

A CHOPI (ṬṢṐPI) LOVE-SONG
AND
A STORY IN KI-LENGE

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A CHOPI (ṬṢṐPI) LOVE-SONG

Introduction: A young man named Nyagumbe starts off to seek a bride. He finds the girl he wants; but while he is staying at her parents' home, she shows no signs of returning his love. He therefore refuses to take the food she prepares for him. The girl's mother advises her to love the young man, and then all will be well. Nyagumbe is secretly amused at his own plans for winning the girl's affection.

I have heard this song twice in **Chopiland**; once at Shilumbelo, when it was sung by a young man of the Muyanga sib; and once at Nteteni, sung by a girl.

After each line there is a humming refrain.

	Ṭi-Ṭṑpi	English
BRIDE.	Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!	<i>Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!</i>
(Humming refrain)	Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm!	<i>Hm! etc.</i>
	Ulambela ṭṑani?	<i>Why do you refuse?</i>
BRIDEGROOM.	Nolamba nani.	<i>I am refusing.</i>
	Ngukanani kwangu ¹	<i>In my heart</i>
	Kurandaku	<i>is the love</i>
	Kulamba.	<i>of refusing.</i>
BRIDE.	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Banzani. ²	<i>to the band of men.</i>
	Thatane! Thatane!	<i>Father! Father!</i>
	Yalamba Nyagumbe.	<i>Nyagumbe refuses.</i>
FATHER.	Alambela ṭṑani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yalamba nani.	<i>He is refusing.</i>
	Ngukanani kakwe	<i>In his heart</i>
	Kurandaku	<i>is the love</i>
	Kulamba.	<i>of refusing.</i>

¹ *Ngukanani*. Bishop Smythe, in his XiLenge Grammar, gives *kanani* as 'down the throat, inside the mouth'.

² The *Banza* is the place in the open air where the men congregate together and chat over a fire, or under a tree.

	Σi-Tʃopi	English
	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Σikoni. ¹	<i>to the hearth.</i>
	Mamane! Mamane!	<i>Mamane! Mamane!</i>
	Yalamba Nyagumbe.	<i>Nyagumbe refuses.</i>
MOTHER.	Alambela tfani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yolamba nani.	<i>He is refusing.</i>
	Ngukanani kakwe	<i>In his heart</i>
	Kurandaku	<i>is the love</i>
	Kulamba.	<i>of refusing.</i>
MOTHER.	Tsula sizendani!	<i>Go to the bin!</i>
	Ulava tinyawa!	<i>Procure beans!</i>
	Bika! kubika!	<i>Cook! Cook!</i>
	Avela! Avela!	<i>Serve! Serve!</i>
BRIDE.	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Ndangani. ²	<i>to the boys' hut.</i>
	Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!	<i>Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!</i>
	Ndite tinyawa.	<i>Here are beans.</i>
	Ulambela tfani?	<i>Why do you refuse?</i>
	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Banzani.	<i>to the band of men.</i>
	Thatane! Thatane!	<i>Father! Father!</i>
	Yalamba Nyagumbe.	<i>Nyagumbe refuses.</i>
FATHER.	Alambela tfani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yolamba nani	<i>He is refusing</i>
	Ngukanani kakwe.	<i>in his heart.</i>
	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Σikoni.	<i>to the hearth.</i>
	Mamane! Mamane!	<i>Mamane! Mamane!</i>
	Yolamba Nyagumbe.	<i>Nyagumbe is refusing.</i>
MOTHER.	Alambela tfani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yolamba nani	<i>He is refusing</i>
	Ngukanani kakwe.	<i>in his heart.</i>
MOTHER.	Tsula sifini!	<i>Go to the fowl-run!</i>
	Idola nkonge!	<i>Catch a cock!</i>
	Daya! kudaya!	<i>Kill! Kill!</i>
	Bika! kubika!	<i>Cook! Cook!</i>
BRIDE.	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Ndangani.	<i>to the boys' hut.</i>
	Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!	<i>Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!</i>

¹ The *siko* is the hearth-circle in the women's hut. The women sit round the fire and tell stories in the evening.

² *Ndanga* is the hut used only by young men and boys.

	Σi-Tʃopi	English
BRIDEGROOM.	Nyama yitʃani?	<i>What is the meat?</i>
BRIDE.	Nyama inkonge.	<i>The meat is a cock.</i>
BRIDEGROOM.	Nkonge utʃani?	<i>What is the cock?</i>
BRIDE.	Nkonge indungu. ¹	<i>The cock is a cockerel.</i>
	Ulambela tʃani?	<i>Why do you refuse?</i>
BRIDEGROOM.	Nolamba nani	<i>I am refusing</i>
	Ngukanani kwangu	<i>in my heart</i>
	Kuranda	<i>is the love</i>
	Kulamba.	<i>of refusing.</i>
BRIDE.	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Banzani.	<i>to the band of men.</i>
	Thatane! Thatane!	<i>Father! Father!</i>
	Nyagumbe yalamba.	<i>Nyagumbe refuses.</i>
FATHER.	Yalambela tʃani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yalamba nani.	<i>He is refusing.</i>
	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Σikoni.	<i>to the hearth.</i>
	Mamane! Mamane!	<i>Mamane! Mamane!</i>
	Yalamba Nyagumbe.	<i>Nyagumbe refuses.</i>
MOTHER.	Alambela tʃani?	<i>Why does he refuse?</i>
BRIDE.	Yalamba nani	<i>He is refusing</i>
	Ngukanani kakwe.	<i>in his heart.</i>
MOTHER.	Ɖwanangu! Ɖwanangu!	<i>My child! My child!</i>
	Murandi! murandi!	<i>Love him! Love him!</i>
BRIDE.	Ntoya bwa	<i>I will go</i>
	Ndangani.	<i>to the boys' hut.</i>
	Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!	<i>Nyagumbe! Nyagumbe!</i>
	Nikurandile!	<i>I did love you!</i>
	Yakuseka!	<i>He is laughing!</i>
	Usekela tʃani?	<i>Why are you laughing?</i>
BRIDEGROOM.	Noseka nani!	<i>I am laughing!</i>
	Ngukanani kwangu	<i>In my heart</i>
	Kuranda	<i>is the love</i>
	Kuseka.	<i>of laughing!</i>

A STORY IN KI-LENGE (PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA)

This story is in the old ki-Lenge language, which is fast dying out, being spoken only by some of the older people in the south of **Gazaland**, P.E.A. The ki-Lenge dialect is allied to *ſi-Tʃopi*, but presents some differences from both *ſi-Tʃopi* and *ſi-Thonga*.

The story deals with the 'spooks' which a sorceress makes use of to work

¹ *Ndungu*. This is a cockerel not old enough to crow.

her spells. The beliefs about the *sigono* or spooks are very curious. The *sigono* are supposed to be the souls of the people whom the sorceress has bewitched. The *sigono* are then called the *givanana* or 'little children' of the sorceress, who may hide them in a pot, or in the trunk of an old tree, or in a basket-bin. They seem to be of all sizes, and to be a curious combination of elf, pixie, and spook. The *sigono* have a language of their own, which is onomatopoeic. The little ditties or refrains which occur when the story is in progress, are often sung in this 'spook' language.

The sorceress in the story goes to *lobola* a girl for her son. The girl is followed by the spooks of her mother-in-law when she goes to the field to work, and so she discovers that her husband's mother is a sorceress. She becomes frightened, and returns to her own home. The match is broken off and the *lobolo* returned. Her successor shares the same fate. The third girl chosen is a sorceress herself and shows the fact by producing her own *sigono*. Hence she is enabled to live with her mother-in-law.

(The story begins with the usual formula 'karingani wakaringani' 'story of stories' or 'once-upon-a-time, of a-certain-time'.)

STORY-TELLER.

Karingani wakaringani!

Story of stories!

AUDIENCE.

Karingani!

Story!

STORY-TELLER.

Karingani wakaringani!

Story of stories!

AUDIENCE.

Karingani!

Story!

STORY-TELLER.

Vatseka kyiuma,
vakiyalobowa wakihoranyana,
tina dakwe i Muhayitane.

*They take the lobolo,
they go to lobola a maiden,
her name is Muhayitane.*

AUDIENCE.

Karingani!

Story!

STORY-TELLER.

Atsekilwe hi vaka Matuwele, se
akitfuwa vukatsi kakwe.

*She is taken by the Matuwele family.
Then she goes to her husband's home.*

AUDIENCE.

Karingani!

Story!

STORY-TELLER.

Akiyabwaka nwingi wakwe, awa-
mbile, aki: tjuwa wangeni.

*Her mother-in-law appears, saying: go
to the field.*

AUDIENCE (*more faintly*).

Karingani!

Story!

STORY-TELLER.

Akitseka kihundwana nikhavana.

She takes her field-basket and her

Se vakihuma vanana vanwingi
wakwe wasigono, şiki: (song of
the spooks) Mamane awombele:
unatsekwa kamasiku:

Ukiagya şihehe; maringiringi!
khoni! khoni! maringiringi! qhō!
qhō! (*q click*) maringiringi! khoni!
khoni! qhō! qhō!

Kwanyu! kwanyu! duku! duku!
duku! duku! gwalagwanda! ma-
ringiringi! khoni! khoni! maringi-
ringi!

(*Song ends. It is repeated at intervals, the audience joining in chorus.*)

STORY-TELLER (*proceeds*).

Akiwiya hiwangenı, vaki: mama-
nyaa, utwa mafake yawa? Aki:
wobava jungu.

Vaki: mulavela rende, akitsuwa
kaya, vaki: wowiya, uphakatiye
muhava?

Vaki: gona! ukitaembeteya. Aki:
kutotabwaka şigono wangenı. şiki-
embeleya şiku: Mamane awombile:
unatsekwa kamasiku: ukiagya
şihehe! maringiringi! khoni! khoni!
maringiringi! qhō! qhō! kwanyu!
kwanyu! duku! duku! duku! duku!
gwalagwanda. qhō! qhō!

Se akilandetsa űwingi wakwe aki:
gikyiani ukipfuka usahiusalisa?

Vaki vatatsane vakwe, vaki: tseka
kyiuma kyawena, unğadayi űwa-
nana.

Se atseka kyiuma, akiaqoma mwani,
tina dakwe iNtowane. Se akitsuwa
vukatsi. Se kukikya nimifo, vaki:
ţuwa wangenı.

Akitseka kihundwane nikhavana,

*hand-basket. Then there come forth
the children of her mother-in-law, the
spooks, saying: Mamma has said
You will be taken (i.e. in marriage)
one of these days.*

*You will eat flying-ants. (Sounds
expressive of being driven from pillar
to post.) (Sounds of perching. Hence
gu qhosa = to perch.)*

*(Sounds of biting a mealie-cob.) (Sounds
of pulling up, and shaking the earth
from, ground-nuts.)*

*She returns from the field, they say:
Little mamma, are you feeling the
mealies? (i.e. to see if cooked enough.)*

She says: My head is aching.

*They say: Seek medicine for her. She
returns (to her own) home. They say:
You return, carrying your hand-basket?*

*They say: Come, you shall tell us. She
says: there appeared spooks in the
field. They sang saying:*

*Then her mother-in-law follows her,
saying: Why did you go off without say-
ing good-bye to us?*

*Her parents say: Take your lobolo, do
not kill the child.*

*So she takes the lobolo, she captures
another (girl), her name is Ntowane.*

*Then she goes to her husband's home.
At dawn in the morning they say: Go
to the field.*

She takes her field-basket and her

se akihabwaka wageni. Aki ŋwingi wakwe ka ŋigono ŋakwe: milandetsela wageni.

Ŋikiembeleya kambe ŋiki: (*Repeat song as before.*)

Se akikuka wageni, akiwiya kaya, vaki: Mamanyaa, wowiya wageni ntsikahi wuwa? Se aki: wobava nŋungu. Vaki: munyinga rende. Se kukikya vaki: Mamanyaa, nŋungu wawena ungadi ukibava fana? Aki: upanda kwati.

Vaki: unokala ukitsiyingiseya. Aki: natŋuwa wageni. Vaki: hiŋona, tŋuwa. Akitŋuwa wageni, akiabwaka wageni, akikatsa gudukuwa tsinyumi. Ŋikiembeleya ŋigono, ŋiku: (*Repeat song as before.*)

Akikuka kambe, akiwiya kaya, aki ŋwingi wakwe, aki: mamanyaa, nikiwomba niki: niyingiseyi, ukilamba, ukitŋuwa? Utiya ŋikotsa kutuma kuwa? aki: wobava ŋinene, se akiwetseya. Se kukikya kambe, aki:

Mamanyaa, nŋungu wawena ungadi ukibava? Aki: ubava kwahi. Aki: udinokalahasi ukitsingiseya. Aki: natŋuwa wageni. Aki: udinobika ŋikakana.

Akitseka kikadyana, akibika ŋikakana, aki: ani ŋiviyana naŋihahe? Aki: ŋiviyana ŋimuwe nyumbani. Se akitseka kikadyana, akibika, akitseka tsiviyana akikuvuwa, akitseka muka, akiphameya.

Ŋikitsa kambe, ŋikimuranganyetsa, ŋikiembeleya ŋiki: (*Repeat song.*)

Se akikuka, akitutuma, akiabwaka

hand-basket, then she appears in the field. Her mother-in-law says to her spooks: follow her to the field. They (the spooks) sing again.

Then she starts off from the field, she returns home. They say: Little Mamma, You return from the field at this noon-time? She says: My head is aching. They say: Give her medicine. At dawn they say: Little Mamma, is your head still aching? She says: It aches gently (i.e. a little).

They say: You will remain and see how you feel. She says: I am going to the field. They say: All right, go. She goes to the field, she appears in the field. She begins to pull up ground-nuts. The spooks sing. (Repeat song.)

She starts off home again. Her mother-in-law says: Little Mamma, did I not say: listen to me! You refuse and go. How did you manage to do that work? She says: It aches very much. Then she sneezes. Then at dawn she says:

Little Mamma, your head is still aching? She says: It aches a little. She (the mother-in-law) says: You will sit down and see how you feel. She says: I am going to the field. She says: You will cook the fruits of nkaka (=Momordica sp.).

She takes the pot, and cooks nkaka, saying: And the little bowls where are they? She says: The bowls are there in the house. Then she takes the pot, she cooks, she takes the bowls and washes them, she takes the wooden spoon and serves.

They (the spooks) come again, they surround her, they sing: (Repeat song). She starts off, she runs, she appears

kaya kavo, vaki: wowiya usingana muhava? Akikatsa guvambeteya, aki: loku nikitfuwa wangen, nwingi akihumesa sigono sakwe, sikitaembeleya siki: (Repeat song.)

Vaki: ukiswona himaso, Ntowane? Aki: e . . e. niswoni. Vaki: vaki-bwaka, hinavanyinga kyiuma.

Se akilandetsa nwingi, aki: mamanyane, gupfuka usanisalisa hikyani? Vaki: gumuhumela sigono, sikiembeleya.

Vaki: tseka kyiuma kyawena, ukitfuwa, ahingagadi hikikulava. Ushilava kuhidayeya nwanana. Se akitfuwa nikyiuma kakwe, akiaqoma Nkandane, akimulobowa. Kuki-tseka vamamane vakwe nivathatane vakwe, vaki: hingamudanana Nkandane. Akivuweya, akikalahasi; vaki: Nkandane! vukatsi vuwa, utandiye vamwani vananakulowe, wamaha sakunyavuwa, ukikanda vukatsi. Akikuka, akitfuwa vukatsi. Vaki: munyinga shivanana shisigono niyena. Se aki: Mamanyane, utfuwa wangen. Akitseka kihundwana ni kihavana, akiabwaka wangen, akikatsa gudukuwa. Sikitsa kambe sigono shnwingi wakwe, siku: (Repeat song of spooks.)

Se kukitseka sigono shamanyane wakona, siki nisona: (they sing)
kuravira¹ fake
kuravira mundu wakukuka,
kuravira nwana wangu dingi

¹ *Kuravira* seems to be the si-Ndau way of pronouncing *gulavela* (ki-Lenge). The word does not seem to occur in the actual si-Ndau language, though I cannot be certain of this. The story is possibly of si-Ndau origin, though told in ki-Lenge.

at their (her parents') home. They say: You return without your hand-basket? She begins to tell them, she says: When I go to the field, mother-in-law sends forth her spooks, they sing saying: (Repeat song).

They say: Did you see them with (your own) eyes, Ntowane? She says: Yes, I saw them. They say: Let them come, we will give them the lobolo.

Then her mother-in-law follows her, saying: Little Mamma, why did you go off without saying good-bye? They say: For bringing forth spooks which sang.

They say: take your lobolo and go, we do not want you any longer. You want to kill our child for us. Then she goes away with her lobolo, she captures Nkandane, and lobolas her. When her mothers and her fathers take it (i.e. the lobolo) they say: Let us call Nkandane. She appears, sits down, and they say: Nkandane! At this marriage-home surpass the other girls: do what is right, and work (stamp) well there. She starts off, she goes to her husband's home. They say: Give her the spook-children also. Then she (i.e. the mother-in-law) says: Little mamma, go to the field. She takes her field-basket and hand-basket, she appears in the field, she begins to pull up ground-nuts. There come again the spooks of her mother-in-law, saying: (Repeat song).

Then the spooks of the little Mamma (Nkandane) also sing:

To want bers

To want a person who goes off,

To want my child

kuravira e!
 kuravira e! e!
 I ba şirende.
 kuravira e!
 kuravira e! e!
 kuravira şake!

Şikikuka şikiya vukatsi. Şikia-
 mbeya nyane waşona, şiki: O,
 mamanyane¹ yaşikotsa; kyiuma²
 hikiwonile, aşikotsile kuseka. vaki-
 humesa Mahumisane³ vaki: tfuwa
 kudana mamanyane wakuluvetsa.
 Akiwiya mamanyane, vaki: vuleya
 nyumbani.

Vaki: mamanyaa, wahetumi kwahi?
 iwamunene wena. Hingamatsaka-
 nisa hikivawona vanana vawena.
 Aki: hi şona, humani. e vakitsikita
 vanana vakwe. Seke akidzumba.

*To want e!
 To want e! e!
 They are people of heels!
 To want e!
 To want e! e!
 To want hers!*

*Then they (the mother-in-law's spooks)
 start off to the marriage-home. They
 tell their owner, saying: Oh! little
 mamma is able to do it. We have
 seen the lobolo, she can cook. They
 bring forth Mahumisane saying: Go
 and call little Mamma quickly. Little
 Mamma returns, they say: Go into the
 hut.*

*They say: Little Mamma, did you
 work nicely? You are really good. We
 shall be pleased to see your children.
 She says: All right, come out. Then
 her children come to her. Then she
 remains (i.e. at her husband's home).*

¹ *Mamanyaa* or *Mamanyane* is the form of address for a daughter-in-law.

² *Kyiuma*=the media of *akulobola*, whether cattle, money, or other goods.

³ *Mahumisane* was the daughter of the sorceress.