

TRAGEDY IN N.A. MILUBI'S DRAMA



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by

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SUMMARY

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter wherein the aim, scope and methodology are discussed. As an opening chapter to the study of tragedy, its main aim will be an exposition of the term “tragic” with special reference to Venda culture as portrayed in Milubi’s dramas.

Although Aristotle’s theory will form the basis of the researcher’s discussions, cultural and historical background of the author will be considered when analysing Milubi’s works. A distinction will therefore be made between what is considered as tragic in Western and in African, specifically in Venda culture. Milubi’s plays which will be examined in this study are:

- (a) **Madomboni a ngoho** (1987)
- (b) **Ndi miṭodzi muni** (1985)
- (c) **Mukosi wa Lufu** (1983)
- (d) **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** (1994)

Chapter 2 deals with **Madomboni a ngoho**. The four elements which the researcher believes are necessary to give a particular work of art a tragic status are chosen and applied in the analysis of the book under study. These elements are: the world, the tragic action, the tragic hero and his sufferings.

Chapter 3 focuses on **Ndi mitodzi muni**. A brief summary of the story, which will be followed by a careful analysis and application of the following aspects - the world, the tragic action and the hero's sufferings will be given. For an effective analysis of this tragic drama, the tragic action will further be sub-divided into the tragic cause, tragic conflict and catastrophe.

Chapter 4 highlights the tragic actions that occur in **Mukosi wa lufu**. The presence of many female characters in this play necessitates the application of feminist theory in this study. The world or atmosphere of the play also forms a basis for the successful analysis of the play under study. The following principles will also be examined, namely, the heroic stature, catastrophe, the poetic justice and pathos.

Chapter 5 revolves around **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani**. Although **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** is regarded as a modern drama, it has many things in common with Ancient Greek tragedies.

This is why principles like **hubris**, **harmatia**, **moira**, **nemesis** and **catastrophe** are being applied in its analysis.

Chapter 6 is a concluding one. Its main objective is to give a summary of all the arguments which have taken place in the previous chapters. Comparative study will be made amongst Milubi's plays with a view of finding their similarities and differences.

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to find out how successful Milubi has been in reflecting the notions of the tragic experience in his works. The findings of this study will help readers (Milubi's plays) in cultivating a critical approach to dramatic works. This is because up to date there is a limited number of critical works available on African drama in general and on drama written in Tshivenda in particular. In many ways, this research will contribute towards the awakening of interest in Venda drama and drama in general.

Although Aristotle's theory on tragedy is regarded as the yardstick in the study of tragedy by several critics (Lucas, 1946; Brooks et al 1975; Lesky, 1986), this study will focus mainly on the notions of the tragic experience in Venda culture as portrayed in Milubi's drama. This concurs with the views of critics like Ngugi wa Thiongo (1980) and Ngara (1982) who argue that a literary text must be regarded as the expressions of the milieu and the period in which the individual lived, and of the race to which he belonged.

This research, therefore, should serve to encourage future critics to take cognizance of the importance of culture and tradition as reflected in tragic drama and in other literary genres.

The research will be confined to one dramatist, viz. N.A. Milubi, as his works are regarded as the quintessence of drama written in Tshivenda.

General principles will be briefly discussed to enable readers to differentiate between tragic drama and other types of dramas. The study will be focused mainly on the principles of tragic drama. Critical works, on tragic drama, will be referred to and their significance in the analysis of the drama under study be established.

Milubi's tragic dramas that are going to be studied are the following:

- Mukosi wa Lufu (1983)
- Ndi mitodzi muni (1985)
- Madombini a ngoho (1987)
- Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani (1994).

A variety of research methods will be employed in this research study.

Textual analysis will be used in order to reveal the variety of tragic situations in the works under study. By this method, the verbal organization of specific literary texts will be analysed in great detail. The cultural background of the situations handled in these works makes it necessary for the researcher to make use of a sociological research method. The researcher will use this method in order to formulate the relationship between the text and reality. This method is useful because it relates literary works to the author's lives and societies.

The primary research method will include cassette recordings and consultations with the author concerned.

This method will be supplemented by secondary research method which necessitates the researcher to consult a variety of sources that are relevant to the topic under study, viz. literary books, articles from journals, honours research papers, M.A. dissertations and Doctoral theses.

1.1 THE NOTION OF THE TRAGIC EXPERIENCE IN VENDA CULTURE

1.1.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to give an exposition of the term "tragic" with specific reference to Venda culture. This section will also focus on the following terms: **tragedy, hubris, harmatia, catastrophe, cantharis and stature of the hero.**

1.2 GENERAL DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY

The word tragedy comes from ancient Greeks who used it to describe religious plays in which great men and women were punished because of their sins against their gods. The heroes or heroines sufferings usually ended in death. But today the word "tragedy" or "tragic", Crow (1983:120) claims, occurs in everyday language and is used to describe private events such as the breakdown of marriage or more seriously the death of an acquaintance in whatever cause.

The origin of the word tragedy, as Theodore (1975:25) puts it, is a matter of conjecture. "Tragos" in Greek means goat, "oide" means song. Tragedy was associated with goat song or goat singer in its early stages. The word could have been used to refer to the prize, a goat, that was awarded to dramatists whose plays won the earliest competitions. It could also have been used to refer to the dress, the goat skin of the performer, or to the goat that was sacrificed in the primitive rituals from which tragedy developed.

Abrams (1981:20) defines tragedy as the term which is broadly applied to literary, and, especially to dramatic, representations of serious and important actions which turn out disastrously for the protagonist or chief character. The definition is based on Aristotle's discussion in which he based his induction on the only examples available to him, that is, the tragedies of Greek dramatists such as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.

According to Dorsch (1965:38) tragedy is a representation of an action that is worth serious attention; complete in itself, and of some amplitude; in language enriched by a variety of artistic devices appropriate to several parts of the play; presented in the form of action, not narration, by means of pity and fear bringing about the purgation of such emotions.

Because of the controversy which is there when playwrights try to define tragedy, Cohen (1973:199) says the best way to define tragedy is to use Aristotle as a basis

for examining various points of view, always keeping in mind that for an art which in performance can have the most overwhelming subject impact, no easy or systematised definition will do.

Stephen (1984:42) has a supportive view to the above statement. He points out that no single definition of tragedy is possible, except perhaps to say that a tragedy is a play with an unhappy ending; but even this simplest of definitions hardly comes near to define the complex emotion and intellectual pattern that marks out a play as being tragic.

Just like other critics, Gill (1985:189) confines the term **tragedy** to literary art. The term tragic, according to him, means a certain kind of literary work and not, as it does in the newspapers and televisions, any kind of disaster. He states that the following aspects of tragedy should be examined, viz. the plot that ends in disaster, the tragic hero or heroine, the fall of the hero, the sense of inevitability, the impact of suffering upon the audience, the sense of waste, the way the audience is caught up in the play, and the feelings of audience at the end of a play.

To Brett (1976:11-12) the term tragedy is generally reserved for drama, but the novel has taken over tragic as well as epic subjects and is parasitic upon these and other literary forms. The chief statement of the nature of tragedy, according to him, is to be found in Aristotle's **Poetics**, which was written over two hundred years ago.

Although Brett's (ibid) observations may not have universal validity, and although other types of tragedy different from the Greek's have evolved, **Poetic** remains the most profound treatment of the subject. Brett includes the following Greek terms which befitted the characters of tragic heroes in the Greek tragedies:

1.2.1 **Hubris**

Many critics are in agreement on the definition of the term **hubris**. In this regard, one may mention Gray (1984:99) who defines it as that pride or overweening self-confidence which leads a man to disregard a divine warning or to violate an important moral law. This self-indulgent confidence, according to him, causes a tragic hero to ignore the decrees, laws and warnings of the gods, and therefore defy them to bring about his downfall.

In the same vein, Gill (1985:193) defines **hubris** as an arrogant and excessive pride and confidence in oneself. The hubris of a tragic hero, he further postulates, is seen when he decides to go against the fundamental moral and religious laws of life.

Conradie (1968:31) also supports the views of the two critics above when he says that hubris "*is die term wat beteken iets soos 'vermoed' of selfheffing*". He further states that "*Die Griekse tragiese digters, veral Aischulos, het hiermee bedoel dat die held dikwels ten gevolge van groot voorspoed al te veel op sy eie kragte begin vertrou en reken dat hy die hulp van gode nie meer nodig het nie*".

Brett (1976:13) defines hubris as an overweening pride which offends divine justice (dike), bringing upon itself the judgement of gods.

1.2.2 **Harmatia**

The term is defined by Gray (1984:96) as a word which denotes the error of judgement which a tragic hero makes and which leads to his downfall.

It is often translated as 'fatal' or 'tragic flaw'. Concerning the definition of harmatia, Brett (1976:13) puts it simply and clearly as a fatal error of judgement. The downfall of such a hero is not caused by external factors, but by a fault in his own character. In other words, a tragic hero is an architect of his own downfall.

1.2.3 **Catastrophe**

This is the term which is applied to tragedy only and a general term for this final scene in both comedy and tragedy is denouement. Denouement is a French word for unknitting: the action or intrigue ends in success or failure for the protagonist, the mystery is solved, or the misunderstanding cleared away. (Abrams, 1981:139)

Catastrophe may be considered as a sudden reversal in the hero's fortune from happiness to disaster. This tragic reversal (peripeteia) as Brett (1976:13-14) puts it, becomes apparent to the audience before the hero himself is aware of it and thus produce an element of dramatic irony which is sustained until his own tragic recognition (anagnonisis) of the real situation.

1.2.4 Catharsis

The term 'catharsis', according to Gray (1984:41) refers to the effect of tragic drama on an audience. The tragic downfall of the protagonist arouses the pity and fear of the audience, these emotions are purged by the cathartic final outcome. Certainly the concept is often used to explain the fact that the audience's feeling at the end is often one of exaltation and relief rather than suffering and distress. Catharsis therefore should be applied as much to the protagonist's feelings of guilt and anguish as to the audience's response.

Concerning the audience's response to the tragic hero's suffering, Brett (1976:13) puts it as follows:

The word purgation (katharsis) was taken from medicine and by this metaphor Aristotle was referring to what some people mean when they go to the cinema to have good cry and feel all the better for it.

Stephen (1984:38) views catharsis in the same light as critics like Brett and Gray; when he says:

The Greek scientist and philosopher Aristotle defines catharsis in his **Poetics** as the proper effect of tragedy: a purging of the emotions and fear from the audience by their presentation on stage. By removing these emotions, at least temporarily, tragedy performed a useful social function, inasmuch as the emotions might

be harmful if left in place. The term is now used of the 'draining' of the emotions that the audience feel at the end of a tragedy".

Gill (1985:196) states that catharsis is an idea that goes back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle. He said that tragedy aroused and then drove from an audience feelings of pity, so that, by the end, he felt relieved. Catharsis is therefore the act of being relieved or purged, of those feelings.

Cohen (1973:201) describes catharsis as the effect of tragedy on an audience which allows it to find pleasure in the painful actions it witnesses.

1.2.5 **Moir**

The fall of the hero in tragedy is often inevitable because he seems to be controlled by powerful unseen forces. The force which is beyond the hero's control is termed moira in Greek. Conradie (1968:31) defines moira as '*n mag wat groter as die mens is, 'n mag wat buite sy wil om sy lewensloop bepaal*'.

1.2.6 **Nemesis**

The pride which is there in the character of a tragic hero causes him to break the unchanging and unchangeable moral order. The end results of his uncalled for behaviour is his excessive suffering. The unseen force which overpowers the tragic hero is called nemesis.

Gray (1984:136) defines nemesis as the force which was personified by Greeks as a goddess who punished men's insolence (hubris) towards gods. Nemesis is therefore the fate that overtakes the tragic hero; his deserved attributive punishment that cannot be escaped by him at the end.

Brett (1976:13) simply describes nemesis as the judgement of the gods.

1.2.7 **Stature of the hero**

Tragedies usually centre on one character; who, according to most critics, should be a man of exceptional qualities in high position. This central figure should, in addition, neither be a bad or a good person, but a mixture of both. This is a general view of critics, but concerning status of a hero, modern critics do not emphasise a high position or a rank as a factor which matters most. The modern view is that even an ordinary person can be a tragic hero provided he has some special qualities which make him rise above ordinary people. In support of the above statement, Gray (1984:209) says that the protagonist may be superhuman, a monarch or, in modern age, an ordinary person. It is possible to imagine a tragic action involving a group of people but unless they were seen in some way outside the rest of society, some of the essential qualities of tragedy which seem to include an element of sacrifice or the scapegoat would be lost.

In the same vein, Crow (1983:125) states that in modern drama reflecting modern societies, the stature of a hero or heroine is not necessarily tied to special rank. According to him audiences can accept that an ordinary 'man in the street' may be fit, and even be fitter, hero of tragedy than a person of the highest social rank or greatest political power, provided that his life engages the issues of the survival of the race; the relationships of man to God.

Gill (1985:191) expresses a supportive view when he says that the central character is called the hero. The title, according to him, indicates the character's importance; a hero is larger than life, almost god-like, and is the centre of myths and legends.

Cohen (1973:200) like many other critics also bases his definition of tragedy on Aristotle's concepts. He argues:

Perhaps the most vigorous argument in regard to tragedy comes from Aristotle concept tragic hero. Aristotle conceived him as a person of stature - even of legendary and perhaps superhuman in nature. He is usually of high socio-political status, and frequently upon him rests the fate of others.

Abrams (1984:202) also does not differ from Aristotle. According to him, the hero is "better than we are" in the sense that he is of higher than ordinary moral worth.

Stephen (1984:42) also echoes Aristotle's idea when he says that for Aristotle the tragic hero was high-born, and neither particularly evil nor particularly good, but merely normal in his balance of the two.

So far, one can conclude that the best way to define tragedy is to use Aristotle's view as a basis for examining various points of view, always keeping in mind that for art which in performance can have the most overwhelming subjective impact, no easy or systematized definition will do. In his attempt to define tragedy Brett (1976:13) also touches the aspect of stature; he says that the tragic hero should be a man like ourselves, though rather better than average, and of sufficient status for his downfall to involve others as well as himself.

To Pretorius and Swart (1982:24) this tragic hero, who seems to be a spine of tragedy, is, in some way or another, above the ordinary person, but who has one tragic flaw which, after a heroic battle, leads to his or her downfall.

All the definitions so far are confined to dramatic tragedy. All the critics seem to converge on one point - the importance of the tragic hero's character. They all agree that the tragic hero must be, in one way or another, different from the rest of society; extra-ordinary in his capacity, aspirations and sufferings. He must be an architect of his sufferings.

Even this summary of tragedy is inadequate because it does not take into account the changing of social and historical aspects of tragic experience. Another difficulty in finding definition of tragedy which is universally applicable is the diversity of cultures amongst authors of tragedies. Taking into account the culture of an author and that of the people for which the book is written, it will be unwise to take Aristotle's principles as the sole criteria to analyse tragedy. However, they can be used as guidelines. Useful as it is, in the analysis of tragic texts, a definition based on Greek tragedies may not always be applicable to Venda culture.

1.3 DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY IN VENDA CULTURE

The word tragedy in Tshivenda is described literally as "*Likhaulambilu*", meaning a heart-breaking event. The term is often used to describe private events like the death of acquaintances or friends and beloved ones. In this case only those close to the deceased mourn the loss of their beloved ones. The death of an enemy is hardly described as tragic.

The term is also used to describe public occurrences with wide and unpleasant implication e.g. the assassination of a chief, and in the largest scale, natural and human disasters such as earthquakes, killing and injuring many thousands of people, or a full scale war resulting in the death of innocent civilians. Events that could be described as tragic in Venda culture could be categorised among others, under the following headings: **Birth of twins, abnormal births, natural deaths, death of chiefs, natural disasters like drought, earthquakes, hail, lightning, etc.**

1.3.1 Twins

The birth of twins, according to Stayt (1968:91) was regarded as unnatural and was associated with any misfortune which befell a family or a tribe. Unlike many Southern Africans, who killed only one of the twins, the Vhavenda killed both. That was done immediately after birth by the mid-wives or mother, by strangling or scalding.

Stayt's (1968) findings on the subject of twins differ from that of the researcher. The researcher's informants told him that only one of the twins was killed. To the Vhavenda the birth itself and not the death of the twins was tragic because, according to them, they spelt ill-fortune. It caused them mental instability. Instead of rejoicing over the birth, they suffer mentally because the twins were regarded as an embodiment of all that was evil; evil that may spell disaster for the entire family or community. The death of the twin or twins tended to be a relief to their mental agonies. Consequently, there was no reason to grief or mourn. The burial of twins also showed that they were unwanted beings, for they were put in one pot and buried in a damp place by the riverside. Under normal circumstances the right burial places for normal children were at home next to the hut.

1.3.2 Shenga (children who cut their top teeth first)

In Vhavenda culture all children who cut their top teeth first were killed by strangling them with sinew. Those children were called **shenga** and it was believed that any person bitten by such a child would die (Stayt, 1968:95). It was again

feared that, if such a child was allowed to grow up, if it is a girl, on becoming pregnant, she would cause the death of her husband, and if it is a boy, he would cause death to his impregnated partner. The death of such children by strangling was not regarded as tragic because they were considered as threats to the society.

The death of a normal child was regarded as tragic on a smaller scale. Its burial was left entirely in the hands of old women of the village, the mother taking no part. It may again be called tragedy on a smaller scale because only the senior members of the family and close old women knew about the tragedy; as it remained a secret and was kept secret from the children and the entire community. The burial of a child took place the same day, at night at home.

Today it is a totally different story. The death of a child amongst the Vhavenda is regarded as tragic. This is born by the fact that many people in the community usually turn up for burial of children these days.

1.3.3 Natural death

The death of young adults is always regarded as tragic in the Tshivenda culture. There is nothing like natural death in Tshivenda culture. If a man or a woman dies, the Vhavenda always believe that death is the work of evil spirits. After the death of a normal child or adult all the works cease throughout the whole district for three or four days, and again on the day the dead man's relatives visit the diviner.

The burial was conducted in a normal way on the same day. That type of burial did not give an unconscious person the chance to regain consciousness.

When the burial party returns to the kraal, a great lamentation is raised; women and children cry in grief. In well-to-do families an ox and a goat is slaughtered to follow their late owners to the world of spirits. The mourning does not end there but continues until after the cause of the death has been discovered and avenged. The day after the burial, all the relatives of the deceased shave their heads and this is done for the second time after the relatives have visited a diviner. After the second shaving, all the hair is collected and rolled into a ball and put in the nest of a 'thaha' bird and buried. The burying of the nest with the hair symbolises the end of the crying and mourning for the deceased. It signifies that the relatives are satisfied with the findings of the diviner, concerning the cause of the death (Stayt 1968:165).

1.3.4 Death of the chief

When the chief is seriously ill his condition is kept a close secret. People who ask about his whereabouts are told by his court officials that he has had a bad cold and must stay indoors for some time. When his death is considered to be eminent, the medicinemen tell the **makhadzi** (the chief's aunt) and **khotsimunene** (the chief's uncle) that nothing more can be done; and they retire from the death chamber. The chief's death is then witnessed by the **makhadzi** and the **khotsimunene**; one or two head-councillors, and sometimes the chief's favourite wife.

Before a new chief is appointed, all the councillors are summoned to the capital and are told that the chief has passed away. All the people are summoned to the **khoro** (council) to take part in reed dance.

An undercurrent of excitement and anticipation runs through the gathering, as it is tacitly understood that these summons precede the disclosure of the identity of the new chief. All the relatives of the chief gather and are told about the chief's death. An ox is then killed and roasted and each member of the family take a piece of meat in the mouth, chews it and thereafter spits it in different directions. It is a taboo for any member of the family to eat any food after they have been informed about the death of the chief until after the ceremony has been performed. During the period of mourning all the people are ordered to shave their hair and beards, so that the new hair will grow with the new chief. This is the only general form of mourning and a symbol of cutting any link attaching them to the late chief and forging a new link with his heir. In Hamphaphuli and Thengwe areas, any stranger discovered with unshaved head when the whole district is mourning is forcibly shaved and tied up for a few days until new hair begins to grow on his head.

The death of a chief is regarded as a national tragedy in Tshivenda culture. The majority of people are affected by it. Lamentation or mourning for such a death is not always out of sympathy as in the case of that of a relative or a close friend, but people are sometimes forced to engage in mourning in order to please members of the royal family. Good examples are those practised at Hamphaphuli or Thengwe.

The situation becomes more tragic when innocent people are killed to be buried with the chief. The person or people killed in preparation for the chief's funeral are called "zwitovho", literally meaning small mats. The most suitable person to be killed in preparation for the chief's funeral is the closest associate of the chief. In Tshivenda such a person is called "tshileli". This is another reason why close friends and sometimes wives of the dead chief flee from their country into hiding and only come back long after the chief's funeral.

1.3.5 Natural phenomena

1.3.5.1 Hail (Tshifhango)

Hail is a natural phenomena which is destructive in mealiefields. In the Tshivenda culture hail is believed to be something sent by Raluvhimba (God) as a punishment for evil. When this tragedy befalls a community, the chief summons the diviner who divine the cause of the god's displeasure. If the hailstorm interrupts ploughing, the work will stop until the next day for the fear that god will think that they are defying him. The destruction of the mealiefields is indeed tragic because the Vhavenda depended solely on the products from their mealiefields for their sustenance, as only few males are fortunate to be employed in towns and cities to be able to bring home some remittance for their families' sustenance.

1.3.5.2 Drought

Drought is regarded as tragic in Tshivenda culture. Lack of rain in the area creates problems for the people. Production in the mealiefields, livestock, the natural vegetation are all seriously affected. Rivers dry up, crops wither on the fields, the grass dries up and this situation results in starvation.

Drought is tragic to all human kind and the tragic effect is severely felt among the Vhavenda because they are traditionally farmers who depend mainly on the rain for subsistence. Instead of devising some means to obtain water or supplement their food supply for themselves and their livestock, the Vhavenda traditionally look up to their chief for food or help. The Vhavenda believe that drought is a condition caused by the gods to show their anger against a community or a people for disobedience. It is therefore seen as a punishment from the gods which sometimes could result in many deaths. Drought, according to Vhavenda may be caused by the following "wrongs".

(i) Killing of a python

It is taboo for anyone to kill a python at the beginning of the rainy season which is the period for planting up to the harvesting time. Without rain nothing can grow, therefore a python should be treated with diference.

(ii) **Waving a hyena's tail**

The tail of a hyena is also associated with rain. It is a taboo for any person to possess such a thing because the Vhavenda believe that if it is waved in the air a strong wind will follow and prevent rainy clouds from forming.

(iii) **The burial of children**

Among the Vhavenda people, twins who are killed at birth, stillborn babies, and children who die of consumption are buried near water. It is believed that a violation of this custom could cause the rain to be withheld.

Another reason for the failure of the rain is the anger of Raluvhimba (god) or the ancestral spirits of the chief. If the chief has failed to prepare the **zwitungulo** (type of ritual) or neglected to perform some of the sacred rituals, the diviner may divine that the ancestors have withheld rain.

The reaction to drought by the Vhavenda is always heartbreaking. They would dig up different roots and pick up cattle's dung for feeding. In extreme cases the situation could compel them to drink cattle's urine in order to quench their thirst.

The unhygienic nature of these desperate acts often led to countless deaths.

1.4 SUMMARY

Although the word "tragedy" is often used to describe any sort of disaster or misfortune, it more precisely refers to a work of art, usually a play or novel. What is interesting is that the sense of tragedy in both drama and everyday life seem to involve identification with the person's suffering. In all tragedies, English, Afrikaans, Greek, African, the character of the tragic hero is of utmost importance. He is by definition an exceptional figure who does not simply embody the average virtue of his society in a typical form; he is extra-ordinary. Other common properties in all tragedies are that:

- tragic heroes suffer greatly for their deeds,
- they are responsible for their sufferings or misfortunes,
- their own faults are important contributing factors to their downfall,
- they learn from their sufferings.

Despite these common properties in African and other tragedies; differences in their forms, due to differences in culture exist. It is therefore necessary for the critic to consider the influence of the author's culture and experience in, for example, portraying his characters, especially his tragic hero. For instance, in ancient Venda, a diviner (ṅanga) or witch-doctor was considered a great man who holds a high position in society. A 'ṅanga' could be as fit a tragic hero in ancient Vhavenda tragedy as much as a medical practitioner in any western society's

tragedies. A chief also occupies a high position in Vhavenda culture. This is not the case in most western cultures.

What may be regarded as a flaw in one culture may not be so in another. Every society is therefore unique in the precise balance of values and assumptions that maintain it. Some patterns that may pass as acceptable norms in one culture may not necessarily be regarded in the same light somewhere; for instance, polygamy is a common and acceptable practice in Venda society while it is scorned in western societies. Critics must therefore consider the culture and experience of the society in which a piece of literary work is set in order to be objective with their analysis of that particular work.

The nature of drama may seriously be affected by the time or period at which it was written. African drama, and Tshivenda drama in particular, is also affected by the milieu. Maqadzhe (1986) supports this when he says that themes reflected by African drama are largely determined by circumstances prevailing in a particular region and time. An understanding by a critic of a Geographic position or milieu of a book is necessary for a fair analysis.

Concerning time, Maqadzhe (1986) divided the Historical period which African literature has undergone into colonial and post colonial. These two periods have bearing on African literature. Both the English and the French dominated the two periods since they were the big partitioners of Africa. Having this time factor in mind one can analyse ancient and modern drama meaningfully.

Bopape (1994) has something in line with Maḡadzhe's view. He says that a comprehensive survey of criticisms produced over the years indicates that tragedies tend to fall into various historical periods. Bopape (1994) quoted people like Orr (1981) who divided the historical development of drama into three periods; namely, Ancient Greek, Renaissance and Modern tragedy. An analysis of the theories produced in various periods show that they differ in more than one way, for instance Orr's (1981) three types of tragedies are characterised by three major modes, namely,

- the Greek mode which is basically divine and is centred on the alienation of heroes of myths, legends and history of divine forces.
- the Renaissance mode which is predominantly noble. It is concerned with an individual's alienation from his noble status.
- the modern mode which is fundamentally social and it deals with the social injustice of man to fellow men. Most modern playwrights like Milubi follow this modern mode in the dramas they write.

CHAPTER 2

2. TRAGEDY IN MADOMBINI A NGOHO

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, just like in the other three chapters to follow, the tragic nature in the works of Milubi will be examined. Four elements which are necessary for giving a particular work of art a tragic status have been chosen. Those elements necessary for an effective tragic effect are: the world, the tragic action, the tragic hero and grave suffering.

2.1.1 The world

Although it is very difficult to define the world, the researcher's understanding of it here includes society with its norms and values. An alternative expression for the world is the setting; sometimes referred to as an atmosphere. This setting of a narrative or dramatic work, according to Abrams (1981:175) is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstance in which action occurs. The setting of an episode or scene within a work is a particular physical location in which the action takes place. Stephen (1984:42) defines it as a scenery or background against which a play is acted. The norms and values within a society change with time and acquire new meanings. It is therefore important in a study of tragedy to determine whether

the world is governed by divine laws, scientific laws or laws of nature (Bopape 1984:41). The concept of the "world" in this study will be used to refer to man's physical world and spiritual environment.

Simpson (1971:02) has a point when she asserts:

One can define 'man' in terms of his physical or spiritual nature", ... look at him in relation to his own identity, his family, his society, his laws, his beliefs, his religion, his country or his customs. And he can be identified in negative, positive or neutral terms. But, if, for example, we say he is a good man or a bad man, then we are comparing him against a (perhaps arbitrary) standard of reference in terms of the world he inhabits, in terms of the world from which we regard him, or in terms of the standard of some other world.

Man and the world forms an entity in such a way that it is difficult to separate them. Tragedy is therefore only possible when there is friction between man and his world. The friction occurs when man's deepest yearning to fulfil his aspirations are thwarted by some forces within the world. Simpson (1971:05) locates the cause of this friction in the failure or violation or rejection or even misunderstanding of what she calls 'bonds', that is, the laws.

2.1.2 The tragic action

Tragic action refers to tragic plot which includes aspects such as tragic conflict, reversal of fortune (peripeteia), recognition of the truth (anagnosis) and catastrophe.

The conflict that is triggered by the violation of norms and standards of society gives rise to tragic action. The hero finds himself in a situation which causes him to choose a particular line of action in order to achieve his objectives. It is the line of action which the hero takes which results in his suffering. The hero is compelled by certain forces to act against the scheme of things in order to be true to his highest ideals.

2.1.3 The tragic hero

Different critics have different views concerning the stature of the tragic hero. Their different views are influenced by different tragic texts. In ancient Greek tragic texts, the hero is a person of higher position within the society. The Middle Ages tragedies dealt with noble persons such as kings and queens. Nowadays, because of popularity of the concept of democracy, the status of the hero does not depend on his nobility alone, but may depend on his courage and the uniqueness of his strength in challenging human dilemmas. Concerning the tragic hero's status, the researcher is totally aligning himself with Mandel (1963:103) who puts it thus:

... the most striking characteristic of the tragic hero as a personality is just his possession of a purpose - a drive or an ideal which insists on being gratified. The tragic hero rises above the common ruck by the very fact of his purpose even when it is a guilt one. He has stature, in other words, he has climbed, and therefore, he can fall.

2.1.4 The tragic theme or grave suffering (Katharsis)

In analysing theme in tragic texts, Aristotle's theory on the effect of tragedy on the audience should be borne in mind. Aristotle maintains that tragedy must excite the emotions of pity and fear, and at the same time, it must give healthy relief to this emotions (Lucas 1957:24). For me the term catharsis (katharsis) implies the audience's response of relief towards the downfall or death of a villainous tragic hero.

2.2 THE WORLD AS PORTRAYED IN MADOMBINI A NGOHO

The play starts with the noise of gun shots; teargas canisters and people running hefter-skelter. The action that triggers off this confusion is the interference of policemen at a community mass meeting. The main audience at this meeting are youths. The majority of elderly people in the community seems not to understand why the youth should behave like this. This comes out clearly in Thili's comment on the situation when she says:

(Hu pfala u thuthuba) Yuwii, vhaḷa vhana vha wa hani? Na nahone ndi zwa mini hezwi zwa vhana vha u sa pfa? Ndi zwa nndwa-de yenei ine vha pinela zwihali nga matombo. (Milubi 1987:02)

(An explosion is heard) Gosh! How dare those children fall? What is it that this children never listen? What kind of fighting is this where they face armaments while they are only armed with stones.)

In the second scene Fhedzi is summoned to the police station for questioning. It is quite evident that he was amongst the speakers at the meeting. His wife Anna accompanies him.

At the police station Fhedzi is expected to answer many questions from Dithu, one of the senior police officers. He is also expected to respond to the allegation that he is the one who is destabilizing the whole country. Dithu persuades Fhedzi to join other ministers of religion in spying on whoever may protest against or question any action of the government authorities. Fhedzi does not show any remorse towards everything he does. Instead of being remorseful, Fhedzi tells Dithu that nobody will stop him from telling the truth.

Fhedzi's second appearance in front of the policemen leads to his arrest. The evidence brought forward by Khavhe supported by a tape-recorded conversation, is enough for the policemen to lock in Fhedzi.

The action taken by Khavhe is condemned by many people. At shebeens, people are divided, but the majority, especially youths, support Fhedzi. The congregation in which both Fhedzi and Khavhe are pastors is up in support of great men like Fhedzi. This is revealed by these words from Pastor Ufundi who states that:

Ndi tshi sedza ndi vhona zwifhatuwo zwa vhaswa zwo nzinzwimalaho. Nda dovha nda vhona vhenevha vhaswa, vha tshi wa vha tshi wela ngoho ngeno zwandani vho puta lone fulufhelo. Vhenevha ndi vha no edza vha vha vha vha kha NGOHO vha vha mona mitsheto ya Jerikho ya vhuya ya wa. Na nne namusi ndi ri tshifhato tsha vhuzwifhi ha lino shango tshi khou thoma u wa. Tshi re hone vhañwe vhashu tshi do ri tshi tshi wa, tsha vha kovhola nga zwidina zwatsho. Sa murathu washu Fhedzi o tsigwaho nga tshidina tsha tshenetshi tshifhato henengeongo. (Milubi, 1987:16)

(As I look I see youths' faces are dull. Again I see the same youths falling whilst they are holding hope in their hands. These are the ones who imitate those who stuck on the TRUTH when they marched around the walls of Jerico until they collapsed. I also say that the building of lies in this country is beginning to fall. The fact is, when this structure collapses, it will hurt some of us with its bricks. Like our younger brother Fhedzi who is knocked down by the bricks of this building wherever he is.)

They all pray for the collapse of the wall - the wall which symbolizes an unrepresentative, undemocratic single party government. This is the plea of the majority, with the exception of few individuals like Matevhu.

Khavhe's team of police informants grows stronger when he recruits other members like Rahele, Mafunaizwo and other anonymous youths. This results in the demotion of Mangalani from the senior position he has just attained, expulsion of Danda and Dosi from their teaching posts; arrest of Mukanganwi. The activities of policemen and police informants, who are government's forces or agents, create discord. Order gives way to disorder. The greater part of the play is then devoted to presenting scenes in which the community is at odds with the so-called law and order officials. Things become worse when the community receives the message that Fhedzi has died in detention.

The death of Fhedzi disturbs the whole community. As a result the community takes the law into its hands. Khavhe is burnt to death on the day of Fhedzi's funeral. The houses of those who participated in the killing of Fhedzi are also torched. It is also interesting to note that the people celebrate the demise which has befallen Khavhe. This is seen in the conversation between Sasa and others:

A vha vhoni. Hezwi a tshi khou nyenga nga u rali, a hu na na muruṅwa na muthihi ane a ḁo tsukunyea a tshi linga u mu imelela. Nḁamusi mifhululu i ḁo ṽaha i tshi ṽahela mishumo yenei ine iṽo ṽa ri u vhona, muvhili wa tshenuluwa nga nyofho.

(Hu dzhena munna a tshi khou femeleka)

Munna: Vhathu vha hashu, muḁi wa Khavhe u khou milwa nga khavhu dza mulilo.

Muthannga: A si wa Vho-Khavhe fhedzi, hu khou nzhangama yothe mid^ui ya vha no nga Vho-Khavhe. (Vhathu vha a pembela ngeno vhañwe vha tshi rwa gwilisha vha tshi livha mid^uini ine ya pfi i khou fhisiwa.) (Milubi, 1987:67)

(You see as he burns like this, not even a single angel will even try to assist him. Today ululation will be heard for this deeds which, when seen by the eye, the whole body shivers with fear. (A man arrives breathing heavily)

Man: Oh! People, Khavhe's home is being devoured by flames.

Youngman: It is not only Khavhe's home but the homes of all people who are like him in their deeds. (People celebrate while others rush to the houses which were said to be on fire)).

From the explanation above, it is clear that the play portrays a specific period in an African country in which corruption is the order of the day. It portrays a political situation which is totally different from a democratic one, in which one has the freedom of speech, and in which individuals's rights are respected. One of the major duties of the policemen in this drama is to silence those who speak the truth; those who protest against an oppressive system. In this drama priests, devoted Christians and youth are the victims of the police intrigue and brutality.

Although not much is said about the head of the state (government), one can easily deduce from the characters' address that the political head is also a traditional leader or chief. A character like Khavhe always addresses the head of the state as Mavu (literary meaning soil). Mavu in Tshivenda culture refers to the chief. The double status the political head has, gives him more power. The following statements by Khavhe show that he is not defending an ordinary leader, but a political leader who also has a high standing in African communities. This is evident from Khavhe's speech:

Nga lufuno lu thamuwaho lu tshi thamutshela vhane vhashu na shango lashu, maṭo anga ndi a zwondolola o livha tshifhatuwoni tshanu inwi Fhedzi. Zwothe hezwi u zwi ita ndi zwi itiswa nga mulandu wa vhura he na akha ni tshi akhela muṅe washu na shango lawe. Zwenezwo nga musumbavhaloi wonoyu wanga, ndi sumba inwi Fhedzi, nde ni tou vha tshira tsha mavu ashu (Milubi, 1987:13).

(With love that goes to our master (His majesty) and our land, my eyes are widely turned against your face, Fhedzi. I do all these due to the bow which you have prepared for His Majesty and his land. Therefore with my index finger, I point at and accuse you of being the enemy of His Majesty.)

When openly reporting Fhedzi to Muhali, who is also a policeman, Khavhe further says:

Ndi sa athu u hangwa, hoyu Fhedzi o vha o sokou fulufhelwa zwinzhi nga Bivhili yawe hei ine a tshimbila o fara. U a zwifha, u ima luñwe na maswina a mavu ashu. Arali zwi songo ralo, lihoroni liḽa ndi musi a tshi ṭodani uḽa musi. Hii! no vha ni tshi ṭodani? No vha no isa yone Evangeli? (Milubi 1987:14)

(Before I forget, this Fhedzi was just trusted due to the Bible he always keeps in his hand. He is lying. He is on the side of His Majesty's foes. If that is not the case, what then did he want from that party that day? Hey! What did you want? Had you brought the Gospel?)

When Fhedzi tries to dispute Khavhe's allegation, Khavhe further states categorically that Fhedzi is a daring man. He has no respect for His Majesty, the Chief. He puts it thus:

U dovha a vha na luñwe lu no nga lwa ṭhangu. U dovha a ima luñwe na vhane vha akha vhura vha tshi akhela Mavu. Zwenezwo, tshe a lindela tshone ndi u vhona u nzwutuwa ha muya wa Mavu vhugubugubuni ha milambo ya malofha. Malofha ane a do ri a tshi gubuwa, ene a vha a tshi khou lidza khwatha dakaloni, ngeno shango lone li tshi khou sala lo tshenuwa na u bubutshelwa (Milubi, 1987:15).

(In addition to this, he is cheeky. He is on the side of His Majesty's foes. As a result, what he is yearning for is the death of His Majesty. The spilling of the blood of the dying chief will make him happy while the country is left tongue-tied and frustrated.)

Khavhe has strong reasons in turning his back against his Christian friend Fhedzi, during this period. Those who become loyal to the head of state get paid for it. The statement by Marandela, Fhedzi's mother, shows that spying on people is making Khavhe rich. She makes it obvious that Khavhe and his family know that she (Marandela) is aware of their secret deal as they converse:

Vho-Khavhe : Kha vha pfe ngeno gugu.

Vho-Marandela: Ndi tshi pfa zwa mini? Ili vhengele na iyi khefi zwi no khou toḡdou fhaḡiwa afho-afho, tshelede ya hone ndi musi yo tou ni nela sa mvula? (Vhathu vha a sea) Idzi goloi dzine na toḡlou pfundulula sa zwiambaro? Nḡe ḡwananga ndi khou mu toḡḡa hafha. (Musadzi wa Vho-Khavhe u a vha dzhena haḡwani)

Vho-Azwiiti: Makhulu wa Tshilidzi.

Vho-Marandela: Hei! hei! Makhulu wa Tshilidzi! Makhulu wa Tshilidzi wa u shuma mini? Ni ri musadzi wa ḡwananga u a takala zwiḡa o sala o raḡa, ngeno inwi ne tenya-tenya na munna waḡu? Vhathu a ni vhonwi ni nga dzinguluvhe nga malofha a vhana vhashu. ḡiphineni zwaḡu khole-khole. Izwi ḡuvha a ḡi nga ḡi. ḡuvha ḡi ḡo ḡa. Muthu wanga u ḡo pfa unga u a swa. Khetshi (Milubi, 1987:31).

(Khavhe: Listen here granny.

Marandela: What must I listen to? The shop and café that you want to build there, does the money fall on you like rain? (People laugh) How about these cars that you change like clothes? I want my son back (Khavhe's wife interrupts her)

Azwiiti: Tshilidzi's granny.

Marandela: Hey! hey! Tshilidzi's granny! Tshilidzi's granny for what? Do you think my son's wife is happy when she is left as she is whilst you live in comfort with your husband? You people are disfigured like pigs due to our children's blood. Enjoy this false happiness. I wonder whether the day will not come. The day will come. One will feel like one is burning; I am telling you.)

Those who are loyal to the government of the day or to the head of state who is also a chief, are highly rewarded while those who do not co-operate are labelled rebels and punished. The punishment may be in the form of demotion, as in the case of Mangalani, or expulsion from work, as in the case of Dosi and Danda. In this regard radio Rambaladza has this announcement:

Heyi ndi Radio Rambaladza. Mafhungo a namusi a ri shang o la America na la Rashia a khou sumbana nga minwe lu sa takadziho. Hezwi zwi nga di bveledza ndwa ya lifhasi ya vhuraru.

Mvula yo naho a yo ngo ri tshithu ngauri gomelelo li kha di vha lihulwane.

Ndivhadzo ya shishi asiyi! Vho-Mangalani nga Musumbuluwo vha fanela u tsa ngei fhasi Mademeni vha divhika hone. Poswo yavho ye vha vha vho gagulelwa khayoy newa Vho-Sumbudzani. Kha zwi divhee zwauri Vho-Mangalani vho tsitswa na muholo wavho.

Mañwe ndi a uri, mudededzi Vho-Dosi na Vho-Danda vho la mushumo. Vha songo tsha vhone vha tshi khou ita nzwila-nzwila tshikoloni. Ndi eneo a rambaladzwaho nga Radio Rambaladza (Milubi, 1987:33).

(This is Radio Rambaladza. In the news tonight, the United States and Russia are at loggerheads. This might lead to the third world war.

The rain which has fallen is insignificant since the drought is still great.

Here is an emergency announcement. Mangalani is to report at Mademeni on Monday. The post he has been promoted to, has been given to Sumbudzani. Be informed that Mangalani's demotion also affect his salary.

Meanwhile Dosi and Danda, both school teachers, are dismissed from their work. They should never ever again be seen at the school. And this ends the news bulletin of Radio Rambaladza.)

The announcement is made with the conviction of those in authority that nobody will question the decision taken. And indeed nobody dares question it.

Detention without trial is another form of punishment used to silence those who stand up and preach the gospel of democracy. The unfortunate detainees like Fhedzi are sometimes tortured to death.

2.3 THE TRAGIC ACTION IN MADOMBINI A NGOHO

The opening scene of **Madombini a Ngoho** creates a feeling of uneasiness; one can easily conclude that upheaval could be the next thing to happen. The discussion between old ladies below suggests another way in which life in this society is about to be disrupted.

Mukegulu: Zwi songo thomaho zwavhuḍi zwi nga si fhele zwavhuḍi.

Vho-Nyakudedede: (Vha mbo dzhuru! Vha tshi pfa u thuthuba na u vhona mushavho wa vhathu.) Ngoho vhone vho ḍi amba. Zwithu zwi songo thomaho zwavhuḍi zwi ḍi dzula nga u rithea sa dangani ḵa o ḵaho ḵama ya kholomo yo dzungudzwaho mutshila musii tshi ḵavhiwa.

Mukegulu: Zwithu zwa hone hafhu zwi tshi dina u rithea zwa ritha na riḵe vhaḵwe ra vho nga sa vhathu vho ḵesaho vhuvhede ngeno ri songo ḵa (Milubi, 1987:01).

(Old Woman: What did not start well cannot end well.

Nyakudedede: (She stood shocked! Hearing the explosion and seeing people fleeing). You were right. What was not started well will always be unsettled like the stomach of one who ate the meat of a cattle whose tale was shaken when it was being slaughtered.

Old woman: How come that when this is unsettled it even unsettles some of us as though we have eaten cooked blood whereas we have not.)

By starting the play with gun shots, teargas smoke and people running helter-skelter, Milubi creates an atmosphere he wants for this play: an impression of confrontation between the youth and the police; between few enlightened individuals and the law enforcement agencies. Enlightened individuals in this play represent those who are, together with youth, fighting for democracy; and police in this case represent the state authority which is unrepresentative and undemocratic. What is happening is that the behaviour of Khavhe (a devoted Christian who turns a police informant) Dithu and Dada creates confusion and social disarray. Dithu, Dada and Muhali are notorious security officers who use agents like Khavhe, Mufunaizwo, Rahele and many others to destabilize the country. This disturbs the normal pattern of lives of the people and causes a lot of worry.

In Khavhe, who is a Christian and a minister of religion, the community expects to see love, trust, sympathy and friendliness being demonstrated. The tragic action is arising from the inner conflicts that tests Khavhe's integrity. The love of money, women and high positions which has developed in Khavhe is at war with the moral order his position represents.

A loving and caring person cannot spy on his friend, propose love to a friend's wife, cause poverty within the community, destroys beliefs in humanity and brings about death to innocent people. Yet this is what Khavhe does.

Khavhe sells out his fellow Christian Fhedzi to the police. He also proposes love to Anna, who is his friend's wife.

Here follow the exact words directly from Khavhe's mouth:

Vho Anna, vha songo pfa zwine mbilu yanga ya ita
(Vha nana u vha omelela) Vha songo zwi pfa. Hafhu
na u edela ndi edela ndi songo lala nga mulandu
wavho (Milubi, 1987:18).

(Anna, you can't imagine what my heart does (He
holds her tightly). You can't imagine. By the way, I
spend sleepless nights because of you.)

Khavhe also shows no love to his fellow man. He sells out people like Mangalani, who as a result, is demoted from a senior position; he sells out Dosi and Danda, who, as a result, lose their jobs. All these actions bring poverty to other members of community. This is tragic.

Khavhe destroys belief in people like Anna and Rahele by proposing love to them. Rahele could no longer hide her confusion and frustration caused by Khavhe's behaviour. She says:

Vhone khezwi vha tshi vho nga sa muthu o no netaho
Murenani. Ndi amba ngauri vha vho nga sa muthu o
waho - hii (Milubi, 1987:34).

(Why do you seem to be losing power in the work of
God. I say so because it looks like you have back-
slided).

Khavhe participates in the death of Fhedzi in two different ways. He reports him to the murderers and also physically participates in the killing. These actions do not show love to a friend and this is really tragic. All these help to bring disorder in the community. The following words show us what type of person Khavhe is; what type of a friend Khavhe is to Fhedzi:

Ni vhale maipfi anu. Ni songo ntsema sa tshilakati.
Ni khou zwi pfa? (Vho-Khavhe vha raha Vho-Fhedzi.
Vho Fhedzi vha a wa vha mbulumbuwa na a^la
magedane. Vho-Khavhe vha dovha vha raha hafhu,
vha dovha, u swika Vho-D^hithu vha tshi vha fara.
Malofha ndi vhudwedwedwe kha Vho-Fhedzi)
(Milubi, 1987:53).

(Count your words. Do not scorn me like nobody.
Do you hear me? (Khavhe kicks Fhedzi - Fhedzi falls
and rolls down with his hands chained together.
Khavhe kicks him time and again until D^hithu holds
him. Blood flows from Fhedzi).

The same man Khavhe again acts against the values and standards of Christian life when he leads a morally decadent life. Can the community trust him when he proposes love to women - both married and unmarried, in his congregation; when he is unsympathetic to people close to him? Mukanganwi and Fhedzi are behind bars because of Khavhe, who is their Christian brother. This is a tragic action because a fellow brother in Christ should be sympathetic towards his fellow brother.

Dithu, Dada and Muhali are government officials, they are policemen. What the community expects from the policemen is peace and security. The community knows the policemen are there to protect them against criminals; to see to it that justice is done. But instead of protecting the community, these three policemen are rather harassing the community.

As policemen they should respect married women. In fact, it is expected of the police to show respect to each and every citizen. The comment of Dithu when he says to Fhedzi: "Vha na mufumakadzi o nakaho vhukuma" (Milubi, 1987:02) (You have a very beautiful woman) is uncalled for.

Policemen are not expected to openly side with one political party and become actively involved in politics. These three policemen show it openly that Fhedzi's involvement in the activities of a specific political party is unacceptable to them. This should not be the case. In a democratic society everybody has the right to belong to whatever political party he chooses without any fear of victimization by the police.

If the police suspect anybody of any criminal offence, they must take him/her to the court of law and not kill him. But Dithu, Dada and Muhali are themselves prosecutors, judges and executioners. Fhedzi is prosecuted, sentenced and executed by the policemen. The image of the police is tarnished by the actions of these men and as a result the credibility of the police force is destroyed. This is tragic because

if the community no longer trusts the police, who else should it trust? This is a recipe for chaos and strife. Individuals take law into their own hands; for instance at the funeral of Fhedzi, Khavhe is killed, many houses of police force members and police informants are burnt.

2.4 THE TRAGIC HERO AND GRAVE SUFFERINGS

The tragic hero in this drama is Khavhe. He is firstly portrayed as a Christian. He is not just a Christian, but also a minister of religion. This gives him a high social standing in the community. There is, in Khavhe, a conflict between his vain distress and his awareness of the code of conduct his call imposes on him. The following shows that there is conflict in Khavhe. He says this to his friend and fellow brother in Christ:

Zwine vha vha zwone na nne ndi a zwi funa, ndi ro
dinwa nga mafhungo a u vha musingidzhane u no
fhefheḁa mua u tshi vhudzula (Milubi, 1987:08).

(I also like what you are. My only problem is that I
am like grass which is blown by wind.)

Khavhe is confessing to his fellow Christian, his fellow minister of religion Fhedzi that he is being overpowered by desires and indeed he allows them to take over his better part. What sets Khavhe apart is the intensity of his lust for money, his love for women and his lust for power. He is now in the stream of government officials.

Khavhe acquires wealth albeit in a corrupt manner. In the world of today society tends to accord more respect to riches than to virtue.

Khavhe's status as a minister of religion and as a rich man who owns shops, café and many cars makes him live a pompous life. He becomes so proud and confident in himself in such a way that he becomes blind to underestimate the anger of people around him. He regards himself as a demigod. His pride, which the Greek dramatists call Hubris is demonstrated at the following occasions:

After proposing love to Anna, who is Fhedzi's wife, and failing, he tells her openly that her promotion and transfer is in his hands. This is really tragic. The following statement is not expected to be uttered by a minister of religion:

Vha a zwifha, ndi do vha wana. Ndi a vhona vha khou tongisa hezwi zwine vha tolou vhidzwa u pfi vhomme! Vhomme! Vha a zwifha munna a vha tsha do mu vhona. Ndo vha ndi tshi ri ndi do vha ambela uri na vhone ndi nga si tsha vha ambelela. Ndi a vha litsha vha tshi poswa henengei Hagumbu. Vhumisiterese ha heyi phuraimari ndi hone ho vha fhelela. Vha do zwi pfa u tshila sa vhanna vha madendeni. Na gwama ndo vha ndi tshi ri ndi do ita ndi tshi li totela vhone, zwino vhone a vho ngo funa. Vha do zwi pfa. Vha nga si tou ntshuma nga hoku kwitele (Milubi, 1987:19)

(You are lying, I'll get you. You seem to be deriving pride from the fact that you are called Mrs Pastor! Mrs Pastor! You are lying, you will never see your husband again. I had thought I would recommend you that ... I will no longer recommend you. I will

let you be transferred to Hagumbu. The privilege of being a lady teacher at this local primary school is over. You will feel the pain of living like a migrant labourer. I had thought I would even share the money with you; but you did not like it. You will feel it. You cannot treat me in this manner.)

Khavhe's pride makes him to underestimate the anger and intelligence of the youth at the shebeen. He thinks that money can control the life of everybody. That is why he untimely approaches his second recruit at the shebeen. The discussion is as follows:

Muthannga 1: Vha khou mmbidzelani?

Vho-Khavhe: Murathu, naa no tou ita hani naa? Dzhiani masheleni haya ndi anu (Milubi, 1987:29).

(Young man: What are you calling me for?

Khavhe: My younger brother, what type of a person are you?
Take this money.)

To Khavhe's surprise the youth rejects the offer and tells him that truth, and not money, will liberate his mind.

Khavhe's visit to Rahele in the evening without prior appointment shows that Khavhe is self-important. When he proposes love to her, she tells him that she has a steady boyfriend who has promised to marry her. Khavhe openly threatens to eliminate Rahele's boyfriend if she is boastful of him. The pride which is now a

dominant feature in Khavhe's life makes him to regard other people's lives as of less importance. This attitude turn to widen the rift between him and those around him.

After Khavhe's participation in the killing of Fhedzi, a sudden reversal of his life from happiness to misery is quickly realised. This turning point in the life of the tragic hero is termed Catastrophe in Greek. It is at this point that because of sour experience, some heroes decide to take their lives. Khavhe, as a tragic hero in this play, starts getting it very tough. He is very sorry for what he has done. His prayer shows that he grieves his wrongs:

Mune wanga, mpfarele hezwi zwe muhumbulo wanga wa u tama lupfumo, nda rumbula nda shulula malofha e a ri a tshi gubunyea, a tanza muya u si na mulandu. Mpfarele hezwi zwe nda shanduka Judasi Isikariote nga u rengisa malofha a si na mulandu. Mpfele vhutungu mune wanga uri ndi si nembelele sa zwe Judasi a ita.

Iwe Mudzimu khotsi a swina langa a si tsha tshilaho kha lino, nkhatshutshela mbilu zwe nda lalela hoyu Fhedzi mudinda wau, sa livemu nda mbo di mu phadzha nda lozwa vhutshilo hawe. Vhutshinyi he ha ralo u vaya ha tungufhadza muya wanga. Ndi a disola kha u pambuwa hanga ndilani yo lugaho nga mulandu wa gwama na thumbu fhedzi-fhedzi. Vhutshinyi hanga ndi khou vhu vhona. Mpfarele mune wanga. Amen (Milubi, 1987:63).

(My Lord, forgive me for having been so greedy for wealth that I stabbed and shed blood, which, when flowing, led an innocent soul out of the body. Forgive me for turning into Judas Iscariot by selling innocent

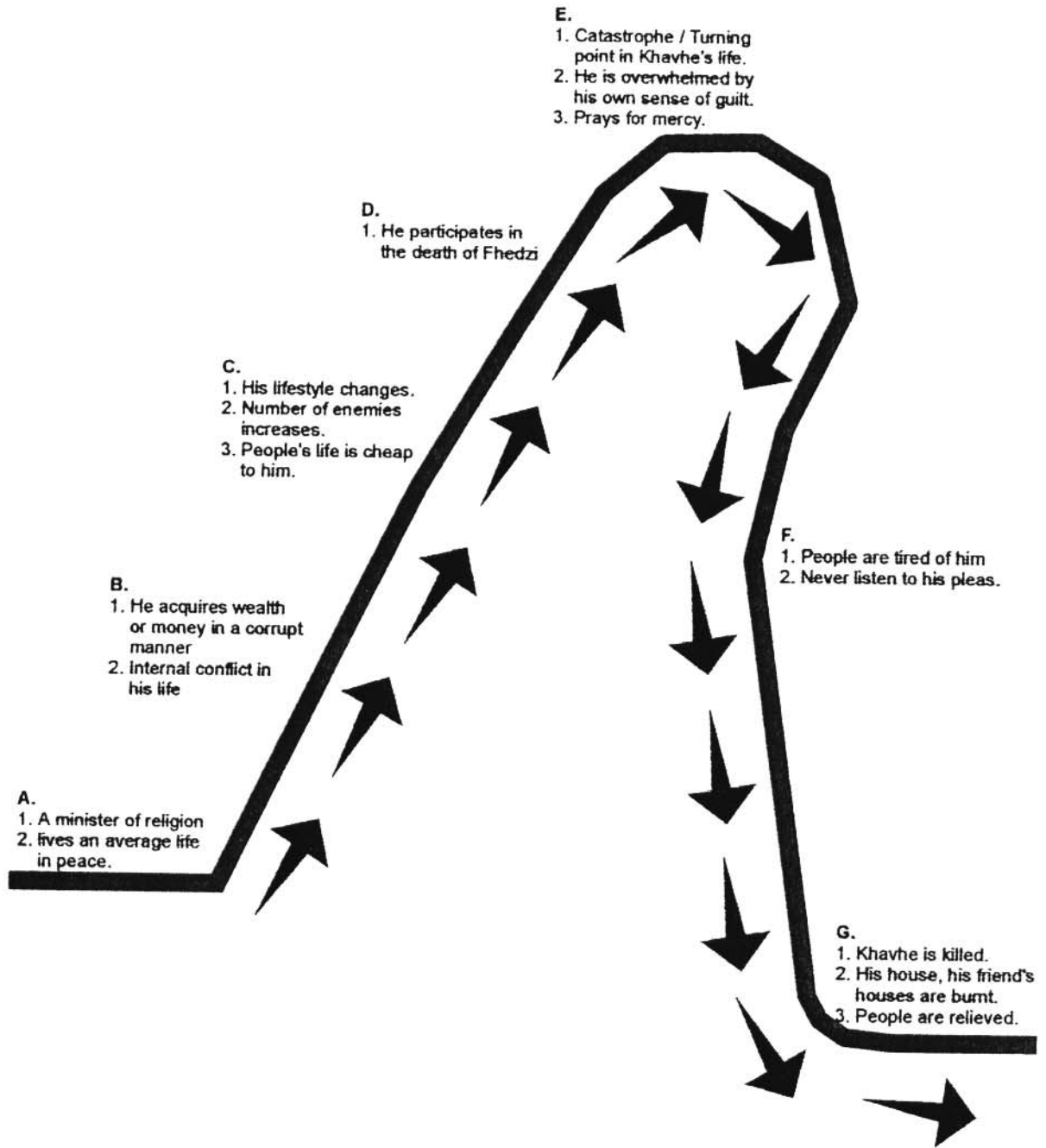
blood. Be merciful to me, my Lord, so that I do not hang myself like Judas.

Oh, God, Father of my deceased enemy, forgive me for being not open to your servant Fhedzi, like a criminal I attacked and killed him. My soul is grieved by the offence I have committed. I regret for diverging from living a righteousness life owing to lust for money and mere self satisfaction. I acknowledge my guilt. Forgive me, my Lord. Amen)

After the death of Fhedzi in detention, Khavhe becomes aware that people suspect him and are waiting to take revenge. Instead of staying at home on a funeral day, a self indulgent Khavhe disguises himself and sets out for the graveyard.

This wrong decision taken by Khavhe due to his pride leads to his painful death at which the majority of the community rejoice.

Khavhe's experiences as a tragic hero in this drama may be represented diagrammatically as follows:



2.5 CONCLUSION

In any drama we look for the action which triggers off complications of the plot. In **Madombini a ngoho** the tragic conflict is triggered by the disruptive effects of Khavhe and policemen's behaviour. The behaviour of the policemen, of using gun shots and teargas to disrupt the community's meeting is tragic. They never take into consideration the period at which they are operating or the type of community they are serving. Listening to the people's grievances or problems and negotiating with them is one of the best ways in which problems can nowadays be solved. But these policemen choose a violent and disruptive method to solve their problems.

Khavhe, who, because of his lust for money turns into a police informant, also disregards the anger of people when he openly recruits youths to join him in spying on people.

Pride which develops in him because of the wealth he has acquired makes him to lose the respect of his people. It is morally wrong to propose love to one's friend's wife. Khavhe proposes love to Anna who is Fhedzi's wife. He further proposes love to Rahele, who is an active youth in the congregation in which he is a leader. In so doing he loses the respect of his church members and as a result the congregation antagonises him.

Because of pride which is in Khavhe's life, he is not even ashamed or afraid to betray his friend openly. In reporting his friend to the policemen, he has the courage to say:

Ma[^]to anga ndi a zwondolola o livha tshifhatuwoni
tsha[^]nu inwi Fhedzi (Milubi, 1987:13)

(My eyes are widely turned against your face Fhedzi.)

This shows that he has confidence in himself and his masters.

To make things worse, he also physically takes part in the killing of Fhedzi. But after killing Fhedzi, he suffers mental instability. The end results of all his tragic actions is his death, a painful one.

The tragic hero in this play is Khavhe. This conclusion is reached after a thorough comparison is made between the two main characters, they are Fhedzi and Khavhe. Aristotle's principles have been used as a basis for comparison. The following aspects have been taken into consideration in the comparison: they are **pride** (Hubris), **flaw** (Harmatia), **catastrophe** and **recognition of truth** (Anagnosis).

Fhedzi's position as a minister of religion never changes his lifestyle. If ever there is a change in his life, it is for the best. He wins the hearts of the members of his congregation and members of the community at large. He is accepted and

respected as a church leader. But Khavhe, also a church elder and a pastor, has acquired wealth and this changes his lifestyle. Instead of becoming a loving and caring man, he now regards other people's lives as nothing. He now thinks that money can buy love. That is why he does not understand why Anna does not accept his proposal. He also believe that money can buy eternal life. That is why he abandons his good Christian life and leads an evil worldly life. To him, Christian life can only be led by those who still need much from God; those who are poor.

Khavhe is advised by his wife Azwiiti to refrain from his evil and dangerous life he is leading. Self-confidence causes him to respond to his wife's plea in this manner:

Inwi ni dina nga u tshuwa na tswina i tshi tshoko-tshoko. A re n̄e ndi tou vha vhukhudoni ha dzhavhelo dzhavhi (Milubi, 1987:13).

(The problem with you is that you can be frightened by just a moving lizard. As for me I am under the shelter of a strong fort.)

Both Fhedzi and Khavhe die. Fhedzi dies a dignified death. His death is for the right cause. He suffers for the truth and dies for it.

Khavhe believes that he has the whole world in his hands. He does what he likes when he feels like doing it. In the end, there is a dramatic change in his life, from happiness to disaster. Khavhe is bearing it alone at the graveyard when an angry

mob attacks him. He pleads for mercy, but the mob never forgives him. Khavhe believes that the following words can save him:

Ni tou mphisa nga mathaela naa? Nditshenni vhathu vha Mudzimu. Ndi ri ndi do ni fha danga lothe (Milubi, 1987:66).

(Do you burn me with tyres? Please, leave me, people of God. I say I will give you a flock of cattle.)

Fhedzi never regrets his actions until he dies. He repeats the word 'NGOHO' (truth) until he dies. His last words are:

Gundo la NGOHO la lelemela la lalama nga hu sa fheli (Milubi, 1987:55).

(The defeat of TRUTH lingers and remains there forever.)

After uttering these words, Fhedzi gives up the spirit and dies.

Khavhe's last words show that he now realizes the truth which he ignored during his hay days. He is sorry for his actions. He now believes that God is the only solution to all problems. That is why he asks the pastor to help him in this situation. He says:

Vhafunzi vha nga nnyambelela. Ndi ri a thi tsha do
dovha nandi (Milubi, 1987:.....).

(The pastor can talk on my behalf. I am saying that
I will not do it again.)

This gives one the impression that Khavhe misleads the policemen, knowing very well that Fhedzi is not guilty. He does that out of jealousy.

CHAPTER 3

3. TRAGEDY IN NDI MITODZI MUNI

3.1 Introduction

A brief summary of the story will first be given. This will be followed by a careful examination and application of the following aspects: the world, the tragic action, the tragic hero and the hero's suffering. The tragic action will further be divided into the tragic cause, tragic conflict and catastrophe.

3.2 The story in brief

The opening scene tells us that things are not normal in this society. Conversation between two civil servants, Itani and Razwithu, shows that corruption is rife in their working environment. Itani is the one who is more fed up about the evil practices taking place in the government offices. Fortunately Itani does not put the whole blame on the government authorities only; he also blames himself for not improving his qualifications. Despite all discouragement from his friend Razwithu, Itani firmly decides to go to study at the University of Madevhula. He is doing this with an intention of coming back to his work place in a higher position and using the opportunity to rid the place of corruption. This thinking is borne out in a statement he makes to Razwithu:

Hezwi zwithu zwa tshidivhano na vhuada zwi do ri u mmbona zwa wisa zwifhatuwo nga thoni. Ndilani yanga zwi do tsiruwa nga u pfa mitsindo yanga ndi tshee kule. Ndi do ri ndi tshi fhira tsini nazwo zwa sokou vheni! gaa! Zwa sala zwi tshi khou bata-bata vhutshilo ngeno nne ndi tshi khou raha ndi tshi ya mathakheni. (Milubi 1985:6)

(These nepotism and corruption will turn their faces down before me with disappointment. They will give way for me when they hear my foot steps. On my arrival all the two will be no longer there. Corruption will be left frustrated while I am acquiring a higher position.)

His advice to his friend Razwithu not to love many women gives one an impression that Itani is a faithful man. This is a type of behaviour which is expected from people who are in authority like him.

At the University of Madevhula, Itani becomes unpopular with other students because of his collaboration with the lecturing staff during class boycotts. Itani is beaten up by other students for breaking an agreement or resolution taken by student masses at a mass meeting. He shows himself as a responsible student to the lecturers by submitting his work while others are still on class boycotts.

His sour relationship with his fellow students does not affect his performance at the university. He completes his degree in record time.

Itani's dreams come true when he occupies a high position in one of the government departments. The position he occupies changes his life. He is no longer the same Itani who once promised people like Razwithu that he would fight against corruption when he comes back from the University. He, instead, leads a corrupt life. He uses his office power for his personal gains. For example, he sexually abuses married women like Selina, and the wives of Thanyani and Gwangwa. He also accepts bribes from male job seekers. All these evil practices annoy the community.

Things become worse when he makes love to women, especially married ones, in his office. He is so self-important and confident in himself that even after he is caught red-handed making love to another man's wife, he does not stop his evil deeds. Because of the high position he occupies within the disadvantaged African community, he does not listen to any advice. Not even those who, for his own good, pluck enough courage to speak to him about his excesses. Through his own actions, his life and the life of people around him are thrown into disarray.

His corruption in this community becomes so serious and disgusting that individuals who are directly affected like Maraga, Thanyani and Gwangwa decide to take the law into their hands. They plan to kill Itani.

Although Itani is hated by many people, there are few individuals who still sympathise with him. This is why people like Nyakukali and Maswoba want to tip

him about the impending attack. But pride makes him not to take them seriously. Maswoba's and Nyakukali's warning about his impending attack falls into his deaf ears. He is found making love to Selina, Maraga's wife, in his office. Itani is killed in the full view of the public. His death comes as a relief to the community. The comments by some of the community members suggest a feeling of relief:

A u pfi. Hafhu ro di amba re havha ndi vhone vhane vha do ri lapulela. Namusi phalaphala i si ya musanda yo lila. Matari o fhufhurea nwedzi wa Thangule u sa athu u dzhena. Duvha vhukovhela namusi li kovhela tshifhatuwo tsho bilufhala. Vhuriha namusi ho khebuwa, tshilimo a tshi tsha vha kule (Milubi, 1985:103).

(Listen. We have spelt it out that these are the people who will solve our problems. Today the horn is blown by the commoners. Leaves have fallen before it is August. The sun is setting today in the west with a bleak face. The winter is over today and summer is nearby.)

3.3 The world as portrayed in 'Ndi mitodzi muni'

From the explanation above, it is clear that the play portrays a modern autocratic government where high positions are obtained by the chosen few. The period is plagued by corruption; only those closer or loyal to the authorities benefit. The absence of labour unions gives authorities powers to do as they like. They employ or expel whoever they like and whenever they feel like doing so. Itani is occupying

a senior position because his wife's uncle is an influential person in the government offices. He has just given him this position, confident that nobody will oppose or question it.

Itani is not satisfied with the position he is holding. He decides to go to the university of Madevhula to improve his academic qualifications. This is only possible if he can get financial assistance. He applies for a bursary. In order for his bursary application to be processed easily, Itani secretly approaches Disani, who has the influence in the bursary section, with a bottle of brandy. In appreciation of Itani's gift, Disani says:

Nne a thi na jifhio line la vha langa. Tshanga ndi u tshenuwa musi ndau dzi tshi vhomba. A no diita tshigugu tsha vhogugu, tshawe ndi u dzula u shamani (Milubi, 1985:16).

(I have got nothing to say. Mine is just to get frightened when the lion roars. Those who regard themselves as blocks will always cry.)

From this simple language it is easy for one to conclude that the application will be processed with the "urgency" it deserves. The world view of the majority of people during this period is that there is nothing for free. Those who are in the government own it. For one to obtain a job bribe should be paid first.

Through hardwork and loyalty to the government authorities, Itani in the end gets promoted and acquires a high position. People in his community, men and women, at this period know what to do and what not to do in order to get jobs. This is why Selina is greeted with the following words when she visits Itani in his office:

Kha vha dzule Vho-Selina. Mafhungo e nda vha vhidzela one ndi ane a do vha dzhenisa vhududo vhu no do thatha phepho heyo ya nyofho dzo vha hwelaho. Mafhungo a hone a do tou vha shudu li sa sokou wela nnyi na nnyi. Izwi zwone zwo di shanduka yone mvula ine munisi a nisela he a ta ngeno hufwe vhanwe a tshi khou ralo u vha thatha ngalo duvha. Zwi khou pfala? (Milubi, 1985:38).

(Take a seat, Selina. The message I have called you for will give you warmth and drive away the cold which you have contracted due to fear. You will realise that you are the most fortunate person to receive such a message. This is like when it rains in a specific area and not in the other area. Do you understand?)

These words show that there is a great possibility for Selina to be employed. But it is a favour, not a right and as such the gesture should be appreciated. The nature of the "appreciation" that attractive female job-seekers must show is brought out vividly in Itani's words and actions:

Mushumo u do wanwa nga a sa hani tshithu. Zwothe zwi kha vhone zwa u dzungudza thoho, vhukimvi ha

ela vhu tshi fhira kana vha tsinya ito vha luma mbilu luthihi fhedzi. U tsinyulula havho ito vha vho diwana ngomu vhuphovhephovheni ha vhukimvi. (Vho-Itani vha sendela tsini. Vho-Selina a vha tsha hana sa u thomani. Vho-Itani vha a vha mama ngeno Vho-Selina vho di bonya zwavho mato (Milubi, 1985:39).

(Appointment will be made to those who refuse nothing. The ball is in your court. You may shake your head to let the luck go by or close your eyes and let it happen. When you open your eyes, you will find yourself in paradise. (Itani moves closer to Selina. Unlike before, Selina is now co-operative. Itani kisses Selina, whilst she has closed her eyes.)

Many more women also fall prey to Itani's unbecoming behaviour; for example, Thanyani's wife, Gwangwa's wife and even unnamed elderly women. Poverty and low standard of living may be the factors that make these women succumb to his immoral demands. Most women are victims because they need employment. Male workers use money (bribes) to get jobs or to secure positions. Some are advised to use their wives to get jobs. Katudzani, a married man who is also looking for a job gets this advise from Itani.

Vhone kha vha tou amba na mufumakadzi wavho a vha kwakwanyisele. O vhuya u na lunako lune muthu a nga vhuya e ndi mu ... Hone vhone vha mumini? Kaleni havho vha bva vhe ngafhi? (Milubi 1985:57)

(If you are serious ask your wife to settle this for you. Fortunately enough, she has the beauty which

resembles that of ... By the way, what is her nationality? Where does she come from?)

This is a flaw on the side of Itani, which because of his position, is not aware of. The type of government he is serving seems to condone this, as long as one is loyal to it. The interests of few and not the entire community, matters most.

Corruption seems to be the order of the day in the social setting. What Itani is doing seems to be a common practice amongst people of authority. This is why he gets no advice from other authorities to refrain from such an evil practice. This is so because when Itani is killed, many government officials also follow suit. The statement by an old man shows that many officials have been killed together with Itani on that day. He states:

Namusi thavha dzi khou pidimuwa rothe ro lavhelesa. Rothe ri katea ri vho nga vhaloi. Miri mihulu i tupuwa na midzi yayo ngeno ngala dzayo dzo xeelwa nga vhugala hadzo. Nyofho dzone dzi vho nga dza vha shavhaho zwipuku, vuhali ha vhahali hone ho no shanduka vhubwepwere. Sa gumbe li no tumulwa yalo thodzi yo livhaho matlalani, na mbilu namusi i ralo i itshi tumulwa sa mbilu ya muomva-tshivenda; i no tumulwa muomva u tanza u sa athu u tanza wa fhedza (Milubi, 1985:103).

(Today the mountains are crumbling whilst we are looking at them. All of us are trapped like bewitched people. Big trees are uprooted while their beauties are no longer there. Fear, which is like that of people

who are afraid of ghost, has gripped us. The bravery that was there in us has changed to cowardice. Like the bud of a creeper which is cut, the human heart is cut like the heart of an indigenous banana tree which is removed before the fruits mature properly.)

While young people (men and women) celebrate the death of corrupt government officials, elderly people lament it. Elderly people are living in a different world from that of youths. That is why the majority of the elderly people in the society seem to be seriously affected by Itani's death. They are not used to seeing people killed in such a cruel manner.

To them, killing won't be justified in any way. Murder is wrong, whatever its causes and consequences. As a sign of disapproval for the youth's action in murdering Itani and his colleagues, an old man says:

Ndi ngoho. Thavha dzo t̃angulwa vhulegelege vhu re hadzo. Ñamusi mikombo yo sala yo shona musi vhugala ho ela na mulambo. Ngoho ho ela na mulambo, asivhuḷaa ... Tsho salaho ndi vhugubugubu na vhudwedwedwe ha yone miṭodzi, ine ya ḍo ela kha marama sa kudambo kha thavha. Mbilu dzashu dzo kama tshisimani tsha miṭodzi yashu. Ngoho ḍuvha ḷo kovhela ḷi sa athu. Maṭo enea a vhoneho u kovhela ha ḷeneli ḷa ñamusi, ha tsha ḍo dovha a vhone manzalinzali a u tsha haḷo (Milubi, 1985:104).

(It is really true. The mountains have been stripped off their heights. Today the navel is left in a shameful

state while valuable things are flowing downstream. It is a sure fact that valuable things are flowing downstream. What is left is the shedding of tears, which will flow on the chicks like a stream down the mountain. Our hearts are swimming in the fountain of tears. It is true that the sun had set before its time. The very same eyes which have witnessed the setting of the sun today will not be able to see the sun's rays at dawn.)

The planned killings, which occur, not as a surprise to the youth in the community, become a shock to an old lady who expresses her state of shock in this manner.

Yuwii! tshitu^uhu tsho raliho a tshi athu u vhonwa kha
la muno, hune vhana vha muthu vha ha^udwa sa
mahavha a tshi ha^udwa nga kholomo. Vha mbo wa
vha tshi puta mavu ngeno vha^unwe vho rondolosa
ma^uto. Yowee, i na u fhalala mitumbu, i si heyi.
Zwihulu mitumbu ya vha sa sumbwi na nga minwe ya
muthu zwawe. Kheyi, mi^unwe ngei^ulaa, yo rukuluwa ye
rukununu-rukununu, sa magwa^udi tsimuni ya mu^utavha.
Ha, nga Vho-Ramathaga (Milubi, 1985:....).

(Gosh! this cruelty is the worst of them all; the situation where human beings are killed like when cattle devour young mealy plants. They fall with soiled clenched fists and some with shrunken eyes. Oh! people used to die, but not in this manner. The worst part of it is that most corpses are of great men. Here they are, there they are, corpses which lie on the ground like indigenous watermelon in the field. Gosh, I swear by Ramathaga.)

3.4 TRAGIC ACTION IN 'NDI MITODZI MUNI'

For an effective analysis of the tragic action in this play, the following aspects will be thoroughly examined: the tragic cause, the tragic conflict and catastrophe.

3.4.1 The tragic cause

There are a number of tragic causes in this play. Some of these are lust for power, love for women, bribery and pride.

3.4.1.1 Lust for power

Itani is an ambitious man. His statement confirms this:

Nne vha do mmbona ndi tshi khou kwanyamela muhuyu wa tswavhelele, tenda nda swika hu re na mahuyu. Naho dza vha thole zwadzo kha nne dzi do vha dzo luga (Milubi, 1985:06).

(People will see me climbing a smooth fig tree, as long as I will reach the fruits. Even if they are figs of low grade, I won't mind.)

A person who is over-ambitious is dangerous to himself and to the entire community.

This brings chaos to the community.

3.4.1.2 Lust for women

The fact that Itani is not selective and goes for any figure in a skirt shows that he is a womanizer. The women he picks range from pupils, middle aged women to very old women. He sometimes makes love with women of his mother's age. A_lilali says of him:

Zwino gegulu _lilala a si mme awe? Na mme awe vha bvani? Fhala a hu na tsho dobwaho. Nwana u_la u pata sa limange la goya. Kaniha nazwino u khou tou kungwa nga lunako? (Milubi 1985:40).

(Is that old lady not his mother? His mother is even better. He is a useless man. That young man is as naughty as a wild cat. Is he attracted by beauty?)

Itani's lust for married women is of serious concern to members of the community. Community members, especially elderly people blame education for Itani's behaviour. This is the way Mud_lambi puts it:

U_la ndi n_wana lini. Vha amba Itani. Haa! a si n_wana na luthihi tshithu hetshila. Nazwino thanwe ndi dzenedzi pfunzo dza hone dzi no vha lundisa kha vhuada honohu vhune vha ralo u n_weka khaho (Milubi, 1985:40).

(That one is not a normal child. No, he is really a bad child. Maybe he is influenced by the education he has acquired to lead such a bad life.)

Itani's insatiable lust for women can be seen, amongst many incidents, in the following:

When a married woman named Anna asks for a job, Itani responds in this manner:

Zwothe zwine vha nga humbela kha nne ndi do vha itela. Tenda vha si hangwe uri zwanda zwi a tanzwana. Nahone a hu na khuhu i no imba mutsho i si thadulwe nga inwe (Milubi, 1985:45).

(I will do everything for you as long as you know that you will also do something in return. It is a known fact that a man's life is only meaningful if there is a woman on his side.)

When Itani is again approached by another woman who is looking for a job, he promises her a job. He makes it a point that the lady understands that he is doing her a favour. He says to her:

Hoyu mushumo une nda khou todou vha fha wone, a si mushumo nyana. Mushumo wa hone u nthesa lune na u vha fanela a wo ngo vha fanela. Ndi khou tou vha fha wone nga mulandu wa uri nne ndi a lisa kha vhane nda ta. Zwi khou pfala zwavhuḏi-vhuḏi? (Milubi, 1985:59).

(The type of employment/job which I am about to offer you, is not an ordinary job. This is a top job which is not suitable for you. But I am just giving you this job because I am not selfish when it comes to my people. Is it well understood?)

This is really tragic because the remarks he makes when he is offering jobs to the women are such that they could cause a lot of dissatisfaction and lead to chaos if they are not kept secret.

Itani's affairs with married women is known by people. Nyakutombo, an old woman who has seen him with Thanyani's wife, tells her friends her experience. She tells her friends how Itani hugs and kisses Thanyani's wife. She puts it as follows:

Ha, i nga vha dugu lini. Izwi a si enea mabambiri a hone. Hafhu o ri u bvisa vha vhandavhanda katini ha lai-lai ya kutotshi ngeno vha tshi khou talatadza, vha tshi ralo u sumba-sumba. U fhedza fhala uja wa munna a mbo di uyu wa musadzi nga henefha shwaa! Uyu wa musadzi nga itshi tshifhinga o vha a si tsha hana. U ralo, vhothe vha mbo di ri nga milomo mole. Nda sedza nda pfa ndo zwi ofha. Henefha hune vhatu vha ralo u tshotshonyana milomo sa mabilipili. Haa, vhone (Milubi, 1985:63).

(No, that was not a handkerchief. I suspect it was a piece of paper. I am saying this because I saw them. With the aid of a torch's light, he wrote something on it. After that I saw the male partner hugging the female one. The woman was at that time no longer refusing. At that time the lips of the two partners glued together. Looking at people who were biting each other like birds was a fearful experience.)

3.4.1.3 Bribery

Itani lives a corrupt life. He prospers through corrupt ways, for example, for his bursary forms to be processed, he gives Disani a bottle of brandy as a bribe. This helps him because his bursary application is processed quickly and approved.

When he is at the University of Madevhula, Itani clashes with his fellow students because of his corrupt life. He secretly approaches the lecturers and university authorities so that he gets promoted.

This is why he is booed by university students on the graduation day. Other students call him by names like tshifhēti! tshifhēti! thuñwa! thuñwa! tsikidzi! gufha! gufha! (Milubi, 1985:32).

All these names mean a 'spy' or 'sell-out'.

Even when he is in power, Itani does not forget how he climbed up the ladder. He makes it a point that all job seekers, pay first before they are appointed or promoted. The payments vary according to situations. Women have to pay with sex. Men, depending on their financial positions and the nature of the favour being sought, could pay with a bottle of wine, beer, a sheep or an ox. Bribery has become a tradition in such a way that those who ask for it and those who give it are not shameful of it; rather they boast about it. The following discussion between Itani and Doyoyo in the presence of other people gives one a clear picture of how corrupt the authorities are:

(Hu dzhena Vho-Doyoyo vha tshi shisha na mabiko)

Doyoyo : Ndaa! Vho-Itani, muṅe wa milomo yashu. Vha tshi vhona biko ḽi vhugabegabe ngaurali, ndo vha ndi kha khakhathi na vhatukana vhangā, ya u khwikhwidza na u gagamisa ḽigu ḽa mutshila mungafha. Na zwino ro sia ro ḽi vhoḽha na tshiḽa tshiḽaka tsha munukhowa- tshilongwe. ḽigu iḽo a hu na zwiṅwe arali hu si tshisevho tshavho muṅe wanga.

Vho-Itani : Ya nga vha thoṽha i ḽo tou ntsumba i kule.

Doyoyo : Mphedziseni na ene ndo ḽangana nae a tshi khou khada ḽipulu ḽingafha ḽa zwiṅanga zwingafha. Naho hu swiswini, u vhona ndo ḽi vhona. Kukhadelwe kwaḽo kwo vha ku tshi sumba kukhadelwe kwa tshisevho tshi livhaho ndongwanani yavho Vho-Itani (Milubi, 1985:43-44).

(Doyoyo arrived sweating)

(Doyoyo : Hello! Itani, our great supporter. When you see me sweating like this, my sons and I were struggling with a very big sheep. As I am talking with you now, we have tied one against a tree in that small bush. The sheep is going to be used by nobody else except you, my Lord!

Itani : I am going to enjoy the meat.

Doyoyo : I have also met Mphedziseni with a big bull which has small horns of this size. Although it was dark, I could see. It was clear that the bull's destination is your home, Itani.)

The community members, especially those who cannot afford to give bribes starts to complain about this practice. The established social order is disturbed. Katudzani shows his dissatisfaction with the way people have to pay for employment in the following words:

Arali heyi mishumo yo no tou shanduka mafhungo a tshitungani na a nduvho, izwo mishumo ya hone kha i mphire zwanga. Nne ndi do wela mulambo wa Luvuvhu kana Lunwenwenwe. Zwa kunda ndi do wela Vhembe. Ri pfulwa nga i si na vhutinyelo, ngeno mikosi ri tshi tavha i pfiwaho nga aridi! (Milubi 1985:58)

(If employment has turned into sexual immorality affair and bribery, issues, let those who qualify get it. I will cross Luvuvhu and Lunwenwenwe river looking for medicines to empower myself. If the local medicines fail, I will import stronger ones from the other side of the Limpopo river. It is very difficult to duck the arrows thrown at us, and there is nobody who is listening to our cries.)

The cry seems to be common amongst community members but they lack courage to approach authorities like Itani and his friends.

3.4.1.4 **Pride/Harmatia**

Despite good qualifications and the high position he holds, Itani loses respect of the community members because he is vain. He looks down upon people. He displays his pride on the following occasions:

- (i) When Maswoba asks permission to enter Itani's office, he gets this reply from him:

Hu pfi mini? Vha khou [^]to[^]da mini tshine vha [^]to[^]da?
Vha vhuya vha vhona afha fhethu ho tea aya
malakhanthana avho (Milubi, 1985:97).

(What do you say? What are you looking for? Do you think a place like this is suitable for these worn out clothes?)

This is a sorry affair.)

- (ii) When Itani proposes love to Diana, a married woman, he makes it a point that she knows that he is not an ordinary person earning peanuts. He boastfully says:

A hu na na zwiñwe. Vhañwe vhatu musu vha tshi ita
zwa u wana avho malamba nga u tou dobedza n[^]ne
anga a vha a tshi tou nga mu[^]avha wa lwanzhe
(Milubi, 1985:47).

(This is right. When others earn meagre salaries, I receive a lot of money every month.)

When Itani sees young school girls passing by his office, he invites them in. When they ask him who he is, he introduce himself in this manner:

Kani a ni khou ^udivha uri ni khou vhidzwa nga nnyi?
Ni khou vhidzwa nga muhulisei Vho Itani (Milubi,
1985:75).

(It looks you do not know who is calling you? You
are being called by the Honourable Itani.)

Because of the pride he has, Itani never takes advice from anybody. The
community is aware of this; this is why Nyakutombo, an old lady, remarks:

Uyo u a tsivhudzwa nga muthu wa ^unama? O bva
nnda ha tshanda hoyo. Ndi inwe khangamutupo inwe-
vho heyo. Tshi no ^udo mu tsivhudza ndi ^ulenelo gwengo
he^ulo (Milubi, 1985:83).

(Does he take advice from a mortal man? He is out
of hand. He is a bastard. What will discipline him is
the butcher knife yonder.)

Itani is also advised by his wife to refrain from following unattractive young girls
(she calls them zwibolibolibo) and married women. Concerning married women
Arina says:

Vha khou sokou ^utanganya mulomo wa ^untha na wa
fhasi. Vhone vha no khou ^utoka midzi kha musadzi wa
mu^uwe muthu, izwi a si khombo ine vha ^udo ri i na
vhaloi ngomu (Milubi, 1985:49).

(You are just talking. Your insistence in making love
with another man's wife will jeopardize your life and
you will at the end put the blame on witches.)

The advice he gets from various people fall on his deaf ears.

3.4.2 Tragic conflict

Tragic conflict in this play is triggered by Itani's violation of many moral laws that govern human behaviour. Itani makes love with married women, for example, Selina and Diana. This brings chaos. The husbands of the women he seduces are offended by this behaviour. The community also sympathizes with the poor victims of Itani's actions. Bribery is another cause of conflict in this play. Although some other people like Selina, Doyoyo, Diana benefit from Itani's corrupt life, others like Kaṭudzani, Thanyani and Maraga suffer the consequences. Those who do not benefit from Itani's behaviour antagonise him. His abuse of power also causes conflict.

Conflict in this play manifests itself both in the physical and metaphysical dimensions.

Under physical conflict the following instances may serve as good examples.

- (i) When Arina, Itani's wife, advises him; he beats her. The noise awakes the children who are asleep. When Arina cries for mercy, Itani says to her:

Ndi ḍo ni sumbedza zwauri munna ndi nnyi muḍini.
Ndi ḍo ni ... (buḍuu! thekhu!). No ḷa muḍowe-hii!
Ndi a vhona u nga ni vhona unga ndi Itani uḷa we na

vha ni tshi mu kaṭa sa ndode. Ndo no vha Itani a re nṅe. Namusi ndi do ni bvisa tshikwamani, nda ni layela vhanzhi (Milubi, 1985:50).

(I'll prove to you that I am the only man in this house. I will ... (he beats her). You are spoiled. You think I am still that same Itani whom you used to play with. I am a changed Itani. Today I will take you out of my pocket.)

- (ii) Because of Itani's unbecoming behaviour, his wife fights with his concubine.

This happens when Itani invites his concubine to come and visit him at his home. His wife, who was away for a visits, comes back unexpectedly and finds the woman in her room.

- (iii) The fight between Arina and Itani's concubine leads to another fight - a fight between Arina and her husband. This leads to separation which ends in a divorce. When her parents ask her what the matter is, she tells them:

Mafhungo anga a hu na maṅwe arali hu si enea anga na khotsi a vhenevha vhana. Nazwino khavhe hu si tou fa wone muhangambwa ndi musu iyi thoho i songo fhafhariwa. Nga mulandu wa mini? Nga mulandu wa vhafarekano fhedzi-fhedzi (Milubi, 1985:72).

(There is no other problem except the one you know between my husband and myself. Had it not been for a door frame, my head would have been chopped. What was the problem? The cause of the whole saga is concubines.)

Another visible and serious conflict is the fight between Itani and a group of angry men. These angry men are Thanyani, Gwangwa and Maraga, whose wives are Itani's concubines known to everyone in the community. Itani is found by the three men making love with Selina in his office. They attack him. Itani pleads for mercy, but his attackers never listen. Itani is killed. Selina escapes with a wound.

Metaphysical conflict

Maraga, Thanyani and Gwangwa consult a traditional doctor. Their aims in consulting traditional doctors are, among others, to be physically and spiritually empowered so that they could attack their enemy without any difficulty. Another aim is to evoke the evil spirits so that they could kill Itani without suffering consequences.

Believing that the traditional doctor's charms work, they attack Itani. Charged with the medicines, Itani's attackers never listen to his words of plea:

Vho-Maraga, vha songo vhuya vha mmbulaha. Ndi do
vha fha tshiñwe na tshiñwe tshine vha ta. Tshelede
yanga yothe, na Mamvuka vha do vhuiswa vha da vha
shuma fhana dziofisini (Milubi, 1995:).

(Maraga, do not kill me. I will give you whatever you
ask from me. All my wealth; and your transfer to
Mamvuka will be reversed so that you come back and
work in the office.)

3.4.3 The tragic hero and his grave sufferings

The tragic hero in this play is Itani. In identification of the tragic hero Aristotle's recommendations have been applied. He recommends a particular type of a person as an ideal tragic hero. Firstly, he should not be a perfect or virtuous man. He should fall somewhere between good and average. In the analysis below, Itani's personal qualities will be examined under two headings: namely positive and negative character traits.

(a) Positive qualities

When Itani feels dissatisfied with the position he holds at work, he does not lose hope. He knows there is a solution in this dilemma. He decides to go to the University to improve his qualifications. To him nepotism and other forms of corruption can be eradicated if the right people were at the helm of affairs. He wants his friends to know this:

Hezwi zwithu zwa tshidivhano tshi no vhinula mbilu ya muthu vhudzuloni zwi khou n̄an̄iswa nga zwiṅan̄isi, Vho-Razwithu, n̄e ndo no humbula na u vhuyelela ngei Yunivesithi ya Madevhula uri ndi ṭhaphudze pfunzo dzanga (Milubi, 1995:06).

(This nepotism which is psychologically affecting many people cannot just be criticized, but we are also contributing in its practice; Razwithu, I am planning

to go back to the University of Madevhula to complete my degree.)

The decision taken by Itani is not easy to take, especially if one has the responsibility of being a family man. Itani has an objective and is determined to work to achieve it. His friend Razwithu tries to discourage him from going to the University. He does not believe that a man of Itani's age can still make it. Itani never changes his mind because of Razwithu's advice.

Itani's wife also advises him not to waste time by going to the University of Madevhula to study. She believes that her uncle, who promoted Itani to his present position, still has the capability to give him whatever post he would like to occupy. To her there is no need for Itani to undergo the strain of learning in order to improve his qualification. But Itani never takes this advice. Instead of taking such advice from his friend and his wife, Itani proceeds with his plan. He goes to the university where he completes his degree in record time. This is an achievement which is commendable.

(b) Negative qualities

Although some of Itani's virtues have been shown, he, however, has some serious pitfalls. One of his shortcomings is that he drinks too much. He does not respect his family when he is drunk. His drunkardness is condemned by Gethe:

U dina nga u roḁa ḁama yeneyo a tshi sevhedza nga mahalwa awe henengei ḁakani ngeno hayani vha tshi khou tema-temisa milomo. Tshiḁwe tshifhinga arali o zwi funa, hayani u mbo vha rengela aḁa marambo ane na ḁthuno dza shanduka khwiḁe. Vhana u wana na mmbwa dzo shanduka khwiḁe (Milubi, 1985:8).

(His problem is that he enjoys meat and beer whilst his family is starving. Sometimes when he is willing, he may buy dry bones for them to cook. His children have turned into dogs which feed on bones.)

Itani cheats at the university. He manoeuvres to get his university degree through cheating by collaborating with the lecturing staff and the university's authorities. This is why the university students booed him during a graduation ceremony.

Itani brags a lot. When he proposes love to women, he boasts about his job and his wealth. He also informs his concubine that he builds houses for those who love him. He remarks to one of his concubines:

A ni tsha humbula zwauri Mufanadzo tshiḁa tshifhinga ndi tshi kha ḁi andana nae ndo mbo ḁi mu fhaḁela (Milubi, 1985:69).

(Don't you remember that I once built for Mufanadzo while I was still in love with her?)

Another weakness of Itani is that he is a flirt. He proposes love to pupils, very old women and married women. His lust for married women ultimately leads to his own destruction.

The second of Aristotle's principles which is also going to be used in identifying the tragic hero is **stature**. Aristotle recommends that the tragic hero should not be an ordinary man. He is supported by Mandel (1961:103) who states that the tragic hero rises above the common ruck because he has purpose even when it is a guilty one.

In this play Itani is not an ordinary man in his society. He is an educated man who has risen to a very high authority. This man also has a purpose in his life. He has drive for sex, and power which need to be gratified.

Aristotle also recommends that a tragic hero must be a proud man.

Because of the position he holds within the community, Itani changes into a proud and arrogant man. His arrogance compels him to defy all well-meant advice and this results in him failing to make authentic choices. He flaws when he chooses to go after married women, young girls and very old women. These tarnish his image and finally cause his painful death.

The last recommendation which is going to be used in this play is the hero's recognition of truth. When Itani feels pain, he now remembers that Maraga, like any other person, also needs special consideration. He promises him a convenient post at the local government offices. He now realizes that unfair transfer is not the way to treat a fellow human being. Unfortunately, his attackers are no longer ready to hear anything from him. They are sick and tired of him. Itani is killed.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion one can say that '**Ndi mitodzi muni**' is really a tragedy. The disorder starts from the beginning of the play with Itani complaining about corruption in work places. When Itani goes to the university, he gives people the impression that he wants to fight corruption. But when he comes back, he becomes the personification of corruption.

Itani rises from the lower rungs of the civil service to become a head of a department. He appoints and dismisses whoever he likes at anytime. He picks and chooses women - married or unmarried - to flirt with. People complain about all these. But because of his position, people dare not complain openly.

Few people, like his wife try to advise him but Itani never listens. This leads to his self-destruction. His unbecoming behaviour makes it very easy to identify him as the tragic hero in this play. He is an outstanding figure with a marked character. He is the major source of evil in this play. Much as he has risen, Itani does not just fall, but is killed.

CHAPTER 4

4. TRAGEDY IN 'MUKOSI WA LUFU'

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the tragic actions that occur in **Mukosi wa Lufu**. On the basis of these actions, the researcher will then be able to determine whether **Mukosi wa Lufu** is a tragedy or not.

For an effective analysis of this play, which is dominated by female characters, feminist theory will be applied. The world or atmosphere of this play will also receive special attention.

Because of the difficulty which is there in identifying the protagonist, the following principles will be applied to the examination of the play: **the heroine's stature, catastrophe, the poetic justice** and **pathos**. The application of these principles will help the researcher to determine the protagonist of the drama and assess her status in the unfolding of events.

4.2 FEMINIST THEORY

Feminism is a political movement asserting and seeking to overcome oppression of women. Feminist philosophy is therefore a response to the experience of persistent subordination of the female person to the male, with the result that women suffer

continuously in the various social systems of the world. All cultures seem to place women on a lower social status than men. Regarding the universality of these oppressive attitudes Moore (1994:01) observes:

There appear to be no societies in which women are not subservient to men, even if there are many differences in the degree and nature of that subservience. The concept of patriarchy, referring to the structures through which male domination over women is established, has had its vicissitudes; some hold that the notion is so general and that it conceals more than it illuminates - and that is obscures politically and socially significances between women.

As a distinct response of women to oppression and domination by men, feminism originated in Western Europe and Northern America and spread to other parts of the world. The following form the basis for the rise of the feminist philosophy in Europe, which have soon spread to the countries of the south:

4.2.1 The philosophy of reproduction

Aristotle is quoted by Mangena (1996:01) as having stated that the male person is superior to the female because the soul that comes into a new human being is injected by the male person into that new human being during conception. Aristotle believes that only the male body, and not the female one, has a temperature which can preserve the soul. If the soul is the principle of life and only the male can

preserve it, then by virtue of his special capacity the male must be superior to the female. European philosophers take this further and conclude that the female is simply the property of the male person. She is an appendage and therefore, the dependant of the male counterpart. The view is justified by the Christian account of why and how God created the woman (Genesis 2:21-23).

4.2.2 The philosophy of human rationality

Human rationality also lends support basis to argument that the woman is inferior to the man. For example, John Locke, the British philosopher, is quoted by Higgs (1995) as having observed that only the male person is capable of establishing, managing and controlling democracy because it rests on rationality; a quality which a female person generally lacks. Rationality is used as a criterion to exclude the female person and sometimes the docile male from participating in public life.

4.2.3 Philosophy of scientific knowledge

European philosophers claim that women lack objectivity, a criterion which they believe, is necessary for the formulation and validation of knowledge. It is claimed that since women are emotional by nature, they cannot attain the kind of objectivity required for the formulation of scientific knowledge. The male person is accordingly accorded the exclusive right to be engaged in science. He alone can find access to scientific knowledge (Morrow, Wally 1989).

Farganis (1994:15) supports the idea that feminism is a movement formed as a response to the female oppression; she states:

Feminism argues that women are oppressed or dominated by men and that structural arrangements that initiate, support and legitimate that systematic oppression constitute patriarchy. This domination is held to be historically of long-standing and morally wrong, and the objective of feminism is to constitute itself as a social and political movement to undo this domination.

Rice (1989:10) expresses the same view when she notes:

In the feminist phase, from about 1880 to 1920, or the winning of the vote, women are historically enabled to reject the accommodating postures of femineity and to dramatise the ordeals of western women.

Feminist critics like Gottdiener (1994), Chodorow (1994); Hill (1991) condemn amongst other things the following: women stereotypes in literature; biased perception of women as useless, cheap, predictable designed personalities; prejudices of women.

On the other hand feminist critics praise fair projection of women or female characters in literature. They note; for example, strong character traits, achievements by female characters; praise the artistic skills and vision of women writers, praise initiatives undertaken by female figures and also praise independent thinkers.

4.3 THE WORLD IN MUKOSI WA LUFU

The first act of this play shows that all is not well in Mawela's family. Mawela is the head of the family in an African social set up. He has two wives. The first wife is Masindi who was married in an African traditional way. The second wife is Maria who was married in the Western traditional manner under incommunity of property.

The first scene opens with Masindi complaining about her husband's changed behaviour. He seems to concentrate on his second wife Maria and totally neglects her. Her daughter Tshililo observes her state of depression, and questions her about it. Masindi tells her:

U amba ndi ndo[^]the ndi a amba n[^]wananga. Zwi[^]la u amba ndi u pfa mini zwi[^]la? Ndi u pfa mbilu u vhavha. Ni vhona zwi zwa mini yenei ine khotsi a[^]nu vha endela u tshenisa wa mmane wa[^]nu muta[^], ngen[^]o washu u tshi khou shanduka dumba la[^] madumbani. Hafhu ri fhan[^]o ri vho nga mmbwa i si na mu[^]ne. Ha, Vho-Mawela nazwino-hii (Milubi, 1983:01).

(I will continue with my soliloquy. What do you think is the cause of this soliloquy? This is due to the fact that I am hurt. Do you think it is fair that your father only support your common law mother's family while ours is degenerating into an abandoned shack. Right now we are like a dog which does not have an owner. Gosh! What is wrong with Mawela?)

Tshililo has also observed this fondness of Mawela for Maria and tells her mother of an occasion when she saw Mawela, drinking tea and eating bread with his second wife while she looks at them admiringly. This is a sorry state of affairs.

The situation does not affect only Masindi and her children. Mawela is also seriously affected, for example, when he is about to defend Masindi against cruelty as practised by Maria, Maria asks him this question:

Hone vhone vho vha vho zwi itelani hezwi zwa u mala
bofu lo raliho li si na na luvhonela na luthihi (Milubi,
1983:05).

(Why did you marry this blind woman who does not
have a slight vision?)

Mawela confesses to Maria that he has made a mistake. He confesses:

U mala ndi nge u mala ha vha ho da. Nda hu
tanganedza ngau ha vha ho ndela. Ho no tou balelwa
mato a u vhona phanda (Milubi, 1983:05).

(I married because the time was due. I accepted the
challenge of nature. My problem was that I lacked
foresight.)

Maria reminds Mawela of the vow he made when they got married. She also reminds him of the incommunity of property type of marriage he has signed for; its

implications and meaning. By so doing she wants to show him that she is his only recognised wife that he has.

Maria reflects feminist tendencies. That is why she is able to stand for her rights. She is no longer prepared to be looked down upon by virtue of being a woman. This comes as a great surprise to Mawela who thought that Maria will always do his bidding.

The rivalry between the two women affect their children both at home and at school. For example, when Tshililo and Ndivhuho, both Masindi's children, ask for money for books from their father, Maria intervenes. She tells Mawela that there is no way in which he can use her money to pay the tuition fees for children who are not hers. As if, the education of these step-children is not important, she reminds him of financial commitments he has towards her:

Vhone vha tou vha mutsinda ane a si kone u vhona tshililo tsha thodea dza fhano hayani? Televishini yo vha yo no fhela nga lini u badelwa. Goloi ila ye nda pfi ndi do rengelwa, ndi do vhuya nda rengelwa lini? (Milubi, 1983:14).

(Are you an outsider who does not know the basic needs of this family? When did you finish the television instalments? The car which you promised to buy for me? When are you going to do it?)

The clash between Ndivhuho (Masindi's son) and Itani (Maria's son) intensifies the tension which is there between Mawela's two wives. Itani accuses Ndivhuho's mother of witch-craft. Ndivhuho reports this accusation to his mother. This causes a heated debate between the two mothers, each accusing the other of practising witch-craft.

Lowani, Maria's youngest child, gets ill. Maria does not believe that Lowani's illness has a natural cause. She is fully convinced that Masindi is the cause of her child's illness and blames Mawela of doing nothing to address the problem. She does not expect peace in the family in which a witch is somehow protected. She believes that peace can only be restored if the witch is eliminated. To this effect she states:

Ndi uf^hio mu^hdi kale na zwino, wo no go^hombelwaho ngeno tshira mu^hdini tshi khou veka. N^hne ndi ri hu tou imiwa mazha, mabala na zwihali zwa n^hanzwa makole. Ha kona u femuluwiwa nge tshira u ngalangadza nga tshingalangadzi tsha vha tsho ngalangadzwa (Milubi, 1983:35).

(Which family in the past and present; which, with a dangerous creature inhabiting it, got settled? I say we stand up together, pick up assortment of weapons and fight with the enemy. This is the only way in which peace can be restored in this family.)

Maria, though educated, does not believe that medical doctors can cure her child's disease. She convinces her husband that the solution can only be found from witch-doctors. The two parents end up visiting Manyuvhula Rasimphi, a well-known local

witch-doctor. After throwing down his divine bones, Manyuvhula tells Mawela and Maria that the person who is bewitching Lowani is a close relative. He puts it as follows:

Vho-Mawela, mushumi wa hezwi zwithu haho kule, ndi wa henefha. Ndi Kwindā asilī (Milubi, 1983:43).

(Mawela, the person who is responsible for this thing is not far; she is just here nearby. She belongs to the Kwindā clan.)

Manyuvhula's statement reinforces Maria's belief that Masindi is the one responsible for Lowani's illness.

Unfortunately, when the couple arrive at home, they find that Lowani is dead. Maria can no longer stand the pains. A decision should be taken as suggested by Maria. Maria, together with Mawela should move to a new township called Zwavhadivhalea. This is done in order to avoid further loss. But this decision is taken against Mawela's will.

Maria does not enjoy the type of life which she expected to enjoy at Zwavhadivhalea. The enemy she has run away from seems, in one way or another, to follow her and makes her life difficult. This is revealed by the following statement:

Tshi pilipitisaho ndi luvholela lwa mutevheli. Tsho ntsalelaho ndi u shanduka vuluvulu lo shelwaho mavu (Milubi, 1983:57).

(What is disturbing me is the persistence of the enemy.
What is only left is for me to change into a dangerous
snake which is ready to attack.)

Maria plans to kill Masindi. She decides to use Sambula in carrying out this task. She wins Sambula's heart by pretending to love him very much. Sambula is emotionally carried away and performs the duty. Masindi is burnt to ashes in her hut. Her children escapes the horrible death because they are on a visit at their grandmother's home. After carrying out his task Sambula vanishes into the dark.

The events described above take place in a middle class family in an African society. Two worlds are portrayed in this play. They are the African traditional and modern Western world. The African traditional world is represented by Mawela and Masindi in this play. Mawela has married two wives, which is totally acceptable in the African, particularly Venḡa, culture. The marriage between him and Masindi is a customary one.

There is nowhere in the book where Masindi shows resistance when Mawela comes up with his proposal that he wants to take a second wife. Rather, there is an indication that Masindi, just like other African women, helped her husband to find his second wife. The idiomatic expression 'Muḡangawe ndi musundaiwe' (Milubi 1983:02) literally means that the one who comes through you is the one who pushes you aside. An interpretation of this expression makes one conclude that Masindi has somehow positively contributed to her husband's second marriage. She may have done this in the hope that Maria would in one way or another help her.

The modern Western world is represented by Mawela and Maria. Mawela is a civil servant in the government. He is a Christian who is also a church elder and a lay-preacher. The following statement supports this.

Vhafunwa Murenani, ndi dakalo fulu namusi Mudzimu a tshi amba na tshivhidzo nga nne. Fhungo la namusi li a ri kaidza nga u ri fhembeledza. Li ri dzhenani nga khoro tsekene ngauri khulwane i isa mutshinyaloni (Milubi, 1983:38).

(My beloved ones in the Lord, it is a great pleasure for me today to pass God's message to the congregation. Today's message humbly reprimands us. It says you should use the narrow entrance because the wide one leads you into suffering.)

Maria is a Christian teacher. The life style in Mawela and Maria's family, which is projected by TV, lounge suite, type of food, e.g. bread and butter, the promise which Mawela has made to his wife Maria e.g. to buy her a car; shows that they are leading a western type of life. The marriage between Mawela and Maria also reflects western concept of one man one woman. They choose the incommunity of property type of marriage.

Educated as they are, Mawela and Maria do not throw away their cultural beliefs. When Lowani is ill, they forget their positions in the church and at their work places and go to consult a witch-doctor.

4.4 FEMINIST APPRAISAL IN 'MUKOSI WA LUFU'

Mawela is portrayed as a real head of an African family. The little education he has received causes him to mix two cultures. He marries two wives, one according to African tradition and the other according to European tradition. This is really tragic. He does not realise the danger he is creating for Masindi. He might have taken advantage of Masindi's situation - of being very traditional and an illiterate.

Choosing the incommunity of property type of marriage in tying the knot with an educated person like Maria is also tragic in his circumstances because as an African who holds on to tradition based on African values, he should have been careful not to do so. Mawela does this while he knows that he cannot divorce his first wife Masindi. He may have under-estimated the intelligence of Maria. The conflict and unhappiness he brings upon himself is the results of his flaws.

Masindi is portrayed as a normal African woman who respects African tradition or culture. She marries Mawela under customary law. She also helped to woo Maria for her husband. This is normal and acceptable in the African culture. This may have been a practice in her society and hoped that it would also work in her case. She fails to realize that unlike her, Maria's world-view and concept of herself as a woman has changed as a result of her education. For instance, Maria forces Mawela not to give money and food to Masindi; she is accused now and again as a witch and insulted as an uncivilized and ignorant fool by Maria - a second wife who in the African traditional set-up, is expected to treat the first wife with all respect and indeed take instructions from her.

Maria is a teacher who knows her democratic rights; for instance, the right to an environment which is not harmful to her family's health and well-being. She forces her husband to move to Zwavhadivhalea for safety and security reasons. Fortunately, Maria succeeds in her battle.

Maria knows what is due to her by the rights of the marriage she has contracted. Mawela's wealth, together with all the monies she can accumulate in all manner, is legally hers. That is why when Mawela tells her that he would use money from his personal account to pay Masindi's children's tuition fees, she reminds him:

Vha songo sokou fhufhumelwa sa mvuvhelo ya mahafhe.
Vho no hangwa kale na lini zwauri zwavho ndi zwanga
na zwanga ndi zwavho. Na kha tshelede zwo di tou ralo
(Milubi, 1983:15).

(Don't be foamy like a pot full of African beer
(mutomboti). Have you already forgotten that yours is
mine and mine is yours? This also applies to our
earnings.)

The above words show without doubt that Maria is very bold and knows her human rights. To her, husband's words are not final and if the circumstances deserve that he be chastised, so must it be.

This is the nature of the attitude that feminism advocates. Maria uses her democratic rights to consult the doctor of her choice. When she is convinced that her child's ailment can only be treated by a witch-doctor, she takes her child to Manyuvhula.

4.5 THE TRAGIC ACTION IN MUKOSI WA LUFU

To determine the tragic plot in this play the following aspects of drama will be examined; namely, the tragic cause, tragic conflict, reversal of fortune and recognition of truth.

4.5.1 Tragic cause

Masindi is regretful of the fact that she made it easy for Maria to settle in her marriage. She remarks:

Nangoho muḁangawe ndi musundaiwe. Nḁe ndo vha ndi tshi ri ḁanzu ḁiswa ḁi tikwa nga ḁilala. Izwi nḁe a thiathu u zwi vhona, zwa ḁiswa ḁi no thudza lilala ḁa ḁi sala ḁo ima nga ḁine (Milubi, 1983:02).

(It is true that one is pushed aside by the person one is trying to accommodate. I was always of the impression that young ones survive if they get support from elderly people. I am shocked by the independent status which the new generation of today claims.)

Masindi has positively participated in effecting the relationship between Mawela and Maria. Culturally there is nothing wrong in her participation in this bounding. But looking at the time and situation (being in modern time), one may consider Masindi's action as tragic. Before the arrival of Maria in this family the relationship between Mawela and Masindi was a happy one. But disharmony sets in quickly after Maria

joined this family. This new family member whom Masindi considers as her junior now usurps Masindi's position as the elder wife. This is really tragic on the side of Masindi because she is no longer able to exert control in her own family. This is something which she can no longer reverse. She must learn to live with this situation.

The type of marriage between Mawela and Maria is another cause of tragic action. One fails to understand why Mawela chooses the incommunity of property type of marriage while he is fully aware that he has another wife. This is something which is tragic and contributes significantly to the destruction of the family he has built.

Mawela and Maria's visit to the witch-doctor is another tragic action. Manyavhula's divination makes Maria believe that Masindi is the one who is causing Lowani's illness. This fuels the hatred and jealousy which was already there in her towards Masindi.

The love which has developed between Maria and Sambula is another cause of concern. Maria is now using Sambula as an instrument to solve her problem. Sambula, out of love, kills Masindi.

4.6 TRAGIC CONFLICT

Conflict in this play is triggered by the clash between two cultures, namely, the African traditional and the Western cultures. An African culture allows a man to marry more than one wife. Polygamy is therefore accepted. This is why Mawela

marries the second wife, Maria. Culturally, Mawela has done something which is acceptable in African culture. There is a saying in Tshivenda which goes: Musadzi muthihi ndi khaladzi - literally meaning, one wife is a sister. This figuratively means that a respected man in African culture in general and in Venda in particular, is the one with more than one wife. To marry additional wives is another way of showing the society that one is rich. Thus a man ends up gaining more respect in his own community. Sometimes this might even give him an advantage if one is vying for the position of a chief.

Mawela's first wife is married under a customary law which allows him to marry more than one wife. As an African who believes in communal life, Mawela believes that his wives will share whatever they have in the family and learn to live harmoniously.

Masindi helps her husband to get his second wife. She may have done this in the hope that Maria will give her the respect due for her as is always the case in polygamous African communities. Unfortunately, this was a miscalculation and the beginning of her destruction.

Mawela marries his second wife under the incommunity of property law. This is a type of marriage which does not allow extra marital relationship. In effect, it is one man, one wife. Whether Mawela understood it in that way or not, one cannot tell. Had he known what he was doing, he may have chosen the customary law in marrying his second wife. A conflict could have been avoided in this way.

Masindi may also not have understood the nature of the marriage Mawela was contracting. Had she had the knowledge or understanding of it and its implication, she may not have stood by and allowed it to be contracted.

It is only after the marriage that Masindi realizes that she has made a blunder by allowing the marriage to take place under the western laws. Her position as the first wife who must be recognized as such by Maria and be respected in an African family is rather scorned.

Instead of her as a senior member of the family to play the tune for Maria, it is Maria who dictates everything. The communal life which she was expecting to enjoy with the newly wedded wife becomes a mirage. Sharing or helping one another as wives of the same husband is not what happens in her case. This in a way frustrates Masindi. In her frustration Masindi pours her heart out to Makwarela: (A helpful old lady who wants to know what Mawela is doing in order to normalize the situation in his family).

U zwi itisa vha khou zwi itisa. N^owa i wisa th^oho kha muthu o dzivhelwaho nga vhu^tungu ha n^owa, a songo edzaho izwo tshawe ndi u gombiwa nga i re na vuhali. Nahone a pinaho u fanela u vha o dziba ho mu dzibisaho, zwa sa ralo u mbo shanduka a dzibaho kha helele. Tshawe ndi u suvha e nga tshikosi gaa, ha vha u shanduka fhasi. Na mukalaha wa hashu kha vha hangwe. Vha^la vho paniwa havha^la, u panulula a hu tshee na. Vha^la Maria u khou vha nyonga vhukuma. Zwi pfisa hani vhu^tungu. Zwa vhuhadzinga ndi a zwi vhona. N^oamusi zwi nga u dziba zwi a dziba. U

hadzingana hu tou nga ho swika tshivhangani, u gomela hu pfala kule. Uvhu ho pfuvha sa muroho wa muthanyi; une na u vhavhesa u vhavha ha ^λdi vha hawo (Milubi, 1983:08).

(He is a contributing factor. A snake bows its head when it comes into contact with somebody who is empowered with an anti-snake powder; if not so he is a victim of a poisonous one. For a firm grip, a challenger must be sure of a good fighting ground, if no thorough inspection is made, a possibility of losing one's grip on a slippery ground is very high. As a result one could obviously slip down. Forget about my husband. That one is dancing to Maria's tune; he has no choice. This is a sorry state of affairs. I used to see women sharing one husband peacefully in the past but today it is almost impossible. I am afraid our tradition is breaking down.)

The life style in Mawela's family changes. A social rift is created between Masindi and Maria's family units. Mawela's family is therefore divided into two, with Mawela trying to play a unifying role. Unfortunately he fails dismally. The section of Mawela's family which is suffering is the one which is under Masindi. Although Mawela is still employed he can no longer support Masindi's family as he did before. Life becomes sour for Masindi and her children.

While Masindi is living in "hell" within the same family with Maria, Maria has created herself a worldly paradise. She is a teacher, who, despite her monthly salaries, is in full control of Mawela's wealth.

The sour relationship which is there between Maria and Masindi also affect their children. Itani and Ndivhuho clash in a game in which they are together engaged. Itani accuses Ndivhuho's mother of witch-craft. Ndivhuho reports the accusation to his mother, who, out of rage, attacks Maria. Maria's response to the attack shows that she supports her son, for she tells her rival:

Nṅe a thi nga ḍo zwi kona zwa u amba navho zwino,
vhusiku nda vho ḍo balelwa. Rine zwashu ndi zwi no
itwa masiari zwi tshi vhone nga nnyi na nnyi. Nahone
zwine ra ita zwi bveledza vhana na lushaka phanda.
Vhone vha tou vha muswohoo muthanyavhusiku
(Milubi, 1983:22).

(I will not be able to talk to you now while I am fully aware that I will not be able to do so in the evening. My duties are to be performed during day-light and in public. My work brings development to the youths and the community at large. You are but an owl which is active during the night).

Masindi's confrontation with Maria co-incides with the illness of Lowani, who, unfortunately dies. Maria believes that Masindi is the cause of the illness. She accuses her husband of keeping an enemy within the family. She makes a recommendation to her husband that they move to Zwavhaḍivhalea, which is a new residential area where she hopes life will be better. Conditions force Mawela to do as he is told. Masindi and her children are deserted.

The move taken by Mawela and Maria is in conflict with African tradition. Extended families are acceptable and indeed a common feature of African tradition. Division in the family, no matter how big it is, is totally discouraged. Many people, especially elderly people condemn the decision taken by Mawela and Maria, this is why an old woman says:

Zwino Masindi ndi u sala e e^hthe hezwi. Haa! Zwa nnda ha mavu a zwi fheli. Zwa u tamba nga n^wwana wa muⁿwe ngaurali a si zwavhu^di. A si na tshawe i^tali u kandekanywa sa dzadza (Milubi, 1983:51).

(Is Masindi being left alone? Gosh! Life is so complicated and unfair. It is very bad to abuse another person like this. A poor person is trampled upon like a tattered cloth.)

An old man, just like many other elderly people, is not happy about what Mawela has done. He totally disapproves the action, that is why he angrily says:

Ho yiwa hafha kha lokhishi ya "Zwavha^divhalea". Ho ngo iswa nga onoyu Maria. Fha^la o farwa vhukuma, u sutuka a si hawe na luthihi (Milubi, 1983:51).

(They have gone to settle at "Zwavha^divhalea". Maria dictated the move to him. She is in total control).

The action taken by Mawela and Maria does not solve the problem. Maria still believes that Masindi is still carrying on with her witch-craft activities. In this regard she states:

N^owa ndi i no tevhelwa ya humelwa. Wa i tevhela na mulindini wayo ndi u t^oda u vhona ma^o a lufu. Ndo fhufha sa tshin^oni tshi t^oda^o vhuthukho ha vhuawelo (Milubi, 1983:57).

(Charge a snake and make a fast retreat. It is a fatal mistake to follow it up to its hiding place. I flew like a bird which was looking for a safe resting place.)

Maria approaches Sambula to help her solve her problem. Sambula is in love with Maria and therefore sees this as an opportunity to advance his interest. Masindi is therefore murdered in a terrible manner, by Sambula. This happened in this manner:

Ndi vhukati ha vhusiku. Shango lo^othe lo^o ya nga khofhe le d^ure! Vhukatini ha vhusiku honohu, hu vhonala Sambula a tshi khou mona-mona na tshit^oanga tsha Vho-Masindi. U mona ha hone hu tou vha u n^enya hu sa vhuyi ha pfala.

Sambula u hon^oa vothi la tshit^oanga nga ganzhe-. U fhedza a mbo thoma u shela tshilu^odimulilo u thoma vothini, u mona na n^odu, a fhedzisela nga t^hangani. Nga itshi tshifhinga avha Vho-Masindi a vha pfi tshithu. O no fhedza e mulilo khweru! n^odu lai, khathihi fhedzi ha mbo dⁱ vha ho takuwa bonyongo. Sambula na afha he a fhelela.) (Vho-Masindi vha tou u zwi pfela

khofheni. Vha tshi ri papara vha vhona ma^{lo}! vha khou vhona zwi sa v^honwi.) (Vha a lwisa vo^{thi}, vo^{thi} lo hoⁿⁱwa. Vhathu vha tshi bva vha wana nangoho ho tangana dzhatsha la malombe.) (Vho-Makwarela vha tshi pfa mukosi vha vuwa, vha vhona bonyongo lo tangana, vha mbo di vha vho u vhea.) (Milubi, 1983:67).

(It was at mid-night. It was quiet as everybody was fast asleep. Sambula is seen lingering around Masindi's kitchen. He walked stealthily.

(Sambula locks the kitchen's door. After that he pours an inflammable liquid, starting from the door, around the hut and lastly on the roof. At this time Masindi is fast asleep. He finally strikes the matches and set the hut alight. Sambula vanishes in the dark. (Masindi hears this as if she is dreaming. When she wakes up, she was surprised to find her hut engulfed in flames.) (She tries to force the door open; unfortunately it is locked. When neighbours wake up, they discover that Masindi's house is on fire.)

(When Makwarela hears the noise, she wakes up, and after noticing the danger, she also alert those who were not aware of it.)

4.7 REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

Reversal of fortune, according to Cohen (1973:200) is the downfall of a protagonist from good fortune to bad; that is, his collapse from a position of eminence to a state of destruction, though not necessarily death.

Reversal of fortune can be traced in the development of two main characters, namely, Masindi and Maria. For one to fall, one must first rise.

Firstly, an examination of the life of Masindi will be made to find out whether she got a chance to climb a social ladder or not.

The opening scene shows that Masindi is complaining about the social order which is disturbed. This gives one an impression that peace and harmony once prevailed in Mawela's family. But immediately after Mawela marries his second wife, we see the family disintegrating. Maria's action in this family throws life into turmoil. Masindi and her children's life-condition changes from bad to worse. She has no food. Her children never receive proper paternal care from their father. Masindi therefore ceases to enjoy the warmth and care one finds, in family life.

Maria is Mawela's second wife. She is fortunate to have married under incommunity of property, the type of marriage which makes her the sole heir to husband's property. In addition to exercising full control over her husband's property, Maria is a school teacher. All these put her in a good economic position.

Maria's influence over her husband as a woman married according to the ordinance, and as a school teacher who is financially well-off, makes Mawela leave Masindi behind and move to Zwavhadivhalea. This new location gives Maria an additional status.

After Sambula has killed Masindi, one expects the law to take its course. Unfortunately no proper investigation is done to lead to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. The failure of the author to develop the plot to include the arrest and punishment of the murderers leaves the reader disappointed and makes the "unfinished" plot more tragic.

The play ends with the death of Masindi. Had she died a natural death; some people would be tempted to say that she is relieved. Unfortunately, after her many years' life of hardship, she dies a painful death. Her murderers are also not brought to book. Maria and Sambula are not arrested. Because of the nature of Masindi's death and the murder case which is unsolved; there is no catastrophe in this play.

4.8 THE TRAGIC HEROINE AND HER SUFFERINGS

The tragic heroine in this play is Masindi. The researcher has based his argument on the following points:

4.8.1 The tragic heroine's stature

Concerning the tragic hero's status Abrams (1984) states that a hero is "better than we are". This means that a tragic hero must somehow be above ordinary people's level.

Masindi is the wife of Mawela who is a lay-preacher. In the Christian community, a lay-preacher's wife, just like a minister of religion's wife, is accorded great respect. They even address her as "Vho-Mme" or "Jeffrou". To be addressed as the "Mother of the church" is a great honour and recognition of one's moral stature. By virtue of being the wife of Mawela, Masindi enjoys this status.

The first wife in an African community is the one who has full control of the family. Every family member, with the exception of the husband who is the head of the family, is expected to show her respect.

Masindi is Mawela's first wife, and everyone who joins the family thereafter is culturally bound to respect her. This is why many people like Phophi and other elderly people blame the western culture when Masindi no longer receives her due respect. One elderly woman states her disapproval of the western way of life and its adverse effects:

Kha vha litshe ri vhone. Ndi mutsedu wa vhana khoroni, vha tsedula ri tshi khou vhona, vhañwe vha fhedza vho kaṭa. O kaṭaho u fhedza nga u fovhela vhuṭunguni, ngeno vhasei vha tshi khou sea dakaloni (Milubi, 1983:54).

(Let us wait and see. This is a children's game at an open ground near the main gate where some are winning while some are loosing. Those who are loosing are in despair and are laughed at.)

Still on the question of the tragic hero Steven (1984) states that the tragic hero should be high-born, and neither particularly evil nor particularly good, but merely normal in his balance of the two.

4.8.2 The tragic hero's great suffering

Hattens (1975:30) states that all tragic figures suffer greatly. The tragic hero, according to him, is a man of good intentions whose catastrophe may be the result of a flaw, not of guilt. He may fall because he errs or sins.

In this play the author wants to be realistic. He wants to show the readers that it could happen in life that one suffers the greater part of one's life. This is what exactly happens in Masindi's life. The arrival of Maria in Mawela's family marks the turning point of Masindi's life. Life becomes unbearable for her and her children.

Masindi's intention of allowing her husband to take a second wife is noble. But her noble intention turns into a nightmare because her husband no longer gives her food or buy her children books and clothes. She is now and again accused as a witch by a woman she helped to bring into the house as a second wife. The worst part of it is that her husband and his second wife deserted her. She is left alone with nobody to look after. The most painful part of the story is when she is burnt alive. She is not killed because she has done something wrong to those who planned and killed her. She made a mistake of helping her husband in wooing an educated person like Maria to become her husband's second wife. She again made the mistake of allowing Mawela to marry his second wife under incommunity of property. This is really tragic.

Maria acquires her social status through hard work. She is a teacher; she has money; but she is bound to be criticized by her fellow colleagues and her fellow Christians for taking away somebody's husband. The first wife in most African countries, especially in Venda is regarded as the "owner of the family". Anyone who comes in thereafter is expected to be submissive to her.

Masindi leads a very painful life. She realizes her mistake very soon but cannot do anything to reverse the situation. She learns to live with all the pains and difficulties the situation creates for her and is finally killed in a horrible manner. There is no reversal of fortune in this play because Masindi's death is the final scene of her sufferings. Maria has also risen to a certain height. The author fails to pull her down.

Because of the lack of catastrophe in this play, the aspect of agnorsis also falls short. Neither Maria nor Sambula realizes his or her mistakes.

4.8.3 Poetic justice

Abrams (1981:142) defines poetic justice as the term coined by Thomas Rymer, an English critic of the late seventeenth century, to signify the distribution of earthly rewards and punishments at the close of a literary work in proportion to the virtue or vice of the various characters.

The character's good or bad works are weighed by the critic and judged if they are in line with the rewards or punishments they finally get.

Concerning the same theme, Gray (1984:161) defines it as the term used to describe the idea that literature should always depict a world in which virtue and vice are eventually rewarded and punished.

In this play Masindi receives a heavy punishment which she does not deserve. She is married to Mawela, who later on, decides to take a second wife. She does nothing to stop the marriage. Even after Mawela's second marriage, Masindi does nothing to disrupt it. Despite all these, Masindi's only earthly rewards were accusations of evil thing, she is criticised of witch-craft. This leads to her terrible death.

Maria lives a happy life. She has money. She is married according to the ordinance and this gives her total control of Mawela's property. She stays in a beautiful house. Generally she has all the basic things which every middle class person has. Her only stumbling block is Masindi and her children. For Maria to become a free and a happy woman, Masindi's family must be whipped off. She approaches Sambula who helps her solve her problem. Masindi is killed for no apparent reason. Jealous is the only motive for this cruel killing. Unfortunately the perpetrators are left unpunished.

The author in this play would like to show the readers that we live in an imperfect world. It is not always the case that those who lead noble and virtuous lives are positively rewarded. It is possible for innocent people to suffer the consequences for which they are not responsible for. In trying to show this, the author deviates from Aristotle's criterion that poetic justice apply in a tragedy.

4.8.3 Pathos

Pathos is defined by Gill (1985:280) as the arousing of tenderness, pity or sorrow in a reader or an audience by the presentation of sad or moving scene. The pity aroused in a reader or an audience is often due to the helplessness of the characters.

Gray (1984:154) defines pathos as a Greek word which refers to moments in works of art which evoke strong feelings of pity and sorrow.

Mukosi wa Lufu, is a tragic drama and is full of moments of pathos. For example, Masindi's speech in the opening scene is full of pathos:

Vhukuma ro shanduka yone ngwanzha-ngwanzha ya lone gwangwangwa. Tshalo a hu na arali hu si u bviswa badani mbilu na yone vhudzuloni ya bviswa (Milubi, 1983:01).

(We have totally changed into an unroadworthy car. What is only left for us is to be issued with an unroadworthy certificates and be forgotten.)

Strong feelings of pity and sorrow are again evoked when Mawela and his second wife Maria drink coffee and eat bread while Tshililo, who is Mawela's legitimate daughter looks at them. In support of what her mother tells her about her father's unfair treatment, she says:

Vhone vha kha ḍi amba izwo? Nḽe hu nwiwa idzo dzigofhi dza hone ndo sokou lavhelesa. Zwi tshi ri u nwiwa na marotho a dzidzhamu, batha na phinathibatha wa vhuya we nazwino a si zwa gofhi na marotho fhedzi (Milubi, 1983:01).

(Are you still talking about that? I just look at them while they are drinking their coffee. When they are relishing the drink you will not believe that they are drinking this ordinary coffee, that they are eating this ordinary bread and jam, butter and peanut butter.)

These statements by Masindi and her daughter are full of pathos, particularly because Masindi is culturally the rightful wife of Mawela. She has culturally the responsibility to control the whole family. There are also no reasons why Masindi's children should suffer. They do not get enough food; for example, when Ndivhuho is not satisfied with a piece of porridge he gets from Tshililo, he says to her:

Hafhu Tshililo no thanya nga maḽḽa. Ni nga mbo ḍi peḽḽula vhuhulu, nḽe na mpha vhuḽḽuku (Milubi, 1983:63).

(Tshililo, I know that you are very clever. You can give yourself a big portion of this piece of porridge and give me a small portion of it.)

This is really a sorry state of affairs. Things become worse when an innocent woman like Masindi is killed in a horrible manner. Her last painful words are:

Nandi naa vhathu! Ndi tou fa zwanga no di lavhelesa
zwanu? Nandi naa wee Vho-Tshavhungwa? Na
mphalala? (Milubi, 1983:68).

(Hello fellow people? Should I die while you just look
at me? Hello Tshavhungwa? Why don't you come and
rescue me?)

This passage quoted above is designed to evoke the feeling of tenderness, pity or sympathy from the audience towards Masindi.

4.10 SYMBOLISM

A symbol is defined by Gray (1984:203) as something which represents something else (often an idea or quality) by analogy or association. The symbolist movement usually refers to French poets of the second half of the nineteenth century, whose poems exploit the mysterious suggestiveness of private symbols.

A symbol in the broadest sense is anything which signifies something else. The symbol may be public or private. Public or conventional symbols refer to symbolic objects of which the further significance is determined within a particular culture, for example, a peacock is generally associated with pride.

Private or personal symbols refer to the symbols whose significance the poets generate mainly for themselves. These types of symbols pose a more difficult problem in interpretation.

Cohen (1973:197) views a symbol as a process of association or fusion of two elements. He further states that the symbol itself usually begins with some concrete form - a physical condition, an object (animate or inanimate) or an event. In the context of a literary work, the concrete element may suggest an abstract concept or meaning.

Abrams (1987:195), in his definition of symbol states that the term symbol is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself.

Gill (1985:21) puts it clearly when she states that a symbol is a word that stands for, or points to, a reality beyond itself, for example, sunrise is often used as a symbol for a new beginning.

Symbolism abound in **Mukosi wa Lufu**. They are seen in names given to characters, children's play and names of places.

Maria is a Christian name - an European name that the converted bears to signify that she has abandoned those aspects of her native culture that are considered heathen.

The name Maria therefore can be regarded as a symbol representing Western culture and values. Maria displays a strong character in this play. She is not submissive as women are generally expected to be. She cuts her husband to size. Mawela tries to protect his children (Tshililo and Ndivhuho), Maria tells him:

Vha nga amba lune vha nga bvisa na luphugwane, fhedzi nne ndi nga si tende u wa nga fhasi. Kani-ha a vha zwi divhi uri muluvha hothe maputu a a fhela. Nahone zwa muluvha hothe kha nne a zwi fanywi.

(Vho-Maria u ralo vha mbo di sedza thungo. Vha tshi vhona uri Vho-Mawela vha todou amba, vha mbo di bva, vha vha sia vhe vhothe (Milubi, 1983:15).

(You can talk until your mouth is wet with particles of saliva, but I will never allow you to sit on my back. Don't you know that submission to everyone does not pay? To become loyal to everybody is something which I will never do.)

(After saying this, Maria changes her sitting position and faces the other direction. When she realizes that Mawela wants to talk to her, she stands up and leaves the room.)

Mawela represents both African and Western culture. The dominating culture in him is African. For example, the marriage between him and Masindi is typically African which still allows him to take a second wife.

When Lowani is ill, Mawela, together with his wife Maria, consult the traditional healer. This type of action is not expected of a lay-preacher who preaches against heathen practices. Mawela's life style is typically that of an African who in spite of his education and calling, still adheres to his traditional practices.

Masindi is an African name given to an African woman. The name itself has a symbolic meaning. It represents an African culture. Masindi is defeated by Maria. She has totally lost hope. This is brought out vividly in her remarks:

Ngoho v^hutshilo a v^hu na ma^hto, ngavhe e hone, ndi musⁱ ho v^huisa mbilu. Atsina zwithu zwi a vhonelelwa sa muthu?

Ndi d^o ri a si izwo ngani afhu na Matongoni lⁱ tshi nga lo ri furalela? Ngavhe lⁱ tshi longa zwanda ma^hdini, mutakalo na dakalo zwa ri dzhena-vho (Milubi, 1983:55).

(It is true that life has got no eyes; if it had, it would have felt sorry for us. Do innate objects have a show-off like a human being?)

What can stop me from saying this, while Matongoni (where ancestors live) is silent about our problems? They should have responded by blessing us so that peace can prevail.)

The defeat of Mawela and Masindi by Maria symbolically means that the African tradition is defeated by the Western culture. The author here tries to show the

breakdown of a system as a result of intrusion of another; in this case the intrusion of western culture.

Masindi admits that even her ancestors have failed to intervene on her behalf. If the ancestors have also failed, who else can bring the solution? Obviously in the African tradition the ancestors are regarded as supernatural beings who watch over the living and guide and protect them. For one to suggest that the ancestors have failed in this, shows the extent of the feeling of hopelessness that one feels in the face of an alien culture that seems to destroy established tradition in its wake.

Masindi's death has also a symbolic meaning. This can be interpreted as the total destruction of what represents traditional customs, beliefs and values.

When Masindi dies, some people feel pity for her while some never sympathize with her. For example, Nyakubilwana shows sympathy when she says:

Yanga miṭodzi i gubutshela iwe Masindi ṅwana wa
nakudze yanga. Vho u zwimaho vho u zwima ṅamusi
vha u wana. Kha vha takale ngauri ṅamusi ndi hone
vha tshi ḍo thukha vhukimvini vha si tsha gogonwa
(Milubi, 1983:70).

(My tears are shed for you Masindi who is my relative's daughter. Your hunters have finally found you. Let them rejoice because from today they will live a life which is free from disturbances.)

Nyakubilwana in this case symbolises those Africans who feel sorry for the valuable African culture which is disappearing. An individual's culture defeat has a bearing in one's daily life.

While Nyakubilwana is sorry about Masindi's death, Tshavhungwa arrogantly says:

Aredi, ndi yafhi na muloi? Mu litsheni a thuthube na
vhuloi hawe. Ni vha tshi mu sia e ethe vho vha vho
vhona mini (Milubi, 1983:68)?

(I don't care, I have nothing to do with a witch. Let
her, together with her witch-craft powers, burst. What
do you think is their reason for abandoning her?)

Tshavhungwa represents those Africans whose minds have been totally colonized. They feel proud about adopting an alien culture in its entirety and throwing away theirs. When children are playing, Itani wants to ride on other children's backs, including Ndivhuho, who is Masindi's son. These children would never complain as long as they get a piece of cake in return. Here too, one can see some symbolism - those who have economic power subjecting those who haven't to their wishes.

The names of places like Sokoutenda and Zwavhadivhalea also have symbolic meanings. Sokoutenda is where Mawela, Masindi, Maria and their children live before Mawela and Maria move to a new township. Sokoutenda literally means "to just agree". This is an area where Masindi and her children are left to accept their fate.

Zwavhadvhalea literally means "place for the elite". People who stay there are usually those who can afford expensive life. Maria chooses to stay there with her husband.

4.9 CONCLUSION

The aforementioned discussion above has shown that **Mukosi wa Lufu** is a tragedy. The tragic action is triggered by the violation of western marriage laws by Mawela. The western marriage laws, if correctly applied, have their own advantages and disadvantages. But if the western marriage laws are mixed with African traditional laws, like in the case of Mawela, chaos obviously results. Mawela's family is now in tatters because of his flaws. He marries Masindi under customary laws and Maria under the ordinance. This brings chaos in the family.

Mawela is therefore acting as a tritagonist in this play. He is trying to please both his wives; unfortunately he fails.

Masindi is portrayed as a protagonist or tragic heroine in this play. Everything revolves around her and she is the one who suffers. Her life ends in a tragic manner.

Maria is an antagonist in this play. The harmony which was there in Mawela's family is disrupted by her. Masindi and her children's lives are thrown into turmoil by her. Masindi's murder is organized by her. The murder case is unfortunately unsolved in this play, and this makes the whole play ends in suspense.

CONFLICT IN CULTURES CAN BE SHOWN DIAGRAMMATICALLY

CONFLICTING ASPECTS	TSHIVENDA CULTURE	WESTERN CULTURE
1. Polygamy	+	-
2. Christianity	-	+
3. Equality of sex	-	+
4. Belief in witch-craft	+	-
5. Classification of people according to wealth	-	+
6. Separation of families	-	+

CHAPTER 5

5. TRAGEDY IN KHORO DZI SA DZHENELANI

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to find out whether **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** is a tragedy or not. The world view together with the tragic plot, which will both help in determining the tragic effects will be examined. Although **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** may be regarded as a modern drama, the following principles, which were used by Aristotle in the analysis of the ancient Greek tragedies will also be applied in this study: the stature of the hero, hubris, harmatia, moira, nemesis, catastrophe, catharsis and agnorisis. In justifying the use or application of Aristotle's principles in an effective analysis of some of the modern plays Clark's (1965:149) quotes [Le] Bossu, one of modern critics as saying:

That all excellent arts and particularly that of poetry, have been invented and brought to perfection by men of transcendent genius; and that, therefore, they who practice afterwards the same arts are obliged to tread in their footsteps, and to search in their writings the foundation of them; for it is not just that new rules should destroy the authority of the old.

Because of the relationship which is found between Milubi's play and many Greek plays, the researcher is forced to apply most of Aristotle's principles in his analytical study.

5.2 The world as portrayed in *Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani*

The story takes place in a modern African community. The first scene depicts chief Thavha addressing his subjects about the importance of initiation schools in his country. From his address one can easily see that chief Thavha has authority over his subjects. He tells them:

Kha zwi dzhene ndevheni dza vhathu. Vhana vhothe vhane vha vha mashuvhuru vha fanela u wela. Mula khoula fhalala thavhani ya Tshilata, ngeno domba li henefha khoroni yeneyi. Mubebi a sa isi n'wana u do ndivha zwavhuḏi (Milubi, 1994:01).

(Let it be understood by everybody. Every youth who has not yet undergone an initiation school must join others who are at present attending. Boy's initiation school (mula) is there at Tshilata mountain while the snake dance (domba) is here at the chief's kraal for female participants. A parent who does not take his/her child to the initiation school will account for that.)

When some of the chief's subjects like Thambatshira try to mention modern schools as an excuse of not going to the initiation schools, the chief further shows that he exercises supreme authority:

Problem arises when the priest's son also joins other youths at the initiation school. The person who brought the message to the priest's attention is Bababa, one of those regarded as outcasts by Reverend Tshibovhola. The congregation wants the same measures to be taken against Polosi, the priest's son, as the priest has excommunicated others for taking part in the initiation school's activities.

The problem becomes complicated when Rev. Tshibovhola receives the message that his daughter, Murendeni, has been refused permission to join other youths at the initiation school because she is pregnant. This is also a misconduct which needs punishment of some kind. The congregation expects a strict pastor like Tshibovhola to act very quickly as in the case of other members of the same congregation.

Rev. Tshibovhola tries to concentrate on the second problem first. He would like his daughter to sign with her boyfriend and gets married before the community or congregation realizes that she is pregnant. Unfortunately, the boy who impregnated Murendeni is the chief's son. There is a condition binding every girl who wants to be married into the chief's kraal to undergo the initiation school's rituals first. Murendeni therefore does not qualify to become Nndwakhulu's (the chief's son) wife because she did not graduate at an initiation school. The most unfortunate part of the story is that her father, Rev. Tshibovhola is not ready to take her there (to the initiation school). He tries to bribe some of the influential royal family members to endorse the marriage, but he does not succeed. He expects people like Bababa and aunt Ndiitwani, whom he frustrated at his church, to

negotiate on his behalf. Instead of negotiating for Murendeni's unconditional marriage with Ndwakhulu, they, as a way of revenging for Reverend Tshibovhola's action, try to look for any means to make the marriage difficult.

Rev. Tshibovhola does not easily lose hope. He still believes that his daughter will get married to somebody else who is a Christian; not a heathen like Ndwakhulu. For this reason he tactfully traps Murendeni's cousin to become her legitimate husband. Rev. Tshibovhola fortunately succeeds in winning Murendeni's cousin's heart. He is ready to marry her. But this prematurely becomes known to the congregation. Influential members who are loyal to the members of the royal family start to question the action taken. They even take the matter further to the affected people like Ndwakhulu and his parents.

Despite the rumours and dissatisfaction by the members of the congregation, Rev Tshibovhola proceeds with the wedding preparations. The allegations that he is going to use the church's funds for his daughter's wedding become stronger. This leads church elders like Tshilongo and others to demand financial statement from him. Tshilongo openly says to Reverend Tshibovhola:

Vhafunzi, kha vha bwise gwama la kereke ri li vhone.
Vha dovhe vha bwise na bugu dzothe dzi no sumbedza
madzhenele na mabvele a tshelede ya kereke (Milubi,
1994:58)

(Pastor, bring out the church's money so that we see it. On top of that, bring out the books which show the income and expenditure of the church funds.)

Reverend Tshibovhola ignores all the congregation's protests and proceeds with preparations for the wedding. Other church ministers warn him not to proceed with the preparations since it is scandalous. They also threaten to boycott the wedding if he does not listen. The advice unfortunately falls on deaf ears. He tells them that he is not ashamed to solemnize his daughter's wedding. He tells them:

Hoo! Vhone vha khou ima na leneli la uri nwananga
a iswe ngomani, a si zwone? Arali zwo ralo, nne
nwananga ndi do tou mu fhatutshedza nga tsha
vhukoma (Milubi, 1994:61).

Well! Are you supporting the fact that my daughter should be taken to the initiation school; is it not true? If this is the case, I will solemnize my daughter without your assistance.)

The wedding day arrives. People gather in the church as planned. Ndwakhulu and his mother are also among the congregation. The aim of the two is to disrupt the wedding since Ndwakhulu is the rightful husband of the bride. Fortunately, the two arrive at a right time when the Reverend is making this following announcement, which is of course a procedure.

(Vho fara Bivhili tshandani) Hu na ane a pfa hu na zwiñwe zwine zwa nga kundisa avha vhavhili u malana?

(Hu dzhena vhakoma vho ði kanyela ñwenda wavho khunduni, ngeno vho salwa murahu nga Nndwakhulu na mukalaha. Nga murahu ha vhenevha hu mbo vhonala Vho-Bababa na Vho-Khavhagali) (Milubi, 1994:63).

(With a Bible in his hand) Is there anybody who has something which can stop these two from getting married?

(The chief's wife, wearing a traditional attire, enters the church with Nndwakhulu and an old man follows her. Immediately after them, Bababa and Khavhagali also follow.)

Without wasting time she openly attacks Rev. Tshibovhola and accuses him of intrigue. Nndwakhulu supports his mother by saying:

Vha khou amba ngoho vhakoma. Hoyu musidzana Murendeni ndi musidzana wanga. Na muhwalo une a vha nawo ndi tou ðivha zwavhuði-vhuði. Ndi wanga.

(Tshivhidzo tshi a kanuka.) (Milubi, 1994:63).

(You are speaking the truth vhakoma (a title given to a chief's wife) This girl Murendeni is my girl friend. I am also responsible for her pregnancy. I am responsible.)

(The congregation is surprised.)

Very quickly the celebration is turned into confusion. Nndwakhulu's mother scolds the bridegroom (Murendeni's cousin) and Nndwakhulu kisses Murendeni in front of her cousin or husband to be. The bride's wedding gown is torn apart and thrown into fire. After burning Murendeni's gown vhakoma grabs Reverend Tshibovhola's gown and throws it also into the fire. This act seals the downfall of the proud priest. People like Tshilongo and others who terribly suffered during Rev. Tshibovhola's reign of terror celebrate his demise.

From the narrative above it is clear that the play is set in modern times and in an African community. This is a modern world because there are schools. A concern raised by Thambatshira when the chief tries to force every community member to go to the initiation school shows that formal education is regarded as an important institution. The concern is put as follows:

Muhali, zwino vhana vha do tou ita hani kha
mafhungo a tshikolo (Milubi, 1994:01)?

(My lord, what will happen to the youths who are still
attending school?)

A modern period is again projected by the presence of churches in this community. The members of congregations include some members of the royal families and these include Ndiitwani, the chief's sister. In the olden days royal family members as custodians of culture were the ones who showed total resistance to Christianity.

In the olden days, the church leaders, especially priests and lay-preachers were mostly whites. But in this play the leader of the church is Tshibovhola, an African. To show that he has authority over the church he says:

Namusi ndi divhadza nga ha u khaulwa tshivhidzoni
na tshilaleloni ha Vho-Khagavhali na Nyaluvhani. Ndi
pfa ndi sa pfesesi uri Evangeli iyi i no tolou reriwa i
khou welafhi (Milubi, 1994:8)?

(Today I want to announce the excommunication of
Khagavhali and Nyaluvhani. I do not see the effects
of the gospel which is regularly preached.)

The church in this play differs from the olden days' churches where church members did not know their democratic rights. Tshilongo represents the modern Christian who knows his democratic rights. When the rumour that Tshibovhola is embezzling the church funds spread around Tshilongo and his friend fearlessly approach him and demand a financial statement.

An aborted marriage between Murendeni and her cousin marks the modern period. The ceremony is taking place at the church and people who have problems with the marriage are invited to cross the floor. This is the correct procedure in the modern marriages. Ndwakhulu's mother understands the proceedings; that is why she, together with her son, cross the floor. She accuses Rev. Tshibovhola of being untrustworthy. Regarding his distrustfulness Vhakoma puts it as follows:

He vhone vhafunzi! Ngoho vhufunzi havho ndi
vhufunzi ha vhukwila fhedzi-hii (Milubi, 1994:63).

(Hallo there pastor! I have realized that you are an
unfaithful pastor.)

Enlightenment, as introduced by the church in this community is accepted, but with some reservations by some individuals. For example, Ndiitwani, Jimisi, Bababa, Khagavhali and Nyaluvhani are Christians who cannot sacrifice their culture for Christianity, the new religion.

They are given conditions to become full church members by their pastor, Reverend Tshibovhola. They are at liberty to participate in initiation school's activities and lose their membership status or become loyal church members by not attending activities of initiation schools which are considered heathen institutions. The four members mentioned above chose to be suspended or excommunicated rather than become stereotyped followers. As a sign of protest against Tshibovhola, Ndiitwani remarks:

Kereke hedzi a dzi iti na luthihi. Ya nga vha iyi yashu
na luthihi a I iti na luthihi. Yo vhuya i fhirwa nga ila
ya tshigubu. Ila i takadza ngauri na tshithihi a i hani.
U ntumula u a ntumula zwawe hoyu Tshibovhola, nne
dombani ndi nga si litshe u ya. Vhone vhe muduhulu
wanga ... hooi (Milubi, 1974:05)!

(These churches are not good. This one of ours is the worst of them all. The Zion church is even better of. I like that one because it does not have restrictions. Tshibovhola can suspend or excommunicate me if he so wishes. There is nothing which can stop me from going to the initiation school. Do you think that I can leave my grand-daughter in a lurch?)

Chief Thavha is also a modern chief. He lives in a modern world. Unlike the other chiefs who, in the past, rejected Christianity in their communities, he has accepted it. This is why many members of the royal family are members of the church. He only has problems with aspects of Western culture as a traditional leader. He knows his democratic rights as a chief and also claims to understand how the church should operate or function. This is why, when another church member asks him whether he has an intention to obstruct Christian movement, Chief Thavha simply gives the following answer:

A tho ngo ralo, fhedzi arali ipfi la kereke li tshi ni
luṭanya na milayo ya shango, ndi khwiṇe u litsha na
ita zwa shango la hanu zwine zwa vha zwa hanu
(Milubi, 1994:13).

(I did not say so, but if the church is in conflict with the constitution of this country, I will advise you to leave the church and concentrate on the country's matters which directly affect you.)

The above statement is an indication that the chief is not necessarily against Western civilization but only against anybody who may try to interfere with his programme as a leader. He has authority in his constituency, which is the whole community within his area of jurisdiction. All institutions, including the church, within his area are, according to him, accountable to him. Consequently, there is no other institution which can compete with his position.

The play portrays a corrupt modern society where money is the source of all evils. Reverend Tshibovhola has a serious problem. He wants his daughter's relationship to be solemnized before the congregation and the public become aware that she is pregnant. Vhakoma is the stumbling block in Murendeni's marriage. She has, together with influential royal family members, put forward a strong condition for the marriage of the two youths. Murendeni must first go to the initiation school in order to qualify to become Nndwakhulu's wife. Reverend Tshibovhola decides to bribe Vhakoma (Nndwakhulu's mother) so that she authorises the marriage without any condition. The worst part of it, is that he uses the church's funds which were intended for building another church at Gunda. Fortunately or unfortunately, Vhakoma refuses the bribe. It is tragic for a pastor to utter the following words:

A re n̄ne Tshibovhola ndi ri gwama li no fhira li la la mulovha asili. Huñwe la mulovha u li hana hu nga vha ho vha mafhungo a u vhona u tukufhala (Milubi, 1994:49).

(As for me (Tshibovhola), I am giving you this lump-sum of money. I am just suspecting that you rejected yesterday's offer because it was a small amount of money.)

Corruption which is common in this modern world is witnessed in the last scene of this play as Tshibovhola tries to use bribe to get what he wants. Had it not been for Vhakoma and her son who disrupted the wedding ceremony, Tshibovhola would have blessed the bride and bridegroom. This is really scandalous and tragic.

5.3 TRAGIC ACTION IN KHORO DZI SA DZHENELANI

Tragic action refers to tragic plot. It arises from inner conflicts which test the protagonist's integrity. The structure of tragedy, according to Dorsch (1965:48) should be complex and should represent actions capable of awakening fear and pity. According to him it follows in the first place that good men should not be passing from prosperity to misery - for this does inspire fear or pity. Nor should evil men be shown progressing from misery to prosperity. This is the most untragic of all plots.

Our pity in a play is awakened by undeserved misfortune and fear experienced by someone like ourselves - pity is therefore for undeserving sufferer and fear for the men like ourselves (Dorsch 1965:48). This is why many critics agree that the tragic hero should neither be good nor bad, but a mixture of both.

In order for him to arouse pity and fear in audience, the tragic hero should be, according to Dorsch (1965:48), a sort of man who is not conspicuous for virtue and justice, and whose fall into misery is not due to vice and depravity, but rather to some error a man who enjoys prosperity and a high reputation.

Many, but far from all plots, deal with conflict (Abrams 1981:137). Conflict may arise between individuals who are somehow at loggerheads. In addition to the conflict between individuals, there may be the conflict of a protagonist against fate, or against the circumstances that stand between him and a goal he has set himself; and in some works, conflict is between opposing desires or values in a character's own mind.

As the plot progresses, Abrams (1981:137) claims it arouses expectations in the audience or reader about the future course of events, and how characters will respond to events.

The tragic plot in this chapter will be divided into the following: **tragic cause, tragic conflict, reversal of fortune** (peripeteia), **recognition of the truth** (anagnorisis) and **catastrophe**. **The stature** of the tragic hero and its influence on the plot will be discussed fully separately.

5.3.1 Tragic cause

There are many things which cause tragic actions in this play; for example, pride, lack of timing, lack of advice, lack of consistency in the application of rules governing certain institutions are all found in this drama.

Chief Thavha in this play displays a personality of a proud man. He does not respect an important institution like the church. That is why he warns:

Ni mu vhudze uri arali a tshi sedzela mulayo wa shango fhasi, kukereke kwawe ku do tupulwa kwa latelwa kule-kule sa vhananyana vha tshi tupula vha latela kule magowampengo. Li re langa ndi lenelo. Kha hu pfumbiswe maitele na mulayo wa shango. Zwi re zwigwasha zwone arali no doba ni latele kule (Milubi, 1994:03).

(You must tell him that if he undermines the country's law, his lousy church will be uprooted like mushroom and thrown away. I command you. People should abide by the law of **the country**. **An adopted life-style** is not welcomed here.

This is an authoritarian behaviour quite commonly of chiefs. In the past, people did not have problems with that kind of behaviour, but in the democratic world of today, such kind of behaviour could be unacceptable. This is why the chief's behaviour causes row at schools, at churches and in the community as a whole. This is why people like Mbudzeni tells him the following:

Muhali, lo zwiwaho li a pfala, fhedzi a re nne ndo vha ndi tshi khou todou vhudzisela rine vha kereke. Kereke yashu rine a i ri tendeli ri tshi didzhenisa kha mafhungo o raliho (Milubi, 1994:02).

(My lord, what is said is understood, but I only have a concern about some of us who attend the church. Our church does not allow us to involve ourselves in matters like these.)

Mbudzeni's plea falls on deaf ears because the chief is not ready to take anything which is in contrast with his decision; moreover because the church is something brought into his country by foreigners.

As a chief, he loses the respect of his own community, he causes more conflict between his own subjects, so, instead of peace and harmony, now and then his subjects are engaged in fights.

Reverend Tshibovhola also displays the same personality. He is a proud pastor who runs the church like his private property. He does what he likes at anytime. He does not involve other church members in running the affairs of modern democratic world, like the one he lives in. Tshibovhola unilaterally takes a very sensitive decision to suspend or excommunicate Bababa, Ndiitwani and many others from the church. The reason for their suspensions is their participation in the initiation schools. When another church member asks him why he is suspending them for something which himself is a graduate of, he arrogantly tells him:

Ndi songo t_ol_ou vhudziswa zwa ha maḍala fhanu
kerekeni khethwa ya Mudzimu. Hamaḍala ndo ya ndi
tshi kha ḍi vha nḍa, Mudzimu a sa athu u penyisela

tshedza tsha tshifhatuwo tshawe kha nne. Zwino a re nne ndila ya Mudzimu ndo i vhona, ndi nga si tsha ita zwa u kanda ngeno na ngei sa vha nnda (Milubi, 1994:04).

(People should refrain from asking me lots of questions about initiation school here in the holly church of God. I attended an initiation school before I repented, before I met with God who saved me. As for myself, I have found the way to life and I have decided to lead a straight-forward life.)

This tragic action is the main cause of his downfall because all the suspended church members team together and plot his downfall as a citizen and as a minister of the church.

When Murendeni, who is Tshibovhola's daughter is impregnated by Nndwakhulu (the chief's son) the first thing which comes into Tshibovhola's mind is to bribe some of the royal family's members. Regarding bribery he says this to Jagavhosi:

Ndi uri nne ndi ro itwa nga u shaya tshanga. Ndi musi vha tshi tou rengwa mbilu hedzi uri vha bve kha heli le vha ima khalo. Hu mbo di swielwa thukhwi heyi i sa athu vhuya ya vhonala (Milubi, 1994:28).

(The problem is that I am poor. Had it not been due to poverty, I would have bribed these people so that they change their minds. This would make it possible for us to put our house in order before people realize anything.)

Tshibovhola takes this decision because Nndwakhulu's parents have laid down strong conditions for the marriage between the two youths. The challenge he faces tests his integrity. With the approval of Jagavhosi, who is also ready to give financial support, Tshibovhola decides to bribe whoever is trying to disturb the planned marriage.

The first person he approaches is an old man who is a member of the royal family. Fortunately the old man seems to be positive. He advises Jagavhosi to also approach Nndwakhulu's mother and other elderly women too. Jagavhosi promises to do as advised and says:

Hetshi tshikati ndi khou ya u tshi latela mbiluni dza havho vhakegulu vha havho. Hu fanela u bikwa dzo no vhibva. Ri nga si tolou tumbela muṭhanyi wo pfuvhaho. Kha vha ntsombe ndila ri ye zwino (Milubi, 1994:30).

(I am going to give this lump-sum of money to those elderly women of yours. A solution must be sought. We cannot waste our time for nothing. Show me the way and let us go.)

Vhakoma, Nndwakhulu's mother, is approached by Jagavhosi. Unfortunately things didn't go well. She is not ready to take the bribe and says angrily:

Vha ntsedze vha ntsedzese zwavhudi. A re nne ndi nga si fanywe ndo rengisa vhumuthu hanga sa vhone vha no rengisa vhumuthu havho nga boḁelo la burandi (Milubi, 1994:32).

(Look at me well. I cannot sell my identity like you who sell yours for a bottle of brandy.)

The words are directed to an old man who is trying to persuade Vhakoma to take a bribe.

What has happened to the old man and Vhakoma undoubtedly reaches Tshibovhola's rivals. Bababa, Ndiitwani, Tshilongo, Khagavhali, and others get to know about the bribery which is going on.

The situation gets complicated when Tshibovhola untimely approaches Bababa for help at night. He is seeking help from a person whom he has suspended from his church. It is tragic for him to go on his knees before a subordinate he has suspended with a plea:

Heji ndi gwama la tshivhidzo la u fhaḁa kereke ngei Gunda. Nde litshani ndi ḁe ndi vha ... (Milubi, 1994:40).

(This is the congregation's money intended to build a church at Gunda. I thought that I must ... you.)

Bababa seizes the opportunity to remind the pastor of a popular theme in his sermons:

Vhafunzi, hoyu ndi mulingo muhulu. Pfunzo ye vha vha vha tshi tolou ri funza yone ndi ya u ri: U songo tswa. Namusi muthu a tshee muthihi u vho shanduka sa luaviavi. Mufunzi ula washu wavhudi-vhudi o no vha vemu lihuluhulu. Izwi nne a thi athu u zwi vhona, nga Masindi a re fhasi (Milubi, 1994:40).

(Pastor, this is a great danger. The theme which you used to preach to us is that: 'Thou shall not steal'. Today the very same person is changing like a chameleon. Our good pastor has changed into a dangerous criminal. This is really a shock to me.)

From the unsucceeded consultations, rumour that Tshibovhola is misapproaching church's funds spreads like wildfire. The scandal comes at the right time for Tshibovhola's rivals who need something with which to destroy him. This is why, when an old man advices Tshilongo to quit this rotten church, Tshilongo says:

A si mafhungo a u funesa zwithu khalaha yanga, ndi mafhungo a u todou rwa nowa kha thoho ra fhedza ra i sumbudza muliloni wa mudzhanganzhanga (Milubi, 1994:46).

(It is not a question of liking many things, my old man, but I would like to hit the snake on his head and throw it into a glowing fire.)

The above statement is a clear indication that Tshilongo and his other friends have planned to destroy Tshibovhola.

Tshibovhola, just like any other person, has friends. His closest friend is Jagavhosi. Unfortunately Jagavhosi is not a friend one can rely on. A real friend would advise Tshibovhola not to suspend Bababa and others in the way he does. Instead of advising him, Jagavhosi urges him on:

Ilo le vha amba ndi lone vhafunzi. Ha sa itwa zwa vhukuma hafha kerekeni heino, ri do fhedza ri tshi vho tea u tengulwa nga tshimebi sa zwe Murena washu a ita musi a tshi wana vhathu vho shandula kereke yawe khethwa sa makete une wa ralo u rengisa zwimini-mini zwavho (Milubi, 1994:08).

(I support what you have said. Unless we do the right thing here in our church, we will qualify for a whip like those who were thrashed by the Lord while they were selling those things in the church as if they were at a market place.)

When Tshibovhola plans to bribe his rivals, Jagavhosi does not advise him that it is evil to do so. Instead of advising him he assures him:

Vhafunzi, a zwi ngo dina tshithu. A re nne ndi nga si litshe dzina lavho li tshi dala mashika. Masheleni haya anga a di fa e avho. Ndi nga si vhuye nda hangwa zwe vha nthusu ndi khakhathini ila ye ya vhuya ya nnyitela dengetenge li sa takuwiho. A re

nne ndi do ya nda renga mbilu dza havha vhatu nga haya masheleni anga, ngeno ndo imela vhone vhafunzi. Ndi do dzhena nga onoula mukalaha a no funesa burendi. (Vha a bva) (Milubi, 1994:28).

(Pastor, there is no problem. I will never let your name spoil. This money which I have is also yours. I will never forget that you once helped me while I was in a serious problem. I will use my money to go and bribe those people on your behalf, pastor. I will use that old man who is very much fond of brandy as our mediator.) (He leaves)

Jagavhosi in this case reveals himself not as a true friend to the minister. His advice is wrong and in the end, it contributes to the downfall of Tshibovhola. Although Jagavhosi sees himself as a true friend to Tshibovhola, his actions are in fact the catalyst that stir conflict between Tshibovhola and the community. Thus Jagavhosi's action may be regarded as the nemesis of Tshibovhola.

Sosi is Rev. Tshibovhola's wife. Murendeni's pregnancy also affects her. She listens attentively and sympathetically when her husband complains.

Zwa vhukololo kule hangei. Nne ndi ri ngavhe a tshi vha e Lufuno hoyu wa burada. Ula ndi n'wana-n'wana. Na u dina zwo vha zwi sa do dina u yafhi ngauri ro vha ri tshi do vha sainisa vha fhatutshedzwa kerekeni hu sa athu vhonala tshithu. Zwo vha zwi tshi do sala zwi tshi vhonala zwothe zwo no phethea. Zwa sa ralo

n^une v^hufunzi hanga ndi hone v^hu tshi d^o n^unembelela
nga n^utha n^uthihi ine ya nga gambuwa tshifhinga
tshiⁿwe na tshiⁿwe (Milubi, 1994:21).

(The fact that he is a prince means nothing to me. I wish the person responsible were Lufuno, a brother in Christ. That one is a good boy. It would not be a problem because we would ask them to sign and get blessed before the public become aware of it. We do not want people to find this out before they are solemnized. If we fail in this, my profession or call as a priest will hang on a single thread which could be broken at any time.)

Instead of advising her husband not to do evil things which are in contradiction with Christian values, Sosi unfortunately says:

Ya d^o gambuwa ra d^o pfi vha ha nnyi? Mushonga
wazwo ndi u zwi t^uv^hanyedzela hezwi zwithu. (Vha a
bva) (Milubi, 1994:21).

(If the thread breaks who is going to look after us?
The best medicine is to solve the problems). (She
leaves)

By the above statement Sosi is trying to show her husband that she is supportive of his every move, good or bad, in trying to solve their daughter's problem of getting pregnant before she is legally married.

Sosi shows that she is always supportive of her husband when he tells her that he is intending to bribe Bababa and those other royal family members - she assures him:

Izwi arali e ayo aiwaa! Kha vha dzimele zwi tshee zwiṅu. Tshoo! Zwino afhu vha tshi vho nga vha vho shanda zwiluvhelo (Milubi, 1994:37)?

(I support your decision. Silence them before it is too late. Gosh! It seems as if you are not putting on your underwear properly.)

Instead of supporting him in doing this evil thing she should have advised him not to.

Another cause for the tragic action is Tshibovhola's lack of consistency in the manner in which he handles problems in his church. For example, Bababa and others have been suspended for attending initiation schools. If it is a church's policy which is known to every member, there is no problem. Tshilongo was also once suspended for having an extramarital affair with another woman. People accept that because it is a church's policy. It is also a policy that if one is found making love out of wedlock, he or she must be suspended. It is even worse if one becomes pregnant before getting married.

Reverend Tshibovhola's daughter becomes pregnant before she gets married. The congregation and the public want to see how Tshibovhola would handle this case.

To show him that the congregation and the public is aware of the pregnancy, Tshilongo tells him:

Rine ri khou dinwa nga zevhezevhe li no khou mona-mona na hoyu riwana wavho wa khomba (Milubi, 1994:35).

(We are bothered by the rumour which is circulating about your daughter.)

Before Tshibovhola responds to the hint dropped, Tshilongo advises him:

Nne ndo vha ndi tshi khou ri arali zwa zevhezevhe zwi zwone, vhone vha mbo di tshea nga leneli banga li no hatula hu si na tshitalula. Ndi ralo ngauri hu na thoho nnzhi dzo no waho, dzo tumulwa nga banga li bvaho tshandani tshavho (Milubi, 1994:35).

(I wanted to say that if the rumour is true, you treat this issue in the same way as you have treated others. I say this because there are many heads which have fallen due to your strictness.)

Instead of handling his daughter's case as advised by Tshilongo, he unfortunately insists on getting his daughter married to avoid any punishment. He tells Tshilongo:

Vho-Tshilongo, maloto o raloho ha na munango na muthihi mudini uno. Tshi re hone ndi tsha uri hoyu

ñwananga u khou ḁo saina hu si kale, a ḁo ri u saina a kona u fhatutshedzwa-ha heneḁha kerekeni. Hafhu na vhone vha tshi ḁo ḁi vha vhe hone, vha ḁo zwi vhona-vho (Milubi, 1994:35).

(Tshilongo, rumours like those will never be accepted in my family. It is an obvious thing that my daughter will sign before long, and this signing will be followed by the blessing rite in this church. Fortunately you will witness the occasion.)

What the pastor says here is very unfortunate because he is talking to one of the church elders. The pride which is there in Tshibovhola makes him run the church as if it were his personal property. As a result, influential church members team up against him. Bababa tells his colleagues:

Vhakoma, nḁe ndi khou ri hoyu mufunzi u na u twela u zwi ita. Zwa zwino o guma nga gumani. Kha itelwe-vho, uri a pḁe uri naa muthu o itelwa nga kuñwe kuitele zwi ita nga kuitele-ḁe (Milubi, 1994:46).

(Vhakoma, I say that this pastor is well versed in dirty tricks. He has now pressed a wrong button. Let us work on him so that he also feels the pains which he has caused all of us to experience.)

5.3.2 Tragic conflict

Conflict is defined by Cohen (1973:181) as the collision of opposing forces in prose fiction, drama or poetry. He further states that it can take any one of the following forms:

- (i) Conflict between people or individuals.
- (ii) Conflict between man and his environment (family, occupational circumstances, social and economic conditions) beyond one's control, natural forces.
- iii) Conflict between ideologies and concepts, and any of the forces above, from feelings within a person or from causes unknown.

The major conflict in this play is brought about by two leaders: Chief Thavha who is a political leader and Tshibovhola who is a religious leader.

Chief Thavha is a strong traditional leader who has self confidence. As a chief, Thavha exercises total control over his people with no exception. That is why he has the courage to say:

Tshikolo ndi tshikolo tsha mini? Na hu na tshiñwe
tshikolo tshi no fhira ngoma yashu ya Tshivenda?
Nahone tshikolo tshine vha khou amba nga hatsho,
tshi fhasi ha nnyi arali hu si fhasi ha muvhuso wanga.
Na riñe khezwi ro fara muvhuso wa tshikhuwa ngeno

ri tshee ro ḍi omelela kha dzone nḥa dza vuhosi ha hashu ha Tshivenda. Kha zwi ḍivhee zwauri zwikolo zwoṥhe ndi khou ya u zwi vhetshela muswodo. Kha zwi ḍivhee zwenezwo. Mashuvhuru oṥhe a re zwikoloni a khou ya u kukuṥiwa sa khovhe musi dzi tshi kukutiwa nga vhatukana mulamboni wa Dzondo. (Hu pfala u ḥuḥuna.) (Milubi, 1994:01).

(What do you mean by a school? Do you think there is another school which is better than our traditional (initiation) school? And the schools you are talking about, whose control are they under if not under mine? Learn from us who have accepted the Western way of governing but never forget our roots (still sticking to the traditional way of governing). Let it be known to all of you that I am going to lay down strict rules for the governing of those schools. Let this be known to you. I will make it a point that everybody who is at a modern school is a graduate of my traditional school; if not so, he or she will forcibly be taken there like when the boys catch fish from Dzondo river.) (People grumble).

As a traditional leader within an African community, chief Thavha exercises supreme power over all his subjects. Consequently the whole community is bound to live according to his country's constitution. It is also the law of his country that everybody should graduate at one or another initiation school. That is why he does not understand why some of his subjects resist attending such schools. To him, people who refuse to attend initiation schools are rebels.

Tshibovhola, as a minister of religion, also claims to have supreme powers over his congregation. As a messenger of God, he believes that everything belongs to Him and as a result He must, through him, be respected. Tshibovhola's main objective is to save the soul of every citizen in this country. In order for one to be saved, one must let Jesus take total control. If Jesus takes control of everything in this country, it means that Tshibovhola has achieved his objective. This is indeed a sure recipe for conflict with Chief Thavha.

The conflict of cultures in this drama is caused by the two strong leaders who do not want to compromise. Chief Thavha regards Christianity as something which promotes Western culture at the expense of African traditional culture. As an African leader he fights tooth and nail to protect his culture. He regards Christianity as 'zwigwasha' (a lost article which may bring misfortune to the family members if one picks it up). The word 'zwigwasha' is repeated several times by thavha when he tries to advise people not to follow the new religion blindly. To him Christianity is like a new fashion which is here but would certainly pass. In trying to advise Mbudzeni not to take the church seriously, the chief says to him:

Zwi re zwigwasha arali no doba ni mbo ḍi laṭela kule.
Ndi ralo nṅe muṅe wa mavu (Milubi, 1994:02).

(I advise you not to be controlled by the foreign or Western philosophy. I seriously mean it as the governor of this country.)

Didima, a strong supporter of the chief, also uses the same word 'zwigwasha' when he gives Khagavhali an advice to quit the church. He tells him:

Hafhu ro ni vhudza Khagavhali, ra ri vhoiwi ni khou sokou takadzwa nga u namela lutandala lusili lune ni si lu divhe. Zwino asizwi, lu khou ralo u ni tshongolisa sa dziḽa ngoma dza mutshongolo. Mbabvu musi dzi tshi vho vhavha ni vho ri hai, afha-afha hanga. Muthu ha sokou enda a tshi kumbela na zwigwasha zwine a si zwi divhe (Milubi, 1994:11).

(We advised you Khagavhali, that you people are just fond of travelling in an open foreign van which you do not know. Look now, the discomfort which you are experiencing in this van is like what is experienced by people who are engaged in 'mutshongolo' (type of Shangaan dance). When your ribs are painful, you start to complain to us. Learn not to just pick up whatever you come across with (zwigwasha).

The word is repeated for the third time by Didima when he says to Khagavhali:

Isani phanda na zwigwasha zwanu Khagavhali. A nga vha riḽe, dinani yo raloho ri nga si vuwe ro tangana nayo. Tshashu ndi u phasa vhomakhulukuku washu hu si na na zwitshela nga vhukati. Fhala hu re na zwikhukhuliso mutani ra vha suma mbilu ya sala i murunzini. Zwino zwa vhoiwi Swondaha inwe na inwe ndi u vhudzwa nga ha tshivhi na hele i no do ralo u sumbudza vhatu sa mashonzha a Dongola (Milubi, 1994:11).

(Continue to pray to your foreign gods, Khagavhali. As for us, there is no problem. Ours is to pray to our own ancestors without problems. Where we encounter family problems, we just report to them and find comfort. Yours is to be told every Sunday about sin and hell where people will be fried like Dongola worms.)

To Chief Thavha and all his supporters, Christians are people who are suffering, people who, through ignorance are misled by the whites. To him, the church is something which was brought here from overseas by Whites to confuse the people here in African countries. As a result he has no respect for such an institution. He says to Mbudzeni:

Kereke ni amba ifhio Mbudzeni? Ni amba iyi yo rwaho maḽi i tshi khou ralo u ḽiswa nga makhuwa? Arali i iyo a ri na mushumo nayo. I tshi ḽa yo wana ri vhukati na u ita zwithu zwashu (Milubi, 1994:02).

(Which church are you talking about, Mbudzeni? Are you referring to the one which was brought by the Whites from overseas? If you refer to that one, we have nothing to do with it. When it arrived, it found us managing our affairs very well here.)

Tshibovhola regards what Chief Thavha is doing (to force people to go to the initiation school) as evil. He always refers people who underwent initiation schools as 'swiswi' which literally means darkness. Swiswi in this case symbolizes evil things.

What Reverend Tshibovhola considers evil in this drama are: attending initiation schools, not attending church, and indulging in liquor. On the other hand, things which Tshibovhola regards as evils are in fact regarded as expectations or societal norms by Chief Thavha.

The word 'swiswi' is mentioned several times when Tshibovhola is addressing his congregation:

Tshivhidzo tsha Mudzimu tshi funeaho, swiswi lo ri tangaho rothe ri khou li vhona. Ndi leneli swiswi le tsha kale na kale kereke ya lingedza u lwa nalo (Milubi, 1994:03).

(God's beloved congregation, you can see that 'swiswi' (darkness) has surrounded all of us. It is the same 'darkness' which the church has from long ago tried to fight with.)

To give his congregation courage that it should not give up in its fight against evil, he sermonizes:

Vhukati ha swiswi lo swifhalaho bodobodo!
Tshivhidzo kha tshi zwi divhe zwauri kereke i nga si
vhuye ya vuwa yo ima na zwa shango. I nga ima hani

na zwa shango ngeno i yone i no khou lwa na zwa shango (Milubi, 1994:03).

(In the midst of pitch darkness, let it be known to the congregation that the church will never support the practice of evil here on earth. How can it support evil while it is its function to fight against it?)

To show that he is serious about his message, Reverend Tshibovhola quotes from the book of Galatians which he claims supports his stand that attending initiation school is a sin. Although the book is misquoted, Tshibovhola puts it in a convincing manner when he says:

Kereke a i nga vuwi yo ima na swiswi. Na iyi bugu ya Vhagalata ine nda tolou funza vhathu kani nazwino a vha i pfi zwavhuḏi? A isaho n̄wana murunduni kana dombani a mbo ḏi zwi ḏivha zwavhuḏi. Ndi u ribwa fhano kerekeni na tshilaleloni. Na ane ra tou pfa u pfi o ya, u ribwa ndi hawe. Ndi khou ralo ndi sa humeli murahu n̄e Tshibovhola (Milubi, 1994:03).

(The church will never support evil deeds. Even this book of Galatians which I preach about seems not to be clearly understood. Anyone who takes his or her child to the initiation school will be severely punished. He or she will be suspended from the church and from participating in the Holy communion.)

Tshibovhola also advises his children not to take part in initiation school's activities. When he discovers that they are also interested in the initiation schools he says to them:

Vhananga, khavhe ndi muṁwe ndo vha ndi tshi ni fhelela mbilu, fhedzi ndi khou zwi ḍivha uri a si vho inwi ni no khou ḍiita kha haya mafhungo. Ndi muya wa Saṭhane wonoyo wo dzhenaho shango ḵeneḵi. Khoṅo yazwo i kha thabelo vhananga. Vha a gwadama vha rabela (Milubi, 1994:06).

(My children, if I were somebody else, I would be worried about you, but I know that you are not doing this on your own. This is the spirit of Satan which is influencing this country. The solution to this problem is prayer, my children.) (He bowed down and prayed).

The word 'Satan' is emphasized by Tshibovhola when he advises his children; like when he, for the third time says:

Vhananga, ni songo tenda Saṭhane a tshi ita hezwi zwine a khou ita havha vha nnḍa. Ndi lini tshe nda funza nga ha bugu ya Mishumo ya Vhaapostola, Vharoma, Vhakorinta na Vhagalata nga ha u rubiswa, fhedzi a vha pfi tshithu (Milubi, 1994:06).

(My children, do not allow Satan to do unto you what he is doing to outsiders. How long have I been preaching from the books of The Acts, Romans,

Corinthians and Galatians about initiation schools, but they do not listen.)

This cultural conflict between the two proud leaders leads to division in the community. The flaws which are there in Tshibovhola make him lose much support in the community. For example, his pride, his unfair treatment of some of his church members, his misappropriation of church funds. The majority of people who leave his church go and join his main rival, the chief, for instance, Tshilongo, Bababa, Nyaluvhani and Ndiitwani leave to join the chief. This proves the fact that the chief is the supreme head of the country and no one else. The frustrated church members strengthen the chief's base and this leads to Tshibovhola's downfall. The blunders which Tshibovhola commits on a daily basis give his adversaries cause to attack him. That is why when Vhakoma says she wants to discipline Tshibovhola, Bababa tells her:

Vha songo vhuya vha mu litsha Vhakoma. Vhone vha ri a tshi ri shakulisa zwo vha zwi tshi difha? Kha zwi pfe-vho (Milubi, 1994:43).

(Do not leave him Vhakoma. Do you think we were happy when he suspended us? Let him also feel it.)

The tragic conflict in this play may be summarised in a diagram as follows:

A

B

CHIEF THAVHA

REV. TSHIBOVHOLA

1 Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vhakoma • Mukalaha • Ndwakhulu 	2 School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tshilongo • Ndiitwani • Nyaluvhani etc. <p>■ The country</p>		

-	Sosi
-	Jagavhosi
-	Murendeni
-	
-	Polosi
-	Other Christians
■ The country	

Activities

Activities

1. Forces people to attend initiation school.
2. Believes in ancestral worship.
3. Wants total control.
4. Has no record of his subjects corruption.

1. Forbid people from attending initiation schools - suspends them.
2. Propagates the new religion - Christianity.
3. Wants total control of his congregation.
4. Is corrupt.

CONFLICT

CHIEF THAVHA emerges more powerful, victorious

REV. TSHIBOVHOLA emerges less powerful. He is discouraged, defeated and frustrated.

The two opposing forces i.e. African traditional culture and Modern Western culture are represented by the two leaders mentioned in A and B.

Chief Thavha and his subjects, including Vhakoma, Nndwakhulu, Mukalaha, Bababa, Tshilongo, aunt Ndiitwani represent African culture. Chief Thavha's constituency covers a very big area because everybody who resides within the boundaries of his country comes under his jurisdiction. Schools, churches and other institutions, according to him, are under his control.

Rev. Tshibovhola, by virtue of being a pastor, also controls a very big constituency. God created the universe and everything living in it. Human beings are His creature. Because Tshibovhola represents God who has the total control of everything, therefore everybody, (including the chief), are subject to his leadership. This creates great confusion in this community because neither of the two leaders is ready to compromise. But in the end, an unfaithful pastor misrepresenting Christianity is unfortunately defeated by the chief. The name Thavha, in this play means something very old and big. The chief therefore symbolizes traditional African culture which is established and valuable. The lesson in this play is that one's culture is deeply rooted and cannot be destroyed easily.

5.3.3 The stature of the tragic hero

In literature characters are used by authors to convey message to readers. In this section attention will be paid to the significance of the tragic hero in the conveyance of the author's message. The role of the tragic hero will be examined in order to see how it exposes the tragic actions.

Regarding the tragic hero Misra (1987:11) quotes Aristotle recommendations which state that a tragic hero should:

- First of all, not be a perfect or virtuous man, brought down to adversity from prosperity, because the sight of such a man will produce neither pity nor fear.
- Secondly, he should not be a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity, because it is foreign to the spirit of tragedy and can arouse neither pity nor fear, only moral indignation.
- Thirdly, the change of fortune should not be the downfall of the utter villain, since this may gratify our sense of justice without stirring up true tragic sentiments.

Tshibovhola is in this play a tragic hero. He satisfies the following requirements which according to Aristotle and other critics are regarded as important for determining the tragic hero.

5.3.3.1 **Position**

The tragic hero should be a man of exceptional qualities in high position. In addition to his high position, a tragic hero should neither be too good nor too bad.

Rev. Tshibovhola fits this description. He is a minister of religion. Ministers of

religions are regarded as important people within the communities. Tshibovhola is a character which one may like because he is responsible for the people's souls - he preaches the gospel of God. This same character is someone who could be disliked because he is unfaithful and corrupt. For example, he forces the marriage between his daughter and her cousin, and embezzles church funds.

5.3.3.2 **Hubris**

Hubris is defined by Gray (1984:99) as that pride or overweening self-confidence which leads a man to disregard a divine warning or to violate an important moral law. It is through pride that Tshibovhola takes the unilateral decision to suspend Bababa and other church members from (his) church.

Instead of deciding the fate of Bababa, Ndiitwani, Khagavhali and Nyaluvhani with the church-board and later with the whole congregation, the whole church is surprised to hear about their suspensions. He does it in this manner:

Nga tshino tshifhinga ndi \dot{q} ivhadza u ribwa fhanu
kerekeni ha Vho-Jimisi Bababa na Vhomakhadzi Vho-
Ndiitwani.

(Tshivhidzo tshi pfala u akhamala) U bva \dot{n} amusi a
vha tsha vha mura \dot{q} o muthihi na ri \dot{n} e. Na tshilaleloni
vha songo tsha vhonala (Milubi, 1994:04).

(At this point in time I just want to make the following announcement: James Bababa and aunt Ndiitwani have been suspended from this church.)

(The church is surprised). They are as from today no longer our members. They must no longer be seen taking part in the Holy Communion)

Tshibovhola's pride is again displayed when he gets the report that his daughter is pregnant. When he discovers that the boy responsible for his daughter's pregnancy is Nndwakhulu, he asks his wife this question:

Nndwakhulu ili la muhedeni. O tou vhona mini Murendeni henefhala? (Milubi, 1994:21).

(Are you referring to this Nndwakhulu who is a raw heathen? What has attracted Murendeni to that useless boy?)

As a sign of disapproval of the action taken by his daughter, Tshibovhola further states this to his wife:

Ni ri ndi a tamba nne naa? Ndi hone vha tshi do ndivha zwavhudi. (Vhe no, vha dzungudza thoho). Li dina heli Nndwakhulu la hone ndi muhedeni mudaladala. Inwi ni ri dithu line la kha di twa lo ragalala na mbudzi i tshi khou shelwa mpambo. Haa! Nga vhanna (Milubi, 1994:23).

(Do you think I am playing? They are going to know me better. (He keeps quiet and shakes his head). The problem is that this Nndwakhulu is a raw heathen. Just imagine a person who is still struggling with a goat in an attempt to pour "mpambo" (a sacred African beer used in African, especially Venda Religious rites) on its back. Oh! God.)

Due to his pride, Tshibovhola finds it necessary for his daughter to marry her cousin who is a cool and collected boy. He tactfully manages to win the heart of Murendeni's cousin. He promises Jagavhosi that the planned marriage will proceed despite resistance and protests by the church members. He assures him:

Zevhezevhe heli a li dini Vho-Jaga. Hafhu vha divhe lo no rangelwa phanda kale. Muzwala wa hoyu nwananga o no vha ene swiswi mmbadise (Milubi, 1994:34).

(The rumours do not mean anything Jaga. You must not forget that I have already made some pre-arrangements. Her cousin is going to be used as a scape-goat.)

Reverend Tshibovhola does not recognize his limitations. Financially he is very weak. But because he is a proud man, he decides to use the church's money for his daughter's wedding. Church elders try to stop him from making such a mistake, but Tshibovhola does not listen to them.

When he approaches other pastors to come and solemnize his daughter's marriage, they all refuse to do so, considering the circumstances. They want the problem to be resolved first and the correct channels to be followed.

The proud Tshibovhola resolves that he will do the blessing for his daughter himself. This is scandalous and tragic.

All these tragic actions caused by his pride lead to Tshibovhola's downfall. His daughter's wedding is disrupted and his position as a minister of religion is threatened. In the end Rev Tshibovhola achieves nothing with his dirty tricks. He ends up a failure. That is, he does not usurp power from chief Thavha as he thought he could.

5.3.3.3 **Moir**

Moir is a powerful unseen force which is beyond the hero's control. In a tragedy a reader identifies the problems and find out whether they are of such a nature that they cannot be solved. The researcher is also interested in the manner in which the tragic hero handles his problems. The magnitude of the problem and the weakness of the protagonist or tragic hero in solving the problem are considered in an attempt to determine if the action taken by the hero is tragic. In this play, Tshibovhola, just like any other person is facing problems: his daughter becomes pregnant; he does not have enough money to meet the cost of his daughter's

wedding ceremony. There is no pastor who is ready to solemnize his daughter's marriage.

Faced with these problems, Tshibovhola shows weaknesses in trying to solve them; for example, he forces his daughter to sign with her cousin, who is not responsible for the pregnancy; he also wants to use the church's funds for the wedding ceremony; he decides to bless his daughter's wedding himself. There are many acceptable ways of solving all these problems, but because of pride, Tshibovhola chooses the wrong approaches.

5.3.3.4 **Victims**

Victims are those characters in a play who suffer not because they are wrong, but because of their association with the tragic hero or protagonist or any important character. There are many characters in this play who suffer because of their association with the tragic heroes. For example, Jagavhosi, Sosi, Murendeni, Polosi and many others tarnish their names because of their association with Tshibovhola.

The marriage he has forced between Murendeni and her cousin is disrupted by Vhakoma and her son Ndwakhulu who is the one responsible for the pregnancy. Before embarrassing her by pulling her out of the church he says this in support of his mother who accuses Tshibovhola of being unfaithful:

Vha khou amba ngoho Vhakoma. Hoyu musidzana Murendeni ndi musidzana wanga. Na muhwalo une a vha nawo ndi tou ðivha zwavhuðivhudi. Ndi wanga.

(Tshivhidzo tshi a kanuka.) (Milubi, 1994:63).

(You are speaking the truth Vhakoma. This lady, Murendeni is mine. I am also responsible for the pregnancy. She is mine.)

(The congregation is surprised)

On top of the embarrassing statements by Vhakoma and her son, Murendeni's gown is set alight. This is an embarrassment to her.

Tshibovhola's pastoral gown is also burnt. This is not an embarrassment to himself alone, but also to the whole church, and particularly to his wife Sosi, and his close friend Jagavhosi. Their integrity is seriously tarnished. Had it not been for his pride, this situation could have been avoided.

5.3.3.5 **Nemesis**

Nemesis is generally defined as unseen force which overpowers the tragic hero to break the unchanging and unchangeable moral order. In this play pride is amongst others the protagonist's nemesis. His downfall is caused mainly by his pride.

Characters who oppose him, like Tshilongo, Vhakoma, Nndwakhulu, and others are also his nemesis because they fight for his downfall.

Tshibovhola's children, who do not listen to his advice also contributed to his downfall. Polosi and Murendeni go to the initiation schools, committing the same offence which has led to the suspension of many church members. Murendeni becomes pregnant. The weaknesses in his children give his rivals or enemies the ammunition to use to destroy him.

5.3.3.6 **Catastrophe**

Catastrophe is a sudden reversal in the hero's fortune from happiness to disaster. This tragic reversal (peripeteia) as Brett (1976) puts it, becomes apparent to the audience before the hero himself is aware of it.

The situation at the church on Murendeni's wedding day marks Reverend Tshibovhola's catastrophe. His daughter's wedding is disrupted in the same church where Tshibovhola has suspended Bababa and others. His pastoral gown and his daughter's wedding gown are burnt in the same environment where the members of the same church once suffered Tshibovhola's autocratic and oppressive leadership. The once frustrated church members witness the drama and Vhakoma ironically remarks:

Vhahedeni itali tadulu vha do ya nga lifhio? Tadulu hu ya vhakhethwa vha no nga sa vhone. Hone-vho, tadulu ha hone vhanwe vhafunzi vha tshi dzhena nga dziphuraphura vhone vha do dzhena vha si na. Galatshane la mufunzi leneli. (Vha mbo di kanyela nwenda wavho vha lela muri gwalani.) (Milubi, 1994:65).

(How can heathens go to heaven? Heaven is for the saints like yourself. But when the other pastors enter heaven with their gowns on, you will unfortunately enter it without yours. (She puts her traditional attire in order and leaves.)

5.3.3.7 Poetic justice

This is the term devised by Ryme (1978) to describe the idea that literature should always depict a world in which virtue and vice are eventually rewarded and punished appropriately. But writers rejected the notion that they ought to fulfil the requirement of poetic justice.

Concerning poetic justice Cohen (1973:200) states that tragedy tends to punish man with punishment out of all proportion to his sin, but only making us feel that he is being crucified for his sins that are ours too.

In this play Tshibovhola is punished because he sins. He has a tendency of running the church as if it were his personal property; for example, he suspends anyone whose behaviour threatens his authority at anytime. This is a mistake which can be

made by anyone in his position. The church-board had the chance to correct Tshibovhola, but unfortunately it did not.

He again sins by trying to hide his daughter's pregnancy. Preparations are made for Murendeni to sign with his cousin instead of signing with the person responsible for the pregnancy. Any desperate parent could be tempted to act in the same way as Tshibovhola does, in order to save his own face.

Tshibovhola uses church funds to prepare for his daughter's wedding. As a minister of religion he also would like to see his daughter marrying in a dignified manner. Unfortunately he does not have money. That is why he decides to use the church money. This mistake is human.

Because of all these mistakes Tshibovhola has made, he receives a very harsh punishment. The punishment is in proportion with his sin as a pastor only, but the same punishment may not be in proportion to the same sin if it were committed by a lay-man. When we consider that Tshibovhola is also a human being like any of us, we consequently feel pity for him and his family.

5.3.3.8 Pathos

The pity or sorrow which is aroused in a reader or an audience by the presentation of a sad scene is called pathos. This play is full of pathos. For example, when

Bababa and Ndiitwani are suspended by Tshibovhola, Bababa asks this painful question:

Ngoho ngoho vhafunzi vho namba vho ri khaula
kerekeni yavho (Milubi, 1994:04).

(Is it true that you (pastor) are suspending us from
your church?)

When Murendeni's gown and his gown are in flames, Tshibovhola helplessly says to Vhakoma:

Muhedeni a no nga vhone a nga si dzhene tadulu
(Milubi, 1994:65).

(A heathen like you will never get into the kingdom
of God.)

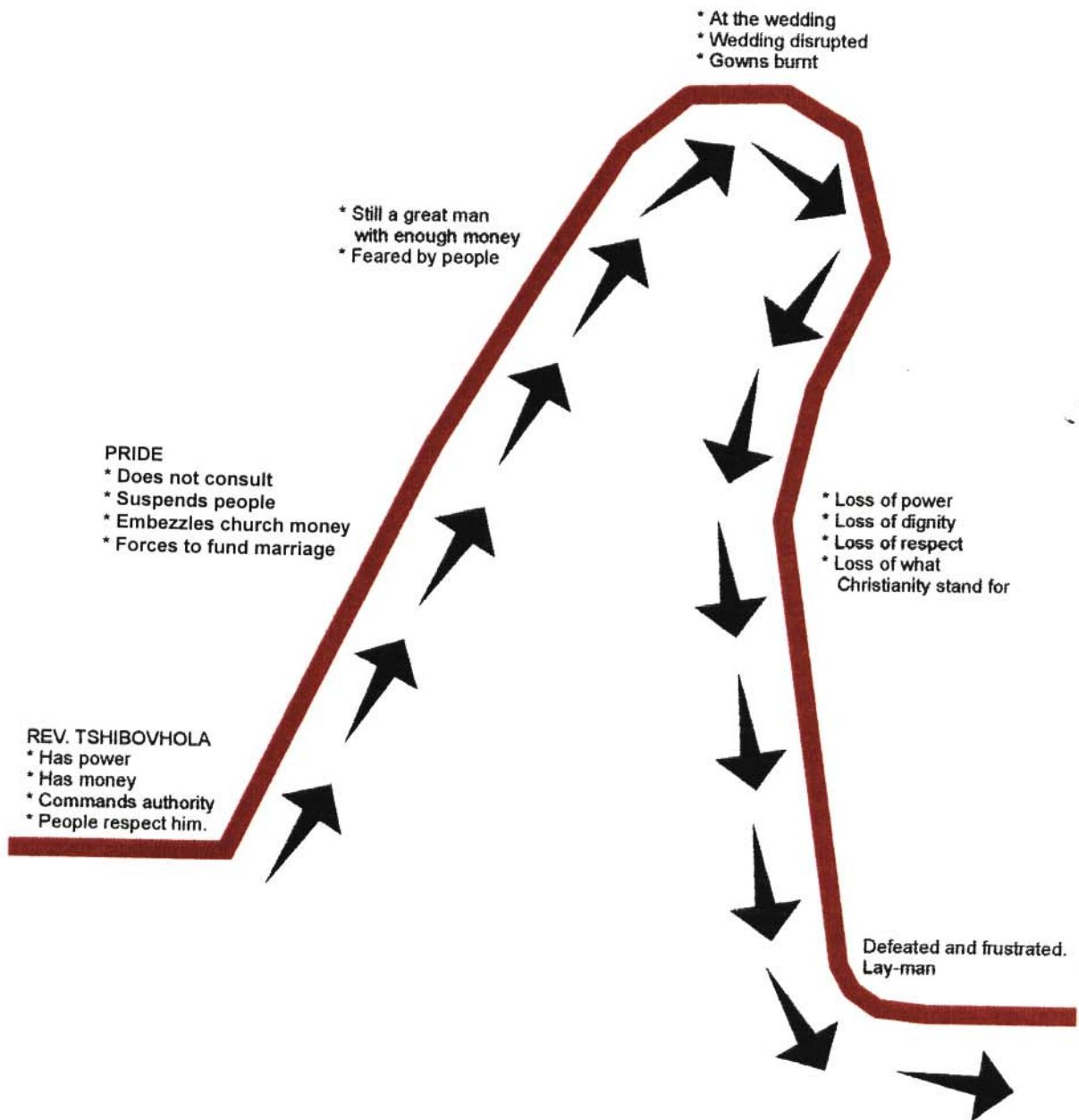
5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** is a tragedy. Although there is no bloodshed and deaths in this play, main characters suffer spiritually. For example, Bababa, Ndiitwani, Khagavhali and Nyaluvhani are suspended or excommunicated in front of the whole congregation - children included. This destroys their morale. They are punished because they participated in the initiation schools' activities.

Tshilongo is also suspended from the church but for a different reason. He has an extra-marital affair with another woman. The secret is revealed and the punishment carried out in the church in front of the whole congregation, including children.

The tragic hero in this play is Tshibovhola. He is a significant man who hides his oppressive attitudes behind Christianity. His downfall is not caused by someone else but by flaws in his own personality. He is a proud man who does not respect other people's feelings. He errs by unceremoniously suspending people in his church; he errs by proceeding with his daughter's wedding amid the church elders' protests and all these led to his downfall.

The tragic plot in his drama can be represented by the following sketch which summarizes events relating to the protagonist.



CHAPTER 6

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this chapter is to give a summary of the main arguments as advanced in the previous chapters. Again, a brief analysis regarding similarities and differences between Milubi's dramas will be made. In other words a comparison will be made in Milubi's artistic works with regard to the types of tragedies he creates.

6.2 A SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 deals with the theory of tragedy from European and African perspectives. Examples, where necessary, are given from Milubi's works.

From an European point of view, tragedy is the kind of drama which ends up disastrously; always with the death of the protagonist or other main characters. The chief basic statement of the nature of tragedy is, according to Brett (1976:11) is to be found in Aristotle's Poetics. Aristotle defines tragedy as the imitation of an action that is serious, complete, of certain magnitude, dramatically represented rather than in narrative forms; through pity and fear affecting the purgation of these emotions.

European tragedies may be divided into two major classes, namely, the classical and domestic tragedies. Classical or great tragedies are those written by Shakespeare and his contemporaries while domestic or modern tragedies are those tragedies written by writers like Ibsen and Strindberg in the nineteenth century.

Comparison between modern and classical tragedies

The main features distinguishing the two types are as follows:

CLASSICAL TRAGEDIES	DOMESTIC/MODERN TRAGEDIES
1. Tragic heroes are usually great people with high stature.	1. Weak or ordinary people may become tragic heroes.
2. Likely to strike us as particularly ambitious plays.	2. Ambitious or unambitious plays.
3. Considers the possibility that man is no more than a vicious animal.	3. Men are weak or fallible or ambitious and less dangerous.
4. The focus is on evil as a problem.	4. Much as the characters may create discord, they are well-intentioned.
5. The passions that disrupt life are far more extreme and evil.	5. Extreme disruptive foresees are love, jealousy than evil.
6. The protagonist's downfall is brought about by their own behaviour.	6. The protagonists' downfall is usually brought about by other people's behaviour.
7. There is usually a reversal of fortune from happiness to disaster.	7. In some contemporary plays there is no reversal of fortune.

A good example of a modern tragedy is **Mukosi wa Lufu** which depicts Masindi as a tragic hero representing man at his worst. She is a weak tragic hero who is frustrated by her husband's second wife. Masindi is just a housewife who depends solely on her husband's wages to make a living. She is well-intentioned; for she recruits Maria to become her husband's second wife. This is regarded as normal in African tradition.

Although Milubi's plays fall under modern plays, they have many things in common with classical ones; for example, most tragic heroes in Milubi's plays have pride, which the Greeks in their classical plays term **Hubris**.

Khavhe in **Madombini a ngoho** displays pride when he is no longer ready to take advice from anybody. For example, his wife advises him not to be controlled by money and that he should not throw away his Christian values. She warns him that the actions he is taking are destructive and very dangerous. She tells him:

Mushumo wavho wa gwama lavho ndi a zwi vhona khotsi a Taki. Izwi itshi a si tshira tsho ri dzhenelaho mudini? Ngoho ndi tshira hetshi. U tou vha musevhe wo fhomwaho nga vhutulu une wa do fhedza nga u ri goba riṅe vhaṅe (Milubi, 1987:11).

(I am aware that the job you are doing is bringing you a lot of money, my husband. Is this not jeopardizing our lives in this family? This is very dangerous. This is like a poisonous arrow which is ready to strike ourselves.)

Itani in **Ndi mutodzi muni** is also a proud tragic hero. He displays his pride when he introduces himself to the young school girls. When he invites them to come into his office, the poor young girls show reluctance. In order to win their hearts, Itani says to them:

Kani a ni khou ðivha uri ni khou vhidzwa nga nnyi?
Ni khou vhidzwa nga muhulisei Vho-Itani (Milubi,
1985:75).

(Don't you know who is calling you? You are being
called by His Excellency, the Honourable Mr. Itani.)

Maswoba is one of those who knew about the plans by Thanyani, Maraga and Gwangwa to kill Itani beforehand. Maswoba feels pity for him and decides to go and inform him about the pending attach but because of his filthy outfit, he is not allowed to get into Itani's office. Itani says to him:

Hu pfi mini? Vha khou toda mini tshine vha toda?
Vha vhuya vha vhona afha fhethu ho tea ayo
malakhanthana avho (Milubi, 1987:97).

(What do you say? What do you want? Do you think
you are fit to be here in these tattered clothes of
yours?)

This kind of behaviour is uncalled for from a person occupying a responsible and respected position like his. His tendency of undermining other people leads to his death.

Reverend Tshibovhola, a tragic hero in **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani**, also has a weakness. He looks down upon other people. His pride causes him to have very little regard for members of the church. He runs the whole church as it were his personal property. For example, he suspends whoever, whenever he feels like. Church elders like Tshilongo and Bababa warn him to refrain from his autocratic and dictatorial methods of running the church; but Reverend Tshibovhola never listens to them.

Reverend Tshibovhola's daughter becomes pregnant. The boy responsible for the pregnancy is Ndwakhulu, who is Vhakoma's son. Rev. Tshibovhola would like his daughter to marry her cousin, who is also a Christian and belongs to a well-to-do family. When Vhakoma advises him not to make such a blunder, she is told:

Ndi tshi vha ðivha mini vho ralo? Ndi nga twa ndi tshi ðiremisa thoho nga muthu a songo vhalaho bugu? Rine nahone ri amba na vathu vho vhalaho bugu khulwane. Zwi si zwi kegulu hezwo zwi no twa zwi tshi khou shatulula mafola matswu-matswu milomoni i no nga ya phinimini. Jaga, kha ri tuwe ri ye u khada kholomo ya munyanya wa nwananga. U nga zwi pfa nga vhahedeni vha no hata sa mazwilu a magaga. (Milubi, 1994:50).

(I don't care about you. I don't think I will be bothered by an uneducated person like you. I talk with highly educated people only. Not these hopeless old women who do nothing but only engage themselves in removing snuff from their red mouths. Jaga, let us go and fetch a beast for my daughter's

wedding feast. I am tired of listening to such raw heathens.)

A behaviour like this is not expected of a minister of religion like Tshibovhola. The rift he has created between himself and his congregation, and between him and the community, widens. Because of pride, he starts to lead a type of life which totally alienates him from the rest of the people. This gives his rivals a good opportunity to plan for his downfall.

In **Mukosi wa lufu** the tragic hero is Masindi. She is weak, unambitious and well-intentioned. As an African woman who believes in African tradition, she allows her husband to take a second wife called Maria. Maria's arrival in this family causes disorder and brings sufferings to Masindi and her children. But instead of planning to take actions against Maria, Masindi, in despair, says this to her daughter:

Ni songo t_olou d_igurud_a nga mugurud_o wa zwine ni si vhe nazwo n_wananga. Muthu kha livhuhe zwenezwo zwine a vha nazwo. A fhedze nga u sedza henefho hune a vha hone. U d_inuna kha vha d_inune. Lo vha t_avhela litshani vha li ore (Milubi, 1983:02).

(Do not complain about something which you do not have my daughter. Just be satisfied with what you have and learn to accept your condition.)

Innocent as she is, Masindi is accused of witchcraft. Her husband does not support her any longer. She is defeated and frustrated by Maria. Her suffering is not due to the fact that she sins. Unlike in the other three plays in which the tragic heroes are the architects of their own downfalls, the tragic hero in **Mukosi wa lufu** is frustrated and killed for no fault of hers.

The downfall of the protagonists in most of Milubi's plays are due to flaws in the heroes' lives. The error of judgement which leads to the downfall of a tragic hero is termed **harmatia** by the Greek dramatists.

In **Madombini a ngoho**, Khavhe sells out people like Fhedzi, Mangalani, Kukanganwi. Many people are arrested and tortured because of him. People become aware of his actions and others advise him to abandon them. Spying on people openly is a fatal mistake which Khavhe should have avoided.

When Fhedzi is in jail, Khavhe proposes love to his wife Anna. When trying to seduce her, Khavhe says to her:

Hai nandi. Hafhu (Vha lila u isa milomo yavho kha Vho-Anna). Ndi toḁou ri, hafhu na Vho-Fhedzi vha siho (Milubi, 1987:19).

(No! no! Why not ... (he tries to kiss Anna). I want to say that there is nothing which prevents me from making love to you since your husband is away.)

For one to seduce another person's wife is a flaw, and this is one of the mistakes which led to Khavhe's downfall.

When Fhedzi dies in detention, Khavhe wants to test the anger and power of the youth by going to the graveyard on Fhedzi's funeral day. This mistaken act leads to his death.

In **Ndi Mutodzi muni**, Itani blunders by falling in love with married women like Selina and Diana. This type of behaviour is criticized by elderly people like Nyamita who says:

Lila na lone li a dina. A hu na hune vha do pfa dzina
lalo li sa pfali. Hothe-hothe lo fhira ngaho. Ngoho
vhathu vho vhalaho dzibugu a vha iti nga khaladzi.
Vha itwa nga u sa ofha na midi ya vhathu. Kana ndi
dzone, bugu dzi no vha vhudza uri midi ya vhathu a i
shavhiwi kana (Milubi, 1985:42)?

(That one is very bad. He has a bad name all over.
He has slept with almost every woman. I wish they
can kill him. Educated people are really not good.
Their problem is that they lack respect for another
man's family. I do not know whether it is the books
which teach them not to respect other people's
families.)

The tragic flaw which is there in Itani causes him to make love with Selina in the office. These evil deeds which are caused by lust cost him his life. He is caught red-handed making love with Selina and as a result killed by a group of irate men.

Reverend Tshibovhola in **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani** also has flaws. He flaws when he suspends Bababa, Ndiitwani and others from the church without the church board's recommendations. He runs the church like his personal property.

Reverend Tshibovhola again shows flaws when he tries to force marriage between his daughter and her cousin. He makes a fatal mistake when he reveals his plans to his great rival Bababa.

Ñwananga o ri pwashela mmbodi Vho-Bababa.
Zwino riñe sa vhafunzi vha tshi zwi ðivha, zwa sa
tavhanyedzelwa zwi a dina (Milubi, 1994:38).

(My daughter has created a big problem for us, Bababa. Since you know what usually happens to pastors, if this cannot be resolved quickly, this can cause a lot of problems.)

Tshibovhola uses the church funds to bribe Bababa to help him solve his daughter's problems. This is a fatal mistake, because in the first place, it is unacceptable to use church money for one's personal benefits without the congregation's consent. Secondly, he is bribing a man he has suspended from the church for attending an initiation school. This fatal mistake contributes to Tshibovhola's downfall. Catastrophe, which is also regarded as the reversal of fortune in the protagonist's life from happiness to disaster is also examined in Milubi's works. With the exception of Masindi in **Mukosi wa Lufu**, there seems to be reversal of fortunes in the lives of all the tragic heroes of the books under study. For example, Itani leads

most of his life as a happy man until he meets his painful and terrible death. No one ever believed that Itani would be killed by ordinary people like Gwangwa, Thanyani and Maraga who tolerated his corrupt life for many years.

Chapter 2 treats **Madombini a ngoho**. The focus is on the world or setting which includes society with its norms and values, tragic actions, tragic hero and catastrophe. The play portrays a period in the '80s and is set in an African community. This period marks the birth of democracy. People like Fhedzi and a group of youth are seen as agents of transformation. Unfortunately it is not easy to preach the gospel of democracy in an area which is under the control of indoctrinated policemen like Dada and Dithu. The Police service to them means the protection of few government officials and sometimes chiefs even when they are wrong. Civilians are, according to the security forces of the time, not allowed to speak out their minds regarding governance of their country. That is why Fhedzi is arrested for speaking the truth. The person who reports him to the police is his friend Khavhe, who, because of his strong lust for money, becomes a notorious police informer. With his new recruits like Rahele and Mafunaizwo, Khavhe does a commendable job which pleases his bosses by reporting some more so-called dangerous elements like Mangalani and Mukanganwi to the police. The culprits are arrested and severely punished. Police actions divide the community, with the majority of people supporting Fhedzi and few individuals supporting the police force. That is why, after the death in detention of Fhedzi, the community members kill Khavhe and set all the houses of police informers alight.

Although it is very difficult to identify one protagonist in this play, the researcher chooses Khavhe as the most suitable tragic hero. Aristotle's principles of hubris, *harmatia* and catastrophe form the basis of the researcher's argument. Khavhe, just like Fhedzi, occupies a high and influential position in the community. He is, just like Fhedzi, a priest. But Khavhe is, unlike Fhedzi, a proud man. The wealth he has acquired makes him to openly report his friend Fhedzi to the police. This is a dangerous step to be taken. Many people, including his wife advise him to stop his dirty business, unfortunately the advice fall on deaf ears. There is a reversal of fortune in Khavhe's life when the mob turns against him and kills him. His death or downfall is not attributed to anybody else, but to himself. The drama is a major tragedy and the focus is on evil as a problem. To support the researcher's choice of Khavhe as a tragic hero, the researcher would like to refer to Coyle and Peck (1985) who state that in major tragedies there is a focus on the evil that results not only in the death of the tragic hero, but also in the death of the innocent and good who are singled out for destruction for no other reason than that they are innocent. Fhedzi is killed not because he has done any wrong, but evil men like Khavhe, Dithu and dada singled him out for destruction. Lucky enough, Khavhe also pays a heavy price. He is also murdered.

Chapter 3 concentrates on **Ndi mitodzi muni**. The play starts when Itani, who is a tragic hero, complains about corruption among senior government officials. He accuses them of nepotism. Unqualified people who are loyal to government authorities are appointed or promoted to high positions.

Although Itani is one of those who have been elevated to high positions, he fortunately does not condone this evil practice. This is why he decides to go to the university to improve his qualifications. Fortunately he completes his degree in a record time.

Itani returns to his office now as a proud man. He is a person who qualifies for the position he occupies. The community is expecting very good service from him.

In contrast to the community's high expectations, Itani resumes his office duties a changed man altogether. He is no longer the same Itani who was totally against corruption. He now leads a corrupt life himself. For example, he sells job for sex; he accepts bribes; he has no respect for married women. Selina, a married woman is appointed because she is ready to pay with sex. Diana and other married women also fall prey to Itani's lust. Elderly people put the blame for Itani's behaviour on education.

Itani becomes vain. He is self-important and unapproachable. Those who try to advise him are not listened to. He has developed a tendency of belittling people, especially uneducated elderly people. This flaw in his life costs him dearly. He is killed by jealous husbands like Thanyani, Maraga and Gwangwa. Scene 5 of this play marks the turning point in Itani's life. People who used to respect him, fear him and once loved him turn against him and kill him. His plea for mercy falls on deaf ears.

Chapter 4 focuses on **Mukosi wa Lufu**. The tragic heroine in this play is Masindi. She is portrayed as a weak innocent character. She is singled out for destruction not because she is evil, but because her perpetrator took advantage of her agreeable nature.

Masindi recruits Maria to become her husband's second wife. Maria's arrival in Mawela's family causes discord. Masindi, who is the first wife of Mawela is no longer accorded any respect or cared for. Disruptive forces examined in this play are love and jealousy and to a lesser extent, evil. Maria loves Mawela very much. Although Masindi plays an important role in bringing the two (Maria and Mawela) together, the latter no longer likes to share Mawela with anybody else. Because of jealousy, Maria accuses Masindi of witchcraft. She accuses her of bewitching and killing her daughter Lowani. For this reason, she can no longer stay in the same house with a witch. For fear of further misfortune, Maria advises her husband to look for a new place that would be safe for her. They move to a new residential area called Zwavhadivhalea.

Masindi is left behind on her own without anything to eat. Her children can no longer continue with their education. Her problems increase day by day. The climax in this play is reached when Maria organises a killer, one Sambula, to eliminate Masindi. Masindi is killed for no apparent reason. There is no catastrophe in this play since Masindi never enjoys her marital life. Her killer is also not brought to book.

Chapter 5 focuses on **Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani**. The tragic hero in this play is Reverend Tshibovhola. Conflict of cultures in this play divides the community into two. While chief Thavha regards education and Christianity as foreign institutions misleading his people, Reverend Tshibovhola views initiation schools as barbaric. Reverend Tshibovhola discourages all his church members from partaking in the initiation school activities. Those who dare go there are excommunicated from his church. Pride makes him take such decisions without consulting a church-board. He again flaws by using the church funds to finance his daughter's wedding. All these lead to Tshibovhola's downfall.

There is a reversal of fortune in this tragic play because Tshibovhola leads much of his life as a happy man until things turn sour for him on the day of his daughter's wedding.

He is humiliated because his daughter's wedding is disrupted; his pastoral and daughter's wedding gowns are burnt into ashes. His image as a minister of religion is not only tarnished, but scandal leads to his rejection by the congregation. He ends up in the street. This is a terrible downfall that he brings upon himself.

A summary of major characteristics of tragedy and their types as reflected in Milubi's drama may be tabulated as follows:

Characteristics of tragedy

TITLE OF DRAMA	Catas-trophe	Hubris	High stature	Pathos	Poetic Justice	Harmatia
Mukosi wa Lufu	-	-	-	+	-	-
Madombini a ngoho	+	+	+	-	+	+
Ndi miṭodzi muni	+	+	+	-	+	+
Khoro dzi sa dzhenelani	+	+	+	+-	+	+

Types of tragedy

TITLE OF DRAMA	Classical TR	Modern TR	Pathos
Mukosi wa Lufu	-	+	+
Madombini a ngoho	+	-	-
Ndi miṭodzi muni	+	-	-
Khori dzi sa dzhenelani	+	-	-

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