of the family³⁰. There is also emphasised by scholars that, especially the British, tried to impose the Victorian values, that a woman's place was to stay in the home, cook and take care of children.

However, some scholars are also stating it is important to note that that pre-colonial economy, social,- and political institutions were to varying degrees patriarchal. Capitalism and colonialism did not create patriarchy in Africa, but rather reinforced it by adding a European version.³¹

²⁷ In the village where fieldwork was conducted, I interviewed men who had been sent to Burma in 1938 to fight in the Second world war, and I was told that many relatives never returned.

²⁸ Iliffe, 1995: 201

²⁹ Heidi Hudson quoted in *“ Gender Perspectives on peace and conflict studies”* in Karame/Tryggestad, 2000: 91

³⁰ Heidi Hudson in the book Karame/Tryggestad, 2000: 91

³¹ Iliffe, 1995: 202

In Tanzania divination processes in which suspected witches were identified and exposed, were prohibited under the anti –witchcraft legislation witch came with colonialism (See Browne 1935, Roberts 1935, Kato, 1969).³² The legislation did not, however, eliminate the belief in mystical power of witches to cause harm and misfortune.

2.1.2 President Julius Nyerere and Ujamaa

Julius Nyerere, also known as Mwalimu (The Kiswahili word for teacher) or “ Baba ya Taifa,” (The Kiswahili word for father of the nation) became leader of the pro independent Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1952 when Tanzania still was a British colony. Nyerere was a strong supporter of indigenous African culture. He stated clearly that he did not want to adapt to the culture of the colonisers, but use all the good traditions the Tanzanians had created. As leader he preached a belief in non violence, and succeeded in achieving Tanzania’s peaceful transition to independence in 1961³³. A year after independence Nyerere became the first president of Tanzania. He stated;

*“ If we want to develop, we have no choice but to build both our way of living and our way of farming up to date.(...) But we can not even do this if our people are going to continue living scattered over a wide area, far apart from each other, and still haunted by the old superstitious **fear of witchcraft**, just as in the days of our grandfathers.³⁴”*

One male teacher I interviewed said Nyerere had spent his first years of president ship travelling around the country, visiting as many villages as possible, asking people for advice how to lead the new independent state. Many of the elder men who had met him during his visits said he was a good role model, because; as one man in his fifties said;

“ If people were digging in the village where he visited, he started digging too. He never thought he was more important than ordinary people just because he was a president.”

Apart from trying to get rid of superstitiousness and witchcraft belief , Nyerere worked for more equality between men and women. Nyerere meant creating equality among people were necessary in order to create development and peace in a society. He stated the following about women;

“ It would be appropriate to ask the farmers, especially the men, how many hours a week they work. Many do not even work for half as many hours as a wage-earner does. The truth is that in the villages the women work very hard. At times they work 12 to 14

³² Simeon Mesaki in Abrahams, 1994: page 65

³³ This was in sharp contrast to neighbouring Kenya, where the road to independence was long and bloody.

³⁴ Nyerere, 1966 :184

hours a day. Women work harder than anybody else in Tanzania. But the men who live in the villages are on leave for half of their life.³⁵

2.1.2.1 Ujamaa - villagisation

Nyerere had an idealistic development programme called *Ujamaa*³⁶ based on an African philosophy, neither capitalistic nor communist. His vision was to build up a self reliant state. Its goals included that people should cooperate, improved health care and literacy, and a the language Kiswahili should be a common language for all in the tribes in order to communicate with each other non violently. His own writings tells he was very much found of and inspired by the non violent philosophy by Mahatma Ghandi and Paulo Freire.³⁷ For further reading can Julius Nyerere's "Nyerere freedom and socialism"(1968) be read.

Even though he believed in non violence, he decided to send troops to Uganda in 1979 in order to free the people from the dictator Idi Amin. This was the beginning of the organisation *Sungusungu*, an organisation which emerged among the Sukuma tribe as grass –roots law and order organization in 1982.

2.1.2.2 Sungusungu

The organization was formed with the goal of controlling the increasing number of cattle thieves because of the Ugandan war in 1979 had produced a surplus of guns and young jobless males³⁸. This was supported by the Central government which focused on the self reliant philosophy where each village is responsible for it's own security.

The original focus of *Sungusungu* had on protecting villagers against cattle theft has changed the last years. The focus is now on controlling women's behavior by punishing adulterers, run-away wives, debtors, and suspected witches³⁹. Abrahams (1994) says *Sungusungu* revitalized traditional aggressive behavior towards women and became involved in the killings.

35 Nyerere, 1968 :245

36 Ujamaa is the word for togetherness, familyhood and unity. The idea was that resettlement into cooperative villages. Since many people did not move into villages, forcible resettlement started. By 1977 over thirteen million people or eighteen percent lived in some eight thousand villages. Several studies have shown that this project had serious effects in Sukumaland, because it ran against several fundamental features of the Sukuma culture and society, and related forms of ecological adaptation.

37 Nyerere's legacy, however, had mixed results. His decade long experiment in self reliant socialism, 'Ujamaa', ended in economic disaster. When Nyerere ended his presidency in 1985, the country was left in severe poverty. He apologised and said an independent Tanzania was not ready for African socialism.

38 <http://www.brianpaciotti.com/sungusungu.htm>

39 <http://www.brianpaciotti.com/sungusungu.htm>

Although often violent, *Sungusungu* are nevertheless looked upon as being *peacemakers* and council members often arbitrate disputes involving debts or adultery resulting in retribution settled out through fines and sometimes isolation from the community.⁴⁰ Central government tried to reform *Sungusungu* in the mid -1990s to become an arbitration organization of peacemaking counselors, involved in solving community disputes, by imposing penalties and sometimes ostracizing⁴¹. In chapter 6 will I will present empirical data from *Sungusungu* in the village where the fieldwork was conducted. However, Tanzania has a modern and a traditional legal system.

2.2 Modern and traditional legal system

After independence the British law system was adopted with some modifications to accommodate customary and Islamic law in civil cases. Christians are governed by customary or statutory law in both civil and criminal matters, while muslims apply either customary law or Islamic law in civil matters⁴².

A couple of years after independence the government codified it's customary rules through the Customary Law Declaration order of 1963. The Customary law was an attempt to validate, codify and preserve Tanzanian tradition and custom.⁴³ Unfortunately it is not at all progressive with regard to the rights of women. Further some clauses in the Customary law are contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, the national land policy, the marriage Act and the Land Acts of 1999⁴⁴. In chapter seven will inheritance rights of land be brought up which bring up the dilemma between the two legal systems.

2.2.1 Customary laws and institutions

Over the past forty-two years, ethnic groups have for the most part continued to apply their own traditional institutions where the traditional norms and customs are kept. Weber (1977) defines the word "traditional" as: *Behaviours, institutions and practises that derive from the past.*⁴⁵ In the village where I did fieldwork I saw that statutory laws and institutions have

40 <http://www.brianpaciotti.com/sungusungu.htm>

41 <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3079230.stm>

42 Department of state Human rights report for 2000: Tanzania. <http://www.humanrights-usa.net/reports/tanzania.html>

43 Department of state Human rights report for 2000: Tanzania. <http://www.humanrights-usa.net/reports/tanzania.html>

44 Secure land –Tanzanian Women`s Perspectives on Secure tenure <http://www.wat.kabissa.org/myland.htm>

45 Zartman 2000: 204

little influence on peoples' every day. An overview of all the six traditional institutions found in village can be found in appendix 1. Abrahams⁴⁶ (1989) confirms this by saying:

“ The Sukuma, especially northern, have a long experience of organizing affairs to themselves on the village level, both complimentary to , and at times in conflict with, chiefdom and other higher level political structures. Sukuma have tended in this situation to fall back on their own recourses (whether those of ordinary individuals, village based diviners or neighbourhood groups) to solve some of the problems for which other societies may seek outside help.”

2.2.2 Customary laws do not see the situation from a female perspective

Customary laws are, nevertheless, held to apply to the Tanzanian population unless the contrary is proved. However, since independence, ethnic groups have for the most part continued to apply their own institutions, where the traditional norms and customs are kept with little influence from Statutory institutions and laws. Statutory law is supposed to prevent customary law, at least on paper, if it discriminates women. However, the formal law is known inaccessible to the vast majority of people in rural areas. An example of lack of Customary land rights for women will be looked at in chapter 7.

As a former Village executive officer said;

“ In the village customary law is much stronger than statutory law. There are always problems between the two institutions. A person can do a little mistake, but the punishment can be huge because old oral customary laws are used.”

Sukuma land is known for having protected their traditional political system and institutions where women are under represented wherever decisions are made, regardless of the level or the institutions involved. It is also seen within government machinery, despite the fact that it is signatory to many of the UN conventions and resolutions on gender equality.

⁴⁶ Abrahams, 1989: 17

3 Different explanations and former research

Research on witchcraft demonstrates that people find an explanation for events that would otherwise be difficult, possibly impossible, to explain within the means of everyday knowledge.

A lot of valuable research on African witchcraft belief has been done, especially among anthropologists such as Gluckman⁴⁷ and Evans –Pritchard. Evans – Pritchard gives different explanations on 'witch accusation,' the classical being the structural – functionalistic rationalization, where 'witch accusations' is a 'safety valve' removing frustration /conflicts away from contradictions in society. An alternative explanation is that witchcraft creates social order in people's life, giving explanation on misfortune.⁴⁸

A third and a newer explanation, look at the increasing 'witch- accusation' of being a result of the chaotic modernization process (Geschiere, 1997).⁴⁹ Jean and John Camaroff agree with this view (with fieldwork in southern Africa) and suggest;

'Witchcraft is a finely calibrated measure of the impact of global cultural and economic forces on local relations, on perception on money and markets, on the abstraction and alienation of "indigenous" values and meanings⁵⁰.

Many research done on 'witch' craft does not use gender as a tool for analysis. For instance in Alan Macfarlane's historical research on witch accusation at Essex Assizes in Britain, released in 1970, he argues that witch accusations 'were not evidence of hostility between the sexes' despite the fact that he found the high number of women were victims of witchcraft accusations⁵¹. Marianne Hester, in a study seeking to interpret the Essex witch trials from a feminist perspective, comments that Macfarlane oversimplified the issue. Dianne Purkis has accused Macfarlane and Thomas of devaluating women through an interpretation of witchcraft which privileged the public sphere, and notes that both avoided gender theory.

⁴⁷ I recommend 'Custom and conflict in Africa' by Gluckman, (1955) as well as 'Witchcraft Oracles and Magic among the Azande' by Evans – Pritchard (1976) for further reading.

⁴⁸ Evans –Pritchard, 1976

⁴⁹ I recommend Peter Geschiere (1997) "The modernity of witchcraft: Politics and the occult postcolonial Africa" for further readings

⁵⁰ Jean and John Camaroff quoted in Behringer,2004: 29

⁵¹ For further readings look at Alan Macfarlane's "Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A regional and comparative study,1970

However it is not surprising that research done before the arrival of the 1970's women's movement neither employ gender or patriarchy as a category of analysis.

Carolyn Nordstrom, however, at the Institute for international Peace studies at University of Notre Dame, says recent historical research has demonstrated that the mass of 'witch deaths' during the Inquisition followed definite patterns rooted in power politics, gender and exclusionary oppression. It also showed that approximately 80 percent of the 'witches' killed were women⁵², a signified proportion women of income and women who practiced medicine.

3.1 Tanzanian context

The link between 'witch' killings and the organisation *Sungusungu* has not been much explored in former research⁵³. I was not able to find much contemporary research on 'witch hunt' in Tanzania particularly, and what I found did not give deeper causes behind 'witch' killings or analyses how to transform the inhumane practise. However, it helped me to find a pattern who is the 'witch', which is important information in order to come up with preventive strategies.

According to Simeon Mesaki, an anthropologist from the University of Dar –Es –Salaam in Tanzania, 3692 persons were killed under the label 'witches' in Tanzania between 1970 and 1984, 69 percent of them being female. Behringer, in his newly released book '*Witches and Witch – hunts*' is referring to Mesaki's study, saying it shows the regions in Sukumaland, Mwanza and Shinyanga, were particularly effected with 2246 'witch killings' in Sukumaland alone, and another 828 killings between 1985 and 1988, giving a grand total of 3072 'witch' killings from 1970 to 1988 for the area⁵⁴. This means that two thirds of the killings happened in Sukumaland.

According to Abrahams (1994) he says in *Witchcraft in contemporary Tanzania*, based on mainly Tanzanian anthropology scholars, that the high 'witch killing statistics' presented in

⁵² According a national population census report 2002 it says Tanzania from 1967 to 2002 has almost tripled it's population. 12.313.469 (1967), 34.569.232 (2002)

⁵³ Abraham, 94 is taking up the link in the book "Witchcraft in contemporary Tanzania which is the best literature I have found on the topic". Publications by Brian Paciotti and Craig Hadley, both Ph.D scolars from California,- and Brown university in the US. For further readings look at their publications.<http://www.brianpaciotti.com/sungusungu.htm>
<http://www.brianpaciotti.com/Africa.pdf> Informal social control in Southwestern Tanzania

⁵⁴ Behringer 2004: page 213

1988 led to four senior politicians losing their posts. It also resulted in that the ruling party (CCM) appointing a team of experts and officials and in order to investigate the situation.

This could imply that witch – killings is a hot political issue or/and that public exposure of the practise has produced embarrassment in the political society.

What I found astonishing in the statistics, figure 1, is the high number of women between 41 and 90 years being killed. While the above documentation shows that 80 percent of the victims were women⁵⁵, a more recent study, conducted by Ted Miguel, a professor of economics at Berkeley University, show that 96 percent of the victims of 'witch killing' in Sukuma land were women. 80 percent of the women had a median age between 50 and 60 years⁵⁶.

Figure 1. 'witch' killings in Sukumaland⁵⁷

Year/ages	10 -20	21 -40	41 -50	51 -90	Total
1980	1	4	58	43	106
1981	-	11	33	40	84
1982	1	8	28	49	86
1983	1	18	30	63	112
1984	-	6	15	44	65
1985	-	4	17	59	80
1986	-	10	39	48	9
1987	1	6	40	69	116
1988	4	7	27	42	80
Total	8	74	287	457	828

⁵⁵ Abrahams,1994:54

⁵⁶ Study links extreme weather, poverty and witchkillings http://emlab.berkeley.edu/users/emiguel/UBC-press_jul03.htm. Study links extreme weather, poverty and witch killings. Economist from Berkley see the economic conditions might be the key to understanding the witch killings. He found with murderers were concentrated in years where the region experienced floods and drought, both of which is associated with poor harvest and near famine conditions in the area. Moreover, which murderer were twice as high in the six month hungry season, February to July, as they were during the rest of the year. There was a sharp drop in killings right after the harvest ended in July or August

⁵⁷ Abrahams is referring to CCM statistics 1988.Bk.2 p.29,1994:54

The study showed that the majority of women who were killed are above the average life expectancy for both men and women.⁵⁸

While the governmental investigation from 1988 did not find any significant concentration of killings in particular months,⁵⁹ the 'Berkeley study' shows that 'witch killings' increase considerably during 'hungry' or dry periods, when there is a lack of food. 'Beyond inequalities', however, see the same pattern saying; "When economic hardships increase and death rise due to poor nutrition and ill-health including HIV/Aids, more old women are likely to be victims as suspected witches. Some of these old women are harassed and even molested by their sons whenever they are suspected of witchcraft, while old men remain respected and loved."⁶⁰

Both the 'Berkeley study' and 'Beyond inequalities' are then confirming that ecological factors influence women's personal security. However, I miss a more holistic analysis exploring the cultural legitimisation that underscore witch killings in Tanzania. The most recent and updated quantitative data comes from the book 'Witches and witch-hunts' by Wolfgang Behringer (2004). He is here referring to recent statistics given from the Tanzanian ministry of family; stating; "5000 people were killed in 'witch-hunt' in only five years between 1994 and 1998"⁶¹. That number can illustrate that the killings are increasing considerably.

From the research on Tanzanian witchcraft presented above, it is possible to see a pattern *who* is vulnerable to be labelled a 'witch'. The 'witch' is;

- Woman
- Between 50 and 60 years old
- Widow
- Originate from Sukuma land
- Vulnerable during "hungry periods"

The book "Witchcraft in contemporary Tanzania," based on long fieldwork by Tanzanian scholars in anthropology, showed that the violence and 'witch killings' against women were

⁵⁸ According a UN report for 2002 is the average age for Tanzanian males 51 years, 53 years for women

⁵⁹ Abrahams, 1994 referring to governmental information from ccm(1088, appendix D)

⁶⁰ 'Beyond inequalities' – Women in Tanzania, 1997: 56

⁶¹ Behringer 2004: 213

organised and legitimated through the organisation *Sungusungu*. These findings were very much in line with my own empirical findings.

3.2 How do the Central government view the situation?

17 years have passed since Central authorities first investigated 'witch killings' in terms of a perspective of women being vulnerable. However, how do official authorities view the problem today?

The world health organization (WHO) writes that the Tanzanian government until recently has been reluctant to acknowledge that belief in witchcraft still exist. However, the latest WHO report says "*the subject [witch –killings] is being widely discussed and officially condemned[by Tanzanian Central authorities]* ".⁶² In 1999, the Tanzanian Government even made witchcraft the theme for the International Women's day.⁶³

Even though the Central authorities hold that 'Witch killings' are '*an enemy of progress and even illegal*',⁶⁴ it does not necessarily mean that local authorities and even local governments abide by statutory laws or opinions. Since 'witch killings' is supported and initiated by local authorities, such as Council of elders, 'witchdoctors' and Local Village Council, it is 'the reality' for the people. For them it means nothing if Tanzania has signed International Declarations such as; the Universal declaration on Human rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of discrimination against women, the Declaration on the elimination of violence against women as well as the Declaration on the Right to development

Before I start presenting my empirical work I will present three dilemmas which can be kept in mind while reading this thesis.

3.2.1 Dilemma 1 – Attitudes towards 'witch' belief often differ with central and local authorities

The current statutory law on witchcraft declares both the accusation and practice of witchcraft to be illegal. This law came when Tanzania was under British protectorate and has been saved

⁶² WHO's 'World report on violence and health', 2002: 128

⁶³ WHO's 'World report on violence and health', 2002: 128

⁶⁴ Abrahams, 1994

in the statutory law system after independence.⁶⁵ However, even though central authorities through the statutory law, try to criminalise the 'witch killers' by giving fines and imprisonment for up to seven years, it has not changed the attitudes towards 'the witch' as being the general cause of misfortune, at least not in Sukuma land.

Among villagers and local authorities, such as Local village councils and traditional healers, many view 'witch-killings' as simply pursuing justice or helping the village to get rid of bad luck. In Sukuma land, *Sungusungu*, the institution which chased away Maria, was a part of the official local authorities.

Even though Central authorities see chasing away and killing women as a normal thing in Sukuma land,⁶⁶ their effort in preventing it through raising the living standard and education level has been minimal. However, The Shinanga Town Council in Sukuma land and the Social Welfare Department, have recognised the problem to be so big that they have established camps where they offer food and a place to sleep in order to help 'suspected witches'. The central authorities know that sending them back to their villages would cost them their lives⁶⁷.

Different voices are speaking up against the government;

'Beyond inequalities'- Women in Tanzania

Tanzania Gender Networking, - (TGNP) and the Women in development in Southern Africa Awareness programme (WIDSAA) have produced a book named 'Beyond inequalities'- women in Tanzania, where they claim governmental efforts to address the 'witch' hunt problem to be minimal. They emphasise the importance of identifying root causes of witchcraft accusation in order to make preventive strategies, and argue the legal punishment of seven years' imprisonment for people convicted of killing suspected witches does not help these old women. They refer to a governmental study carried out by the ruling party CCM in 1992, containing useful recommendations to fight witchcraft such as; empowering women

⁶⁵ The witchcraft ordinance of 1928 was revised in 1958 to take into account changes in local government structure, leaving the substance of the ordinance intact.

⁶⁶ Simeon Mesaki in Abrahams, 1994: 58 -59

⁶⁷ Abrahams: 1994

through education and better technology in villages⁶⁸, but different women's organisations are claiming little effort has been made⁶⁹.

Amnesty international

Amnesty international's annual report for 2000⁷⁰ is also criticising the Central authorities of taking little action in fighting 'witch killings'. The report says;

“murders of elderly women accused of witchcraft continued in the west of the country, predominantly among the Sukuma ethnic group”[...] the Government officials criticized the practice, calling it a “national catastrophe”, but they took little or no action to prevent the killings or bring those responsible to justice”.

Non governmental organizations contribution

'Beyond inequalities' complain that local NGO's have neither done much research on 'witchcraft accusations' nor the directly and indirectly violent consequences it has on women. Although efforts for women's economic empowerment are on the increase⁷¹. A local nongovernmental organisation and HelpAge international are also taking measures to improve the security of older women in Tanzania. They aim to change attitudes and beliefs and to address some of the practical matters, such as poverty and bad housing⁷².

3.2.2 Dilemma 2 – Do central government promote killings through issuing 'vyeti' ?

Since traditional healers or 'Witchdoctors' are considered to be part of traditional medicine, Central authorities have problems refusing part of the tradition. Even though government and party officials are speaking up against witch – killings, they are caught in a situation where they issue certificates, 'vyeti', to traditional who may promote, through their divinations, hatred in their respected communities⁷³. A woman told me a story about a boy who killed his

⁶⁸ Beyond inequalities, 1997: 56. What I also find astonishing is the suggestions given from the government suggest remedies for women, and not actions against the perpetrators in form of changing males' beliefs ?

⁶⁹ Especially the non governmental organisation HelpAge international

⁷⁰

<http://web.amnesty.org/web/ar2000.nsf/7e6e3766b402ffb3802568f500614544/28d727d8245609a7802568f200552974!OpenDocument>

⁷¹ Beyond inequalities, a profile of women in Tanzania produced by Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) and the Women in development in Southern Africa Awareness programme (WIDSAA)

⁷² World report on violence and health, 2002:128

⁷³ Solomon Bombeshora in Abrahams, 1994: 83 -84

mother after he visited a traditional healer claiming that his mother was the cause of the misfortune.

According to scholars it has not been possible for the Central authorities both to authorise traditional doctors to practise their medicine, *and* at the same time forbid them from accusing other villagers as witches. Solomon Bombeshora, a Tanzanian scholar, says this would have helped to prevent the physical assaults, and even murders⁷⁴.

Association of traditional medicine men

Association of traditional medicine men (ATME)⁷⁵ on the other hand, states in a newspaper article in *Sunday Observer*, 10 august 03, that they praise the government for recognising the importance of traditional medicine and the role played by traditional healers in eliminating deceases in the country. “*Therefore*” the chairman said, “*members are preparing fully to show evidence of work to the people.*”

3.2.3 Dilemma 3 – Central government’s ambivalence towards Sungusungu

Sungusungu was initially formed, with encouragement from Central authorities, as a grass – roots law and order organization of the Sukuma tribe of the Mwanza and Shinanga region, aimed at controlling the increasing number of cattle thefts emerging at the end of the Ugandan war in 1979⁷⁶.

According to many male informants I interviewed, they uttered how Tanzania’s first president Julius Nyerere, had promoted the importance of the organisation in fighting crime on the grass – root level.

In the newspaper *BBC News* 3 September 03⁷⁷ the Bariadi district commissioner in Sukumaland, Cleophas Rugarabamu, talk about the tension “*which occurred after Sungusungu gave two local unmarried women an ultimatum on getting married, leave the Inkoma village or face the consequences.*”

⁷⁴ Solomon Bombeshora in Abrahams, 1994: 83 - 84

⁷⁵ Why is it just open for men ? Why can't also women practise traditional medicine ?

⁷⁶ Starting in one or two villages, elders used charismatic leadership to organize villagers into a rank-and-file hierarchy to combat crime and protect cattle. Within a year, the organizations had spread from the Sukuma populations in northwestern Tanzania to distant emigrant Sukuma populations in areas such as Ukerewe island in Lake Victoria and Shinanga where this research was conducted. In the village it was formed in 1984

⁷⁷ <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3079230.stm>

The commissioner “*that the directive did not come from the government.*” He acknowledged that **Sungusungu** sometimes overstep their boundaries, something which the government, he says, is closely “*monitoring to ensure that they do not operate outside their mandate. Their [Sungusungu] powers are limited to operations involving curbing of cattle- rusters and people who infringe on other people’s properties*”

On the other hand a lot of positive critique towards **Sungusungu** can be seen from the Central government’s side. This was found in a governmental newspapers;

In an article in *Sunday observer*⁷⁸ 9 May 04, under the headline “**Sungusungu** vital for community policing,” central government is emphasising the ‘successful’ role **Sungusungu** is playing, keeping ‘safety and security’ in communities. The article states “*there is no need to scout for guards to look after safety. People had to do it themselves. [...] All citizens have the right to a safe and secure environment. [...] Every leader at every level has to play a part in developing safety at a grass root level. ‘Sungusungu`’s presence is very vital bearing in mind that the number of police at any given moment is not enough to control crime in all areas.*”

In the article they state the word **Sungusungu** has gained an international status, as the Dar es Salaam City Council was awarded a trophy during a conference in Namibia, “*an award for best practice in implementing local policies for crime prevention.*”

Then my question is; Won’t those newspaper articles promote legitimacy and promote more killings by **Sungusungu**? Where is the criticism towards **Sungusungu**, whom the authorities are aware do killings of ‘alleged witches’? My question here is who’s ‘safety and security’ are they referring to? Safety on the grass root level, for whom? It is for sure not the safety of Maria and her female friends living in the streets in Mwanza.

Political parties in opposition give critique

Sungusungu has become the object of a lot of criticism the recent years with opposition political leaders calling for the group to be disbanded.

⁷⁸ <http://www.ippmedia.com/ipp/observer/2004/05/09/10443.html>

“ *The security of the people and property is the responsibility of the police and not some traditional militia [Sungusungu], who have the mandate of the government*”, said Richard Hita Tambwe, the director of publicity and information with the opposition Civic United Front (CUF).⁷⁹

4 Where is the connection between ‘witch’ hunt research and peace research ?

Peace researcher Johan Galtung (1996) says Peace research is investigation which work to reduce violence; *by analysing different types of violence and it’s causes, predict in order to prevent, and act preventively and curatively*⁸⁰. He also says it is not enough to come up with a description of violence without coming up with a solution to the problem. This makes peace work very challenging intellectually.

I believe research on ‘witch hunt’ is important in a peace perspective, being a fact that it has not gained enough public/ international attention as I see it. I get that confirmed every time I tell people the focus of my thesis. I see people get surprised to hear ‘witch killings’ happening today and some are even curious to know the reasons behind it. That inner voice saying ‘this is important then’ has given me strength to continue writing in the hope that it can help the women in one form or another.

I do not focus on witch hunt, however, just to criticise or describe an ‘exotic’ cosmology or a striking ‘conflict resolution mechanism’, but to find underlying root causes why women are being accused, chased away or killed today, in order to contribute ending the practise.

4.1 Peace definitions

This means that the narrow definition of peace as the “absence of armed conflict” has been extended in the past few decades by a much broader definition. Peace is now generally taken to include *both development and the enjoyment of basic human rights*. A good example of the

⁷⁹ <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3079230.stm>

⁸⁰ Galtung, 1996: 50

extended definition on peace was shown when the Kenyan woman Wangari Maathai received the Nobel's Peace 2004, for her life long work planting trees and saving the environment⁸¹.

However, this years Nobel's peace price announcement started an interesting debate, showing how the extended view of peace is far from being internalised– even in the minds of peace researcher's such as Stein Tønnesen, the Director for Peace Research Institute Oslo.

Tønnesen states in *Dagbladet* 19 October 04 ; “... *the price [meaning Wangari Mathai's peace price] was given to a prominent environmentalist, who in addition fought for women's rights, for democracy and against corruption, but has not been especially engaged in questions concerning war and peace.*”⁸²,

Here he explicitly says that fighting for women's rights and patriarchal structures, democracy and against corruption is not peace work ! Luckily the debate did not end there. Professor Ida Hyde countered the statements in *Dagbladet*, 28 October 2004 by pointing to the facts that the protests against Wangari Maathai receiving the prize coming from prominent male Peace researchers, is about gender and the right to define peace research. Hyde is further referring to the female Peace researcher Hilde Henriksen Waage, who after publicising her report on the Oslo agreement declared how difficult it is for female Peace researchers, “ *who are not men and not political scientists*”, she says, “*to achieve a breakthrough with another knowledge and arguments differing the traditional*” [referring to Peace research. She ends by asking; “ ...*Who are given a voice to pass on the vital human questions ? [...]*”⁸³

4.1.1 UNESCO's peace definition

However, If we take into regard UNESCO`s definition of cultural peace⁸⁴, it presupposes that societies promote qualitative values, attitudes and behaviour which leads to a non violent peace culture in form of ;

- Equality between women and men
- Democratic participation through a transparent and accountable governance
- Sustainable economic and social development by reducing inequalities

81 She was the the first Kenyan woman to be awarded a masters degree in Biological sciences in 1966. She is also known for her political engagement.For instance she led mothers of political prisoners in stripping at Uhuru Park to demand the release of their children in 1991.

82 The Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*, 19 October 04 under the headline “ Hvit, men ikke sur fredsforsker” (White, but not mean a mean Peace researcher)

83 The Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*, 28 October 04

84 For more information look at <http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk-cp.htm>

- Transcend and overcome enemy images with understanding, tolerance and solidarity
- Free flow of information and knowledge

From Unesco's definition I see Sukuma land being far from peaceful, especially for women, whom I see are far from obtaining any of UNESCO's five points listed above, which I also presume is the reason why women are oppressed, victims of violence, often covered under the label that they are "witches."

4.1.2 Johan Galtung's peace definition

However, in the book "Peace by peaceful means", Galtung (1996) says it is normal to split up the peace concept into "negative" (curative) and "positive" (preventive) peace. While negative peace means the more established way of looking at peace as; "absence of war/armed conflicts," positive peace means "absence or elimination of cultural, structural, and direct violence". He also says peace studies have much to learn from medical science and has therefore taken the concepts; diagnosis, prognosis and therapy from medical science.⁸⁵

Since I will look at the 'elimination of violence aspect' and try to find root causes behind 'witch – killings,' I find Johan Galtung's⁸⁶ analytical tools on conflict, cultural,- direct and structural violence useful for my analysis.

I will start presenting which theoretical perspective I will use as a lens for my analysis.

4.2 Theoretical perspective

The world health organisation (WHO) writes in the latest 'World report on violence and health,' that culture and tradition often justifies social practises which carry on violence. They mention oppression⁸⁷ of women as one of the most widely quoted examples.⁸⁸ One now see

⁸⁵ **Diagnosis:** Factual description, objective, value free, but nor without certain assumptions that can be discussed. Observable criteria. Context information, symptoms, anamnesis.

Prognosis: Value free, but maybe more subjective as it projects into the future, with a factual basis in the diagnosis, and then guided by experience and theory. The future is often more flexible than the past. The past may have to be rewritten and reinterpreted, but has factual surprises in store for us. We leave the solid data base behind. The prognosis is like that, unless treated, violence will return. **Therapy:** Value loaded. We try to bend the prognosis upwards, towards health. We intervene to realize value, like a social worker. And we go beyond the absence of violence to build defence against future violence.

⁸⁶ Galtung, 1996

⁸⁷ Pierre Bordieu says people easily accept and even perpetuate their own oppression because their minds are constructed according to the cognitive structures that are issued out of the very structures of the world. "Male order is so deeply

that it is not enough to just invest in more primary school education, better health and improving living standard in underdeveloped countries, violent cosmology embedded in the culture must also be dealt with actively. Changing an attitude is a more difficult job than building a school. The fact that every women in Sukuma land is practically looked at being a 'witch', according to the book '*Beyond Inequalities*' – *Women in Tanzania* (1997), tells us there is a need to go into deep culture in order to find the core conflicts in order to transform the practise.

I will mainly use a peace and gender⁸⁹ perspective in this thesis. Apart from using Johan Galtung's concept of conflict and violence, I will use perspectives given by Tanzanian feminists presented in the book '*Beyond inequalities*,' *Women in Tanzania* (1997), as well as the Norwegian feminists, such as Birgit Brock Utne (1989) and Karame/Tryggestad.(2000) in order to make my analysis⁹⁰. Paulo Freire (2003). All the authors are emphasising that peace is not possible without improving the status and position of women.

4.2.1 Conflict theory

According to Galtung's (96) conflict theory⁹¹ is a conflict made up of three components;

- Attitude/assumptions (A)
- Behaviour (B)
- Contradictions⁹²/content (C)

He talks about how conflicts often are placed on the latent level, without reaching a level of consciousness. I believe the deep culture and cosmology seen in attitude the 'man being superior' (A) is the main key to understand 'witchcraft accusations'. Galtung says such a belief particularly can lead to sexism and 'witch – killings'.

grounded as to need no justification: It imposes itself as self –evident, universal (man, *vir*, is this particular being which experiences himself as universal, who holds a monopoly over the human, *homo*.”)

⁸⁸ World report on violence and health, 2002: 16

⁸⁹ From time immemorial the term sex has been used as a determining factor in assigning roles to men and women, and in assigning the necessary recourses for these roles. “Sex” was used as a key variable in social analysis. However, with the advent of gender analysis, “sex” is no longer relied upon by social analysts. Gender has become both a social construct and a unit of analysis of social phenomena.

⁹⁰ The strongest quality of gender analysis lies in the fact that it leads to an understanding of the distinction between whose elements based on biological attributes (sex) and those which originate from social construction.

⁹¹ In *Berghof Handbook for conflict Transformation* Hugh Miall says theorists of conflict transformation draw on a variety of conceptual building blocks, some recent, some older, and some borrowed from other schools. He says the idea of conflict formation was already present in the work of the European structural theorists who analysed conflict formations (e.g. Senghaas 1973; Krippendorf 1973).Furthermore he mentions the Norwegian Peace researcher Johan Galtung for having written the most influential work to date, because it offers a rich brew of core concepts⁹¹.

⁹² In a skills and strategy book on working with conflicts, issued by the Coalition for peace in Africa⁹², ideas from Galtung's conflict theory was used. In stead of using contradiction/content is context used, which I found more useful.

He presents this in his book;⁹³

God (and ancestors, added by me) chooses	And leaves to Satan	With the consequences of
Men	Women	Sexism, witch -burning

According to Brock- Utne sexism is like racism, being “ *a belief system rooted in the world view that assigns varying levels of worth to different groups of human beings.* ”⁹⁴.

According to Johan Galtung (96), conflicts occur when there is a contradiction, being incompatible goals, between parties. He uses patriarchy as an example, saying;

“*Take the two gender in a patriarchy; obviously there is a contradiction.*”⁹⁵

Let us use Maria’s story as example. Both Maria and the clan of the deceased husband wanted the matrimonial house and the land. In other words there is a contradiction. For the clan it might feel as a big frustration, because they, according to codified Customary Inheritance law, the wife does not hypothetically have the right to inherit anything. Because Maria needs a place to live in order to survive and take care of the children belonging to the husband’s clan, she gets the permission to use a part of the land, and continue to live in the old house. The children grow older, move out of the house, and Maria continues living in the house and using the land.

Galtung says if a goal is being blocked, as in this case by Maria, it will often lead to aggressiveness as an attitude (A) and aggression as a behaviour (B). He says in such a situation the prognosis to the diagnosis will sooner or later lead to behavioural manifestations.⁹⁶

I believe if the aggression become high is the way to witchcraft accusation rather short. In the Maria story, for instance, we saw how the a clan member of husband, after visiting a traditional healer, was contacting *Sungusungu* to point out Maria as being ‘a witch’(B) .

⁹³ Galtung, 1996: 2002

⁹⁴ Brock- Utne, 1989: 109

⁹⁵ Galtung, 1996:76. He is here saying the contradiction was there before Henrik Ibsen wrote ‘A doll’s house’ and increased the collective awareness by a quantum jump

⁹⁶ I found most “Witch - killing research” focusing on the behaviour (B) corner; in this case on victims, mostly women, being expelled or killed, or the people committing the killings. It is the easiest way of looking at it because numbers of killings can be counted and put into statistics, it is empirical observable. But what about the attitudes leading to the killings and the contradictions ? However, without looking at the attitudes (A) and contradictions (C) which often is on the subconscious level, it will be difficult to transform a conflict.

Sungusungu was then expelling her, but in cases where widows refuse to leave, it often ends in killing them. Galtung also talks about how the contradiction in some cases are identified, maybe also assumption/attitudes, but that the parties are unaware of what is taking place between them..

4.2.1.1 Conscientization – making the conflict conscious

Therefore Galtung states, it is important to lift the attitudes (A) and contradictions (C) up to the daylight, making it manifest, raising it up to the consciousness about where the incompatibility is located. So which goals stands in the way of each other in the Maria case? Maria's goal after her husband died was to live and raise her children. On the other hand was the goal of the deceased clan most probably to accumulate land which in their view belong to the forefathers, and has to stay within the clan for future generations

According to Galtung we are now dealing with a conscious person, aware not only of his/her own images/wants and feelings, but also what stands in the way.

Paulo Freire (2003) talk about this situation as conscientisation in his book "*Pedagogy of the oppressed*".⁹⁷ Conscientization is an ongoing process by which the oppressed move toward critical consciousness. Conscientization means breaking through existing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness--in particular, awareness of oppression, being an "object" in a world where only "subjects" have power. The process of conscientization involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and becoming a "subject" with other oppressed subjects--that is, becoming part of the process of changing the world.⁹⁸

Galtung (96) says the process[conscientisation] is basic, saying; "*how can a conflict be consciously transformed unless the parties to a conflict are conscious subjects, true actors?*"⁹⁹

In other words, the subconscious must be made conscious.

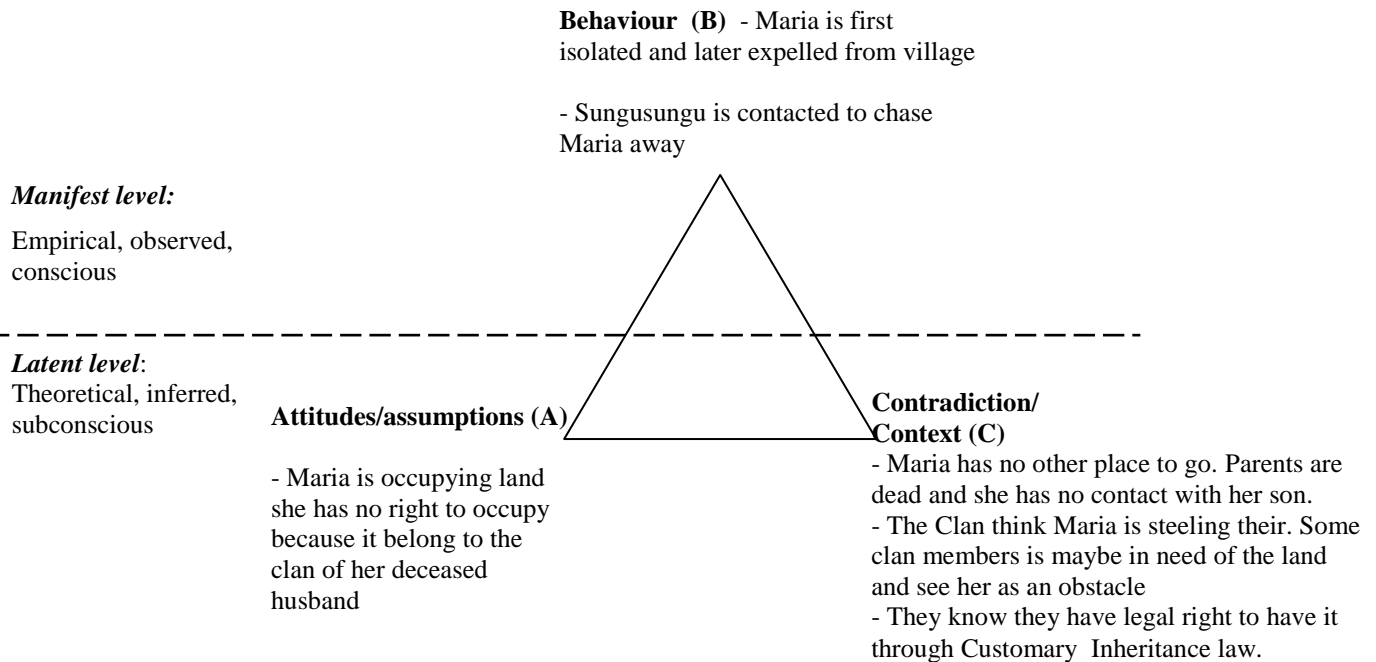
⁹⁷ Look at chapter 1. Freire's use of conscience rather than consciousness points to volition and emotion, not only to cognition.

⁹⁸ Even though these thoughts were used in the context of getting rid of the colonisers, I think his thoughts are useful in the fight for developing equity for women in Sukumaland

⁹⁹ Galtung (1996) he also says Conscientization is only a necessary, not a sufficient condition

Applied theory by using Galtung and Freire in the case of Maria

This is how it hypothetically can be seen from the deceased clan's point of view just before Maria is expelled both on the latent and the manifest level¹⁰⁰;



Apart from Galtung's conflict theory I found his theory on violence particularly useful as analytical tools and for understanding underlying legitimating factors of violence on women¹⁰¹. Galtung says cultural violence is the core of all violence and justifies structural and direct violence in a society. This thinking is also shared with Tanzanian feminists in 'Beyond Inequalities' – Women in Tanzania, stating they see '*culture, religion and ideology as mediators for structural violence seen in macro and micro policies, legal framework laws and customs*'¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ I have used Galtung's ABC triangle presented in the book "Peace by peaceful means" 96:72

¹⁰¹ In the book German book "Krieg und Frieden – Handbuch der konflikt –und Friedenspsychologie" by Sommer/Fuchs: 391 Galtung is criticised that his theory is based on a lack of empirical research, calling his analysis "empirie abstinenter Analyse" (Translated from German would be "free from empiric analysis"). However, they refer to another researcher (Ross 1985, 1992) who has through empirical research in the 1980s ended in the same conclusions as Galtung.

¹⁰² Beyond inequalities, 1997: 16

4.2.1.2 cultural violence¹⁰³

” Those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence.”¹⁰⁴

He says cultural violence highlight the way in which the act of direct violence and structural violence are legitimised and made acceptable in a society, explaining it works by;

“ changing the moral colour of an act from red/wrong to green/right or at least to yellow/acceptable¹⁰⁵”.

I regard 'witch – killings' as cultural violence legitimised through myths, patriarchy, laws, traditional religion and ancestorship belief¹⁰⁶. While killings of women on behalf of oneself is seen as wrong, is killings done by *Sungusungu* 'on behalf of the community' seen as right. Cultural violence is often subconscious and taken for granted and seen as natural and therefore not even questioned. I will come back to that in chapter 7 . Galtung says the inclusion of culture as a major focus of peace research is deepening the search for peace.¹⁰⁷ However, I believe it is necessary to look at deep culture or 'the roots of the roots,' (however very much challenging) in order to do research on 'witch – hunt.'

4.2.1.3 Structural violence

Structural violence is violence which lies in the structures of the society, in form of power over other people and is legitimized through culture. The result is often that it leads to exploitation and oppression for some people. This is for instance seen in the patriarchal value system and the law system, both codified customary laws, and village norms. Johan Galtung

¹⁰³ This concept can be seen as a follow up of Galtung`s concept of structural violence over 30 years ago (Galtung, 1969). He asks himself if inclusion of culture does not broaden the agenda for peace studies considerably, replying “of course it does ! “ Why should peace studies be narrower than, for instance health studies, less complex ? If culture is relevant to violence and peace, and surely it is, then only the dogmatic mind will exclude it from explorations as penetrating and tenacious as the countless studies devoted to the many aspects of direct and structural violence.

¹⁰⁴ Galtung 1996:196

¹⁰⁵ Galtung 96:196

¹⁰⁶ Symbolic violence built into a culture does not kill (or at least not directly, added by me) or injure like direct violence or the violence built into the structure. However it is used to legitimize either or both, as for instance in the theory of Herrenfolk, or a superior race¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁷ Galtung, 1990: 291 -305.Journal of peace research, vol.27.no3

(1996) classifies patriarchy as ¹⁰⁸a form of structural violence because it is a repressive top – down system built into the person and the social world. He explains patriarchy being “ a prison for women”, which I interpret he means women are not free to do what they want, but controlled by men. He uses the example of a million men keeping women in ignorance, as an example of structural violence. Apart from the law system women are being oppressed and marginalised from decision-making at all levels. Examples of structural violence will be shown through the Bride price and inheritance rights in chapter 7

The researcher Birgit Brock – Utne (1989) even divides structural violence in organised,- and unorganised violence¹⁰⁹; saying that ‘*even if the million men are not organised [mentioned in the above example by Galtung], they behave as they were because patriarchal thinking is so much part of their value structure, even maybe of their laws and educational system*’.¹¹⁰

4.2.1.4 Direct violence

The third type of violence is according to Galtung (96) direct violence which can be verbal and physical violence, but also violence on the mind and spirit. He says all combinations leave behind traumas over time¹¹¹. Domestic violence in form of beating women, sexual violence and ‘witch killings’ would be concrete examples of direct violence,¹¹² but he also mentions fear or threats of violence to be included. The daily fear Sukuma women live with in their every day life

4.2.2 Human security

According to the UN Human development report, 1994, has the concept of security been interpreted narrowly for too long . It has been related more to nation states than to people, claiming; ”The most important component [in human security] is freedom from fear”.

Forgotten were the legitimate concern of ordinary people who sought security in the ordinary daily life. Human security can be said to have two main aspects.

¹⁰⁸ Galtung mentions Patriarchy is seen as an institutionalization of male dominance in vertical structures, with very high correlations between positions and gender, legitimized by the culture (ex. Religion).

¹⁰⁹ Karame/Tryggestad, 2000: 14 -15 “Feminist scholar’s links unorganized direct violence on the micro level with organised direct violence on the macro level.”

¹¹⁰ Brock –Utne, 1989: 44

¹¹¹ Galtung, 1996: 31

¹¹² Galtung, 2002. Unpublished working paper no.3 written for Center for Peace studies at the University of Tromsø

1. safety from chronic threats as hunger, decease and repression
2. Protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the pattern of daily life

For most people a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a devastating world event. Will I and my children have enough to eat? Will I be able to get a piece of land if my husband dies? Will I become victim of violence due of my gender ?

The report says;” *Human security is not a concern with weapons – it is a concern with human life and dignity. The idea of human security, though simple, is likely to revolutionize society in the 21 century*”. This type of security is far from being reached the women in Sukuma land.

5 Living in the field

Enthusiasm and eager to learn about traditional conflict resolution brought me to spend four months, June till October 2004, doing fieldwork in Tanzania. Having limited background in anthropology nor given a qualitative methodology course made the four months a challenging experience. Three months were divided into two different places, a village in Ukerewe island in Lake Victoria and a village in Sukuma land, both in the Northern Tanzania. This chapter will mainly focus on my fieldwork in Sukuma land¹¹³. Spradley (1980:3) writes about the aims of doing fieldwork:

“ Fieldwork involves the disciplined study of what the world is like to people who have learned to see, hear, think and act in ways that are different. Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people. In order to discover the hidden principles of another way of life, the researcher become a student. Discovering the insiders view is a different species of knowledge from one that rests mainly on the outsiders view.”

5.1 Access to the field

My original plan was to study traditional ways of conflict resolution in Africa.. However, nearly all literature on the topic based on western approaches. I wanted to know more about how non – western cultures thought around conflict resolution.

Tanzania was picked for my fieldwork through my friend Paul Onango, a Tanzanian master student in Fisheries management at the University of Tromsø.

“ *Why don't you come to Tanzania to study peace*”, he said one day. After Tanzania got its independence in 1961, the country had not been in war with any other African states¹¹⁴, nor have civil/ethnic wars been fought in the country, he could tell me.

That was a good start for a peace research. While neighbouring countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo all have been facing inter-

¹¹³ When I refer to village I mean the village where I conducted field work in Sukuma land

¹¹⁴ Except the invasion in 1978, under Nyerere's leadership, Tanzanian troops entered Uganda, deposing its dictator Idi Amin.

state and intra–state violent conflicts, Tanzania was an remarkably example of a peaceful nation in the traditional sense¹¹⁵.

5.1.1 Ukerewe island – Ship o hoi !

Some months later I was sitting on the ferry heading for Ukerewe island together with Paul¹¹⁶, with my newly achieved Tanzanian Research permit issued from Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTEC)¹¹⁷. Ukerewe island is situated in the Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa and the third largest in the world.

Paul had working experience in the area and helped organize a welcoming committee and an interpreter. Paul was an inside academician who knew the context, and was able to see his culture from a distance (Geertz).¹¹⁸ He had done a lot of qualitative research in the region prior to my research, and was familiar with different methods and approaches used in Development research.

However, after staying some weeks on the island, I was unfortunately not able to find as many traditional institutions and conflict resolution mechanisms as I expected. This was partly because we stayed in a small town¹¹⁹ of traders and fishermen from all over Tanzania, and therefore with loose connections to each other. Secondly, the island had a statutory Court, Police, Local and District government that abolished many traditional institutions¹²⁰. Increased level of Secondary school education could be another reason.

5.1.2 Changing focus

Through reading news paper articles such as ;“ *Witch killings in Sukuma land !*” and “*Traditional police force women to marry !*”, I decided to change my topic. I was put in

¹¹⁵ Meaning peace being “absence of war”

¹¹⁶ Paul was also collecting data around Lake Victoria region for his Masters’ in Fisheries management at University of Tromsø, Northern Norway. We only spent the first two weeks together .Paul comes from the Luo tribe, is a sociologist, and lives in the northern part of the lakeshore, close to the Kenyan border. He knows the area well due to his ten years working, - and research experience in the Lake region.

¹¹⁷ I remember how the local contact asked me; “ Well, I assume you are writing about gender issues as all the other Scandianavian women coming to Tanzania, are you ?”

¹¹⁸ Geertz, 1974

¹¹⁹ It is called a town even though there is just a few hundred people and no electricity, except that the guest house where we stayed had an [agregat](#).

¹²⁰ Such as the traditional police and court. I was informed, however, that the Traditional police called *Sungusungu*, had started as a pilot project in three villages on the island around 1985, but ended gradually in 1995. The training was given by commanders from Sukumaland, where I was told they were strong even today

contact with Simon, a Sukuma native and a social worker in a town in Mwanza region. Simon came from a 'Rainmaker family'¹²¹, where the 'Rainmaker forces' in his view was inherited through generations. His father had an executive position in *Sungusungu*. This meeting changed my focus and I started looking at the underlying factors of why women were labelled 'witches' in contemporary Sukuma land. Since I now was looking more at belief systems, I changed my 'research style'. In Ukerewe I lived at a family run guesthouse, now I changed to live together with a family and take a more active part in their daily lives. Participation would make me more capable of grasping the belief system. Belief is something active, something people do, and living with people would make me able to observe behaviour.

5.2 Living conditions

I lived with Simon's family, consisting of his parents and 13 children. Some daughters had moved out because of marriage, except Rebecca, one divorced daughter who had moved back to her parents together with her children.¹²²

The family's property consisted of two grass thatched houses built of mud and poles and one main house with an iron roof, a property of better standard than most houses in the village. The family had some forty cows and crops.

5.3 Interpreter

Although I had learned to speak some Kiswahili at the University of Zanzibar, I needed a translator. Sukuma dialect in Sukuma and Kikerewe dialect in Ukerewe were spoken in daily life.

In Ukerewe island I had two interpreters. Sarah, was a 24 old woman with secondary school education. She was an orphan, living with her stepmother and working occasionally at a shop making photo copies. Robert was a 42 year old governmental development worker, who also became my research assistant, organizing logistics and helping find informants through the "snow ball effect". In Sukuma land Simon, 30 years old, was my interpreter. Simon had high school education with one foot in the modern world and the other foot in the traditional world – and lived in a symbiosis between the two cosmologies.

¹²¹ The magic power was inherited through a forefather called Sitta he said, cf. appendix 5 "Village history"

¹²² Her husband was a former soldier who had become psychologically ill or traumatised after the invasion of Uganda in 1978

Using interpreters are not the optimal way of communicating with people. Effective communication aim to result in a degree of understanding between a sender and a receiver, and psychological research implies that biases do occur in the process from the senders initial intent and personal belief to the reception of the message and its decoding. Verbal cues (e.g. vocal speed, accent, loudness) and non-verbal cues (e.g. anxiety, fear etc. interpreted from e.g. gesture, posture, facial expression, people involved) can strongly influence both the message and the interpretation of the message. The use of a translator implies an even longer communication channel which increases the possibility of misrepresentation. I see there are many dilemmas connected to using an interpreter. An interpreter work as a filter, not giving the exact information or interpret people's answers, is a possibility.

I tend to think that many women were reluctant to say the whole truth when my interpreter was a male. The fact that Joseph normally did not live in the village and therefore was an 'outsider' could mean that people in general presented another view than they would if I had a female interpreter for instance (Berreman, 1962). The fact that my interpreter came from a Rainmaker family, with a father in the *Sungusungu* police, and more educated than most villagers, made him have a higher status than most villagers, which could mean that villagers were keeping back important information .

However, doing a research in a foreign country make one rely on using an interpreter. My native language is Norwegian, while my translators' mother tongue was Sukuma and kikerewe language. The only way we could communicate was by speaking English, a secondary language to all parties.

5.4 My status

In a world of former colonialism, a fair skin set me not only as a foreigner, but also as someone of higher status than the natives. The value of light skin is a reflection of the western cultural imperialism on the non – western world.

In Sukuma people were not used to foreigners. The fact that I was a foreigner led the people to link me to aid, which might lead them to exaggerate the harshness of their situation. Even the village chairmen asked me for a personal sponsorship as well as raising the question while villagers were present; " So what kind of benefit do our village get from your research ?" I felt quite bad answering " ...well, I am just a student now. My aim is to work with

development work in the future, but I can not guarantee support of your village specifically.” The villagers in front of me were among the poorest in the world.

Many villagers used the opportunity to ask individually for money or medicines. Some villagers thought I was an expert in many different fields, for instance asking me to do a medical consultations on pregnant women.

5.5 Qualitative and quantitative oriented methods

Methods have to do with how we gain information about any given phenomenon. In social science it is common to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods aim to access meaning, social interaction etc, in other words a method to understand social phenomena. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, are designed to investigate measurable phenomena, and distribution of any particular phenomenon (Fossåskaret, 1997).

The two methods can be complementary. Representativeness is achieved in different ways in qualitative and quantitative methods. In qualitative methods/ ethnography , contextualisation is essential; in quantitative methods sampling and selection criteria are crucial.

Cato Vadel (1991:10) writes; “Fieldwork is often defined as qualitative method. This can bring confusion, because fieldwork as well as other investigations often include qualitative and quantitative methods¹²³. Fieldwork include in that sense that we necessarily are interested in spreading of pattern and frequency”.

Fredrik Barth (Cato Vadel, 1991:10) is talking about “a *research being more or less content-oriented, or more or less frequency- oriented*”. He says; “*Our first description of our findings is emphasising on frequencies. No matter which methods used for registration and counting, we have to claim that we have discovered a non –accidental distribution of actions*¹²⁴”. He continues stating ; “*It is anyway necessary to talk about research being more or less content- oriented, or more or less frequency- oriented. We can then use concepts such as qualitative and quantitative oriented research. Fieldwork is in that sense looked at being qualitative research oriented, but not as qualitative method because all fieldwork necessarily includes qualitative methods.*”

¹²³ Translated from Norwegian to English by me.

¹²⁴ Translated from Norwegian to English by me.

My research was a qualitative oriented research, but also using quantitative data. I tried to understand the society and culture as a system with an inner logic and tried to see how different phenomena were connected by using many different approaches.

5.5.1 Participant observation

Participant observation means that the researcher tries to grasp the world of the people she studies. As such the researcher is both a participant, in the sense of trying to do like the participants do, and to understand their worlds. On the other hand she is also an observer, in the sense of reflection upon their world. It requires that one stay in the same place for a long period of time, as well as learn the native language. Because of my time and language limits I had to put more emphasis on the observation part rather than participation. In addition many arranged approaches were used to get more information in a shorter period of time.

I have therefore accompanied a research based on fieldwork, but not in accordance with the anthropological perspectives on 'a proper' participant observation (Malinowski style).

5.5.2 Participatory learning in action (PLA)

I am using ideas from Participatory learning in action (PLA), also called "action research" during fieldwork. Chambers (1997) calls this an *approach* to research more than a specific research method. In action research the researcher is not doing research on people, but is working together with the people.

Nina Foss (2001) writes that the ideology behind research is to give the oppressed a voice and find practical solutions to peoples problems. She states;

*"PLA is an approach to work for and with people which emphasis on participation and empowerment. In order to use PLA you must believe that everyone, no matter status, wealth, education, gender and age, have important knowledge and experience. PLA also look at the important of sharing. Through sharing thoughts and experiences with others more knowledge is built than just one person can develop and the participants learn from each other in each than just one individual can."*¹²⁵

¹²⁵ My own translation from Norwegian

PLA has many different approaches to gather information, but all are based on working in groups. The critique towards using PLA as a research method is that it is based on a constructed setting where the researcher chose the themes and decides whom to invite. When I arrived the village my informants were picked through Simon's mother and father, with instruction from me on age and gender. This means that they practically were able to control whom to invite. However, later I used the "snowball effect" in order to find my informants. Even though the setting is constructed, I am not sceptical towards using the approach because I see PLA as complimentary with other data collected.

I arranged fifteen group discussions on different topics, mainly groups of 7 -12 people. People were personally invited to join the meeting a day or two in advance, chairs were set in a circle in the shadow outside the house and huge papers were placed in a tree together with coloured markers. I started every session by introducing myself and why I was there, emphasising that I was a student in the setting and they were my teachers. I explicitly opened up to any question after the session or under the meal ending every session. Opening up for their questions became valuable data for me and brought me into interesting discussions and became a way of understanding their belief system better.

An example of PLA is for instance asking the following three questions to a group¹²⁶;

- Which conflicts do you see in the village ?
- Which solutions are given ?
- Which institutions are solving them ?

I found the more concrete questions I asked , the better data I was able to collect. I started by asking the first question, and after a conflict was mentioned I could say for instance; "*In that particular case you mentioned; how were you able to solve it ?*" The group discussed the questions and chose a secretary to write it on big sheets of paper so all the literate people could see it. While discussing I got a simultaneous translation, which gave me the opportunity to ask further questions.

Some people claimed they learned a lot about their village participating in group discussions. This was said by Kereza, 24 years;

" I did learn a lot about our village yesterday, will there be another seminar ?" , she asked me as I was passing her at the market place. The previous day I had organized a

¹²⁶ The end result from such group discussions can be seen in appendix 3 and 4

workshop with eight women, where conflicts and institutions in the village were topics. She was the youngest in the group and I remembered her being quiet the whole time."

In general I saw it was strength to use focus group discussions in order to get a lot more information collectively than through individual interviews.

PLA is also good for seeing things visually. For instance, after having a session asking about conflicts mentioned above, I could end by asking them to draw the relationship between the institutions. An example of this can be seen through appendix 2. I could also ask questions such as; "Can you draw a map of the village and put down where all the suspected 'witches' live?". A visualisation was made by a former Village chairman and can be seen in appendix 6. Appendix 1 – 6 are all examples of using PLA 'in practise'.

After I had been in the village some time I asked the focus group members to film while they were discussion in groups. I was also filming the daily life in the family where I lived This material has been a great help later for my writing and as well through making a visual presentation of my fieldwork. However, using a camera can also be an obstacle and make people behave differently due to the camera.

5.5.3 Informal conversations and semi structured interviews

I tried to be present in every aspect of the village life that was open for me, such as meals, slaughtering of goats, rituals made of traditional healer, traditional dance and drum performance as well as gatherings outside the house during nights. It was a chance to exchange views, ask questions, and get information from different members of the household. Many of the family members became key informants through conversation. A lot of the data I collected through small conversations, which I wrote down during evenings.

I also did many semi structured interviews (45). In the beginning I actively used a question guide. However, it did not go many days before I found out that this type of approach did not give the information I needed. It worked better to try to have more 'normal conversation' based on the focus from the question guide.

6 Sungusungu - the big black ants in village

The name *Sungusungu* means 'big black ants' in Kiswahili; "*The ants work slowly, but in cooperation they are able to do a lot. Just like us. We work together in groups and we are dangerous. You can not be killed by one, but together we are strong enough to kill!*", the *Komanda* said smiling.

This chapter will focus on the Sungusungu leadership in the village where my fieldwork was conducted. I will focus on their beliefs and attitudes, and their organizational power to execute violence against women.

6.1 Organization

As revealed in the group discussion with the *Sungusungu* leaders, the leadership consists of a leader (Ntemi), a commander (Komanda) and four men in leading positions¹²⁷.

The organization was formed in 1982 in order to keep peace in the village. "*A big group of men came to the surrounding villages to steal our daughters and belongings. We had to protect ourselves. Even Nyerere [Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's first president] and central government told us to establish protection,*"¹²⁸ one leader said. "*And now all men in the village are Sungusungu soldiers*".

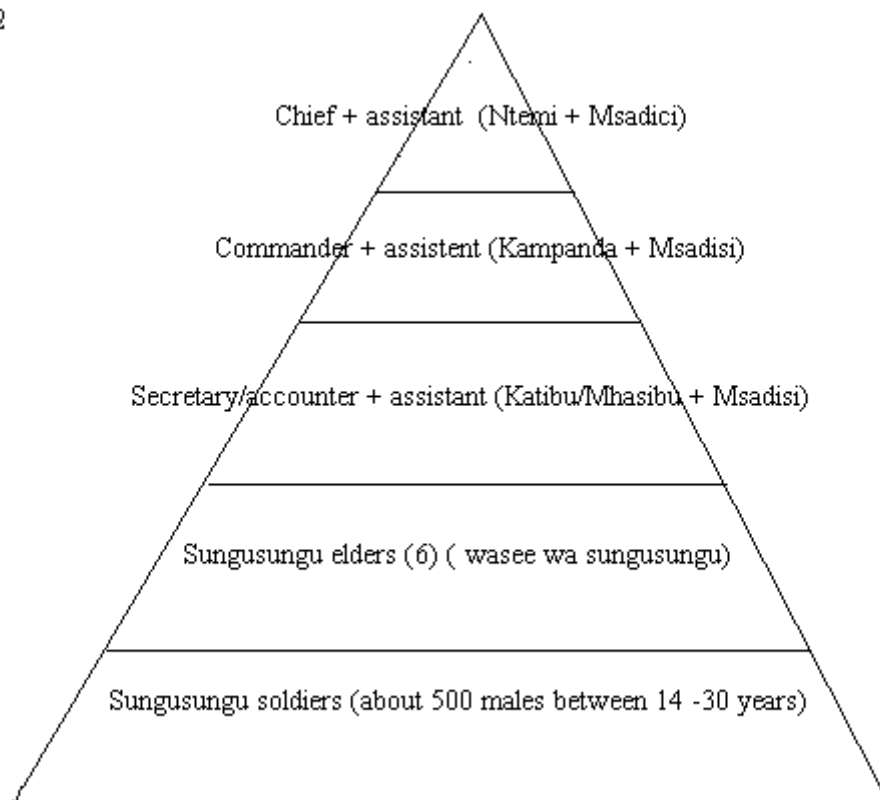
As seen in the hierarchal structure in table 2 all male villagers between 14 -30 years are considered *Sungusungu* soldiers. The elders are supervising the commander's actions, which should be 'a fair judgment'. The *Sungusungu* are expected to obey any orders and immediate action is required when crime is being committed.

The *Sungusungu* are organized in the majority of the villages in Sukuma land, and the leaders meet regularly in regional meetings to discuss different challenges.

¹²⁷ They were between 53 and 73 years old. They had 9.6 children and 1.8 wives each in pro medio.

¹²⁸ Today Sungusungu are also present in cities such as Mwanza and Dar es Salaam, where they try to solve small theft and violence which the police do not cover

Table 2



The Sungusungu, as in pre-colonial times, depends on the *Sungusungu* leader as a religious diviner¹²⁹. Before the soldiers go out and punish they are given traditional medicine in form of a black powder. “*It gives us protection against bad spirits and witchcraft*”, one *Sungusungu* soldier said. Within the leadership, a few dozen council members have the duty of debating cases in secrecy. If the secret committee fails to reach consensus on a difficult case, *Dagashida* is informed, where all *Sungusungu* members are expected to attend.¹³⁰ Action are called for by the commander;

“*Oeeeeeeoo, oeeeeo, oeeeeo !*” “*Oeeeeeeoo, oeeeeo, oeeeeo !*”
(the commanders voice shouting)

When the ‘soldiers’ hear that call, they must run to the commander’s house immediately to hear whom to punish. All young men must leave everything. If they are working in the field they have to leave the hoe immediately and start running. It takes just a minute for the boys to gather around their commander.

¹²⁹ Abrahams,1994

¹³⁰ *Dagashida* is the traditional higher court. Look at appendix 1 for further information.

I saw this with my own eyes one morning. A group of men, about 40 of them, were running towards a neighbour's house, each holding sticks in their hands. They were all singing songs while one of them was drumming on a huge traditional drum. Their faces were covered with masks made of animal skin or thick paper. In the house lived an old widow.

Some days earlier at a group discussion with male *Lugoye* members, the traditional lower court in village, I was told that a neighbour lady was among the fifteen bad witches in the village.¹³¹ I got a detailed drawing showing where the seventeen 'witches'; fifteen 'bad witches' (using black magic) and two 'good witches' (also called witchdoctors) were living. I was further told that the witchdoctors were both males, while all the evil ones were women.

6.2 Beliefs and attitudes

"We are working hard to get rid of all the 'witches', because they kill people and make trouble in our village" (Commander, in his fifties)

I asked why the majority of the suspected witches were women, and got the following answers;

" The main reason is because most women are bad - hearted. I don't know, but they are born naturally that way, and lacking love for mankind. They are gossiping, filled with hatred, jealousy...and is not able to forgive.... and all sorts of bad elements. Such elements are not very common for men."

Another man said;

"Women in general like the hobby of witchcraft, and a few men practise witch doctorate to cure the bewitched by these female witches. Well, this is how things are since long time ago. It is the right information. And usually they start the practise when they are 45 years and above, up to 80".

¹³¹ According to a group discussion with men 17 September one former male Village Chairman had drawn a village map in my field note book, showing where all the suspected witches lived in village. This map can be found in appendix 6.

Another said;

"And most women are born evil naturally. We must help to discipline them!"

I was told that 'witch – accusations' normally came from the male clan members.

"We use the traditional methods¹³² to detect 'the witch,'" one said, "if the women are not behaving according to village norms and values we must chase her away. "

Because of the general secrecy I failed to get official statements whether the Sungusungu in my village had committed any witch-killings, or which criteria were used to select the witches. However, the leaders could tell stories about killings done in neighbour villages. As one said, *"I know that 11 witches were killed in Mashala village the last years"*.

'Witch killings' are against the Statutory law, as the village leaders and the Sungusungu are aware of. One leader said; *"One Sungusungu commander in Tobo village was taken to statutory court for having commanded the soldiers to kill a suspected witch. This happened in 1997, and I think he still is in prison."*

The leaders were more open to tell me about their practise of expelling suspected 'witches' from the village as well as the practise of forcing women to marry.

"The last years we have chased away about 6 'witches' from our village", the commander says, commenting that one lady was chased away that same day. "Her clan had suspected her to be a witch for a long time, and today we took action", he said.

In Ukerewe island I even heard on the radio that **Sungusungu** had started to force women to marry in Sukuma land, in order to keep the village secure. A local newspaper writes the following September 1 04¹³³;

"In a village called Nkoma, the Sungusungu gave unmarried women and widows the orders to get married or at least declare their marital ambitions. This order was given as a response to an increasing crime rate in the village, where these women were

¹³² Traditional methods means here clan members and neighbours following that traditional norms and values are followed

¹³³ <http://www.bcstimes.com/cgi-bin/np/viewnews.cgi?category=1&id=1062389265>, September 1 04

*accused of giving accommodation to criminal men. Two women (Majura 25yrs and Kobelo 33yrs) have received letters ordering them to appear before the **sungusungu**"*

"This year we have forced around 10 women to marry", the commander said. " They were a threat to the security in the village. So many unmarried women in the village are leading to an invasion of boys from the outside. And many of them are thieves. It makes the village insecure and we work to create peace in our village".

I believe we can talk about a collective sub consciousness. I assume that the majority of the soldiers are not reflecting about the harm they cause on these women, but rather their contribution on improving the security in village. It is seen as 'natural'¹³⁴ to expel and sometimes kill women because the **Sungusungu** commander says so, and all men in village participate.

The strong male superiority and domination against women make women an easy 'scapegoat' when misfortune occurs in village. This is also stated by Johan Galtung (1996) in the theory chapter, where he talks about how superior male beliefs can lead to sexism and 'witch' killings¹³⁵.

¹³⁴ Juergensmeyer.2000 talk about naturalisation as a dangerous concept because there is not any reflection

¹³⁵ Galtung, 1996: page ?

7 Socio cultural factors legitimating 'witch -hunt'

7.1 Deep culture

Former research on 'witch' hunt described in chapter two, showed the 'witch' to be a woman, often a widow, between 50 -60 years, originating from Sukuma land and that these women are especially vulnerable during dry season. These characteristics were very much in line with my own empirical findings from the area. By knowing this pattern I assume socio cultural factors related to power is leading to 'witch accusation' against women¹³⁶. My assumption is that male believed superiority and sexism work as legitimizing violence against women.

When '*Beyond inequalities – Women in Tanzania*' (1994) write that Sukuma women, especially those with red eyes after years of cooking in smoky kitchens, are either regarded as witches or bad omens, I am asking myself – what can be the reason behind killing old women? What kind of threat can they represent? And how can such violence be legitimised?

I found that a research looking at deep underlying factors of why women are exposed to 'witch' hunt to be absent from the research field. This chapter will look into aspects in "deep culture", by using a term of Johan Galtung (1996) applied on my own empirical research in order to look for the root causes behind the violence against women.

My empirical findings suggests that the violence against women are related to four factors which will be presented.

¹³⁶ This finding correlates with findings of Carolyn Nordstrom, Institute for international Peace studies at University of Notre Dame, mentioned in the introduction chapter, saying recent historical research of 'witch deaths' during the Inquisition followed definite patterns – patterns rooted in power politics, gender and exclusionary oppression.

Show respect ! Be submissive!

Arriving the village I quickly observed how all females were kneeling to all males, irrespective of age. I never forget how the fifteen year old sister in the family had to kneel down, with her knees almost touching the ground, to her three year old brother (and twelve years younger) every time they met. While asking various men why women were kneeling, the common answer was “showing respect.”¹³⁸

According to a focus group discussion with six men between 42 – 65 years, 10 September 03, I learned that showing ‘respect’ was looked upon being an obvious and fundamental quality in a woman’s behaviour, and was connected to the following criteria ;

- Being disciplined towards the Head of the household
- Not oppose the Head of Household
- Not take decisions without consulting the Head of household

As one of the male informant said; “ *A woman must be cheerful, polite, social and abiding to local laws and customs.* ” Abiding to local laws and customs means to be submissive.

An other example of showing respect and submissiveness was seen through the daily meals of Ugali, a kind of porridge made of cassava, where the Head of household and boys always were served food before the wife and the girls. When the head of the Household was hungry he told the wife, and the small daughters came running with water in order for the men to wash their hands before starting the meal.¹³⁹ When the men had finished eating, the wife and the daughters could eat. However, many times it was not enough food left for the girls.¹⁴⁰

The examples above tell us that respect is highly valued in the society. Respect is looked upon as a scarce recourse, and connected to authority, something which is not given to everyone. It follows the men in the family.

My research shows that males’ search for control and respect in the society is central.

However, it tells us that men are not necessarily searching respect from women, but rather

¹³⁸ I got an impression that men thought my question was strange and it seemed as it was something they never had heard about

¹³⁹ However, I personally found the situation to be very difficult, since I was eating with the Head of the household and the boys.

¹⁴⁰ In addition I found there were certain food taboos for women. An old woman, around seventy, told me how she had never tasted eggs, chicken,- or goat meat, because it was not allowed according to village norms. This example can also be a signal that nutrition for boys was looked upon being more important than for the female part of the family. Meat is a scarce recourse in the area and by making it a taboo for women, it would be more meat for the men.

from other men. Solidarity among men is keeping the power structure and is a way of controlling women's behaviour. This is supported by Brock – Utne saying; “ (...) *they [Patriarchal men] are united in the shared relationship of dominance over their women and are dependant on each other to maintain that domination.*”¹⁴¹

The fact that the girls and women ought to be disciplined, not encouraged to take decisions and not oppose the males, make the females into more “objects” rather than acting “subjects”.

The understanding also corresponds with Birgit Brock Utne's perception on patriarchy;

*“ Women are held to be inferior to men and have no legitimate claim to authority. Fulfilment of these social roles fixed by this “natural inferiority” requires submission to the exercise of authority.”*¹⁴²

Paulo Freire talks about making people [in this case the women] into a "Culture of Silence" where they are not heard by the dominant members of their society. The dominant members, in this case the men, prescribe the words to be spoken by the oppressed through control, thereby effectively silencing the people¹⁴³. To Edwin Ardener, in the article “Belief and the problem of women” he is presenting women as “the muted group¹⁴⁴”.

I was able to observe how girls were socialised to follow orders from fathers and brothers in the household. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo talks about how the domestic orientation of women is an important critical factor in understanding females low social position in the society¹⁴⁵. When girls marry the commanding role is given to the husband. The obedience is followed into the marriage.

7.2.1 Institution of Bride price –legitimizing oppression ?

“ When we pay Bride price for a woman – the woman belongs to us”
(Male 57 years)

141 Brock- Utne, 1989: 29 -30

142 Brock- Utne, 1989: 109

¹⁴³ Freire, 2000

144 Ardener, 1989

¹⁴⁵ Rosaldo, 1974

Marriage is considered legal both customarily, religiously and in court in Tanzania. In the village all the informants I asked, both males and females, said villagers marry under customary rules. Customarily marriage is associated with Bride – price in form of cows or other valuables given to womans' father, and the size of the prize differs among ethnic groups¹⁴⁶. Customarily marriage also opens up for polygamy, where the man can marry as many women as he can maintain. However, I will not discuss polygamy in this thesis.

According to two males in their forties, I was told that the normal bride price was 3 - 4 cows in Ukerewe islands, 8 -20 cows in the Sukuma village where this research was conducted, while in Musuma district the amount could reach 50 cows. If the marriage ends in divorce, the Bride price had to be re – paid to the husband's clan.¹⁴⁷

In group discussions with women in the village and in Ukerewe island I learned that women feared their husbands would complain they were “bad” wives, because the consequence could be that the husbands exchanged the wife into a more submissive one, more fertile and with higher work capacity. I was told if the husband was not satisfied with the wife, the Bride price had to be returned by the father in law.¹⁴⁸

One woman, Happy, 40 years old, said she stayed in a relationship filled with daily physical and psychological violence, but because her father could not repay the bride price she could not leave her abusive marriage. “ *The cows had been used up many years ago in paying school fees for my brothers, she said.*”

7.2.1.1 Is Brideprice a tag?

A fifty year old Catholic priest and informant said;

“ Bride price is like setting a tag on a person. It is like buying a property and creates less equality. In my opinion Bride price is one of the main obstacles to gain equality

¹⁴⁶ In a group discussion with 6 men in village (age between 41 -62 years) I was told the price depends on obedience, discipline, work capacity in the field and skin colour (the whiter the skin more cows are paid) .

¹⁴⁷ Paying Bride price for a woman in form of cows or other gifts has a long tradition in Tanzania. Traditionally customary marriage was more than union of two individuals, but a union of two families; parents even arranged the marriage, and most often without the approval of the girl. Marriage controlled sexuality where it was assumed to give the husband exclusive sexual rights over the wife

¹⁴⁸ Look at appendix 3 (2) and appendix 4 (2)

between men and women. I only see it create oppression. A lot of women are living in abusive relationships they can not leave, because they can not afford to repay the Bride price. ”

That the wife is looked upon being a property and that Bride price creates oppression is concluded through the following statement from a 42 year old man;

“ Lets say you pay 22 cows for a wife. The husband leaves in the morning and commands the wife to cook, fetch firewood, take care of babies etc. When he comes back he sees that certain jobs are not done..... of course he beats !”.

During a girls leadership conference I met many Secondary school girls from the Great Lakes region who discussed the topic of Bride price reducing opportunities for girls .¹⁴⁹ As one girl said;

“ It is just like slavery – you are sold. Your humanity is taken away” .

Her friend Jasmine commented;

“No man is able to buy me, because I want my dignity and my freedom. I want to study and decide for myself”.

It was obvious that the five girls standing around were nodding towards the girls' answers.

That Bride price is an obstacle to girl's opportunities was as well acknowledged by a headmaster for a primary school in village, a 40 year old man¹⁵⁰. He explains, that out of the 140 dropout's from primary school the majority were girls.¹⁵¹ He says;

” The fathers do not see the reason for sending their girls to school. They think they will just marry anyway, why will they then need to read and write the father's ask

¹⁴⁹ Girls leadership conference , St. Augustin University, August 03

¹⁵⁰ interview conducted at the school 15 September 04. All together there are 780 pupils and 6 class rooms

¹⁵¹ The total amount of children in secondary school was around 800 pupils. The central authorities offer all children obligatory primary school free of charge. Secondary school, however, is not free and the competition to enter is based on national exams. The amount of girls dropping out of school has extended effects. In the village 27 youth had completed Secondary school, four of them being girls

themselves? Many fathers see just bride – price in their daughters. And they want them to marry when they are young, before they become pregnant. That is why many fathers arrange marriage for their daughters when they are twelve or thirteen - they can not loose bride price. When a girl marries she stops going to school, even though the Central government made it mandatory. Other fathers say they need the girls as workforce at home; cooking, collecting firewood and working in the fields”.

The following opinion tells us there are as well men opposing Bride price. A male, 40 years, and Development worker says;

“Me and my wife decided to marry because we loved each other, and not because it could accumulate her father’s wealth. Now we have been together for five years and we have three children. But still, every time I meet my father in law he asks; “ So where are my cows ?”I think he will never except me before he gets his cows ! And he never will.”

What the above examples tell us is that is that the institution of Bride price is leading to both oppression and to domestic violence towards women. The fact that the girl is valued in cows make the girl a property or ‘an object’, accumulating to the family’s wealth. This puts the girl in a vulnerable position where supposedly fathers are looking for a husband who can pay the most cows, often without asking the girl. Bride price also becomes an obstacle to take education, because the custom is that she has to stop school after she marries.

Bena Gard , a contributor to the first international conference on Bride Price organised in Uganda¹⁵² in February 2004, claims that the negative consequences of Bride price has had to little focus¹⁵³. In her unpublished paper ‘ *Domestic violence and Bride price*’, she says there

152 This conference was organised due to a referendum on the reform of Bride price in Uganda on 2001. The question was whether Bride price should be a refundable gift. The referendum was won with 60 % in favour of reform. The need for this intervention arose out of the work with women who highlighted the fact that Bride price is a major contributing factor to domestic violence and poverty

153 The need for intervention arose out of the work with women who highlighted the fact that Bride price is a major contributing factor to domestic violence and poverty.

It became obvious through the referendum that bride price, up till now a marginalized discussion, was actually a chronic problem in the daily lives of the poor and the marginalized, particularly grassroots women and children. However, through a research it was apparent that the injustices connected to the practice were not immediately obvious to the social elite who largely viewed bride price through the positive lens of cultural values and a people’s sense of identity.

Research and activism against a parallel practice – as for instance Dowry in India, led to the criminalization and prohibition of the practice, which did not however make changes in the traditional practice that continues to jeopardize women’s lives.

Yet while dowry has received notable international attention, similar to female genital mutilation, as

a human rights violation from international bodies and governments (See UNICEF,

House of Common reports), bride price remains an unclear topic waiting behind a smoke screen of culture and marriage rituals in many African countries, not just in Tanzania.

is a close link between Bride price and direct violence in form of domestic violence and reduced opportunities¹⁵⁴.

While the above examples connect Bride price to direct or domestic violence against women, indirect violence also restricts opportunities for women to have control over their own lives. To me this process is dehumanising the girl, taking her personhood away. Through dehumanising the women one can assume it becomes easier to commit violence, because there is no personal worth in the person.¹⁵⁵

Galtung referred to cultural violence built into a culture, such as in this case Bride price, can legitimize the theory he calls '*Herrenfolk*', where some people think they have a higher value than others. By this one can think that Bride price dehumanise the woman and legitimise the 'superior' man to use violence, even kill his wife, because he has 'bought' the girl, it is his 'property'.¹⁵⁶

The fact that cows must be repaid puts women in a difficult situation. The women have to do everything they can in order to fulfilling the role as 'good wives' so the cows do not have to be repaid. And we can also assume that the Bride price can contribute to the practise of 'witch accusation' and chasing women. During my fieldwork I heard a story about a man who accused his wife to be a 'witch', and claimed the father in law to repay the cows.

Myths, traditional religion and codified customary laws reinforce this belief.

7.2.2 Traditional knowledge legitimizing patriarchy

7.2.2.1 Myth legitimizing 'witch' accusations against women

In an interview with Norah, a 24 years old female secondary school teacher, she states;

In the village the men say everyone with red eyes are 'witches'. It's a proof that the person is connected with the demons they say ! Just think about all the elderly women having red eyes in village ! There are so many ! They get red eyes from cooking with

154 According a focus group discussion with 8 -12 women in village as well as in Ukerewe island, showed that physical violence against women was a big problem for many women. This can be seen in appendix 3 and 4

¹⁵⁵ Juergensmeyer (2001) says link between dehumanising and demonising can be short, saying; "For those in cultures of violence who experience both despair and defiance over what they perceive to be a hopeless situations, religion provides a solution: cosmic war. As opponents become demonised and regarded as "forces of evil" the world begins to make sense."

¹⁵⁶ Galtung, 1990: 291 -305. Journal of peace research, vol.27.no3

low quality fuel in smoky kitchens. And of course that doesn't happen to the males, because they are never in such environment !”

I found many elderly women were called 'witches' because of a myth about appearance of a 'witch' having red eyes.¹⁵⁷ I was told “the red eye argument” was used as one of the factors why Maria, her story told in the introduction chapter, was expelled from her village, Maria said;

“ My husband's clan said they had to chase me away because I was connected with demons and the evil forces due to my eyes. ”

7.2.2.2 Myth about supreme male ancestors

According to a focus group discussion with 8 elderly men, I could identify the belief in mythical ancestors with supreme power.¹⁵⁸ These myths are leading to violence because they are legitimizing that supernatural power or 'witch craft' exist¹⁵⁹. This positive witchcraft is believed to be inherited by the 'witch doctors' in village, who are men and they use their position to execute 'witch hunt' against women: The mythical ancestors are;

- **Belengany** came up from the ground. On the first day the people saw his head, hands and shoulders. The second day he was completely out. Then his cows, goats and sheep came out. He had no parents.
- “ **Sitta**¹⁶⁰ could foresee and predict the future. He could change cows to become stones and left footsteps on rocks.
- **Nindwa** made a lake to prevent the Masai¹⁶¹ from stealing cows.
- **Shigulu and Masuka** arrived the village and started taking cows from people using force as well as killing women in village¹⁶². When men saw their wives and women being killed, they started fighting. They fought until Shigilu did a miracle by changing sand into bees and defeated the men.

¹⁵⁷, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/1951053.stm> has Help age International, a UK sponsored NGO, started schemes in 70 villages in Sukuma educating that older people are not witches by using traditional drama groups, dances, choirs to pass educational messages to the entire community. They teach how to build kitchens so smoke is emitting outside in order to reducing red eyes and giving the elder women medical help.

¹⁵⁸ This information is based on a group discussion on village history 8 September. The whole village history can be found in appendix 5.

¹⁵⁹ These mythical men appear being very real for most villagers

¹⁶⁰ He could even foresee white people coming to Africa. These people could have breakfast in Europe and lunch in Africa. He meant they would fly using a plane to get from one place to another in a short time.

¹⁶¹ They traditionally nomadic people

¹⁶² During the discussion it struck me that all the supreme beings mentioned were males, and the only time women were pointed out was through being victims of violence!

I suspect myths and mythical male characters is legitimating the 'witch' doctors. Also I have seen how the myths are used to explain how the entire world came into existence¹⁶³ and how it were used to legitimate that land belong to the man's clan.

This was shown through the following statement;

“Quarrels between husband and wife about land , or a quarrel after a husband dies can disturb the ancestors .Everyone knows the land belongs to the ancestors. If the land will be given to another clan [the wife is not a part of the deceased husband's clan] the ancestors will create misfortune for everyone in the village. In 1998¹⁶⁴ there was a lot of misfortune in village.” (Male, 52 years)

This statement can be connected to the Maria's story chapter 1. As long as the myth exist that misfortune will occur when there is quarrel about land, the violence in form of chasing away women under the label 'witch' is legitimized because it will 'help the villagers to get rid of 'misfortune' and to make the ancestors happy.

7.2.2.3 'Witch doctors' legitimate violence ?

In traditional knowledge the 'witch doctor' is a central character. Because he is related to the ancestors he achieves a huge amount of respect from the society. Villagers I interviewed considered the two 'witch doctors in village being the highest Gods because they are the link with ancestors. These statements confirm their status of 'witch doctors';

“A witchdoctor has magic powers which makes him able to have contact with the ancestors. Individuals have no direct contact with the ancestors, but the ancestors are going to the witchdoctor at night to tell stories [here referring to reasons who caused the misfortune]. By talking to a 'witch doctor' he can tell you the advises he got from the forefathers. ” (Man, 30 years old)

¹⁶³ This is the most important myth in a culture, also called the cosmogonic myth, one that becomes the exemplary model for all other myths.

¹⁶⁴ I was told that some people thought 'el nino' was the first step towards a dooms day. In a group discussion I was narrated that many people were waiting for the world to come to and end at the end of the millennium

“ Some were climbing in the few trees we have in the village, because they wanted to be the first ones to reach heaven,” said a 42 year old, male informant. Another male, 45 years said,“ When 'el nino' came in to village in 1998 the rain just poured down. Many farms and houses were destroyed and people got killed. A whole year after that we were having a draught and people were starving. This was a sign from our ancestors that they were not satisfied.”

“ There are a few men in village who practise as witch doctors to cure the people who have been bewitched [here meaning those who are faced with any misfortune]. This is how things are since long time ago.” (Man 25 years old)

Maria in the introduction story was labelled ‘a witch’ after the clan member had visited a ‘witch doctor’ who said a family member had caused the poverty in his clan. Maria was then chosen being ‘the cause’ or the ‘scapegoat’. This means that the two male ‘witchdoctors’ in village are having a lot of power, because people believe in them¹⁶⁵. According to an interview with the Village chairman 17 September 03, I was told that the majority of the villagers believed in Traditional religion and ancestorship worship.¹⁶⁶ Traditional religion includes; Forefather worship, witches¹⁶⁷, spirits, Rainmakers and wizards.¹⁶⁸

I found people in the village were fearing the evil ‘witches’. This was stated by an elder male informant;

“ a witch is a person who cause misbehaviour and disaster to others, sometimes by not being aware of it ”.

A common answer when asking about the sex of the ‘evil witch’ is this;

“Most ‘witches’ [referring to the evil ones] are women. They are simply born with such a character – naturally bad.” (Man, 34 years)

The fact that women are born with an ‘evil character’ gives legitimization to ‘witch hunt’. Due to this naturalisation questions are not asked, because it is considered “the truth.”

¹⁶⁵ A Witchdoctor said apart from giving curative medicine for diseases, many people were coming to heal interpersonal relationships in order to reconcile people. Most of his clients were women. He told some clients came to remove bewitchments, misfortune and bad spirits. I was present at a reconciliation ceremony of two girls, one wanting reconciliation with parents after a quarrel, while the other, wanting her husband to love her.

¹⁶⁶ Oral history says the villagers were introduced to Christianity as early as in 1930, first with arrival of Seventh Adventists missionaries and later entrance of the Roman Catholics, who later built a school, dispensary and a church. Even though colonizers tried to change beliefs in supernatural power, the majority believe in traditional Gods today. Information received from Village council 17 Sept. 04.

¹⁶⁷ I found that villagers were dividing into ‘good’ and ‘bad’ witchcraft or good and evil. The ‘good witch’ was considered a person who is using the magic power to cure people, while the ‘bad witch’ used it to harm others.

¹⁶⁸ In addition to Traditional religion many were Christians. I found many people interpretation the bible (‘Book of Moses, chapter two’) literally and used as justification that women are inferior. A male informant said; *“ First God created the man. From the ribs he created the woman. This is why the man always is stronger and wiser than the women ! And that is why the woman always must stand on the side of the man. A woman is lazy and not so wise and not able to take their own decisions. They always need a man to help them out so they take the right one.”*

What this information tells us is the 'witchdoctors' exercise supreme power. Women on the other hand, such as Maria, can be seen as a victim of that power and she has few opportunities to oppose due to her dehumanised position in society.

Juergensmeyer (2000) talks about how an enemy can be looked upon being a deceiver, a hunt or a sacrifice by dehumanising a whole group. By dehumanising a whole group the group loses personhood. He talks about how people can be looked at not being real humans or "lower humans"¹⁶⁹ or just partly human.¹⁷⁰ I believe that is what has happened subconsciously with Sukuma women. Juergensmeyer says further ; " For those in cultures of violence who experience both despair and defiance over what they perceive to be a hopeless situations, religion provides a solution.[...] As opponents become demonised and regarded as "forces of evil" the world begins to make sense."

In the first part of the chapter I have showed how deep cultural violence is legitimizing unorganised structural violence, seen in the patriarchal power structure. It is obvious that this structural violence put women in a vulnerable position leading to direct violence in form of 'witch hunt.'

However, I found the unorganised' violence¹⁷¹ to appear as it was 'organized'(in an unwritten law between men). Birgit Brock – Utne (89) illustrate a good example, saying;

*" Even if the million men are not organised, they behave as they were because patriarchal thinking is so much part of their value structure, even maybe of their laws and educational system'.*¹⁷²

Through the empirical examples I was able to see a causal flow starting from cultural violence, via structural violence leading to direct violence against women.

¹⁶⁹ Minde.2001: 1 -23 uses the concept " lower humans" explaining how the Sámi (Norwegian indigenous people) were looked at decades ago

¹⁷⁰ Juergensmeyer.2000:172 -175

¹⁷¹ meaning violence which is not organised by written laws, but by patriarchal norms and values

¹⁷² Brock –Utne, 1989: 44

Further I saw the 'unorganized' violence on the micro level, having been made 'organized' through a codified law system where property is inherited by men only. This will be explored in the next part of the chapter

7.2.3 Customary inheritance law of 1963

According to the codified customary inheritance laws of 1963, women are not allowed to inherit any property the day the husband dies¹⁷³. Without having land a person is bound to depend on other male clan members, which make the life situation very insecure, especially for widows.

This was showed through "Maria's story" in the very beginning of the thesis where the piece of land and the matrimonial house was taken from her the day after her husband's funeral.¹⁷⁴ In a group discussion with eight women¹⁷⁵ some being widows, were inheritance disputes brought up as the very first conflict when I asked which conflicts women perceived in village. Some of the women had already gone through the process of losing their land and matrimonial house, while some said they feared they would face the problem in the future.

7.2.3.1 Sexist law

According to Jane Magigita, legal officer for The Women's Legal Aid Centre in Tanzania (WLAC) says the customary inheritance law is discriminatory and against Human Rights¹⁷⁶ because the law, explicitly says women cannot inherit from their deceased husbands. She also points out that that children are divided into 3 grades: The first son, of the first house, gets the bigger share, then all sons from the first to the last house get the second share, while the last one get the rest. A very minimal, if any, is divided among all girls.

¹⁷³ In the newspaper *Guardian*, 7 may 2004 under the headline "Isn't it time to change the inheritance law?," it says how the customary inheritance law, passed in 1963, has a tremendous impact on the daily life of many Tanzanians, particularly women and children.

¹⁷⁴ Further her case was used in chapter four where her story was put into Johan Galtung's ABC triangle

¹⁷⁵ Conducted 15 September 04. The 8 women was between 20 – 74 years. Marriage status showed that one woman was one among five wives, two were one among three wives, one was one among two wives, four was the only wife, and one was a single woman. All together they had 57 children, which makes an average of 6,33 children pr. woman. Many children had died when giving birth or afterwards. Look in appendix 3 and 4 for a overview of all the mentioned conflicts

¹⁷⁵ Beyond inequalities: 48

¹⁷⁶ The *Guardian* 7 may 2004, article written by Eva Wortel. Jane Magigita says that most of the cases the centre handles are either concerning inheritance or relating to child maintenance and custody. Common cases include violence against widows and orphans, as for instance many of them are chased away from matrimonial homes by the deceased relatives.

I believe there is no doubt that this sexist law¹⁷⁷, favouring men to inherit because they are men, legitimize 'witch accusation' and violence against women. According to this law it was legitimate to deprive Maria of land the day after her husband died.

As mentioned in chapter four was Maria able to use a small piece of land after a long dispute with the clan, in order to raise the children. My assumption, however, was the contradiction (corner in Galtung's theory) between Maria and her husband's clan's needs, built up frustration in the deceased husband's clan, which later resulted in expelling her under the label 'witch'¹⁷⁸. Accusations are thus used to get rid of widows living on the land as tenants, and blocking the inheritance of male clan members. Again this shows the flow between cultural, -, via structural to direct violence

7.2.3.2 Customary laws avoided if discriminating women ?

I see the Customary law of Inheritance from 1963 contradicts with a lot of international declarations signed by Tanzanian authorities creating gender equality,¹⁷⁹ especially the signed *Convention on the Elimination of All forms of discrimination against women*, the *Declaration on the elimination of violence against women*.

However the statutory Land Act and The Village Land Act from 1999, mention that it prohibits customary law when it discriminating against women. It says;

“ Secure land rights are key in promoting women's economic empowerment[...]...In sub section 20(2) of the Village Land Act, 1999 it mentions it prohibits the use of customary law in determining the right of occupancy, if the law discriminates against women. “ 180

Regardless of the new statutory law which defend women's rights 'on paper,' are the statutory versus traditional laws far from being on equal terms, as I see it. While the statutory law is a 'paper law' it is the customary law which is followed. This shows that it is far more

¹⁷⁷ According to Brock- Utne is sexism “ a belief system rooted in the world view that assigns varying levels of worth to different groups of human beings. ”

¹⁷⁸ . I believe that the contradiction could have been subconscious from the side of the deceased husband's side. However, in order to transform must the contradiction be conscious, cf. Paulo Freire concept conscientization

¹⁷⁹ Various NGO's are lobbying with a proposed alternative inheritance bill in order to protect the rights of spouses. Even in the case where there is more than one spouse, each spouse is entitled to the marital house. It is further proposed that; “Every heir shall receive an equal share regardless his/her gender, age, religion, tribe, custom, tradition, disability, race, colour, political or other opinion, national or social origin, place of origin, property, birth, health status and station in life”.

¹⁸⁰ Land –Tanzanian women's perspectives on secure tenure <http://www.wat.kabissa.org/myland.htm>

challenging to change a belief in people, than actually changing or adding a paragraph in a law book. However changing the customary codified law is the first step.

On the other hand are most people not aware of statutory laws in the rural areas. I believe the new statutory laws from 1999 prohibiting customary law if discriminating against women, is not known by most Village Councils, and if they are, most probably they are not followed. This was confirmed in a group discussion I had with women, where I learned they were not aware of their legal rights. A woman who does not know her rights cannot fight for them.

According to Jane Magigita, legal officer for The Women's Legal Aid Centre in Tanzania (WLAC)¹⁸¹ says the process of changing these discriminatory laws has been slow because the issue is still sensitive and generally not regarded as a priority. She stated that once politicians have the will to change them, they can be changed within a month. The problem, however, is that there are few politicians in the government who put the topic on the agenda and support the changes.

Let's go back to the example with Maria. If power was not connected to owning property, it would not have been necessary to expel the widows under the label 'witches'. However, as long as power is connected to property it puts widows in a vulnerable and insecure life situation lacking human security. Prestige is valued in property and in the ability to controlling the wives. I assume widows, such as Maria, are looked upon as a threat to patriarchy, both because it challenges the customary property rights and because the woman is not under the control of a man. Therefore I believe customary land inheritance rights is one, possible the strongest, reason why Maria was labelled a 'witch'.

However, the Maria example also tell us that men are not necessarily searching respect from women, but that women are used as a remedy to gain respect - from other men. Solidarity among men is keeping the power structure and is a way of controlling women's behaviour.

This is also stated by Brock – Utne saying; *“ though patriarchy is hierarchical and men have different places in the patriarchy, they are united in the shared relationship of dominance over their women and are dependant on each other to maintain that domination.*¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Women's Legal Aid Centre in Tanzania (WLAC)

¹⁸² Brock- Utne, 1989: 29 -30

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¹⁸³ Brock- Utne, 1989: 29 -30

8 Concluding remarks on my project

In the previous chapters I have given a kind of 'diagnosis' and 'prognosis' (Galtung, 1996) on underlying factors why women are victims of 'witch hunt' in contemporary Tanzania.

This chapter will be divided into two parts. Firstly I will show some positive transformative changes I saw in Sukuma land which might be small sign towards peace in Sukuma land. Secondly I will give a summary of my general findings.

8.1 Which positive transformative changes have I seen ?

Even though my 'diagnosis' and 'prognosis' presents a pessimistic view on women's situation, I was able to see some potentials for transformative changes on the micro level which I assume are important to highlight.

My belief is that cultures are changing gradually as communities begin to recognize how gender discrimination affects them negatively. Further I believe 'witch' hunt more easily can be transformed when the subconscious contradictions become conscious and cultural practises which seems 'natural' are openly discussed.

An example of creative conflict transformation was seen in a neighbouring village, close to where I conducted fieldwork, where the Village council decided to deal with the many complains and problems they had with land, by granting each person in the village, men and women, three acres of land each when they reached the age of 18. Neither men nor women were allowed to sell the land and it returned to the village after death. It would be interesting to see how this arrangement effects the structure of prestige in this village. Will this arrangement effect traditional ways of gender relations ? Will there be no more 'suspected witches' or could it result in that men are marrying many women in order to get more land ?

Another positive example was seen in a group discussion I had with some elderly men when wife beating came into the discussion. One man, around seventy years old, mentioned that a neighbouring village had made beating of wives illegal.

"The Village chairman went to a seminar, where they taught him that beating was not allowed so now he made beating of wives a taboo for all men in village. Men who beats their women are even fined!" The man was certainly surprised and looked shocked while saying these words, and ended the discussions with the question; *"But..... how do we discipline our wives then?"*¹⁸⁴.

This means that the topic is at least raised and opened up for reflection¹⁸⁵.

A further example from my village showed how all young males having converted to Christianity were 'excused' from taking part in the *Sungusungu* police, because as one male 30 year old man said; *"Christianity forbid beating and killings."* I also got the impression that this decision was legitimate and respected by the members of *Sungusungu*. It would, however, be interesting to know if the Christians supported indirect violence, expelling women, which in a way can be compared with direct killings. In my view the inhuman life conditions of the 'suspected witches' /elderly women living in the streets of Mwanza is a tragic sign of violence.

Another example worth mentioning is females' opposing and challenging traditional gender roles. I never forget Emnet, who proudly told me she had stopped kneeling to her brothers. While her father had beaten her had asked him *"Why should I kneel to my small brothers? Just because I am a girl?"* Another young girl Sarah, a 26 year old woman and mother of five children, who had started to ask her sons to carry water and sweep the floor in the mornings, even though she knew her husband would not accept it.

Participating on the Girl's conference with 70 Secondary school girls from the Great Lakes region gave me much inspiration and hope¹⁸⁶. Their enthusiastic discussions on the importance of education for women in order to fight fixed gender roles and beliefs were strong. The girls' critique on Bride price, some saying they will never be 'bought', means the topic is brought up in public.¹⁸⁷ The example of the male development worker and his wife

184 Husbands have had the legal right to punish or even kill their wives. Only gradually, changing social attitudes and increased reporting have propelled the problem into the public eye" quoted in 'Beyond inequalities', 97: 22

185 Beyond – Inequalities – Women in Tanzania, 1997: 55 state that the attitude against using violence has changed a bit: "Husbands have had the legal right to punish or even kill their wives. Only gradually, changing social attitudes and increased reporting have propelled the problem into the public eye"

186 These girls were not representative for most rural girls, firstly because they are among the 'elite' taking Secondary school, and secondly because their participation on the conference had limited places and therefore based on a tough competition based on a personal essay on why education of women is important

187 This was also showed through the first International conference on Bride price conducted in 2003

who agreed to marry out of love, shows that also some men see the negative consequences Bride price has on the relationship between husband and wife.

In one village one of the teachers, Sarah, had established a 'gender club' where she taught villagers about statutory laws and women's rights. She told the club had become so popular, that even boys were participating. "*To involve the men was my goal,*" she says. "*Then it becomes easier for the girls to claim their rights !*" Sarah proudly told me how she had used almost the whole monthly salary to buy coca cola and snacks for some of the meeting. "*You see – people must be attracted by material things in order to show up. Then changing their beliefs can start !*"

Learning from success stories

I believe it is important to learn from success stories, taken from different places in Africa and worldwide, where one has been able to transform harmful practises and beliefs. Which successful methods are used to change beliefs in order to stop the harmful practise of female genital mutilation for instance ? What has been done in other countries to stop the killings of women under the label 'witch' ?

I believe cultural practices that undermine the status of women can be fought by providing education to men as well as women by improving the general economic well being for both sexes and getting women represented in decision-making bodies in Sukuma land.

In addition I envision that technological measures, such as internet, an improved television network etc. can produce a cultural awareness about gender relations elsewhere and thus create reasons for changes in Sukuma land¹⁸⁸.

I think, however, it can not be said strong enough the importance to have an explicit gender focus when looking at all circumstances that produce violence and conflicts in societies. Actively promoting women's representation in decision-making should create a gender awareness, be that in the local villages or in the state administration. I also assume it is

¹⁸⁸ Today the villages are without electricity and running water

important to show evidences that through empowering women the lives of men will also be improved as well.

I think, however, it is difficult to change any harmful cultural practise without having an open dialogue with the people who are having power in the village. Community leaders, 'witch doctors', and *Sungusungu* commanders must be used as agents for change when designing and implementing programmes.

This conviction is based on the understanding that violence, especially domestic violence will most likely continue to be viewed as a normal and right way with trouble – women unless the practises of, for instance 'witch' hunt is received as detrimental to everyone's wellbeing. That implies that what is considered 'natural' is turned into something else.

8.2 Summary

Through existing research on Tanzanian 'witch' hunt I was able to find a pattern describing the suspected 'witch' in contemporary Tanzania. Former research indicates the 'witch' to be a woman, often a widow, between 50 -60 years, and she is especially vulnerable during dry seasons. Further she comes from Sukuma land and one can assume the perpetrators expelling or killing are from the traditional village police *Sungusungu*, consisting of young male villagers and neighbours.

My study shows that males' search for control and respect in the society is central. This strong solidarity among men is keeping the power structure and controls the lives of women. My findings shows that the control is done collectively through the traditional village police *Sungusungu*. *Sungusungu* was implemented by the Tanzanian state after independence, as a strategy to reduce cow theft. Members are recruited from the age of fifteen, and are given a fine or isolated if they do not follow the instructions from the *Sungusungu* commanders. My study shows that Central government officials is still supporting *Sungusungu*'s village security strategy which puts the Tanzanian government under a lot of criticism.

My research shows that the issue of 'security' in Sukuma villages seems to mean specific objectives; To control women and their behaviour, in terms of forcing them to marry, chasing them away or killing women under the label 'witch'. Further my research indicates that the *Sungusungu* members are agents for removing female family members who is a 'threat' to

clan recourses. My sample indicates that accusations come from male clan members (in the husband's clan), often after consulting a 'witch doctor. This indicates that 'witch' hunt is systematically organized, and not done haphazardly as it often is presented in newspaper articles such as in BBC news.

My research suggests that socio cultural factors can not be underestimated when looking at 'witch' hunt. I therefore used patriarchy as a category of analysis. The link between patriarchal power and the lack of women's human security, which is an important goal for United Nation's extended security concept, is striking. ¹⁸⁹

In this thesis I have looked at three factors which is legitimating patriarchy; these are Bride price, traditional knowledge and customary inheritance rights. I have argued that violence against women rely upon a connection between cultural understanding and social and political regulations.

The dilemma between the modern and the traditional cosmology in contemporary Tanzania, and the difficulties it faced when building up a state after colonialism is also brought up in my research. One example is the traditional and modern legal system, based on British statutory laws and customary laws, founded on different beliefs. If the 'witch' exists in rural villagers mind, is a "Witchcraft law " the necessary means getting rid of the belief ? My own research suggests that such a law does not change the belief , but rather encourage the *Sungusungu* to kill women in secrecy, or expelling women from villages more frequently.

In principle I am sceptic towards implementing laws in order to change belief, at least without improving the living standard of people. However, it may be looked upon as a first step towards a transformation of gender positions in societies such as the village in Sukuma land in Tanzania. I assume for instance that changing men's belief in that women as well are allowed to inherit land, however, is far more challenging.

The findings in this thesis support Galtung's theory of a causal chain from cultural, via structural to direct violence, the former legitimizing and justifying the latter. I also suggest that the different types of violence reinforce each other.

However, I find his model lack an explicit focus on gender when looking at the different types of violence. My research indicates that an explicit perspective on gender contributes an additional and important aspect of Johan Galtung's model.

I therefore end this thesis by rephrasing the message from Karame/Tryggestad (2000) mentioned in the introduction of the thesis; Gender can not be underestimated, but it must be dealt with explicitly in peace theory. As long as gender is not mainstreamed in peace and conflict studies it will lack the holistic approaches to conflict prevention and management, both as a academic exercise and in terms of policy development, which is needed to build a sustainable peace and Human security for all people.

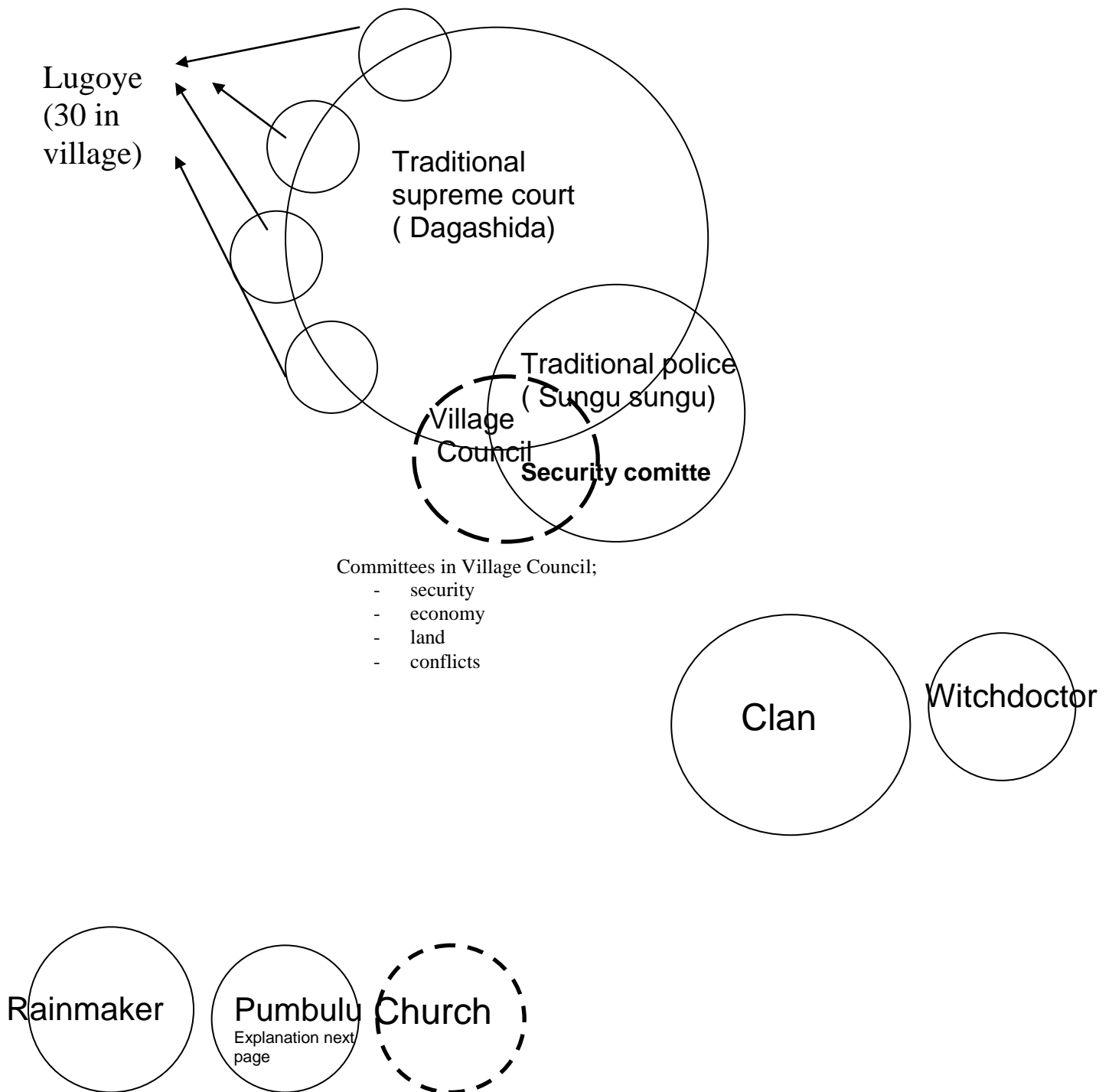
9 Appendix

9.1 PLA in practice

9.1.1 Appendix 1. Duties of modern and traditional institution in village

Institutions	Duties	Recruitment	Gender	Laws	Decision making
Lugoye (Lower court, Neighboring group)	Organize: - funerals - weddings - interpersonal neighbour mediation	Organized by streets (10 -40 household) - between 2- 5 male leaders	Men above 18 years - women cook /gather water and wood for all events	Customary oral law	Decision taken by male Lugoye leaders
Dagashida (Traditional supreme court/Village assembly)	- Solve interpersonal conflicts which was not solved in Lugoye. Some Sungusungu cases are brought up	Consist of 30 different Lugoye's	All men - women cook / gather water and wood for reconciliation ceremonies	Customary oral law	Open assembly in main square. All men allowed to say their opinion
Sungu Sungu (Traditional police)	Punishing wrongdoers - Wives leaving without repay bride price - suspected Witches - Force women to marry - Thieves	chief (ntemi), chairman (mwenyekiti) and a secretary (katibu).	All men between 15 – 35 years are soldiers	Customary oral law + witchcraft	Decision taken in secrecy by Sungu sungu leadership. - is the link from security committee in Village Council - They have 6 elder men to counsel
Witchdoctor	Contact with ancestors,heal people /relationships, give protective medicine, remove bewitchment	Power inherited from forefathers	2 male witchdoctors	Inherited Supernatural power from ancestors	Male witchdoctor
Pumbulu	Teaching women to avoid lying/being unfaithful , run with ashes to next village/contact rainmaker	Women above 60, not being fertile to have children	All fertile women	Customary oral law	Board of elder women
Clan	- Solving conflicts in family - Help paying bride price/fines for clan members	Head of household and male clan elders	Men	Customary oral law + Codified customary law of marriage/ inheritance	Head of the family
Church	- Reduce belief in traditional religion - Create equality between gender	- Priest - Conflicting committee	All priests/religious leaders are males	Bible, with interpretations from Catholic church	
Village Council	- Bring development schools, health, infra structure	25 members, one appointed Village executive officer - Council of elders	Mainly men - 3 women on paper / Conflict committee	Statutory laws and codified customary laws	Whole Village Council 3 committees - Security (Sungusungu) - economy - conflicts

9.1.2 Appendix 2. Power relationship between traditional and modern Institutions



The institution **Pumbulu** is run by a committee of elder women, who are not fertile to have children. Their main goal is to teach girls and women to behave 'as good wives' in order to prevent lack of rain in village. In order to stop the draught they teach younger women to stop telling lies and spreading gossip in village, but the main task is teaching them not to sleep with other men apart from the husbands. If their moral standards are broken the committee give out fines in form of money. If the fines are not paid, male **Lugoye** leaders are contacted to help collecting the money.

There is a strong belief saying "*if a women dies while giving birth; it is a sign she has not been faithful to her husband.*" If that happens it can lead to lack of rain in the village. The task of **Pumbulu** committee is then to inform all women about the women's death and further command all women to collect ashes in the very oldest pot in the house. Then they have to start running to the next village carrying the ashes, in order to get rid of the 'bad spirit' or 'misfortune'. This action will prevent lack of rain in the village.

The women in the neighbour village are receiving the ashes and start running to the next village. This chain continues until the ashes end up in Lake Victoria, many kilometre from the village. "*If you don't run – the rain will not come and we will be left without any crops in village*" one women, around sixty years told me. If all women run, they believe the rain will come back to village. "*When we run to the next village we do not want to see any men on the way, one elderly lady said, ".....and if we do, we either beat him or take all his clothes off"*.

According to an elderly woman she says if there is a dry period in village, women are often blamed to be the cause of the lack of rain. "*Sometimes there are dry periods because some of the women in the village did not run, or in neighbouring villages*", one lady said. **Pumbulu** committee is then asked to contact a rainmaker¹⁹⁰.

I was told that the village did not have a rainmaker at the moment. However the grandfather of my interpreter was known to be a rainmaker, and was sometimes contacted when there was a draught

9.1.3 Appendix 3. Conflicts seen from women's perspective in village

Conflicts in Village	Solution	Institution solved
1. Inheritance dispute between wife of deceased and husband's clan concerning property	Dialogue between common children and both clans - Widow lend a small piece of land or move to the eldest son	Husband's clan
2. Woman beaten by husband due to indiscipline	- Fine one bag of rice and one of corn - Go back to father's home for some time	Husband's clan
3. Wife accused for not taking care of husband and children	- Marry another woman. - Woman's parents must return bride price/children to husband's clan	Husband's clan
4. Woman suspected to be a witch by husband's clan	Chase her away or kill her	Traditional police Sungu sungu
5. Quarrel between wives married to same husband	Forgiveness	Husband's clan
6. Husband favouring children of youngest wife	Fine one cow and 10 000 Tsh	Husband's clan
7. Husband not providing food	Fine 3 bags of maize	Village government
8. Conflict between pastoralists and farmers due to cows destroying crops	Fine of 6 000 Tsh (40 nok)	Lugoye/Lower Court (clan paid)
9. Bitten by snake during snake performance	Fine 10 cows	Village government (Clan paid)
10. Quarrel between two men - Man beaten until he died	Kill the murder	- Dagashida - Clan helped to transport corps
11. Adultery with somebody's wife	20 000 Tsh and 10 cows	Dagashida /Higher Court

Interpretation of above table

As seen in the table 'women's conflicts' are women's conflicts mainly handled in three institutions; In the home by Husband's clan (male members of clan), Village Council and by *Sungusungu*. None of those institutions have a great female influence. Husband's clan, being the Head of the household and other male clan members of husband, was however most frequently mentioned as 'conflict solver'. This can signify that women's conflicts are mainly handled in the home and not taken to any formal institution. I also had focus groups with men asking the same three questions as the women. Some reflections of the different answers;

Men and women focus differently on conflicts

Women were mainly focusing on conflicts connected to the micro level; household; marriage, children and access to food. Conflicts concerning inheritance rights, Bride price,

domestic violence, as well as conflicts associated with polygamy and witch accusation are emphasised as main conflicts. Those conflicts do not just affect the women, but the children as well. However, the home and the field are women's social sphere, where they spend most of their time. Public and political sphere is not a space for women, as seen in chapter 4 women are not involved in decision making on family level nor the village level.

Men, on the other hand, were not emphasising on conflicts related to the family level, when being asked the same questions in a group discussion. They were emphasising on conflicts such as ; Invasion of land, destruction of crops, stealing of community property, stealing and killing of cows, and physical fight between men. Adultery with somebody's wife was mentioned as being one of the biggest crime, something which should not be done under any circumstances.

This means men do not see the conflicts woman are facing in their everyday life since women are not given a voice in conflict resolution. Since those conflicts do not reach the surface and made conscious, they are impossible to transform. People in decision making positions must realize it is a conflict in order to put it on the agenda and transform it. Men (as well as village women) , however, are socialized to see the right of inheritance being a right the man has, domestic violence and polygamy as normal and unproblematic or "just the way things are". However, from a peace perspective I see unless root causes and beliefs are not treated, violence will be reproduced for generations.

9.1.4 Appendix 4. Conflicts seen from women's perspective in Ukerewe island

Conflict	Solution	Institution
1 Inheritance dispute when man dies	Dialogue between common children and both clans	Clan
2.Wife not taking good care of husband and children	- Marry another woman Woman`s parents must give the bride price back	Man`s clan
3. Woman beaten in marriage (kupigwa wanawake)	- Separation, woman stays in Father in Laws house for 2-3 days - Fine a goat -Woman turn back home	Head of family (husbands father)
4. Adultery (Ugoni)	2 cows (one female and one male) or 150 000 Tsh (approx. 1100 kr)	- Omutwale - Divisional secretary
5. Quarrel about land	-Visiting the place together -Dialogue	- Elders - Land com.
6. Rape	- Court - Fine	Magistrate
7 Son force to have a sexual intercourse with mother	- Expelled	Head of family and clan
8. Husband not providing food to wife and children	Bring the woman back to her father	Parents of the woman

9.1.5 Appendix 6. Community history of the Sukuma village

Origin of Sukuma: They came from Kenya (country), Kahama (district in Shinyanga region), Singida and Arusha (regions). The clans Bakama, Babinza and Baseka came from the last two regions.

Sitta.

Sitta could foresee and predict the future. He could change cows to become stones and left footsteps on rocks. He could foresee white people coming to Africa. These people could have breakfast in Europe and lunch in Africa. He meant they would fly using a plane to get from one place to another in a short time

Nindwa:

He made a lake, Nindwa lake or Majita Lake to prevent the Masai to steal cows.

Before 1884: Before partition of Africa in 1884/colonialisation Sukuma land was full of wild animals such as lions, elephants and giraffes. People were clothes made of animal skin and many villages had chiefs.

Before 1918: **Shigilu and Masuka – two powerful men in history**

The man Shigilu left with villagers from Taturu village and arrived at Sukuma village. When he got there he started to take cows from people by using force. People were left without any cows. The villagers held a public meeting to come up with a strategy how to drive the person out of the village. One person suggested to ask the Masaai to help the villagers to fight Shigilu. Some villagers went to the Masaai to ask for help. There they were welcomed very nicely and full support were given by strong men who joined them in the fight. Shigilu had a dream that the Masai were supporting the Sukuma people to fight against the Taturu people. He told his people to leave the village as quick as possible which they did. Shigilu and his people went to the coast near the big ocean. He told them to wait while he went to meet Masuka in the water. Masuka was living in the water. Shigilu took a stick and hit the water, this transformed the water so he was able to walk on it. Shigilu spent 3 days together with Masuka in the water. The fourth day he got back to his people carrying oil. This oil was said to be medicine which healed people who used it. Masuka and his people started a journey back to Ntuzu people. When he got there he started fighting with people there. Ntuzu women were killed by Shigilu's people. When Ntuzu men saw that their wives and women in the village were killed they started fighting with Taturu people. They fought and fought until Shigilu did a miracle by changing sand into bees. Ntuzu people were defeated.

Resurrection of **Belengany**. Once upon a time there lived a powerful man called Belengany in Sukuma land. He came up from the ground. On the first day the people saw his head, and shoulders. The second day he was completely out. Then his cows, goats and sheep came out. He had no parents.

1918: **War between Sukuma and Masai** people because Masai stole cows.

1918: End of First World War

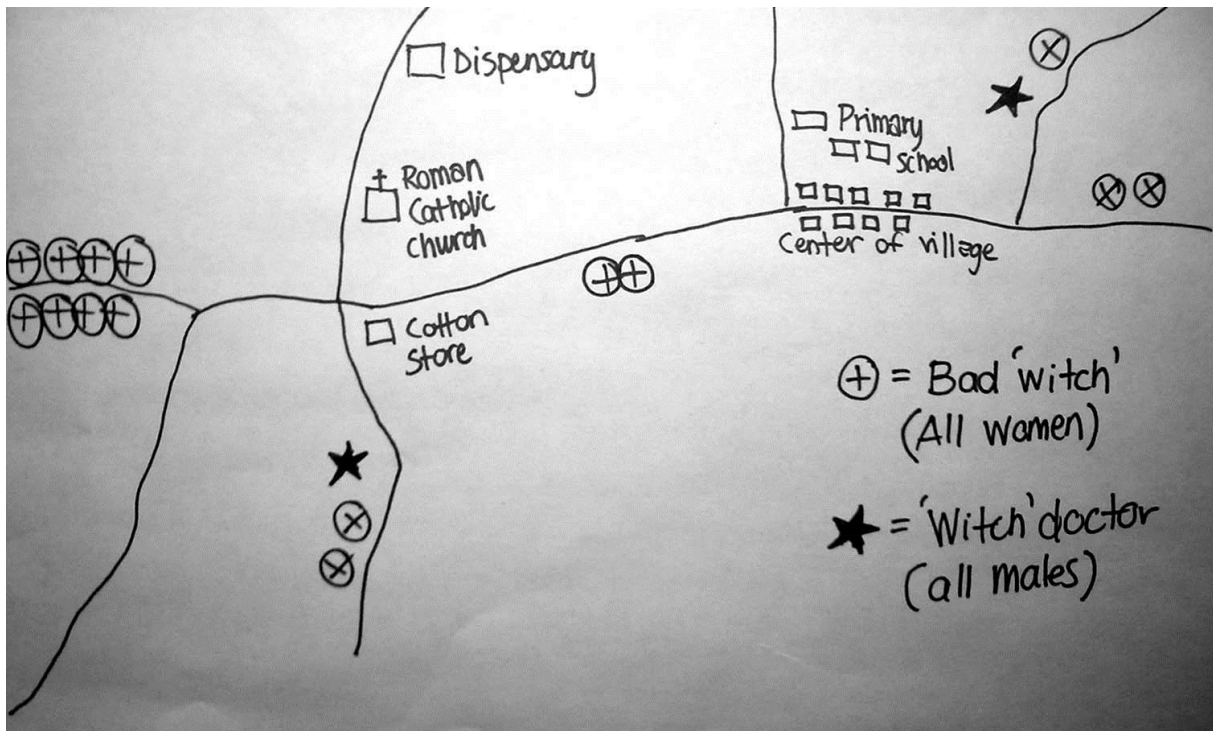
1930: Missionaries from the 7th Adventist church came. They started to build schools, dispensary and a church.

1938 -1942: People from Lagangabilili went to Burma to fight for the Germans in the Second World War

1942: Missionaries from Roman Catholic Church came

- 1938 -59: People were going to fetch salt for cooking at Nyaraja Lake near Iramba, Singida district.
- 1940: Many people moved to Lagangabilili village from various places in Sukuma land.
- 1947: Many woman were killed by Masai people
- 1947: **Famine** called “ Tungu” occurs. It was named by a village leader because there were no food left for the people.
- 1948: **Famine** “ Bepela” occurs because of lack of rain. Bepela means hunger. The drought led to shortage of food
- 1949: **Famine** “ Liguligi” occurs due to lack of food caused of drought from 1947 – 1948.
- 1949: **Heavy rainfall.** Finally people had enough food to eat.
- 1953: Tanganyika African Association (TAA) established under the leadership of Julius Nyerere
- 1954: Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) established
- 1958: General meeting of all the Sukuma chiefs to discuss the ways of preventing the Masai to steel their cows.
- 1960: **Heavy rainfall.** People had a lot of food.
- 1961: Tanzania got it`s independence
- 1974 -1975: **Famine** “ Umeme” occurs
- 1976: Waganga and Basuma were taken to a forest in Ngwang`holo and beaten 5 strokes
- 1977: Afro Shiraz party (ASP) from Zanzibar and Tanganyika African national union (TANU) were united and formed the party Chama Cha Mapindizo (CCM) which means Revolutionary party.
- 1978: War between Uganda and Tanzania
- 1983: People engaged in corruption were taken to prison due to the law of Arusha declaration
- 1984: **Famine** “Buluga” occurs
- 1984 -1985: A big group of thieves were stealing cows, money and women (by using force) from the village
- 1985: The traditional village police Sungu sungu was established. Sungu Sungu is the Kiswahili word for big black aunts. The reason was to prevent thieves from steeling cows and woman in the village, stop innocent killings, solve general conflicts within the community and reduce violence.
- 1992: Multi party system was established in Tanzania
- 1994: **Famine** occurs. The drought hit the whole land of Sukuma people
- 1998 – 1999: **Heavy rainfall** – “El nino”. Many farms were destroyed and, houses were damaged and people got killed.
- 1999: **Famine occurs** caused by the heavy rainfall “ El nino”. The heavy flods made the crops to rotten or swept them away.
- 2000: People thought it was a doomsday. Some people started to climb the trees to be the first ones to reach heaven
- 2003: Earth quakes occurs and destroys many houses

9.1.6 Appendix 5. Map over good and bad 'witches' in village




This map was drawn of a former village chairman in village during an interview. He has drawn where the 17 'witches' live. 15 bad 'witches' are women, while the two witch doctors are men.

9.2 Other relevant appendix

9.2.1 Appendix 6. My research permit

**TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(COSTECH)**

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RESEARCH PERMIT

No. 2003 – 186– CC– 2003– 84 Dates: 29th July 2003

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2. Nationality : Norwegian



3. Title : Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation by Traditional Methods


4. Research shall be confined to the following region(s): Mwanza, Kagera and Mara

5. Permit validity: 29th July 2003 to 28th July 2004.

6. Local Contact/Collaborator: Prof. P.O.J. Bwathondi, TAFIRI, Dar es Salaam

7. Researcher is required to submit progress report on quarterly basis and submit all Publications made after research.




PP H.P. Gideon
for: DIRECTOR GENERAL

Appendix 7. Thematic areas for research

Thematic areas for this study divided into six areas, followed by a semi structured question guide¹⁹¹

Themes to explore	Techniques	Respondents
1. Community history - Conflict transformation - Decision making	Historical analysis, historical lines, focus group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Written documents ➤ Community leaders
2. Traditional Institutions - Main institutions in conf.trans -Role/structure - responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ex: Family, tribe, • Elders council, Chief 	Participatory observation, Semi structured interview, In depth interview, Focus group discussion, Stockholder analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Youth ➤ Children ➤ Elders Council ➤ Customary court
3. Traditional conflict prevention - Does it exist preventive strategies - How do they look at conflicts and conflict transformation - Does the conflict belong to the individual or society - Get an overview of preventive mechanisms	Participatory observation, Semi structured interview, In depth interview, Focus group discussion, SWOT diagram,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Youth ➤ Children ➤ Elders Council ➤ Customary court
4. Traditional Conflict transformation - which types of conflicts do people bring up - To whom do people go to solve them - get an overview of interventions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family, Clan, Chief • Elders Council - who is taking part inside the institution, who is not	Participatory observation, Semi structured interview, In depth interview, Focus group discussion, Venn diagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Youth ➤ Children ➤ Elders Council ➤ Customary court
5. Woman in conflict transformation - Which role do they have - Do their strategies differ from men`s - Which role do they have in decision making in general	Participatory observation, Semi structured interview, In depth interview, Focus group discussion,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Youth ➤ Children ➤ Elders Council ➤ Customary court
6. Traditional vs. modern - Philosophy behind - If they work simultanesly/ complement - To which system is there more trust by the people	Participatory observation, Semi structured interview, In depth interview, Focus group discussion, Venn diagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elders, woman & men ➤ Youth ➤ Children ➤ Elders Council ➤ Customary court

¹⁹¹ Both appendix 4 and 5 was a base for the research before I went to Tanzania . However during fieldwork both topics and aims changed so just some of the ideas were used.

9.2.3 Appendix 8. Semi structured interview guide

(questions are connected to thematic areas of study , appendix 6 above)

Objective 1. Community history

1. Where did the community originally come from
2. Who were they, from which tribes
3. What was the migration pattern and why such pattern
4. Did any major events take place during the migration
5. When did the community settle at the present location and why
6. Did any major events take place since settling in present location
7. Has the community ever been in conflicts with other communities? If yes, how was the conflict solved/transformed. How is the relation between you today
8. What does this history mean to the community
9. How is history being passed on to future generations
10. How do you feel your village is unique to other communities. Explain why
11. Has the global economy effected the community in any way
12. Are more products sold inside the community than to the outside
13. Do you feel that the people in your village cooperate with each other. If yes, how do you see it
14. Is the community working as a "Ujamaa" today. If yes, how
15. Could you point out where the decision makers in the village live
16. Are decisions made using the legal system (formal) or the traditional system (non formal). Explain
17. What kind of decisions are they taking
18. Is it important to you who those people are. If yes, why
19. How do you feel the village members are integrated in the decision making

Objective 2. Traditional Institutions role in transforming conflicts

20. Which are the main institutions for conflict transformation in the village
21. Which one of them are working on solving intra,-and inter personal conflicts in the village (example. the family, tribe, Customary law, Village assembly, Chief and Elders Council
22. Which role do each of them have in the village
23. What kind of structure do each institutions have in the village
24. What kind of responsibilities do they have.
25. Is their responsibilities stated somewhere or is it non formal (Customary law).

Objective 3. Traditional conflict prevention

26. Does it exist any strategies to prevent conflicts before they occur in the village (Table 1). If yes, which means used - Peace education in schools, rituals, peace symbols, witchcraft, poetry, drama, songs, sayings, worship of ancestors, folklore.
27. How do your society look at conflicts in general
28. What is considered the biggest conflict which can happen in the society
29. Do you think there is a general reason behind every conflict
30. Is the conflict belong to the people directly involved, or to the whole society
31. How do the village look at interpersonal conflicts (conflicts between people inside or outside the clan)
32. How do the village look at intra personal conflicts (conflicts inside a person, for example psychological problems)
33. Do you think all conflicts can be solved by dialogue

Objective 4. Conflict transformation

34. Which conflicts do people bring up in the village (get the overview of the variety)
35. To whom do people go to solve their conflicts
36. Is those people a part of the formal legal system or the non formal traditional system
37. Could you tell me which interventions are done by: - family, clan, Chief, Elders Council (or other) in a conflict situation
38. Could you give some examples of cases including intervention
39. Who is taking part in the process of conflict transformation, who is not, and why

Objective 5. Womans strategies in conflict transformation

40. Which role do woman play in conflict transformation
41. Have woman's role in conflict transformation increased or decreased the last years
42. Are their strategies different from men's.
43. If yes, how
44. Are the woman taking enough part in the conflict transformation process in the village
45. What about the woman's role in the political decision making process in general

Objective 6. Traditional vs. modern

46. Do you think the philosophy behind the indigenous customary law and the statutory law look different at conflict transformation. If yes, how do they differ
47. Do the two systems work simultanesly. How does it work
48. Do they complement each other / cooperate. If yes, how
49. Where do you personally want your conflict to be solved.
50. Do you have more trust in the traditional,- or in the legal system ? Or does it depend on the case
51. Why do you prefer your option
52. Do you think your friends would state the same as you. If yes, Why
53. How long time does it take from a person bringing up a conflict in the traditional system - until it is solved (approximately)

9.2.4 Appendix 9. Land Act and Village Land Act

These Acts are of particular importance, since secure land rights are key in promoting women's economic empowerment and the majority of working women in Tanzania live in rural areas, are engaged in agricultural work and are without the right to own, manage or inherit land.

In general, the new land laws secure the rights of women in the following ways:

Secure women's rights to acquire title and registration of land.

- a. Actively promote women's representation in decision-making bodies addressing land issues, such as participation in administrative and dispute settlement institutions.
- b. Address issues of customary land rights and uphold the principle of non-discrimination based on sex.
- c. Inclusion of women's land rights in the forthcoming National Land Policy (see Government Programmes below).

Specific provisions in both Acts regarding women's rights, and equal opportunity for women concerning land management, include:

- a. Sub-section 20(2) of the *Village Land Act, 1999* prohibits the use of customary law in determining the right of occupancy, if the law discriminates against women:

"Any rule of customary law and any decision taken in respect of land held under customary tenure, whether in respect of land held individually or communally, shall have regard to the custom, traditions, and practices of the community concerned and the rule of customary law or any such decision in respect of land held under customary tenure shall be void and inoperative and shall not be given effect to by any village council or village assembly or any person or body of persons exercising any authority over village land or in respect of any court or other body, to the extent to which it denies women, children or persons with disability lawful access to ownership, occupation or use of any such land."

- b. Family land is protected by a presumption of co-occupancy, which recognizes both spouses (*Land Act, 1999*, ss. 161-164.).
- c. A married woman must give her consent before her husband can make a disposition (i.e.: mortgages, sales, leases and other derivative rights) of their matrimonial landed property (*Land Act, 1999*, s. 112(3)).
- d. Appointment of members to the National Land Advisory Council must have regard to the importance of ensuring a fair balance of men and women (*Land Act, 1999*, s.17).
- e. Village Councils must not allow or make assignments which would negate the right of a woman to occupy land (*Village Land Act, 1999*, s.30(4)(b)).
- f. In approving a disposition of a customary right of occupancy, the Village Council is bound, *inter alia*, to ensure that the special needs of women for land are adequately met (*Village Land Act, 1999*, s.33(1)(d)).
- g. In case of a husband exercising his customary right of surrendered occupancy, first priority for offer of the land must go to his wife or wives (In the latter case, in their order of seniority - *Village Land Act, 1999*, s.36.).
- h. The number of women participating in the Village Adjudication Committee and Dispute Settlement Machinery, must not be less than half the minimum number of members (*Village Land Act, 1999*, ss. 53(2), 53(5) and 60(2)).

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