

Traditional Marriage Practices in Rural Areas

Shona transcript:

Kumusha kutori nemamwe maitiro akatosiyana. Muchinyakare chedu kana kuti maitiro edu muZimbabwe, varume vanokwanisa kuita vakadzi vakawanda. Saka unoona kuti dzimwe nguva murume anokwanisa kuroora mukadzi wekutanga oona kuti aah ndafarira musikana anogara pamba pana mai nhingi Anotokwanisa kumuroora oita mukadzi wechipiri kana kuti vakadzi vatatu kana vana kana vashanu zvichingoenderana nekuti murume wacho ane mari yakawanda sei yokuchengeta vakadzi ivavo and zvinoitika ndazvekuti murume anenge aine mukadzi wake iye. Paanoita mumwe mukadzi, mukadzi iyeye anofanira kumuvakira imba yake panenge pari padyo neimba yemurume wake yekurara. Saka unokwanisa kuona imba yemurume yakateedzwa nedzimba shanu and vakadzi vese ava vanokwanisa kumubikira vese kana kuti anokwanisa kuti nhasi ndimai nhingi vanobika mangwana ndimai nhingi vanobika kuswera mangwana ndimai nhingi vanobika. Uyezve murume uyu ndinodavira kuti anokwanisa kuroora vakadzi vemumba mumwe chete sekuti kana vari vanin'ina nevakoma vemukadzi waakamboroora anokwanisa kuvaroorwa futi. Saka irori rinenge richinzi barika rekuti murume anenge ane vakadzi vakawanda ende zvinotenderwa hazvisi zvinhu zvinoshamisira, zvinoitika kazhinji kwazvo kumusha.

Asizve kozoita zvekare inonzi kugara nhaka. Manje iyi ndeyekuti kana mukadzi afirwa nemurume wake haatenderwe kuti aroore mumwe urume wematongo. Anofanira kugara mumhuri imwe chete iyoyo. Anokwanisa kubva aroorwa nemukoma wemurume wake kana kuti munin'ina wemurume wake kuti ange ari mumhuri iyoyo uye zve iyi zvinhu zvinongoitika mazuva ese hazvisi zvinhu zvinoshamisa kuti mukadzi agarwa nhaka kana kuti chinyi. Kana murume akafirwa kune chinonzi chigaramapfihwa kana kuti chimutsa mapfihwa. Apapa zvinoitika ndezvekuti murume anopihwa munin'ina wemukadzi wake kana kuti mukoma asi kazhinji anopiwa munin'ina nekuti kazhinji kachona anotanga kuroorwa mumhuri mukoma wacho. Hazvitarisirwe kunzi vanin'ina varoorwe mukoma asati aroorwa. Saka kana mukadzi akashaika kana ane vanin'ina murume anokwanisa kupihwa vanin'ina ivavo kuti mumwe wavo aite mukadzi wake mutsva. Kana musikana asina munin'ina vanokwanisa kutora vanonzi vana mainini vamwewo. Saka muChishona mainini mwana wehanzvadzi yamai. Saka kana musikana afirwa, amai vake vanenge vane hanzvadzi yavo inenge ine vana vasikana. Vana vasikana ivavo vanokwanisa kuuyawo kuzoita vakadzi vatsva wemurume iyeye. Saka ndizvo zvinoitika kana murume afirwa nemukadzi.

Asi nekuda kwekuti mazuvano vanhu vava kuzivawo anonzi maHuman rights, vasikana vava kurambawo kunogara nemurume akamboroora uyezve varume vacho vavakuzivawo kuti vanokwanisawo kundotsvaga vasikana vekune dzimwe nzvimbo. Asi nanhasi uno unokwanisa kuwana dzimwe nzvimbo muZimbabwe dzine vanhu vachiri kuita magariro akadaro.

Saka zvinoitika pakugara nhaka ndezvekuti kana murume ashaika vanotanga kuita kunonzi kurova guva iyi inoitwa kwaperera gore rimwe chete munhu wacho afa. Kana kurova guva kwaperera, kunozouya mamwe mabiko futi ekuti mukadzi azopihwa murume achamugara nhaka. Saka zvinoitika ndezvekuti varume vese, vakoma nevanin'ina vemufi vanogara vari mumutsetse mumwe chete uyezve kana mukadzi anga ane vana vakomana vanokwanisa kugara mumutsetse iwoyo. Mukadzi anopihwa dish rinenge rine mvura yekugeza maoko. Saka zvinenge zvichitarisirwa kuti mukadzi uyu anotanga kufamba, anenge achikambaira akabata dish mumaoko achitenderera neraini rinenge rakagara varume ava. Paanosvika pane murume waanenge achida kuti azoita murume wake chaiye amugare nhaka anobva aita kuti murume iyeye ageze maoko ake. Saka kana mukadzi asingadi kugarwa nhaka anopa mwana wake mukomana vanhu vose vobva vaziva kuti mukadzi aramba kugarwa nhaka. Asi kana iri nyaya yekugara mapfihwa hakuna izvozvo. Murume anongonzi taura mukadzi wauri kuda, otaura mukadzi waari kuda ndoda mainini nhingi kana kuti ndoda maiguru nhingi zvobva zvotopera zvakadaro.

English translation:

There are some [marriage] practices that are unique to the rural areas. According to our traditional values in Zimbabwe, men can have more than one wife. You will find that men can marry their first wife, and then they find someone else that they like and they decide to marry them too. The man will then have two wives; he can even marry a third or fourth wife, depending on how wealthy he is—this will ensure that he can take care of a big family. So, you can see a man's cottage surrounded by five other houses for each wife. All five wives can cook separate meals for him every day, or they can take turns to cook for him. Also, the man can even marry women from the same family, *i.e.* sisters. The practice of having more than one wife is called *barika* or polygamy; this is a practice which is common in the more traditional communities in the rural areas.

There is also another practice known as *kugara nhaka*. This occurs when a man dies and leaves a wife behind. The wife is not expected to marry a stranger but encouraged to stay in the family and marry a relative of the husband, usually a brother to her husband. This happens a lot and it is acceptable in our tradition. When a wife dies, the similar process is called *chigaramapfihwa* or *chimutsa mapfuhwa*. In this practice, the husband is offered his wife's sister, usually a younger sister of the wife, because the older sisters marry first before the younger ones. If the wife does not have any sisters, the husband can marry the women related to the paternal side of the wife's family. In Shona customs, this woman can be the daughter of the wife's brother. So any of these daughters are also eligible to be the husband's new wife. This is what happens when a man loses his wife to death.

But because of human rights, these days the young women are fighting against this practice; they feel the need to choose their husbands on their own. However, even today, you can still find some communities in Zimbabwe that still practice this way of marrying.

So, according to *kugara nhaka*, when the man dies, there is a post-burial ceremony that happens after a year. After this ceremony, there is another ceremony in which the wife

will be bestowed to a new man. So what happens is all the men in the family who are brothers of the deceased will sit in a single file; if the husband had sons, the sons will join these men, too. Then the woman is given a bowl full of water to wash hands; the woman slowly walks along the row of men with the dish. When she reaches the man whom she sees as a potential husband, she lets that man wash his hands in the bowl of water. If she is not in favor of getting a new husband, she will let her son wash his hands, and that signals her defiance to the idea of getting a new man. On the other hand, the process is different if this ceremony is for a man looking for a new wife. The man simply chooses the wife he wants, and that will be the final say.

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