

Respondent: ID#9503
Interviewer: Christopher
Date: July 5, 1999
District: Balaka

Not recorded. Written up the same day by Christopher, typed by Susan.

I found him at his house drinking *kachasu* (locally distilled beer) with a friend and his mother-in-law. I approached and asked the price of the beer. They said a coca-cola bottle full costs K12, which I produced and bought one, and sat on the veranda where I was offered a sitting place. The mother-in-law went to collect the beer and when she was away I asked which one among the two men was LM. Of course I know the house belonged to L, since on Friday I never found him, he had gone to a remembrance ceremony for the dead. He asked me how I knew him and I told him that I had come on Friday. He said he was going to U after 1 p.m., I told him I just wanted to have a chat with him while I was waiting for the car to pick me. His mother-in-law came with the beer. I said she could drink it and bought the respondent another beer. She thanked me and said God should bless me, and I said she was free to drink it anywhere since I was going to buy her son-in-law some more beer. She gave me a sip to taste which I did. She went away behind the house inside the grass fence.

I asked him if the house we were sitting in was his and he said he stays in that house with his wife, who was behind the house and who brewed the beer. I admired the fresh uncooked fish which were spread on a mat in preparation for frying. He said that's his job, he sells fried fish at [the trading center] some 1 km away. I asked him if the kid who came near us was his and he said it was his stepson. He explained that when he married this lady she had a child, and he also had a child in N village. He said he had the child with a certain woman he never married but was a concubine to him and who worked for the parish. They have two children together. I asked him if he doesn't sneak to his first wife and he laughed and said why shouldn't he do that when he actually helps the son and also that at this place he is "staying with one leg" since he is just "staying there for the sake of staying" but not serious marriage. I asked him why, and he said the woman is a natural lover and even if his mother comes she doesn't respect her. The mother in law is another problem, because she always comes to him for relish, paraffin, *etc.* "I have married both", he joked.

I then asked him to elaborate on the issue of this woman with his son, and he said the woman is clinging to him. Whenever he goes to N, that's his village, she comes or sends the kid. I asked him what kind of assistance he gives her, and he says he gives her money for soap for the child. Whenever he goes there he sleeps with her and he laughed. "*Madzi saiwala khwawa*" he said, meaning "the river water does not forget its course, even after the river has dried", that is, "he cannot forget his old wife/lover even if he is married". I asked him if he does this frequently, he said whenever he goes to N he sleeps with her, and here he mentioned that "I fuck her" and said he shouldn't lie to me since it's natural, every man does this. He said, "even you, you can't cheat me that you don't sleep with other women". I said, "yah, I do since it's natural", and he said he knew that I'd do that. I asked him why, and he said educated people with money, women cannot rebuff them. I ask why. He said women nowadays want money and if a man has money he can sleep with any woman he wishes. He said he wishes he had money like me. I said I don't have much

money. I asked him if when he has money from fried fish he also manages to sleep with other women. He said not usually, but once or twice he slept with a prostitute since these prostitutes do not trouble one, you just produce money and say, “hey, let’s go” and you sleep with her. I asked him if last year he went to N and slept with his wife or he slept with a prostitute recently. He said last year and this year he slept with the woman in N. He slept with a prostitute last year and he says last year he grew a lot of rice, he sold it and had plenty of money and he went to [the city, place] where he found beautiful prostitutes and slept with one, that was last July. I told him that [the city, place] is hot and I’ve also slept with a prostitute there since I also found them very beautiful. He laughed. I asked him what measures he takes as a precautionary measure, and he says he uses condoms. But he said when one is drunk one does not use a condom. I asked if he was referring to other people or himself. He said other people; he himself uses a condom even when he’s drunk, since he is afraid of AIDS.

I asked him how one can detect that this woman might be infected with AIDS or not, and he said it’s because of her hair and coughing plus thinness. I explained to him, giving an example of [the city, place] where he saw beautiful women, if one can know if they have AIDS or not. He said one cannot know, it’s difficult, but he believes all women found in bars/bottlestores have AIDS since they sleep with different men. He further said these women will sleep with anyone for money, whether they are infected or not. I asked him if at [the trading center] he thinks there are these women in bars who he thinks are infected, he said all of them, especially at the [] bar where he says there is a woman who is fond of wearing trousers and she sleeps with different men around [the trading center] (the bosses, *mabwana*, and not him a poor person he says). I told him that he is not poor but should concentrate on his fish sales. I then told him that tomorrow I’ll pass by to taste some if he has the fried fish. He welcomed me and I asked him if minibuses stop by the road, he said sometimes. I bid goodbye and he asked if I wanted another sip, I said I’d drink tomorrow since I had taken malaria tablets.