

Tourism-related informal interaction in Chembe, Malawi
An ethnographic study

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan turismin liittyvää vapaamuotoista kanssakäymistä paikallisten malawilaisten sekä ulkomaalaisten asukkaiden ja matkailijoiden välillä. Etnografinen pääaineisto on kerätty Malawissa keväällä 2013 ja se koostuu haastatteluista ja muistiinpanoista. Tosisijainen aineisto koostuu raporteista ja asiakirjoista, joiden tarkoitus on hahmotella ruohonjuuritason vuorovaikutukselle laajempi yhteiskunnallinen konteksti. Metodologisesti tutkielma hyödyntää ranskalaisen sosiologin ja etnologin Pierre Bourdieun esittelemää käytännön teoriaa ja sen keskeisiä käsitteitä, jotka ovat kenttä, pääoma ja habitus. Tutkielman tarkoitus on valottaa niitä tekijöitä, jotka määrittävät eri toimijoiden mahdollisuuksia toimia turismin kentällä sellaisessa matkailukohteessa, jossa elintasoero paikallisten ja ulkomaalaisten välillä on huomattavan suuri. Aineistoni pohjalta esitän, että epämuodollisen vuorovaikutuksen osalta sukupuoli ja englannin kielen taito ovat keskeiset tekijät, jotka määrittävät paikallisten ihmisten mahdollisuuksia hyötyä turismista. Merkittävin hyöty epämuodollisesta vuorovaikutuksesta paikallisten ja ulkomaalaisten välillä oli se, että monien paikallisten ihmisten koulutuksen on maksanut ulkomaalainen vierailija. Vastaavasti haittoja olivat lisääntynyt alkoholin ja huumeiden käyttö sekä paikallisten miesten ja ulkomaalaisten naisten suhteet, jotka aiheuttivat ongelmia paikallisissa perheissä ja heikensivät entisestään paikallisten naisten asemaa yhteisössä. Myös yleinen epäluottamus paikallisia ihmisiä kohtaan heikensi heidän toimintamahdollisuuksiaan turismin kentällä. Paikalliset ihmiset myös kokivat, ettei heillä ole mahdollisuutta vaikuttaa turismiin liittyviin ongelmiin.

Asiasanat: Tourism – sustainable tourism – poor host community – interaction – ethnography – theory of practice – education – transactional sex – Chembe – Cape MacLear – Malawi

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1 INTRODUCTION

I undertook my first trip to Chembe on Cape Maclear after staying three weeks in Malawi. When I first arrived at the site of this study on the back of a *matola*¹, I could sense the hostility of the local women travelling with me. I said my greetings in *Chichewa*² and smiled in a friendly way at them, but instead of responding – as people in Malawi usually do – they looked at me as if they would have liked to kick me out of the car. The only man sitting with us looked at me more curiously and insisted that the women gave me some berries they were eating. Before we had travelled 18 kilometres from Monkey Bay to Chembe, I had managed to explain where I was about to go, and the male passenger had offered me a boat trip to the nearby island. This gendered dichotomy of how locals seemed to react towards me was followed by encounters in somewhat the same spirit during my first trip. It seemed that from women's point of view I was considered trouble, whereas for men I was a potential client. During this first trip to the lakeside, I would not know if I enjoyed it there or not. However, when it came to studying tourism related interaction in a poor host community, Chembe appeared as a perfect place to be.

The aim of this thesis is to study the factors that determine local participants' possibilities to act in the field of tourism in a tourist destination where the wealth gap between locals and foreigners is significant. I focus on 'the ground rules' of *informal interaction* between three main groups of tourism-related actors in Chembe: originally Malawian locals, foreign residents and foreign visitors. I discuss the data in three sub-divisions: casual communication, intimate relationships and sponsorship (as far as it is based on one to one casual contacts). I use a concept 'informal interaction' to draw a distinction to more regulated forms of interaction which due to their characters have relatively clear structures and regulations. In my data, these were brought up in the context of trade, labour relations and the ownership of resources. My research questions are: 1) what are 'the ground rules' of informal tourism-related interactions in Chembe and 2) what difference does gender make? In my thesis, in order to answer these questions, I map out the field of tourism in the village by

¹ Matola is a pickup truck that is used as a taxi or local bus for people and whatever they need to have with them.

² Chichewa, the language of Chewa is, beside English, another official language of Malawi. According to 1998 population census it is mother tongue for 57,2% of population. Online 19th Nov. 2013: <http://formin.finland.fi>

adopting French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's central concepts of his theory of practice: field, capital and habitus.

This introduction section presents the context of this study. I take a brief look at how the field of tourism in Chembe is related to the fields of power in Malawi and globally. A large role is played by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) which believes that ecotourism and sustainable tourism have a significant potential to reduce poverty in poor nations. Consequently, in order to increase foreign income, the Malawian government has named (eco)tourism as one of its focus areas.³ (Eco)tourism as a poverty reduction strategy is included in the official policy papers of Malawi as a sub theme under sustainable economic growth strategies. Sustainability has been a central concern also in anthropological approaches to tourism since 1980s. The concept of 'sustainable tourism' (derived from the ideals of 'sustainable development') has gained much attention. Generally speaking, the current discussion concerning tourism in poor destinations seems to be polarised. On the one hand, ecotourism/sustainable tourism is seen as a saviour of poor nations, bringing in important foreign currency and benefiting locals through improvements to infrastructure and services. On the other hand, tourism is seen as another form of neo-colonialism, resulting in rising prices, a commodification and appropriation of cultures and in the use of local land and other resources without giving back much more than litter. Without question, tourism is potentially both of these things. What it does and how it works locally, however, should always be investigated through case studies.

The site of this study, Chembe, is a fishing village situated partly inside the Lake Malawi National Park (LMNP) on the southern end of Lake Malawi. The village is one of the most famous tourist destinations in Malawi better known by the name Cape Maclear. In order to understand the interaction between different actors in Chembe today, in this introduction I will also take a look at under what circumstances these encounters began and how the region has since been introduced to foreign audiences. I also present the country's contemporary socio-political situation with a small and a very competitive political elite and great dependency on foreign aid. This thesis is first of all an ethnographic study of casual interaction in the contemporary field of tourism in Chembe. The purpose of examining on reports and documents as well as public discussion in this introduction part is to

³ The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006-2011 (2006). Malawi Government, Publications. Available online 10th Feb.2015: <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/Publications/MGDS%20November%202006%20-%20MEPD.pdf>

draft the context in which these interactions take place. As such, the introduction section also strives to take into account the macro level of tourism that is taking place in this particular destination.

Malawi is a land-locked country situated in southern Africa between Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. The estimated⁴ population is about 15 million and with its GDP per capita⁵ among bottom ten, it is considered one of the poorest countries on the globe. Malawi is a former British colony and a present-day recipient of foreign aid. The economy is based on agriculture and the main export product is tobacco.⁶ In addition to the business people and personnel of the development industry, many visitors who come to Malawi are volunteer workers and representatives of NGOs and churches. In this thesis, I discuss the power held in casual interaction in a small tourist destination. However, these encounters are not distinguishable from the socio-political legacy of the history of the region nor from the contemporary economic situation of the country.

Terms and definitions

When, writing about Malawi from the colonial period onwards, I refer to its modern borders. As such the idea of Malawi as an entity is relatively recent even if there is a tendency to link the modern Malawi to the Maravi Kingdom which existed from the 15th to the 17th centuries.⁷ I will not go deeply into the use of names and territorial borders in the pre-colonial period. Generally speaking, in my thesis I refer to the region as Nyasaland or Malawi, as I refer to ‘the lake’ as Lake Nyasa or Lake Malawi, depending on the context and the era in question. Actually the names Nyanja, Nyasa and Mang’anja all refer to a lake or an expanse of water, therefore aNyanja, aNyasa and aMang’anja refer to people who lived by the lake. ChiNyanja i.e. the language spoken by aNyanja became the most widely spoken despite the fact that also other groups had their own languages. In 1969, the

⁴ On the Malawi Government Official web pages the estimate is about 13 million people. Online 9th March 2015 <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/> and in UN data pages about 16 million people Online 9th March 2015. <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=malawi>

⁵ Online 19th Nov.2013. <http://www.indexmundi.com>

⁶ Ministry of Industry and trade, 2012. NES. National export strategy 2013-2018 http://www.malawihighcommission.co.uk/Malawi_National_Export_Strategy_Main_Document.pdf

⁷ McCracken 2012: 5

government of Malawi renamed chiNyanja to be called chiChewa⁸ which now, in addition to English, is another official language of Malawi. The local name of the village under study is Chembe whereas Cape Maclear, by which most foreigners know the place, is the name of the cape where the village is situated. I use both names depending on the context.

According to Malawi's 'National Tourism Policy' (2013) 'tourism' refers to "[t]he activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes." Thus, 'tourists' are people who do not permanently live in the region and who stay in Malawi less than a year for any reason. 'Ecotourism', by the definition of the 'National Tourism Policy', is "a form of specialised nature tourism that emphasises small-scale operations of tours to natural areas and may include visits to places of traditional or cultural interest. Interest is placed on environmentally sensitive development and visitor use" (National Tourism Policy 2013).

Ecotourism as a concept has many variations. The name itself implies an emphasis on ecological and environmental aspects. Nevertheless, many attempts to form a definition of ecotourism stress that also cultural and social factors are equally important. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) gave its definition already in 1990. A new version from 2015 has not changed much from the original. According to it, ecotourism is, "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education".⁹ What is new is the last part about interpretation and education. In the guide for certification of ecotourism and sustainable tourism Amos Bien (2006) points out that UNWTO identified already in 2002 over 60 sustainable and ecotourism certification programs around the world. Few programs operate worldwide, some are regional, and most are national or local. The challenge of a lack of a standard is widely recognised by the tourism industry.¹⁰ However, using standards is not without contradictions in itself. The procedures can, for example, leave local entrepreneurs without certifications. Even if they could fulfil the requirements they are not necessarily aware of the procedure itself. In addition

⁸ Phiri 2004:32

⁹ TIES, ecotourism definition. Online Jan 9th 2015 <http://www.ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism>

¹⁰ Bien, A. 2006

to ecotourism and sustainable tourism, the colourful vocabulary of tourism industry includes for example concepts such as: responsible tourism, voluntourism, and philanthropic travel. This paper is not study of ecotourism in Malawi as such. However, due to government's policy to name ecotourism as one of the key strategies in order to increase income, I will keep these ideas and definitions in mind and reflect my data on them.

TIES offers eight principals of ecotourism for all “those who implement, participate in and market ecotourism activities”. Four of them are: “Minimise physical, social, behavioural, and psychological impacts. [...] Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry. Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates and [...] [r]ecognise the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous People in your community and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.”¹¹ Case specific guidance for visiting host communities in a responsible way in Malawi is given in online pages of the Bradt's travel guide for Malawi.¹² The instructions are written by Kate Webb from the Safari Company which is based in Blantyre.¹³ The guidelines are in line with TIES instructions.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has a definition also for the wider concept of sustainable tourism. It is tourism “that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”.¹⁴

¹¹ TIES what is ecotourism? Online 20th April 2015. <https://www.ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism>

¹² Webb, Kate: Guidelines for visiting community projects in Malawi. Online 20th April 2015. <https://bradtmalawiupdate.wordpress.com/category/cape-maclear/>

¹³ Kate Webb introduction. Online 20th April 2015. <http://www.responsiblesafaricompany.com/index.php/home/about-us/meet-the-team/>

¹⁴ UNWTO Sustainable development of Tourism. Online 11th Feb.2015: <http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>

Power and capital in public discussion

During our stay in Malawi, a deep distrust between the North American pop artist Madonna and the President of Malawi, Mrs. Joyce Banda, earned significant media coverage. With her children adopted from the country and through supporting the education and orphans, she has given a face to western philanthropism in Malawi. Among others, Mrs. Banda's sister was discharged from her managerial duties on Madonna's humanitarian organisation due to the allegations of financial mismanagement. According to news article, "Banda rewarded her sister for this [the misuse of the money] by giving her a senior position in the education ministry".¹⁵ On the other hand, Madonna has been accused by President Banda of being a diva expecting VIP treatment, and by remarking that the schools she claimed to build are actually only classrooms.¹⁶ The open response of the state house was published in newspapers and it presented 11 paragraphs about why the government is not obligated to give Madonna any special treatment regardless of her help to Malawian children.¹⁷

The 'Madonna case' brings up a very interesting example of the complexity of the *donor – recipient relationship*. Here is a celebrity who is first appreciated for schooling local children but later accused of interfering in government policies (even though only after malpractices occurred among employees of her own organization). If she is not eligible to criticize, one can question who then is entitled and/or obligated to question any government's policies? Is it not everyone's responsibility to try to be aware of how political power is used, and is it not, in fact, more binding upon those who can?

In addition to her publicity, Madonna uses economic power. Yet it was not enough to challenge the government even if the government in question is of a small nation in sub-Saharan Africa. Her accusations, however, did not stand alone. During independence, several cases of corruption and misuse of government money have been revealed.¹⁸ In autumn of 2013, the so-called 'Cashgate'

¹⁵ Online 28th Dec 2015: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/24/madonna-malawi-president-joyce-banda-elections>

¹⁶ Online 28th Dec 2015: <http://www.nyasatimes.com/2013/04/07/madonna-ends-malawi-controversial-tour-accused-of-lying-to-the-world-on-schools/>

¹⁷ Online 28th Dec 2015: <http://www.nyasatimes.com/2013/04/10/malawi-state-house-responds-to-madonnas-outbursts-full-text/>

¹⁸ For example: IRIN 2007: Malawi, corruption worsening. 2007. Online 30th Nov. 2015: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/74577/malawi-corruption-seen-as-worsening>; BBC 2011: Malawi, Ex-president Muluzi's corruption trial opens. Online 30th Nov. 2015: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12675552>

scandal came out. This scandal over money that was missing from the treasury accelerated when the budget director was shot three times in the head. Miraculously, he survived.¹⁹ According to Joyce Banda herself, who at the time had been president for 18 months, over the previous ten years about 30 per cent of country's budget had gone missing. This was almost as much as the foreign aid donated to Malawi during the same time. Banda promised full investigation on the case even if it would mean that she would not be re-elected (Blas, J. 2013).

In 2013, almost 40 percent of the state budget was dependent on donors. The development partners of Malawi at the time were the United States (US), the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Norway, Japan, Ireland, Flanders, Iceland, World Bank (WB), The African Development Bank (ADB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).²⁰ These donors indeed had enough economic power to put pressure on the government – and as expected they reacted. IMF suspended disbursement of a \$20 million loan, which it approved later, in January 2014.²¹ Among others, the largest donor, the Department for International Development of United Kingdom (DfID), withheld payments and instead financed an audit team to study the case of the missing money. Dozens of people were arrested and accounts were closed.²² In February of 2015, DfID was still channelling aid through non-governmental organizations and not through the government itself.²³ Also many other donors were funding more off-budget activities and some activities in the budget without channeling funds through the government's financial system (2014-2015 Budget Statement: 20-29).

¹⁹ Banda, David 2015: Mphwiyo, shooting evidence and facts. Online 21st Feb 2015: <http://www.nyasatimes.com/2015/02/21/mphwiyo-shooting-evidence-and-facts-check-so-far-malawi-cashgate/>

²⁰ 2014-2015 Budget Statement: 20-29. Online 27th April 2015: http://www.parliament.gov.mw/docs/general/2014-2015_Budget_Statement.pdf

²¹ IMF News 17th Jan. 2014. Online 30th Nov. 2015: <https://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2014/pr1415.htm>

²² Blas, J. 2013: Malawi 'cash-gate' corruption scandal unfolds like a thriller, Financial Times 19th Nov. 2013. Online 20th Nov. 2015: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/c17480e0-50fb-11e3-b499-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3Kf4d9vUJ>

²³ Nyasatimes 2015: Britain still givin aid to Malawi through non-governmental system. Online 21st Feb 2015: <http://www.nyasatimes.com/2015/02/10/britain-still-giving-malawi-aid-through-non-governmental-system-high-commissioner/>

Destination Malawi

Despite the challenges that the country is facing it indeed has much to offer to tourists. It has beautiful nature with mountains, valleys and savannah. Most importantly, it has the vast freshwater basin Lake Malawi with more than 500 endemic fish species. Because of its unique species and exceptional natural beauty, Lake Malawi National Park has gained status as one of the world heritage sites. The introductory chapter about the park on UNESCO's web page²⁴ compares it with the Galapagos Islands when it comes to the study of evolution. To compete with more famous destinations in Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania, Malawi is now able to offer the famous 'big five' in its safaris (that is: a rhino, an African elephant, a lion, a Cape buffalo and a leopard). Malawi is also the country of many ethnic groups,²⁵ with their histories, customs and languages. The Malawian tourism sector is actively launching the concept of 'The Warm heart of Africa', referring to polite and friendly Malawians. Historical sites



Picture 1: Map of Malawi (by Shaunde via Wikimedia. Derived from UN map of Malawi)

in the country could offer much to tourists seeking an educational perspective. According to the narrative of the country's history, the efforts of Dr. Livingstone and the British Colonial Government forces led by Sir Harry Johnston ended slavery in the area. The Malawi National Commission is proposing the Malawi slave routes and the Dr. David Livingstone trail²⁶ to be also nominated as a

²⁴ LMNP Lake Malawi National Park on Unesco World heritage list <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/289>

²⁵ Malawi. Formin, Finland. 19th Nov.2013. <http://formin.finland.fi>. Chewa is the biggest ethnic group in Malawi. Other groups are Nyanja, Tumbuka, Tonga, Yao, Lomwe, Sena, Ngoni and Ngonde.

²⁶ Malawi Slave Routes and Dr.Livingstone Trail tentative for – UNESCO World Heritage nomination. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5603/>

world heritage site of UNESCO. Along these trails, many relics referring to the slave trade are still preserved.

Guide books

Linguist Mary-Louise Pratt (2008) has studied European historical travel writings and how these writings constructed Europeans' understanding of themselves and the rest of the world in relation to them. This 'planetary consciousness' was constructed at roughly the same time as – and in relation to – natural history classification as a structure of knowledge and the turn towards exploring continental interiors.²⁷ Her thinking is in line with Bourdieu's who emphasised the importance of understanding how and to what purpose previous knowledge has been produced. Pratt writes:

If one studies only what the Europeans saw and said, one reproduces the monopoly of knowledge and interpretation that the imperial enterprise sought. This is a huge distortion, because of course that monopoly did not exist (Pratt 2008: 7).

In 1906, one corner of the British Empire became introduced to British readers by mission school teacher Miss Alice Werner, who provided detailed descriptions of its flora and fauna and – as the name of the book series 'The Native Races of the British Empire: British Central Africa' implies – also of its peoples. The editor's foreword illustrates the world view of the British middle and upper classes at the beginning of the 20th century:

INTEREST in the subject races of the British Empire should be especially keen in the Mother Country [...] The present series is intended to supply in handy and readable form the needs of those who wish to learn something of the life of the uncivilized races of our Empire; it will serve the purpose equally of those who remain at home and for those who fare forth into the

²⁷ Pratt 2008:11

world and come into personal contact with peoples in the lower stages of culture (Werner 1906, emphasis in original).²⁸

Tourism historian John M. Mackenzie (2005) does not mention ‘The Native Races’ series in his examples, but by presenting some key publishers, he describes how the travel guide books helped to build the British Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries. An important part of the empire building project was the collection of all kinds of data and the mapping of new regions. With these, the globe could “be reduced, compressed within the covers of a few books and atlases, encapsulated within a single room”. According to him, the guide books unveil a complete mind-set. The aim of the publishers was to offer a complete description of the regions in question. Thus, he suggests that it is apparent that the British Empire was built “not only on the sword and the gun, the Bible and the flag, Christianity and commerce, but also on the guide and the map” (Ibid.: 22).

Mackenzie writes that the existence of these guides reflected the expansion of the middle-class market. The success of the shipping lines that were the important financiers of these books was linked to the development of the British Empire and thus they were willing to promote the concept of travel as “a pleasurable, a healthy, a profitable and culturally enlightened activity”. The audiences of these guidebooks were missionaries, teachers, administrators, businessmen, the army and navy officers as well as members of technical and professional services. Not only these men and women but also people who worked as their servants might have read these books. According to Mackenzie, these travellers in the European empires occupied a twofold position. They were seeking – or as Mackenzie writes, “appeared to seek” – other cultures, climes, landscapes, flora and fauna, and/or other morals. However, they were also charting what they thought to be their own achievements. Mackenzie takes an example of a guide book concerning India which included careful explanations of where to find Western architecture and the comfort of afternoon tea. Of African leaders those who had adopted Christianity were mentioned in a positive spirit. Mackenzie writes: “For the British, being imperial was being modern and that was the fundamental value to which all other values referred” (ibid.: 22-39).

²⁸ Werner 1906: *The Natives of British Central Africa. The Native Races of the British Empire*. Foreword written by N.W. Thomas. Online 21st April 2015: Open library.org: <https://archive.org/stream/nativesbritishc01werngoog#page/n12/mode/2up>.

David Livingstone's 'Missionary Travels and Researches in Southern Africa'²⁹ (1857) was one of the best-selling books of the 19th century written in English.³⁰ Remarks about the region of the modern day Malawi and Lake Malawi were included in this book. However, the main topic of the book was 'Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries, and of the Discovery of the Lakes Chirwa and Nyassa 1858-1864' by David and Charles Livingstone in 1866.³¹ The foundation for tourists' interest in the Lake Malawi region was laid for English-speaking audiences by these books. A century after the hardships of the first explorers and missionaries who approached the lake and about sixty years after the closing of the transit port of the slave trade at Nkhokotota, Martin J. Morris (1953) wrote:

The whole country invites you to spend your holidays in relaxation and recreation, on the sandy beaches of Lake Nyasa, to fish and sail on its great waters; to bathe in the freshwater surf; to enjoy scenic tours among its green mountains and valleys; to see its tea, tobacco, cotton and tung being cultivated and produced; to enjoy the amenities of its towns; to see its agricultural areas dotted with African villages; and to hear the friendly cry of "moni Bwana" from all along your way (Morris 1953).³²

Six decades later, an author of Bradt's Guide of Malawi, Philip Briggs, introduces the destination with the often used catch-phrases: 'The Land of the Lake', 'The Warm Heart of Africa' and 'Africa for Beginners'. According to him "these three sum up much of what makes this small African country so well liked by all who visit it". He continues by filling in his conception of the meanings of these phrases. First he describes the lake by numbers. Then he writes about its people who "exude a warmth and friendliness that make most visitors feel instantly home". Referring to the third phrase Briggs estimates Malawi to be probably "the most laid-back nation on Earth" (Briggs 2010: vii).

²⁹ Available online: <https://archive.org/stream/missionarytrave00unkngoog#page/n8/mode/2up>

³⁰ Mackenzie 2005: 19-22

³¹ Available online: <https://archive.org/stream/narrativeanexpe03livigoog#page/n10/mode/2up>

³² Morris 1953. Foreword to the travel book 'Nyasaland, Central African Lakeland. A visitors' guide to Nyasaland protectorate British Central Africa'. Publisher not known. In Society of Malawi library, Blantyre.

About Chembe, Briggs writes a short but an illustrative history as a tourist destination. David Livingstone visited the cape in 1861, and honoring his name and visions the place was chosen in 1875 to be as the original site of Livingstonia mission which, nonetheless, soon moved further north. During the colonial period 1949 – 1950 the planes of the ‘BOAC Flying Boat Service’ flew about a year on weekly basis between Britain and South-Africa.³³ They made a stopover in Cape Maclear during both north- and southbound flights. The flights only continued for a year but because of them already over 2000 passengers had spent a night in Cape Maclear, staying in its one hotel owned by the Nyasaland Hotels and Breweries. One of the initial purposes of the stopover in Cape Maclear was to introduce Nyasaland to British tourists.³⁴ From the early 1980s to its heyday in the 1990s, Cape Maclear was perhaps ‘the most chilled-out’ party destination for travellers going from Nairobi to Victoria Falls. According to Briggs, it was frequently praised as ‘Sub-Saharan African answer to Kathmandu or Marrakesh’. In the late 1990s, travellers moved with their endless parties further north to Nkhata Bay and Kande, and even less travellers came to the cape at the beginning of the new millenium. However, since those days Cape Maclear has restored its success and offers now “a greater choice of mid-range and upmarket facilities, aimed at residents and volunteers as much as passing backpackers”. It also offers a variety of aquatic activities (Briggs 2010: 134):

[T]here remains a gratifyingly integrated feeling to tourist development in Chembe, with most lodges lying right in the heart in the village, so that visitors are exposed to everyday African life in an unforced manner very different from any other lakeside resort in Malawi (*ibid.*).

1.1 (ECO)TOURISM IN MALAWI

Statistics show that the number of arrivals to Malawi in 2011 was 767 000, of which approximately 77 per cent came from Africa, mostly from the neighbouring countries of East Africa. During the same year, 13,5 per cent of the passengers came from Europe and of them more than a half came from

³³ Briggs 2010:134

³⁴ See Baker 1988

Great Britain despite the turmoil in the two countries' bilateral relations and the political situation of Malawi in general. About 6 per cent came from the Americas, 4 per cent from Asia, Middle East and Pacific and less than 0,3 per cent from other unspecified countries.³⁵ As such the numbers are about the same as the average during the period of 1994 to 2009.³⁶ Of all the arrivals in 2011, 60 percent entered Malawi for business or for other professional reasons. Holidays, leisure and recreation were the main reason for 27 per cent of visits and the rest were made for other personal reasons.³⁷ The Market Assessment Report: Eco-Tourism in Malawi (2012) specifies that non-governmental organisations' (NGO) workers and foreign residents make up a significant portion of visitors to Malawi. In the report it is also noted that the backpacker market has changed: Malawi still attracts gap year students but in addition to low-budget travellers there are now professional backpackers with more money to use (Eco-Tourism in Malawi, 2012: 5).

'Ecotourism' seems to be a universal formula which is offered through different international organisations, namely the United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), especially to poor host destinations in Southern America, Asia and Africa in order to increase foreign income. The United Nations General Assembly has credited ecotourism as key in the fight against poverty. In its resolution 'Promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environment protection' in 2012 it called on UN Member States to adopt policies that promote ecotourism. The paper emphasized ecotourism's positive effects on income generation, jobs and education and thus on decreasing poverty and hunger. The resolution also noted that ecotourism contributes to conservation, protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural areas by encouraging both hosts and guests to preserve and respect natural and cultural heritage (UNWTO, 2013).³⁸

³⁵ Malawi: Arrivals of non-resident tourists at national borders, by country of residence 2007-2011 (12.2012). Tourism Factbook database 2012. Malawi. Available online in UNWTO E-library <http://www.e-unwto.org>.

³⁶ Machinjili, C. 2010

³⁷ Malawi: Basic indicators (compendium) 2007-2011 (12-2012) and Malawi. Tourism Factbook database 2012. Available online in UNWTO E-library <http://www.e-unwto.org>

³⁸ UNWTO press-release. Available online 10th Feb.2015: <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2013-01-03/un-general-assembly-ecotourism-key-eradicating-poverty-and-protecting-envir>

UNWTO “generates market knowledge, promotes competitive and sustainable tourism policies and instruments, fosters tourism education and training, and works to make tourism an effective tool for development through technical assistance projects in over 100 countries around the world”. The list of members includes 156 countries of which Malawi is one. They also have six associate members and more than 400 affiliate members who represent the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities (UNWTO).³⁹ The organization is one of the United Nations agencies and its task is “the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism”. It promotes tourism “as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide”. UNWTO has suggested the implementation of ‘The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism’ to its members. It also promotes tourism as an instrument to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2002 it launched the programme called ST-EP (Sustainable tourism to eliminate poverty).⁴⁰ However, the programme itself has been criticised for being too optimistic about the potential of sustainable tourism. It is claimed to have failed to comprehend global structural realities and has instead addressed the topic only on the micro level (Burns, P. and Novelli, M. 2008: 2 – 3).

The Malawian Ministry of Tourism is working according to the ideals of UNWTO to promote ecotourism in order to contribute to economic growth in Malawi. The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006-2011 (MGDS 2006)⁴¹ held out big hopes for the ecotourism sector:

Malawi will be established as a principal and leading eco-tourism destination in Africa and domestic tourism will be increased. Strategies to be pursued include: increasing capacity to service additional tourists in international competitive accommodations; improving transportation links to tourism destinations; increasing attractiveness of national parks for

³⁹ UNWTO who we are. Available online 10th Feb.2015: <http://www2.unwto.org/content/who-we-are-0>

⁴⁰ UNWTO, STEP. Online 30 Nov. 2015. <http://step.unwto.org/en>

⁴¹ Malawi Government, Publications. Available online 10th Feb.2015:<http://www.malawi.gov.mw/Publications/MGDS%20November%202006%20-%20MEPD.pdf>

tourism and eco-tourism and improving tourism marketing regionally and internationally (Ibid.: xix).

‘Malawi - Second Growth and Development Strategy for 2011-2016’ (MGDS II) lists nine ‘priorities within priorities’. In the second group on the list are: energy, industrial development, mining and tourism (without the ‘eco’ prefix). The paper is the Malawian Government’s publication, but the list of stakeholders reveals the wider perspective of influential actors. In the forewords of the MGDS II, the Malawian Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr. Ken Lipenga, writes:

This strategy including its themes and key priority areas have been thoroughly discussed and agreed upon by all stakeholders including the United Nations Country Team, the IMF, World Bank and the European Union. I am confident that the same commitment that prevailed during the formulation process of this strategy will continue during its implementation. While the major implementation tool of this strategy is the National Budget, all stakeholders will be expected to complement by aligning their programmes and activities to the MGDS II (MGDS II, 2011).⁴²

The second strategy plan is based on six thematic areas in which ‘tourism, wildlife and culture’ represent one of the eight sub-categories of sustainable economic growth. It is still estimated to be one of the emerging sectors with significant potential. In addition to new goals, MGDS II presents an evaluation of an earlier strategy paper. According to it, during the period from 2006 to 2011 the construction of access roads to tourist sites in Mangochi (where also Chembe is situated) took place; improvement of airports and airstrips were carried out; and Mpale Cultural Village was constructed. The government also began constructing an international conference centre. According to the paper, the wildlife and culture sector achieved improved wildlife conservation; and animal translocation and

⁴² Malawi - Second growth and development strategy for 2011-2016. Available online 10th Feb.2015:<http://www.mw.one.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Malawi-Growth-and-Dedvelopment-Strategy-MGDS-II.pdf>

restocking, construction and rehabilitation of national monuments and other cultural infrastructures and research on national heritage were undertaken.

The strategy paper (MGDS II) noted also that tourism, being overwhelmingly dependent on wildlife and nature, faces challenges from poaching, the low populations of animals in some protected areas, poor supporting infrastructure, and low community participation in wildlife conservation. In addition to these, there is not much cultural infrastructure such as museums, arts centres and national archive buildings in Malawi. The marketing of tourism products and services is an overall challenge from the tourism sector's point of view.⁴³ The National Tourism Policy (2013) also mentions problems with the infrastructure as well as with limited direct flights from Europe and America. There is a need for fast development and improvement of roads, telecommunications and a steady electrical supply. At the moment, most attractions are still only reachable during the dry season, internet connections are expensive and unreliable and frequent cuts in electricity hamper businesses. Even if tourism is written into the development strategy as a cornerstone to improve economic growth, the industry does not trust the government to have the political will to facilitate it. According to the policy paper, there is also a challenge with employees: there are not enough adequately trained people to work in the industry (ibid.).

As a working tool, the Ministry of Tourism also uses 'Eco-tourism in Malawi, Market Assessment' (2012).⁴⁴ According to this report, there are two central factors that are hindering the sustainability of ecotourism 'and indeed tourism as a whole'. These are: insufficient numbers of tourist both domestic and international and deforestation.⁴⁵ Comparing with my data concerning Chembe, the findings of the market assessment are much in line with what I was told by the foreign residents. For the market assessment, 68 people were interviewed mostly in three regions: Salima, Rumphi and Karonga. They were local and foreign tourism-related actors such as managers of safari companies

⁴³ MGDS II, 2012: 10, 25-27

⁴⁴ Eco-Tourism in Malawi, Market Assessment, Full Report, 23rd November 2012, Prepared by Kay Armstrong For and on behalf of VSO and The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife. (VSO-Volunteers overcoming poverty). E-mailed to me by Mr Dyson Banda, Ministry of Tourism, Lilongwe.

⁴⁵ There have been some efforts in Cape Maclear to stop the deforestation. WWF- Finland had a project in which people were taught to make briquettes of straw to use them as fuel for cooking (see Rantala & al. 2002).

and game parks, owners and managers of the lodges, staff from the Ministry of Tourism and so forth. In the report, also tour guides from different tourist destinations were interviewed. In some respects, my findings about the impacts of tourism were similar to those in the report and included problems with the trash, discussions concerning the ownership and use of land as well as general threats to the Lake Malawi such as overfishing and Bilharzia.⁴⁶ On the positive side, employment was seen as ‘one of the biggest benefits of tourism as a whole’ in the report as well as in my data concerning Chembe.

Some ecotourism projects have been started by the Malawian government. The government is, for example, giving remission of taxes for those who use solar panels to produce electricity. According to the assistant director of marketing in the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Mr. Dyson Banda, tourism is already seen as having considerable potential, but due to lack of knowledge and resources it is still in its infancy and not yet a fully exploited possibility.⁴⁷ It also faces unpredictable misfortunes. In autumn 2013, one of the prides of Ministry of Tourism, Mpale cultural village, faced tragedy when its museum and amphitheatre were destroyed in a fire. Arguably the fire had been set by people who had been chased away after trying to steal cables from the museum (Banda.S.J. 2013).⁴⁸

In addition to challenges at the local level, actors in the field of tourism as in other fields in Malawi operate in a challenging socio-political environment. Malawi became an independent state in 1964 and attained the status of Republic in 1966. By 1971, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) with the leadership of Hastings Kamuzu Banda was made the only legal party. H.K. Banda’s regime lasted until 1994. The political challenges did not disappear with the arrival of the multi-party system. Ever since the press got enough freedom, news about corruption and frauds have been recurring. In the

⁴⁶ Bilharzia is a parasitic disease caused by certain snails living in the lake. There is a preventing medicine that is highly recommended to tourists and can be bought from the clinic and from some of the lodges. Online 20th April 2015: <http://www.who.int/topics/schistosomiasis/en/>

⁴⁷ Banda, Dyson. 2013

⁴⁸ Banda.S.J. 2013. Malawi’s Mpale Cultural Village loses museum and amphitheatre. Timesmedia Malawi. Oct 2013 <http://timesmediamw.com/malawis-mpale-cultural-village-loses-museum-amphitheatre/>

DIFD report,⁴⁹ Malawi is described as one of the most unequal countries in the world. The report pointed out that an extremely small elite controls both the political and economic spheres of the country. Since the political elite regardless of their party are also the major business holders, there are no powerful voices for alternative interests and agendas.⁵⁰ The report summarizes the situation concerning the state budget processes calling it “a theatre” that masks the real distribution and spending. In this theatre all the stakeholders from government, civil society and donors seem aware of what is going on:

Yet, all stakeholders ‘act’ as if the budget planning and formulation will actually have a bearing on the actual implementation and distribution of resources. [...]. Behind the scenes, the actors manoeuvre strategically to ensure that their interests are protected. As a result, despite stated intentions expressed in the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the outcome of the budget process in Malawi is a budget that secures the interests of the politically powerful actors in the public sector (ibid.: iv).

The report discusses several reasons why the poor budget process is tolerated. It remarks that “[a] fundamental problem to be addressed in the context of the budget process in Malawi is how international aid both exacerbate, and is party to, the poor financial management and accountability witnessed”. It points out that assistance from the donors had a tendency to be in form of technical interventions without paying attention on the socio-political context. Government officials did not trust donors any more than the donors trusted them. An interviewee who was a senior government official had put it simply, “donors are bad, they give you money and make you stupid”. Formal institutions and processes at each stage of the budget process were undermined. Civil servants did not have enough resources nor time to do their job so they adopted the attitude of ‘what gets paid, gets done’. Accountability institutions were not effective because they had not received funds to implement legislation, and the civil society did not put enough pressure behind their demands for accountability. The report points out the cultural legacy of a colonial and post-colonial past in which

⁴⁹ Rakner, L. et al.2004: The budget as theatre – the formal and informal institutional makings of the budget process in Malawi. Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen. DFID. Online 1st Jan2016 <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3554.pdf>

⁵⁰ Ibid.: 8

a legacy of “complacency with leadership and a limited commitment to and responsibility for national affairs still dominates state-society relations” (ibid.:20 – 21).

1.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENCOUNTERS WITH EUROPEANS BY THE LAKE

Maravi Kingdom and the trade on the East African coast

Historical sources concerning local people meeting Europeans around Lake Malawi take us to the period of the Maravi Empire from the 15th century to the mid-17th century. The Maravi (Marave) came from the area of present-day Congo to a region which at the time was already inhabited by earlier Bantu speaking groups. The Maravi Kingdom encompassed most of modern Malawi as well as parts of modern Mozambique and Zambia – the regions where their descendants still live in many subgroups such as aNyanja and aChewa.⁵¹ The Maravi clans were acknowledged as warriors and traders and the Maravi chiefs held the monopoly to sell ivory from the area. The empire was at its zenith around the year 1600, but due to conflicts among chiefs, between the years 1650 and 1700 Maravi Kingdom lost its power and was split into smaller groups (Olson 1996: 372; Alpers 1975).

The story of African-European encounters in the area of present-day Malawi was strongly affected by the trade along the East African coast. From the region of modern Malawi, goods based on hunting, namely ivory, were brought to the coast. In addition to these goods, an increasing number of people were sold at the east coast markets by Arab and later also by Portuguese traders. The Portuguese wanted to gain more from the trade and followed the Muslim traders inland. By the 1530s they had established trading posts along Zambesi (Mosambique) at Sena and Tete. Further from these official Portuguese sites lived hundreds of Portuguese Sertanejos, or ‘backwoodsmen’, who had escaped from the military or from the trading posts. They self-identified with Portuguese culture but lived beyond the control of the Portuguese Crown. Many of them were ‘Portuguese slavers’ but acted quite

⁵¹ The dominant clans Phiri (aPhiri- hill top people) and Banda (aBanda – people of temporary shelters) belong to Chewa tribe. (Phiri 2004:13-14)

independent of the Portuguese colonial administration (Dritsas 2010: 7-8. See: Alpers 1975 and Wolger et al. 2010).

‘Malawians’ were not safe from the kidnappings and the horrors of the slave trade. On the contrary, especially during the 19th century, they lived at the very centre of it. Nkhotakota on the western shore of Lake Malawi became the centre of the slave trade in the African interior. Another present-day tourist destination by the lake, Salima, also served similar purposes. The Yaos worked with traders and had systemized the kidnappings of the members of neighbouring groups. Enslaved people started their long journeys from Nkhotakota or other ports to the eastern coast and from there to other continents. In the 1820s, from approximately 19 000 people who were captured and brought to the slave market in Zanzibar, 15 000 people were from the Lake Malawi area. By the 1860s, ‘Wanyasa’ had become a word applied to refer to people of slave origin (McCracken 2012: 25).

Dr. Livingstone in search of Lake Nyassa

The first British Commissioner in Nyasaland during the years 1891-1895 was Sir Harry Hamilton Johnson. In one of his forty books, ‘A history of colonisation of Africa by alien races’, in 1899 he opens a new chapter concerning the explorers’ contributions to colonial conquest as follows:

I think it better to devote a chapter to the enumeration of great explorers whose work has proved to be an indirect cause of the ultimate European control now established over nearly all Africa (Johnston 1899: 191).

The best known explorer of the region around Lake Malawi is David Livingstone (1813-1873). He spent three decades of his life in central and southern Africa where his initial aim was to open up a path to commerce. This lawful trade route would make the selling and shipping of captured prisoners unnecessary. The three C’s: commerce, Christianity and civilisation were supposed to heal what he described as the open sore of Africa, that is, slavery. Livingstone’s earlier explorations had attracted the attention of the government and he was sent back with a well-equipped expedition to explore Zambezi and Lake Malawi/Nyasa, then known as Lake Maravi (McCracken 2012).

The plan for The Zambesi Expedition was simple. It was supposed to reach the delta of the Zambesi and proceed to the Batoka highlands (near Victoria falls). The explorers would settle there, plant crops, build a mill, and explore and study the surrounding areas. Natural resources, especially plants, needed to be listed in order to plan for future trade. The explorers were hopeful that the Africans would gather around their base and would “learn and benefit from the moral conduct of a British community”. However, these plans did not turn out well. Zambesi above Tete was not an option due to impassable cataracts, thus the original plan for the settlement of the expedition had to be discarded. Livingstone, with part of his crew, took the steamboat Ma Robert to explore the navigability of a river, now called the Shire, which is one of the biggest tributaries of Zambesi. At its upper end, the Shire joins Lake Malawi at the southern end of the lake. They made trips on foot to the highlands at Mount Zomba and to Lake Chilwa and estimated the area to be suitable for cotton production. The promising first visits to the Shire turned the focus of the expedition in that direction.⁵² In what follows, Charles Livingstone describes encounters with locals along the Shire.

As we approached the villages, the natives collected in large numbers, armed with bows and poisoned arrows; and some, dodging behind trees, were observed taking aim as if on the point of shooting. All the women had been sent out of the way, and the men were evidently prepared to resist aggression. At the village of a chief named Tingané, at least five hundred natives collected and ordered us to stop. Dr. Livingstone went ashore; and on his explaining that we were English and had come neither to take slaves nor to fight, but only to open a path by which our countrymen might follow to purchase cotton, or whatever else they might have to sell, except slaves, Tingané became at once quite friendly. [...] Tingané was notorious for being the barrier to all intercourse between the Portuguese black traders and the natives further inland; none were allowed to pass him either way. He was an elderly, well-made man, grey-headed, and over six feet high (Livingstone 2001: 55).

⁵² Dritsas 2010:11

Livingstone wrote, that ‘in commencing intercourse’ he and his companions almost always referred to the detestation of slavery, and that often people had actually heard about English efforts at sea to end the slave trade. They also emphasised their aim to persuade the locals to raise and sell cotton instead of capturing and selling people, and “as they all have the clear ideas of their own self-interest, and are keen traders, the reasonableness of the proposal is at once admitted” Livingstone wrote. When it came to other two C’s, Christianity and Civilisation, he admitted that there were indeed more challenges to overcome. He surmised that “the mode of communication either by interpreters, or by the imperfect knowledge of the language” might have explained the great difficulty of the local people to feel a relationship to “Him” (God) or to think that God had any interest in them. He continued:

However, the idea of the Father of all being displeased with His children, for selling or killing each other, at once gains their ready assent: it harmonises so exactly with their own ideas of right and wrong. But, as in our own case at home, nothing less than the instruction and example of many years will secure their moral elevation (Ibid.: 55 – 56).

Livingstone also described the curiosity that the local people felt towards the travellers. From one village, some local people came after the English men. Livingstone wrote that these local men had explained the significance of the occurrence saying, “[a]re we to have it said that white people passed through our country and we did not see them?”. Livingstone continues:

We rested by a rivulet to gratify these sight-seers. We appear to them to be red rather than white; and, though light colour is admired among themselves, our clothing renders us uncouth in aspect. Blue eyes appear savage, and a red beard hideous (ibid.: 98).

What apparently Livingstone did not know was that the expedition had entered the Zambezi region straight into multiple tensions between different Portuguese and Ngoni groups.⁵³ In 1863, eighteen months after his first visits to the Shire and the Lake, Livingstone's party sailed back along the river. He wrote: "No words can convey an adequate idea of the scene of widespread desolation which the once pleasant Shire Valley now presented."⁵⁴ Those who had been left by slave hunters had now died from drought and famine:

Dead bodies floated past us daily, and in the mornings the paddles had to be cleared of corpses, caught by the floats during the night. For scores of miles the entire population of the valley was swept away by this scourge Mariano, who is again, as he was before, the great Portuguese slave-agent. It made the heart ache to see the widespread desolation; the river-banks, once so populous, all silent; the villages burned down, and an oppressive stillness reigning where formerly crowds of eager sellers appeared with the various products of their industry. [...] Tingane had been defeated; his people had been killed, kidnapped, and forced to flee from their villages (ibid.: 332).

In southern Africa, during the 19th century, the British were competing for the South African Cape colony with the Dutch and for Lake Nyasa (Lake Malawi) with the Portuguese. According to Johnston, the British Government was driven by mostly philanthropic motives in acquiring territories in Tropical Africa. The Portuguese met by Livingstone's party treated the British explorers kindly, however suspicions were aroused at the political level in Europe. After five years, Livingstone was recalled back home and his plans for an inland port for legal trade at Lake Nyasa were quashed (Johnston 1899.: 180 – 181). Johnston wrote:

⁵³ As part of the broader migration of Zulu groups called *mfecane*, Ngonis were causing a threat over Portuguese towns (or *captainces*) Tete, Sena and Quelimane, each of which were divided to *prazos*. The *prazos* were smaller Portuguese settlements. Power on a *prazo* was exercised through the *Chikunda* who were military slaves. Important actors in the region were also powerful *sertanejo* families that were not always loyal to crown, but acted as independent clans also against other Portuguese (Dritsas 2010: 8-10).

⁵⁴ Livingstone 2001: 338

Nevertheless, the seed had been sown, and produced a sparse crop of adventures, elephant hunters, missionaries and traders, who found their way to Nyasaland (ibid.).

At the dawn of independence, the nationalistic politician Henry Masauko Chipembre liked to scandalise his opponents and humour his supporters by calling David Livingstone “a tourist”. Chipembre based his arguments on the fact that Livingstone and his party mostly used trade routes which had been in use long before him, and almost always they travelled with the help of local guides. As McCracken points out, Livingstone was probably not the pioneer explorer around the lakes Malawi and Chilwa that he himself claimed. Nevertheless, his influence on the history of Malawi is undeniable.⁵⁵ After him came the missions, the first of them settling in Cape Maclear in 1875.



Picture 2: David Livingstone Depicted Freeing Slaves, Africa, ca.1845 – 1860. Public domain via International Mission Photography Archive, ca. 1860 – ca. 1960.

An early colonial period and its resistance

John McCracken (2012) argues in his book ‘A History of Malawi 1859-1966’ that “the interactions of local people with colonial officials, settlers and missionaries in Malawi [...] had profound if complex consequences that remain of great importance today”. By interaction he does not mean only colonial domination but also local resistance and the strategies for addressing it. Mapping the influence of the colonial period in Malawi, McCracken emphasises the role of the Christian missions.

⁵⁵ McCracken 2012: 38 see also Hokkanen 2000 and 2006

According to him, these missions gained particular importance due to the weakness of the colonial state and the locals' positive response to them in their early stages. Important factors of their influence were the health care and education provided by the missions throughout most of the colonial period, and the missions' role as new Christian communities that modified beliefs and forms of religious life based on African culture (ibid.:2 – 5).

Even if the Zambesi expedition was considered at the time to be a failure, Livingstone had begun to gain a reputation as a Presbyterian hero. In the 1870s the Scottish missions, closely linked to powerful national churches, were financed by significant industrialists based predominantly in Glasgow. The missions built their influence in the region trusting to Livingstone's developmental ideas about lawful commerce with the help of steamboat transportation. In 1875 – 1876, the Livingstonia mission party brought a prefabricated steamer 'the Ilala'⁵⁶ with them and settled in Cape Maclear. Another mission was settled in Blantyre.⁵⁷ Both of these missions gradually became the small Christian states responsible for a few hundred dependants living in nearby villages. These people were refugees, escaped slaves, and local people needing protection against slavers and other threats.⁵⁸ By its name, the *Livingstonia Mission* in Cape Maclear honored the explorer who had passed away just two years earlier. Due to its many hardships caused especially by malaria, the mission moved after five years to Bandawe and soon further north to healthier conditions.

Dr. Robert Laws, who headed the Livingstonia mission, thought that the missionaries' central concern should be extending their evangelist and educational influence. The first school was opened in Cape Maclear in 1875 and it started the history of modern education in Malawi. Livingstonia and other missions by the Scots and the Dutch established a widespread school system that included village schools and later secondary schools. Twenty years after the establishment of the first school in Malawi, Dr. Laws felt university level education to be crucial "to develop a self-sufficient Malawian population with high moral and ethical values". Malawi needed leaders who would adopt the political structure brought by Europeans. Thus, in 1895 the first students enrolled to teacher and

⁵⁶ Ilala was named after the place where Livingstone had died few years previously.

⁵⁷ Blantyre was named after Livingstone's birth town in Scotland.

⁵⁸ MacCracken, 2012: 5, 45

ministerial preparation classes.⁵⁹ The quote points out the unavoidable – but not always articulated – bond between the education and the values transmitted through it. Until 1920's education in Malawi was provided almost solely by different missionary societies (MacCracken 2102: 5, 45; Phiri 2010:23).

According to McCracken (2012), the relationship between the mission and local dependants had been paternalistic. Nevertheless, during the first years, the number of the mission's dependants grew and tensions between missionaries and chiefs of the region intensified. In addition, raids and criminal actions by local residents of the mission increased. This changed the relationship to one of white settlers' arbitrary violence against local dependants. In 1878, being arguably the first in Malawi, a prison was built in Cape Maclear. Also the stocks and flogging were in use to maintain control over locals.

The British government was not enthusiastic about taking over the official administration of the area. They finally did so due to requests by missionaries and other settlers to prevent the Portuguese from doing so. Local chiefs and kings were making treaties with the Portuguese, and since the British government was not willing to invest in its countrymen's behalf, originally an enterprise of the Livingstonia mission, African Lakes Company (ALC), planned to take on the task. However, it was not large enough to be trusted by other settlers, and in order to have a powerful backing, the millionaire mining speculator Cecil Rhodes became involved. He took over the company and paid for the administration of Nyasaland. Harry Johnston, who was to become the first British commissioner in Nyasaland, was at that time in Mozambique. He took a gunboat into Zambesi in 1889, and with a donation from Rhodes, paid for treaties with the local chiefs. Mlauri, who at that time was the most important of the Kololo chiefs, was playing the British and Portuguese against each other to retain his independence. He held meetings with both sides, but due to increasing European presence he became more hostile. In his meeting with Johnston, Mlauri said that he had become convinced that "all white men are equally bad". Treaties to share the region to be governed by the British Foreign Office and by the Company (ALC) were made, but the conquest of the area was finally done with troops from British colonial India. They fought with modern weapons against

⁵⁹ University of Livingstonia. Online 11thNov.2015:<http://www.ulivingstonia.com/history%20of%20uol.htm>

the chiefs who were not willing to submit themselves to the British. By the late 1890s, the conquest was complete (ibid.: 53 – 65).

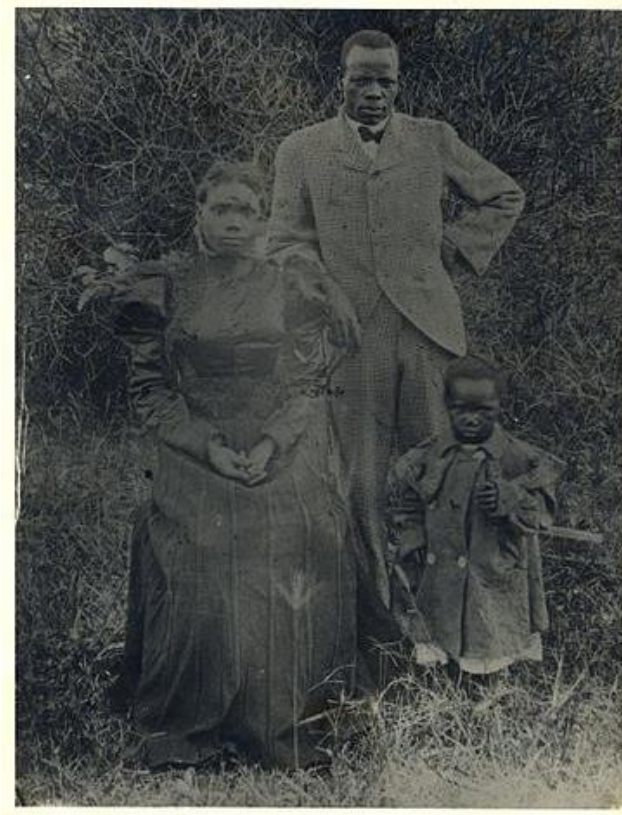
Harry Johnston's (1898) report on trade and the general conditions in British Central Africa is very optimistic and illustrates the reasoning of a key figure of the early colonial period:

Given the abundance of cheap native labour, the financial security of the Protectorate is established. The European comes here with his capital, which he is ready to employ to almost an unlimited extent if he can get in return black men who will, for a wage, work with their hands as he cannot do himself, in the tropical sun. It only needs a sufficiency of native labour to make this country relatively healthy and amazingly rich (ibid.: 77).

A new division of land was implemented and extensive areas were claimed by a handful of settlers who only used small pieces of it. However, the sufficiency of native labour became a challenge. Local people were not used nor willing to be employed in wage work since they had to take care of their own gardens and farms. Thus, in order to address the problem of labour, local people were forced to use money by a tax liability in 1891. The tax liability was first introduced in the Upper Shire region and in the following decade throughout the area of modern Malawi. When people were not willing or able to pay, their villages and grain stores were burnt. Also a system called *thangata* was created to solve the problem. *Thangata* meant an obligation to work for settlers, at first, one month per year, but soon the settlers implemented the rule wantonly. The state left local people entirely at the mercy of the settlers. Many local men migrated abroad. Even before the tax liability, people especially from the north had gone to South Africa and to neighbouring countries to work for better benefits than the settlers offered in Malawi. However, tax liability significantly increased the number of people leaving the colony. The labour problem was soon alleviated by the people fleeing Mozambique to escape an even worse situation under the Portuguese (McCracken 2012: 75-88).

The colonial relations in the Shire Highlands had some unique characteristics. Most of the settlers came from Scotland and England and by 1910, they still numbered less than 400. Isolating themselves

culturally from the local population by forming ‘the islands of whites’ was not possible to the same extent as had been done, for example, in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia. At the same time, the first



Picture 3: Chilmbwe and family by National Archives of Malawi via Wikimedia Commons.

generation of literate and educated local Christians became visible in Nyasaland. This was not easily tolerated by the settlers. From their point of view, the educated local Christians were challenging the colonial social order with its strict racial boundaries. As McCracken writes, they were in fact “challenging the assumption that Africans were morally and intellectually inferior to Europeans”. One of those who stood against racial assumptions was Reverend John Chilembwe (1871 – 1915). For Chilembwe and his friends, wearing smart European clothes and hats was a part of the politics” in shaping their image of the new African man (or woman): civilised, Christian and free”. This was not approved of by white settlers who refused to acknowledge their salutes and considered that copying European manners was arrogant

behaviour. There had been an encounter when an Italian settler had pulled a revolver and pointed it on Chilembwe saying: “You are a blackman and I am a whiteman, and you must take off your hat” (ibid.).

If David Livingstone had gained the status of a Scottish hero, Chilembwe most certainly came to be the hero of the local resistance. His and other activists’ resistance appeared in various forms. Demands for the social and economic equality of all races as well as questions concerning the justification of the colonial rule were raised.⁶⁰ Chilembwe commented on another native minister’s speech planned for the coronation ceremony of the new British king George V in 1910 saying:

⁶⁰ Ibid.:135-139

No – you were mistaken in saying – ‘Honour the King’. The King is not our King. He is the Azungu’s King [...] Even the Governor is not our King. He came here for the interests of the Europeans, not of the natives, because he has not corrected our grievances (ibid.:135).

Missionaries and their African staff had criticised some government’s policies, but they were sure that the colonial rule was beneficial to local people because of the new economic and educational possibilities and most of all because it had ended the slave trade. Chilembwe and other ‘new men’ with a Christian identity and sense of honour challenged the main justification of the colonial rule noting that rather than liberty from slavery, colonial rule brought just another form of it (ibid.: 127 – 128, 135 – 139).

The Chilembwe rising was a name given to an event which took place in 1915. A small party of local armed men attacked the estate where people were forced to work in the name of *thangata*. Another attack against African Lakes Company’s headquarters⁶¹ took place at the same time in Blantyre. The revolt was suppressed quickly. As a result, three European foremen died, two were wounded, 36 rebels were executed and many were killed by the security forces. For other attacks planned for the same night only a handful of men finally participated. Many tribes stayed loyal to British and did not help. Thus, the rising as such was a failure but McCracken agrees with earlier historians by noting that its importance was much greater than it appears at the first glance. Before the First World War, this was the only significant rebellion in Sub-Saharan Africa inspired by Christianity. It was also “the first Central African resistance to European control which looked to the future, not to the past”. Its aim was to found a nation rather than restore the power of the tribes (ibid.: 127 – 128).

⁶¹ Today the ALC headquarters in Blantyre is called the 'Mandala house' and it hosts the Society of Malawi's office and library, an arts and crafts shop and a restaurant.

From the colonial rule to totalitarian regime of Hastings Kamuzu Banda's and beyond

African nationalism in Nyasaland emerged between the World Wars but was at its peak in 1958 with the leadership of Hastings Kamuzu Banda. During the colonial period from 1891 to 1964 infrastructure, namely roads and railways, were built, Malawians were taught to cultivate cash crops, but local agriculture was not developed. After several phases, Malawi gain independence from Great Britain in 1964 after approximately seventy years of colonial governance (Phiri 2010).

The departing British Colonial Government left Malawi in the hands of the then the Prime Minister H.K. Banda with a constitution for multi-party politics. The unity of Malawian intellectuals who had fought together against the colonial rule and formed the first cabinet was soon broken. Many members of the first cabinet were dismissed and others left because they did not accept H.K. Banda's policies. After the cabinet crisis H.K. Banda, who himself was highly educated in the United States and Britain, nominated the group of people with mostly only primary education. The political opposition left to live in exile or was forced to leave. By 1971, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) was made the only lawful party whose absolute power was guaranteed by political institutions. The four cornerstones of the MCP were: unity, loyalty, obedience and discipline.

Despite the fact that before independence, H.K. Banda had announced that Malawi would take the position of a nonaligned country between communist east bloc and capitalist west bloc, he was wholly pro west and therefore, according to historian Desmond Dudwa Phiri, supported against his rivals by the United States and Britain. The dictator admired the western block from the economic point of view but the ideals of democracy did not fit into his policies. Due to the political turbulence and assassinations of politicians in other African countries, he was obsessed with his power and security. Over the course of three decades, freedom of association, freedom of the press and freedom of speech were reduced to minimum. Phiri writes: "it is no exaggeration to say that Malawi was a police state. Wherever the people gathered; in church, tavern, wedding, you name it, there were police agents in plain clothes." Nevertheless, H.K. Banda paid attention to physical infrastructure and education in Malawi: the improvements of roads and railways took place and according to his vision, the capitol was moved from Zomba to Lilongwe (with economic assistance from the South African white-run government). The University of Malawi was instituted in 1964 and education in Malawi was otherwise further developed (Phiri 2010: 273 – 282; 305 – 306; 319 – 326).

After political pressure from within Malawi and from outside of its borders, a referendum regarding a single party vs. a multi-party system was held in 1993. Pro-multi-party voters won, H.K. Banda announced that people living in exile could return to Malawi and the one party rule was repealed. The parliament empowered the National Consultative Council to rewrite the constitution and prepare the election for the next year. It also passed bills to revoke four Acts: Preservation of Security Act which had given the state permission to detain suspects indefinitely without a trial; The Forfeiture Act which had allowed it to take over the possessions of those suspects of subversive actions; the Decency in Dress Act according to which women could be arrested for wearing a mini-skirt or trousers, and finally the section of the constitution which had made H.K. Banda president for life.

The election was held in 1994 with four candidates running for president. H.K. Banda with his 33 per cent of the vote was defeated by Bakili Muluzi of the United Democratic Front (UDF) who won 47 per cent of the vote. Among other projects, Muluzi implemented free primary education to begin in the school year 1994-95 and established Television Malawi in one of the few countries that by 1994 did not have a television. During Muluzi's term in office, the atmosphere relaxed and freedoms of the press, speech and association were restored, therefore he also had to handle great a deal of open criticism. Nevertheless, he was re-elected in 1999.⁶² After Muluzi another UDF candidate, Bingu wa Mutharika, was elected in 2004. Soon he founded the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and was re-elected in 2009. After his death in 2012, Vice President Joyce Banda of the Peoples Party (PP) was nominated as President. She was not re-elected and the brother of her predecessor Peter wa Mutharika (DPP) took office in May, 2014.

⁶² Ibid.: 351-353; 359-367

2 DATA AND METHODS

2.1 ANTHROPOLOGY OF TOURISM

In the opening words of Dean MacCannell's (2012) article 'On the Ethical Stake in Tourism Research', one can easily recognize the frustration caused by a still missing set of tools and a theoretical framework for tourism research. MacCannell writes:

As academic research on tourism enters its fourth decade, the field has become amorphous, sprawling all over the place, and not just geographically. We have reached no agreement on basic questions, concepts, hypotheses or theories. Collectively, tourism research can be characterized as following any tourist whatsoever, doing anything whatsoever any place whatsoever (MacCannell 2012:183).

Dennison Nash (2007) presents the beginnings of tourism research and approaches tourism as a social and cultural phenomenon. In the late 1970s, Nash himself went all the way back to prehistory and argued that 'if one accepts the broad view that tourism is centred around the activity of leisured travellers, it may be possible to identify it in the earliest human societies'. To these early tourists, he included peoples like the San of southern Africa. He concluded his arguments:

This might force us to the unanticipated conclusion that the rudiments of tourism have always been with us and that it may, in fact, be a cultural universal, which makes it an important social fact indeed—grist for the mill of scholars concerned with the unity and diversity of all human societies from the time they first appeared (Nash 2007: 2-3).

The search for cultural universals and social facts was part of the urge to find legitimisation for a new field of study in anthropology and sociology in the 1970s, when tourism, or anything else to do with the leisure time, was not considered as proper subject of interest (Nash 2007 and Nash & al. 1981).

The terms ‘tourist’, ‘tourism’ and ‘touristic’ first appeared in written form in English and French in the early 19th century, but the phenomenon itself goes further back than that. However, most scholars of tourism do not go quite as far back as Nash. Typically, the brief history of European tourism as we know it can be traced back to its origins in the first package tours organised by Thomas Cook starting in the 1840s, and before that to the travels of young aristocrats with their tutors in Europe already in the 17th century. These travels are approached as a kind of sightseeing by tourism scholars.⁶³ Wherever we choose to draw the borders of the origins of tourism, we have to admit that the phenomenon itself goes a long way back in history. However, the present-day extent of tourism is a relatively new thing. According to Erik Cohen, in the 1950s there were 25.3 million international arrivals around the world and in 1981 the number of arrivals was already 291 million.⁶⁴ The press release of UNWTO⁶⁵ in January 2015 stated that the number of international tourists (overnight visitors) arrivals in 2014 reached 1,138 million. Without going any further into the definitions or technicalities of the statistics, the steep increase is apparent.

Concepts

Nash (2007) presents several central concepts in early anthropological tourism research. He separates two main approaches: firstly, those focusing on tourists and the touristic experience; and secondly, those concerned hosts and their communities. These concerns differ greatly from each other. In the first group are the ‘tourism as a pilgrimage’ approaches started by Dean MacCannell’s 1973 article, and ‘tourism as a sacred journey’ presented first by Nelson Graburn in 1977.⁶⁶ According to

⁶³ Nash 2007: 2-3

⁶⁴ Ibid.:1

⁶⁵ UNWTO United Nations World Tourism Organization press release: <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2015-01-27/over-11-billion-tourists-travelled-abroad-2014>

⁶⁶ Graburn in Smith 1989

MacCannell, tourism is a ritual of modern people who are searching for ‘authenticity’, and hosts who stage this authenticity for them in touristic presentations. According to Graburn, the tourist’s journey should be approached as a pilgrimage and see it as differentiating the ordinary life at home from an extraordinary experience abroad. Erik Cohen questioned this too generalised type of tourist in both Graburn’s and MacCannell’s views and developed a typology of modern tourists’ intentions.⁶⁷ Two benchmarks in this first group of tourism literature are Dean MacCannell’s: *The Tourist - A new theory of the leisure class* (1976) and John Urry’s: *The Tourist’s Gaze* (1990). The first was a geographical study which concerned itself with authenticity (as written above), whereas the second book was categorized as sociology and emphasized the centrality of tourist’s visual experience. However, they both represented a step forward in terms of approaching tourism as a cultural phenomenon instead of focusing on purely economic and professional aspects relevant to tourism-related businesses.

The second approach addresses issues concerning hosts and host communities. Scholars focused on ‘commodification’, a process in which commercial values displace other values. Anthropologists and sociologists studying tourism were especially concerned about these developments in so-called less developed societies. Nash developed from his notion of ‘acculturation’ the concept of ‘imperialism’ in the tourism context, which since its appearance in 1977⁶⁸ has been adopted in ways that made Nash himself have second thoughts about the concept. He wrote that “if the term is used in a scholarly way, say, as an indication of some kind of domination by external powers, and not as politically or ethically based criticism, it can serve a useful scientific function”. Most of the research done from the host perspective is related to ‘development’ and especially the ‘underdevelopment’ caused by external domination in societies undergoing Western-inspired development. Referring to economist Emanuel DeKadt,⁶⁹ Nash argues that most tourism scholars would see ‘sustainable development’ to be the most productive line to take for progress. He also points out following DeKadt that this kind

⁶⁷ Nash 2007: 247-250

⁶⁸ Nash in Smith 1989: 37-52

⁶⁹ Among other publications, de Kadt is the author of *Tourism - passport to development? Perspectives on the social and cultural effects of tourism in developing countries*, 1979. The publication is based on joint Unesco-World bank seminar on the social and cultural impacts of tourism, Washington, D.C. In 1976. It is considered to be a benchmark in the study of tourism's relation to development.

of progress will not be an easy task. Nash writes that in all studies with this approach, the negative aspects of tourism development appear clearly. This included studies that focus on ecotourism, which should ideally be “development that is small, clean, green, and above all, sustainable” (Nash 2007: 252).

In her article, anthropologist Amanda Stronza (2001) writes that even taken together, the two approaches, focusing on either tourists or their hosts, seem to produce only a partial analysis of tourism. According to her, the problem is that most studies focusing on tourists aim at understanding the origins of tourism whereas most studies about host communities are concerned with the impacts of tourism. She argues that “the goal of future research should be to explore incentives and impacts for both tourists and locals throughout all stages of tourism” (Stronza 2001).

Development, tourism and questions about sustainability

‘Our Common Future’, better known as the Brundtland Report, was published in 1987 (WCED 1987).⁷⁰ In the report was first presented the concept of ‘sustainable development’:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of ‘needs’, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs (ibid.).

In its report, the Brundtland group demanded that the goals of economic and social development should be defined in terms of sustainability in all countries, regardless of their political or economic

⁷⁰ WCED 1987. Produced for the United Nations by the World Commission on Environment and Development. Online 12th Jan 2015: <http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf>

structure.⁷¹ Accordingly, in tourism sustainability has emerged as new paradigm despite the fact that the concept itself is vague and ideologically and politically contested. Geographer Jarkko Saarinen (2009) summarizes the critical views of many, arguing that sustainable development implies that economic growth is needed, acceptable and should be available for all, but at the same time, it remarks that economic growth causes environmental problems which are damaging to all. Nevertheless, he writes: “[w]hile sustainable development is a problematic concept with analytical weaknesses, the idea of sustainability has provided a platform in which different stakeholders in tourism can interact, negotiate and reflect the consequences of their actions on the environment” (Saarinen 2009:8 – 9). To continue from that, it also serves as a platform to discuss economic, cultural and social aspects of tourism.

Ecotourism and other ‘alternative’ types of tourism have been challenged by scholars from several perspectives. First of all, it has been pointed out that it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of ecotourism since systematic evaluating and auditing are very rare, as are long-term studies. Some critiques argue that in ecotourism, concerns for profit outweigh concerns for conservation. Some have argued that in reality, ecotourism is not culturally sensitive. It cannot be since, according to these critiques, it is embedded in a neoliberal economic system ‘which precludes real respect for local customs, real opportunities for sustainable development or real empowerment for local communities’. More than this, even the evidence of economic benefits has not met expectations. Some scholars have argued that ecotourism has in fact created only a small number of jobs and increased the local dependency on this single income source which, by its very nature, is seasonal. Ecotourism operations are also accused of increasing social differentiation and making the gap between rich and poor even wider. Sometimes the money paid for tourist activities does not reach local communities as tourists had expected. Some studies indicate that relatively few communities have been able to gain significant benefits from ecotourism. In addition to these, Stronza continues with a long list of criticisms focused on the poor results seen also in environmental conservation at the tourist destinations. Sometimes ecotourism has caused more harm than good to the environment. However, some biologists still trust in the potential of ecotourism as a tool for conservation. Stronza suggests

⁷¹ Ibid.

that this might be due to some projects which have managed to link business, benefit for local communities and the conservation of local biodiversity (Stronza and Durham eds. 2008: 6-7).

Stronza notes that ecotourism, as a concept and an opportunity for economic growth as well as for promoting environmental conservation, promises much. If the principles of ecotourism defined by the International Tourism Society⁷² are followed, it is believed that ecotourism could offer to a host community significant benefits instead of the problems listed above. Optimism surrounding the concept has been strong and ecotourism has been widely acknowledged as an opportunity. Academic literature is already manifold, workshops and training programs are available. In 2002, the United Nations declared the year to be the 'International Year of Ecotourism'. At the moment, most international financial and development organisations have targeted a significant amount of assistance toward potential ecotourism destinations around the world. Most countries which have protected areas have some form of national or regional marketing strategy to attract ecotourists⁷³ and Malawi is no exception (The Market Assessment Report: Eco-Tourism in Malawi 2012 and Tourism Policy 2013).

2.2 DATA

Altogether I conducted 29 recorded interviews with 46 – 51 people. One group interview with its 15 – 20 participants raises the total number of interviewees. It was conducted as a flexible open air situation during which people were free to leave or join us. Due to a changing number of people in group interviews the total number of the interviewees is an estimate. Of the total roughly 50 people, only two were foreign residents and four were foreign visitors. The recorded interviews lasted altogether about 23 hours. Twenty-six of them are semi-structured in-depth interviews with one person at a time, one is a semi-structured in-depth interview with two people together, and three of them are group interviews with an interpreter. Two of these interviews (representatives of

⁷² The International Ecotourism Society (TIES). Principles for ecotourism. Available online 28th Feb.2015: <https://www.ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism>

⁷³ Stronza and Durham eds. 2008: 6

administration and education) I consider as background information. The other 27 interviews I consider research data.

I tried to obtain a somewhat balanced number of men and women, but for the reasons presented earlier, group interviews with local women shifted that balance toward more female informants. At first, I attempted to include both locals and foreigners presenting different positions in the field, but as written before, later I decided to interview mostly local people. My data is relatively comprehensive when it comes to understanding the field of tourism in Cape Maclear. However, to gain deeper understanding about any of the particular phenomenon brought up in my data would require new interviews.

The process of gathering the data

In the spring of 2013, I lived for four months in Zomba, the former colonial capitol of Malawi, with my daughter and her grandmother. At the beginning of March when we arrived, the rainy season was just starting and our first surprise was the greenness that surrounded the Lilongwe airport. Thus, the first thing that caught our attention was indeed the amazing beauty of the Malawian nature. What also became clear to us in the coming days was the importance of religion to Malawians. We could see all kinds of churches everywhere. It was also easy to notice international aid organisations with their offices and four-wheel drive cars and with their European and North-American staff filling supermarkets at the commercial capitol, Blantyre – the city named after David Livingstone’s birth town in Scotland.

Before I went to Chembe, I paid visits to the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in Lilongwe and the Malawi Institute of Tourism (MIT) in Blantyre to get an idea of the official understanding of the field I was about to enter. I conducted interviews with assistant marketing director Mr. Dyson Banda (Ministry of Tourism and Culture) and chief executive officer Mrs. Isabel Chakumbira (MIT) and I received some key documents and tips for literature. In addition to these, I gathered reports and documents concerning tourism in Malawi via Internet. I also paid a visit to the National Statistical Office⁷⁴ in Zomba but unfortunately I was not able to meet the right person to help me. In Blantyre,

⁷⁴ National Statistical Office: <http://www.nsomalawi.mw/>

I paid several visits to the library of the Society of Malawi⁷⁵ where I looked through old travel books. While collecting my data at the site of this study, I used ethnographic methods of participating observation, in depth interviews and key informants.

I asked for interviews first by email from most of the lodges in Chembe. I divided the lodges that I approached into three groups: budget, moderate and up-market lodges, to be sure that I covered a full range of accommodation from backpackers' hostels to luxury resorts. My tools were Bradt's⁷⁶ and Lonely Planet's⁷⁷ series travel guide books on Malawi as well as various web pages like malawitourism.com, tripadvisor.com and others. I searched the net as any tourist would do. I used search words like accommodation + Cape Maclear. From those lodges that I could reach, only one denied me an interview. When I contacted the representatives of the lodges, I assumed that the interviewees would mostly be foreign residents, since most of the lodges are owned by Europeans. However, I actually discovered another very interesting group of stakeholders; well educated local employees in good positions, with whom the owners suggested that I speak. Their views were valuable and provided interesting insights especially into matters concerning local youths' opportunities to achieve formal education and possibilities to proceed in a career.

In addition to people I had approached by email, I interviewed other people whom I found more or less randomly when visiting Chembe. They were people that I as a tourist would have normally interacted with: tour guides, craft sellers, people who were doing small scale businesses, those who were working in lodges, NGO representatives and foreign visitors. The most challenging group of interviewees to find was local women who did not work with tourists. Luckily, I received much appreciated help from a young local woman. Usually, I approached my interviewees, but quite often people were also curious about what I was doing and came to talk to me. I asked if they could give me an interview and perhaps suggest someone else who would like to do so as well. I also conducted an interview with a person who had lived and worked in Chembe before, but lived at the moment in another village. I started to talk with this woman in a minibus on my way from Mangochi to Monkey Bay and she invited me to visit her village, which I did.

⁷⁵ The Society was established in 1946 then known as the The Nyasaland Society. It collects information and provides a library for anyone to use. The Society of Malawi also support the museums of Malawi. Online 25thApril 2015: <http://www.societyofmalawi.org/>

⁷⁶ Briggs 2013

⁷⁷ Else 2001

Already when selecting interviewees, I was somewhat aware of their positioning in the field of tourism, and tried to include people from different perspectives. I considered all my interviewees, be they local or foreigners, as representing one of the following groups: *a housewife/a small scale business; an activist; a worker; holding a good position (a skilled job, managerial duties or such), an entrepreneur or a tourist*. I included these categories in quotes I have chosen to use in order to roughly mark interviewee's position on the field of tourism (see the list of interviews).

In Chembe craft sellers, tour leaders, waiters, shopkeepers and other people with whom a tourist would normally have some kind of interaction are mostly men and they also speak English, therefore I did not have any difficulty in finding local men to interview. I conducted most of the interviews in English, but in order to reach women, I had a local young woman as an interpreter. She was introduced to me by one of the tour guides. Her presence was necessary when I met women who did not speak English at all. She was also very helpful and active in finding female interviewees. When the recorded interviews and other conversations were not conducted in English, the spoken language was Chichewa (also called Nyanja) and with one woman from Finland I had a conversation in Finnish. I told all my informants that I would not use their real names when referring to the information they provided, and that I would try to anonymise the data in other ways when needed.

The more interviews I made, the more crucial to me it appeared to learn about the point of view of local uneducated women. Even if they did not seem to have obvious direct contact with tourists, they were presented in most of the interviews as a group with much to lose. Thus, the last interviews I made were intended to fill this crucial gap. The group interviews were conducted with local women whom I found when I was walking with my female interpreter. When we saw a group of women sitting in front of their houses, we stopped and talked with them. I first introduced myself and told what I was doing and asked the women's permission to ask a few questions. Interviews were held in the open air and anyone could participate. During two of the three group interviews there were men sitting with us for a while, but they did not answer the questions. They were neither forbidden nor encouraged to comment. During one group interview, men saw the situation but walked by throwing in a comment or a joke, saying that the women should be careful, because I was just going to sell

their voices. The women laughed. Making the group interviews was a good choice at that point, but the choice also meant that I did not have time to organise more interviews with the foreign residents or tourists. Nevertheless, even if this is a flaw when it comes to the balance of the recorded data I collected myself, I would argue that the fact that the data comes mostly from the local people's point of view increases our understanding and contributes to the balance of knowledge concerning the tourism field in Malawi as a whole.

The inclusion of three groups of actors – locals, foreign residents, and foreign visitors – leaves out the role of organisations such as police and education for tourism as well the Ministry of Tourism. All of these can be seen as contributors to the broader picture of tourism in Malawi and therefore also in Cape Maclear. Yet my focus here is on the grass-roots interaction taking place in this particular tourist destination. Despite the fact that Cape Maclear is well known and praised in tourist guide books, it is situated far from cities and towns. Because of that, officials of the government do not often visit Cape Maclear and the community tends to handle most matters on its own. However, an obvious flaw in my data is the missing interview that I most certainly should have carried out: the interview with the chief of the village who exercises the highest power at the local level.

I conducted theme interviews on four themes: interaction between locals and foreigners; the positive and negative impacts of tourism; government policies concerning tourism; and lastly how the respondent would like to see the village to develop. With these broad themes, I hoped to reach an understanding about different views and attitudes concerning tourism in Chembe. By asking for examples and personal experiences, I sought to focus on interaction on the grass-roots level. My questions varied slightly depending on the informant's relationship with tourism. From all the interviewees, I asked some questions about their background and positioned them in relation to tourism. I also asked about their experiences on the positive and the negative impacts of tourism in Cape Maclear and their experiences of interaction between locals, visitors and foreign residents. In addition, from people who were representatives of the tourism related businesses, I asked about things that in their view were supporting or hindering tourism in Chembe and in Malawi in general. I kept the questions intentionally open in order to let the informants speak freely. Depending on how conversations proceeded I asked more specific questions and encouraged interviewees to tell about specific events and situations. In addition to the recorded interviews, I had several discussions around

the same themes with other locals and visitors. I wrote notes in my field diary about these conversations and I will use them as I use my other field notes.

Reflections upon the researcher's position

I have worked in the tourism sector in Finnish Lapland in an area situated in the heart of Samiland. I lived there for about ten years and I still spend few months of every year working there. Many of the villages in the area are spaces⁷⁸ shared by the Sámi, the Finns (as I am) and foreign residents and visitors mainly from Europe and Asia. In Northern Lapland, I have found the international atmosphere and easy contacts across the national borders to be intriguing in many ways. In this region, tourism is considered important for the local economy. The trade and jobs that it brings are the most welcomed. Nevertheless, the drawbacks of tourism such as cultural appropriation are also acknowledged.

Many tourism-related issues and a construction of 'shared space' in tourist destination are familiar to me because of my previous experience living and working in such an area. These issues were in my mind when I chose tourism to be the topic of my thesis. While in the master's programme 'Development and International Co-operation', I was granted an opportunity to participate in an exchange studies period in Malawi, from where I decided to gather my research data. The whole concept of tourism happening in a very poor tourist destination was difficult for me from the beginning. At first, I did not know what I should think or how I should feel about it, but to imagine myself having a sunbath at the beach in the village where people are starving was very problematic. My attempt to understand why the image was so disturbing led to contemplation of shame and guilt. This was followed by self-accusations of hypocrisy because I had bothered to think that my pangs of conscience mattered when I should have just spent some of my 'western' money in the village where it was needed.

Along the way, new disturbing factors arose for me to contemplate. An illustrating example is one of my first encounters in Zomba where a local friend had arranged a house for me and my family to rent. To our great surprise, the house 'included' two people for whom we suddenly became employers. My first encounter with the first of these persons was eye-opening. There he was, a man

⁷⁸ See Bourdieu, P. 1985

in his 50s bowing at me, looking down and waiting for instructions. I, who came from Scandinavia, Finland, one of the most egalitarian societies in the world, did not know what to do or say. If I had come from the British social elite, perhaps the situation would have appeared to me as more ‘natural’ and not so striking. However, I do not come from a social elite of any kind. Even if Finland is a relatively egalitarian society, it still has a social hierarchy of its own. My roots are in the working class and my grandfather was a half-orphan who had been sold to work for a wealthy household when he was only six years old.⁷⁹ I myself have been a representative of the precariat my whole adulthood and stand on one of the lowest steps of the social ladder in Finland.

The reality into which we are born is the one that appears to us as ‘natural’ and the experiences of earlier generations, in addition to our own experiences, affect us greatly. For this man, whose grandparents’ parents were born in the era of a brutal slavery and whose grandparents and parents had lived under colonial rule, to bow at me while not being entitled to look at my white face seemed normal. Whereas to me it certainly was not. How our relations evolved with two workers and a middleman to whom we were expected to pay their salary is an interesting story of its own. All of them had a different strategy for addressing the situation in which new foreigners had entered their lives. With our backgrounds and personalities, we all acted and reacted to each other in a variety of ways. Indeed, labour relations from many perspectives are also an interesting research topic, however, they are beyond the scope of this thesis. In addition, this interaction happened in the old colonial capital of Zomba, in the area where white and other wealthier people still live in their big houses. Therefore, the encounter reflects the society as a whole, but the framework of the occasion was not the same as it would have been in a small fishermen’s village and the tourist destination of Chembe.

Anthropologist as tourist

The analogy of anthropologist as tourist has been used in varied ways by anthropologists themselves. For example, according to Theron Nuñez (in Smith 1989), in a community which is used to tourists, the ethnographer is likely to be identified with the tourist population, stereotyped and classified as a

⁷⁹ In Finland until around the 1920s municipality placed poor homeless people in private households. Auctions were held and a person to be sold was placed at the house whose bidder asked less compensation to provide for him/her. Many of these people were treated harshly and often the system was misused to get both money from the municipality and a free workforce (See Halmekoski 2011).

member of a group or category of outsiders.⁸⁰ Edward M. Bruner (1989) traces out the history of European visitors to the ‘non-Western world’. First came explorers, traders, missionaries, and colonialists “to discover, exploit, convert, and colonize”. After them came ethnographers followed by tourists “who come to study or just to observe the Other”.⁸¹ Malcolm Crick further develops the analogy:

Tourists are essentially strangers temporarily residing in other cultures; they are normally more affluent than those among whom they stay; they have quite circumscribed interests in the other, interests which are formed in advance and which derive from their own culture; they are awkward and essentially marginal while in the field, and communicate less than effectively; they use their economic resources to obtain the experiences and relationships they value; not ‘belonging’ in a fundamental sense, they are free to leave at any time; on returning home they re-establish their more permanent identity and relate their experiences, enhancing their status with every telling. All these traits, it is contended, characterize anthropologists (Crick 1995: 213).

What I actually did in the field was talk to people who were not paid to give their time to me. In addition to interviews, I walked along the beach and around the village chatting with local people and other foreigners. In my simplified categorization of four different types of interactions, most of my fieldwork would fit into the category of ‘casual communication’. Of course, I also used the services of lodges and restaurants, I used *matolas*, moto-taxis and minibuses and I bought crafts, jewels and pastries from vendors. Therefore many of my actions would fit into the large category of more structured and regulated tourism-related interactions that serve as a background to the informal encounters which are the focus of my thesis. Generally speaking, what I did was what every tourist would do.

As written above, I identified myself as tourist as did the Malawians I met. I was also a tourist according to the definition of the tourism policy paper used by the Ministry of Tourism. Nevertheless,

⁸⁰ Nuñez in Smith 1989: 269 – 270

⁸¹ Bruner, E.:1989: 438 – 439

I was in Malawi and in Chembe as a representative of my university with a purpose to collect data to produce this study. Therefore, I was more involved analytically than emotionally. It can be assumed that I observed everything that happened around me and everything that I was involved in more carefully than an average tourist would have. A double identity as a researcher/tourist was both useful and challenging. My position as a tourist was beneficial to me, since all the encounters that I had myself were relevant to my study. On the other hand, my position as a researcher collecting data on people who identified me as tourist required a very careful reflection on my own behaviour and openness towards the people I was communicating with. At times, I could not help the thoughts of voyeurism and unpleasant feeling of being a peeping Tom. Nevertheless, my discomfort ceased immediately when I told people with whom I interacted what I did and found that it did not seem to bother most of them. In such a small village word spread quickly and after my first visit, many people already knew why I was there which gave them a possibility to choose their own attitudes towards me. Even if there were some people who were already somewhat frustrated in answering questions about their lives, the reactions of others were quite the opposite. A few weeks after their interview, two men told me that the experience of being heard had been empowering and had made a difference in their behaviour by increasing their self-confidence.

2.3 A METHODOLOGY BASED ON BOURDIEU'S CONCEPTS

In Bourdieu's opinion if one wants to understand a social phenomenon or interaction between people, one should study the social space in which events and interactions are taking place. According to him, an analysis of social space should be a relational analysis and it should be done on three different levels. Firstly, it is important to understand *a field* of study in relation to other fields related to it, especially the field of power; secondly a researcher should focus on the transactions of different types of *capital* which reveal the relations and positions of the agents (individuals and institutions) in the field; and thirdly, s/he should study the *habitus* of the agents. Each of these levels of analysis provides a different perspective on social space and *only together* can they produce a picture of dynamic and complex social phenomenon (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Bourdieu used the equation $[(habitus)(capital)] + field = practice$ ⁸² to summarise the relation between these concepts. In his thinking, practice results from relations between one's dispositions (habitus) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of the play in the social arena (field). His thinking reflected upon the contemporary dichotomy in the academic discussion: on the one hand, there were structuralists, for example Levi Strauss who claimed that the 'external' rules, such as an incest taboo, were guiding individuals in communities, whereas on the other hand existentialists emphasised the 'internal' freedom of choice of every individual. Bourdieu argued that to understand individuals' behaviour in societies neither an objective nor a subjective approach were enough by themselves – both were needed. Bourdieu remarked that perhaps the most difficult part of the study is the construction of the research object – which should not be analysed alone. When constructing a research object, the researcher should already take into account the relationships between participants, institutions and the social space which is their context. This means that the formation of the research object is open throughout the research process. He wrote:

Thus, there is a sort of hermeneutic circle: in order to construct a field, one must identify the forms of specific capital that operate in it, and to construct the forms of specific capital one must know the specific logic of the field. There is an endless to and from movement in the research process that is lengthy and arduous (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 108).

A field, capital and habitus

The first level of analysis is the analysis of the field in question and its relationship to other fields, especially fields of power. According to Bourdieu the social world exists in (or is comprised of) a variety of fields of practice such as religion, art, economy and education. In each field actors play by the rules specific to that certain field and use capital with values suitable for the field in question. Fields are relatively autonomous but overlapping. Bourdieu often compared the social fields with the game of sports where players struggle for a good position. His definition⁸³ of a field is complex and

⁸² Swartz 1997: 141 sites Bourdieu's *Distinction* (engl.1984) page 101

⁸³ "I define a field as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at

long but as a whole he compares it with a ‘network’ or a ‘configuration [...] of objective relations between positions objectively defined’. For example, the economic field follows its own specific logic or the religion field follows its own. Bourdieu did not mean the field as a formula to be adopted as such into any given phenomenon. He reminds us that the field is not a system, but “a game devoid of an inventor and much more fluid and complex than any game that one might ever design” (Wacquant 1989: 40). About what happens in the field, he wrote:

In a field, agents and institutions constantly struggle, according to the rules constitutive of this space of game, with various degrees of strength and therefore diverse possibilities of success, to appropriate the specific products at stake in the game. Those who dominate in a given field are in a position to make it function to their advantage, but they must always contend with the resistance, political or not, of the dominated (Ibid.).

The second level of analysis requires a researcher to identify the transactions of different types of capital in the field in question. According to Bourdieu: ‘Capital is accumulated labour (in its materialised form or in its “incorporated,” embodied form)’. He presented four types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital. Economic capital is money or directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the form of property rights. Social capital means social obligations, contacts and connections, and in certain conditions it is also convertible into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility. Both of which (title and nobility) can be called symbolic capital which means any form of capital transformed into symbolic form. Cultural capital refers to our taste, skills, manners and such and is linked to our class position. On certain conditions it is convertible into economic capital and may also be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications (Bourdieu 1986).

Bourdieu’s third level of analysis requires a study of habitus of agents in the field in question. In his ‘Outline of a Theory of Practice’ (1977) Bourdieu points out that research subjects (the objects of

stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.). Each field presupposes, and generates by its very functioning, the belief in the value of the stakes it offers” (Wacquant 1989: 39).

knowledge) are constructed and not just passively recorded. ‘Habitus’ is the principle of this construction. It refers to the physical embodiment of cultural capital. This means our skills and rooted habits as well as our taste and positions on the social fields. Bourdieu stated that habitus is “the system of structured and structuring dispositions which is constituted by practice and constantly aimed at practical – as opposed to cognitive – functions”.⁸⁴ Thus the concept habitus is Bourdieu’s attempt to work simultaneously with an objective structure and a subjective agency. In his thinking, practice is related to both: individual’s actions happen from the subjective point of view, but they should always be looked at in the context of the objective structures of culture and society. Bourdieu repeatedly remarked that habitus was so ingrained that people often mistook the ‘feel for the game’ as natural instead of culturally developed. In this line of thought, social inequality could be justified because it is mistakenly believed that some people are naturally disposed to the finer things in life while others are not.

Bourdieu remarked that the ‘unconscious’ is never anything other than the forgetting of history. By this he referred to Emile Durkheim’s words about “yesterday’s man” living in all of us, and making up the unconscious part of ourselves:

[I]n each of us, in varying proportions, there is part of yesterday’s man; it is yesterday’s man who inevitably predominates in us, since the resent amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result. Yet we do not sense this man of the past, because he is inveterate in us; he makes up the unconscious part of ourselves. Consequently, we are led to take no account of him, any more than we take account of his legitimate demands. Conversely, we are very much aware of the most recent attainments of civilization, because, being recent, they have not yet had time to settle into our unconscious (Bourdieu 1977: 78-79 quotes E. Durkheim in: *L’evolution pedagogique en France*, 1938: 16):

⁸⁴ Wacquant 1989: 42 – 43

Meaningful traces of the past still lay in the identities and habitus of participants in touristic encounters in Malawi. Some scholars of post-colonial studies have criticised earlier research of other cultures for being Eurocentric and have addressed its narrow understanding of the complexity of post-colonial identities. In his book ‘The intimate enemy’ (1983) post-colonial theorist and psychologist, Ashis Nandy, makes a separation between two types of colonialism: the violent conquest of territories and the other which he described as conquering and occupying ‘minds, selves and cultures’. He judges the first of the two as easy to recognize for its greedy and apparent self-interest, and in addition to that, because it did not claim to do or be anything else. Whereas the other claimed imperialism “to be a messianic harbinger of civilization to the uncivilized world” and by so doing it caused a long-lasting and complex relationship between colonizer and colonized (in Gandhi 1998:15).

Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of practice is often grouped together with other so called practice theories.⁸⁵ However, sociologist Loïc Wacquant argues that there is a difference in Bourdieu’s point of departure: Bourdieu developed his thinking based on practical questions which rose during his early ethnological field work, whereas other practice theorists such as Anthony Giddens were solving ‘scholastic puzzles’ at a more philosophical level.⁸⁶ Indeed Bourdieu challenged a tendency to build theories solely based upon earlier theories. He argued that there were problems that did not receive sociologists’ attention because the tradition of the discipline does not recognize or possess concepts with which to approach them. Researchers tend to feel obligated to pose some questions just because they are canonical in the discipline. He argued that theoretical progress required the integration of new data (Bourdieu et al.1991: 28).

In my thesis, the first level of study, that is, fields of power which are related to tourism in Chembe, are mainly discussed in the introduction section as the context of the study. The introduction to the history of the encounters on the shores of Lake Malawi serves the purpose of understanding the elements which have influenced the habitus of agents from generation to generation. As written

⁸⁵ John Postill (2010) writes that social theorists agree that there is no coherent practice theory, just group of scholars with different practice approaches. For example, Theodore Schalinzki introduces Bourdieu and Giddens as social theoretical practice thinkers; Wittgenstein, Dreyfus and Taylor as philosophic practice thinkers; and Foucault and Lyotard as cultural practice thinkers.

⁸⁶ Wacquant 2004: 390 – 391

earlier, my aim is to study the factors that determine participants' possibilities to act in the field of tourism in a poor host community. I try to understand 'the rules of the game' for different groups of participants from their points of view; what there is to gain and what types of capital they can use in the field.

After I had transcribed the interviews, I made some changes (which I have underlined in the transcriptions) in order to keep the interviewees anonymous. These changes included among other things, changing specific names of places into general ones. However, I have retained the information about interaction itself, which is the most relevant to this study, in its original form. After anonymizing the data, I wrote a short summary of each interview. Again, in order to preserve the anonymity of the interviewees, I did not include these summaries here as an appendix. Nevertheless, I think the summaries were a practical tool for working. When, analysing the data, I looked at *(a) which party (b) in which situation chose to 'play' by (c) what rules and (d) why*. I also tried to identify the transactions of different types of capital used in the field of tourism in the village. I tried to find patterns, similarities and variations on the actions taken in this particular context. I analysed the interviews, then other data, on the basis of themes and keywords. I also paid some attention to how people talked when they told about the occurrences they chose to tell.



Picture 4: Two matolas with tourists and locals in 1980's. Stapled on a postcard of Malawi. From the personal archives of Mr. Stevens, a local man who built the first lodge in Chembe.

3 ANALYSIS

Interactions in the field of tourism in Chembe

Whatever methods one uses when collecting the data, in order to represent them and make an argument from them one is forced to label, simplify and organize. I reorganized tourism related interactions brought up in my data into two main categories: regulated and informal interaction. Of these main categories, I focus on the latter. Below are all categories of interaction that were brought up in my data. The letters in parentheses signify the actors that were involved in the interaction in question: a) locals – originally Malawians living in Chembe; b) foreign residents; and c) foreign visitors:

1) More regulated interaction:

1. Trade (abc): vendors such as curio sellers, small-scale business such as selling at the market, tour guiding, safari agencies, transportation.
2. Labour relations (ab): locals working for foreigners in their households and businesses, or with foreigners in organisations.
3. The ownership and management of resources (ab): a relationship between a landowner and a tenant, the lake for different users (such as fishermen, tourists and oil companies).
4. Sponsorship through organizations and projects.

2) Informal Interaction:

1. Casual communication (abc): greetings, behaviour in general, photos, friendship, *chamba*⁸⁷
2. Intimate relationships (abc): dating, marriage, transactional sex, prostitution.

⁸⁷ Based on how people used the word '*chamba*' I concluded it to be a general name for cannabis products. Also names such as Indian *hemp*, Malawian *ganja* or *hashish* and *marijuana* were mentioned. Brian du Toit (1976) writes that cannabis has been used throughout southern and eastern Africa for centuries. Most likely it came along the East African coast with Arab traders long before Portuguese. James M. Chilembwe (2014) argues that nowadays this '*Malawi gold*' is one of the tourist attractions of Chembe.

3. Other informal support for locals (abc): individual foreigners support for locals' education and begging.

Even if in real life situations these categories are overlapping and flexible – and therefore artificial – I found this division to be a useful tool for proceeding with the analysis of the research material. My data provided more information and more examples of individual occasions regarding informal interaction than about formal and regulated interaction. Ethnographic methods of participant observation and in-depth interviews provide relevant tools to focus on especially informal aspects of tourism-related interaction, since participants' motives and interactions are by their nature nebulous and difficult to define, and as such challenging to grasp by other types of enquiry. Because of this, also the chosen methods of my fieldwork supported the emphasis and focus on informal interaction. When reorganising the data into above mentioned categories, I included what interviewees had told me about the specific situations of interaction as well as what they had told me when speaking on a general level, for example using phrases such as “foreigners are ...”, “it happens a lot that ...” and nowadays “it is normal that ...”. I have also included some information from my field notes. This selection supports the interpretive approach, since my aim as researcher is to understand my respondents' experiences and their interpretations of the phenomena in the village and to write my interpretations of these. Instead of investigating what factually has happened, I study how people experience their positions in the field in question.

All categories except for the ‘Regulated Interaction’s’ sub-categories ‘Labour Relations’ and ‘Ownership of Resources’ involved direct interaction between all three groups of actors: locals who were originally Malawians and lived in Chembe, foreign residents (for example lodge owners) and tourists and volunteers i.e. foreign visitors. The two exceptions involved only foreigners and locals who lived in the village. Labour relations were much discussed by both group of participants, but during our stay I did not notice nor hear that visitors would have taken part or commented on the issue. This implies a consensus not to bother visitors who were there for volunteering in order to help locals⁸⁸ or on vacation wanting just to relax and have fun. There had also been a local dispute over

⁸⁸ Motivations of volunteers are briefly discussed in the section concerning sponsorship. To help locals is only one of the reasons why people volunteer. From locals' point of view, their work as well as the fact that they remained in the village for a longer period than an average tourists was considered important.

the use of the lake by restricting the beach to tourists' use only by a foreign lodge owner. Nevertheless, when talking about the issue, people did not bring up direct contacts involving visitors. This too implies that even if there was an obvious dilemma over the matter, locals did not 'disturb' tourists with it. However, people talked about them when I, as a tourist myself, asked questions about how people get along.

A brief look on 'Regulated Interaction'

All examples in this introduction concerning categories of *regulated interactions* such as 'Trade', 'Labour Relations' and 'The Ownership of Resources' by their nature include transactions of money, a certain structure and more or less clear motives on both sides. The interactions between the participants of these categories are regulated by laws and statutes. A quick glance at the official documentation⁸⁹ of some of them reveals that they aim to protect the rights and pursuits of entrepreneurs, investors, customers and employees alike. I do not discuss whether the grass-roots interactions followed these regulations or not, instead, in the following paragraphs about regulated interactions, my aim is to describe these more formal and definable aspects of interactions because the power relations within them unavoidably have an influence on informal interactions which are the focus of this thesis.

In my data, most often, foreign *residents'* behaviour and experiences were discussed in relation to more regulated interactions such as labour relations and a relationship between a landlord and a tenant, or in relation to other fields of society such as the government's institutions. In these cases, the distinction between foreign residents and visitors was clear because of the issue or it was underlined by the interviewee. In the social space of Chembe, all the lodges seemed to have a clear character of their own depending on the owner's personality. The foreign residents' efforts regarding the well-being of the community varied. For some, social responsibility seemed to take a central role, even if personal reasons had guided them to come to the village in the first place, whereas according to locals, some foreigners appeared to regard the village more or less as a resource for their business

⁸⁹ Registered Land Act . Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://www.malawilii.org/mw/legislation/consolidated-act/58-01>. Sale of Goods Act . Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://www.malawilii.org/mw/legislation/consolidated-act/48-01>. Competition and Fair Trading Act. Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://www.malawilii.org/mw/legislation/consolidated-act/49-02>. Labour Relations Act and the Employment Act. Malawi Investment and Trade Center, Investment Guide. Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://www.mitc.mw/index.php?Itemid=520>.

in order to make their own living. Nevertheless, all the lodge owners and other foreign residents, regardless of their attitudes, carried some social responsibility for the village through different projects and most importantly, they used local products and services and paid a salary to a mainly local workforce.

The tourists came to Chembe to enjoy their leisure time and have fun. A significant number of tourists were volunteers working in different organizations in the village or elsewhere in Malawi. They were aware of the importance of their presence in the village and they wanted to use the local services and buy the local products to support the local people directly. Thus, they used their money and as a matter of fact would have liked to use more of it if there had been an ATM in the village. The tourists appeared to be quite flexible and understanding about some difficulties and challenges concerning tourism-related services which they had used during their holidays in Malawi and in Chembe.

Trade

Tourism by its character is a manifold sector of economy. If one started to look at tourism-related services and businesses in Chembe, from the point of view of tourists' needs, the list would include at least: transportation (taxis, motorcycle taxis, minibuses and/or rental cars), accommodation (mainly lodges), food (restaurants, marketplaces, shops, individual people selling their products), souvenirs (clothes, jewels, curios), entertainment (bars and their evening programs) and activities (diving courses, guided tours in the village or to the nearby islands and volunteer work on different programs). In the village, there are several shops, bars and restaurants which are owned and run by local people with the exception of those bars and restaurants belonging to lodges owned mostly by foreign residents.

In order to start any business or service, one needs economic capital and because of that, for example, lodges which require relatively much capital to start with are mostly owned by foreign residents. In addition, one needs to work hard, be competent and have networks of the right sort. It should be pointed out that the first lodge in Chembe was built in the 1980s by a local man, Mr. Stevens. At the time, there was only one (foreign owned) hotel in the village. Mr. Stevens earned his initial capital by working many years in South Africa and after his return, created flourishing businesses in Chembe and Monkey Bay. There were also other examples of locals who had managed

to expand their tourism related businesses. Some elderly locals were worried about the youth of “the new generation” that partied with tourists rather than looking ahead to the future. They questioned whether these young people had what it took to be an entrepreneur. Nonetheless, the fact at the moment is that people who start or have an accommodation business in Chembe are typically foreigners. S/he needs a local family from whom s/he can rent the land to build on, local construction workers, local shops to buy material and equipment, local carpenters to make furniture etc. When the guesthouse is ready, s/he needs waiters, cooks, bartenders, cleaners, front desk personnel, etc. In addition, s/he buys fish from fishermen and vegetables from local shops and markets etc. One foreign resident running a lodge means a potential for a significant increase in wealth for many local people. This is the premise that is understood by both locals and foreigners.

Minibuses, matolas and moto-taxis were options from which tourists could choose when they came to the village, unless they drove themselves. Local transportation was organized by individual car owners and the drivers who worked for them. There were also many boys and young men who looked for clients for minibuses and were paid some *kwachas* (local currency) by the drivers for that. The prices especially in the mini-buses and matolas were more expensive for foreigners, which many foreigners including myself found to be fair to some extent. A foreign resident told me that in Chembe there are three prices in use: one price for people from the village, one price for other Malawians and a third for whites.

In the village, local tour guides offered organized trips, some lodges offered activities of their own, and safari agencies from elsewhere included in their programs some activities also in Cape Maclear. The guides actively approached every new visitor who came to the village. They introduced themselves, told what they had to offer and how to find them later.

A few years earlier the situation had been somewhat different. Briggs (2010) in his travel guide writes about “the notoriously assertive beach-boy and tout culture” which according to my interviewees caused most of the complaints concerning interaction between locals and tourists. The typical problems were guides who never showed up after taking deposit to organize a trip for a client; or they had asked more money than was originally agreed upon. Some of the lodge owners had prohibited them from coming to the lodges to disturb clients. These local self-employed men had

thought that lodge owners had blocked them from the possibility to do business with tourists. At some point there was so much trouble that the community took the problem seriously. To my understanding the initiators were the foreign lodge owners who took the problem to the chief of the village. The Ministry of Tourism was involved and it helped by organising training for local guides and vendors. All trained guides got blue vests and all trained vendors got green vests. The vest with the name of its owner signified that this individual could be trusted to do the work. A *rota* system of guide groups was adopted and at the time of my interviews, it was seen to work very well. In every group was one contact person who knew every member of the group. In order for all guides and groups to get equal possibilities to earn money, one group offered its services one week in a certain lodge and then it moved to another lodge. Chilembwe (2014) writes that the number of the guides who have formal training was by 2010 almost 300.

Most of the curio sellers sat in their open shops and “*did not hassle as much as elsewhere*” as one visitor described to me. If they approached tourists, they would normally believe when someone said ‘no’ or ‘maybe later’. Many men in small-scale business sold products with which they hoped to attract especially tourists. In addition to the curio sellers in their shops were other vendors who sold other handicrafts such as jewelry, clothing and bags. All of these vendors were men. They were the ones with direct contact with the tourists due to their trade and therefore they could easily approach their clients later also informally. Small-scale business such as selling at the market or walking around the village selling pastries was a trade which also women did. Often especially the so called *usiba-business* was done by local women. When fishermen arrived with their catch, the women bought some, dried it in the sun, and sold it onward. At the market, women also sold vegetables from their gardens. Their clients were typically local Malawians or foreign residents – sometimes also tourists. To continue communication informally with these women was challenging due to their limited English skills and due to what many interviewees called their ‘shyness’ towards foreigners.

All the visitors that I spoke with – not only the interviewees – had the same experience of this relaxed and pleasant possibility to do shopping. This is partly due to the fact that all of them were experienced travellers and they had been elsewhere in Africa and, for example, in places like India where ‘hassling’ can be very aggressive. I talked with some people who had participated in boat trips or guided walks in the village and all of them were thrilled about what they had received and thought

that they wanted to come back to Cape Maclear. During my stay, a young tourist who took a boat trip to an island got dehydrated and s/he had to spend some time in a clinic. Another person who had been on the same trip told me that for some reason the guides had not reminded them that there would be no shade nor drinkable water on the boat. Trained guides should know basic things concerning the safety of their clients, but my interviewee was not sure if the guide was trained or not. However, also these two tourists were satisfied and willing to return to the village later during their few months stay in Malawi.

Nevertheless, even if I do agree with other tourists about the relaxed atmosphere in the village, my first experiences were not quite that pleasant. When I first arrived, not many other tourists were around. Perhaps for that reason the need to find a client was greater. One drunken man tried to sell me some jewelry and despite my refusal he approached me many times during my first three days in the village. He waited close to the lodge where I was staying and when I came out, he constantly walked around me and explained how much he and his family needed the money. Finally, he suggested that I should marry him. Also many curio sellers and waiters were drunk, some of them very much so. It was obvious that *chamba*⁹⁰ was smoked by many men.

Labour relations

Labour relations were an issue which was brought up by both local and foreign residents, but was not mentioned at all by tourists. In Chembe, the labour relations involving Malawians and foreigners typically meant that locals were working for foreigners in their households and lodges or in foreign organizations. In households, locals worked as housekeepers, security guards and gardeners. Of these, the first job was for women and the other two for men.⁹¹ The lodges were mostly owned by foreigners. In many of them, local educated people were in mid-level or good positions and worked together with the foreign owners managing the business and doing customer service. Apart from these positions, in lodges people had jobs such as cleaning, washing clothes, preparing food, gardening and guarding at night – which were very much appreciated opportunities for many. People needed jobs

⁹⁰ Cannabis

⁹¹ According to Chilembwe (2014) the jobs in lodges were the only options for women except for laundry work. Whereas for men work in agriculture and fishing were alternatives to tourism.

and in addition to that, at the lodges they had the possibility to interact with foreigners which was considered an opportunity to gain something. In addition to a salary, they all had the possibility to learn English. Employees were also taught new tasks by their employers. For example, even if one was hired to clean rooms, s/he could later work in the kitchen or serve clients. In some cases, an employee was sent to school to study and later s/he came back to work in the lodge. Sometimes, customers had asked lodge owners whether there was a person who would need support for education. In this way, some of the workers or someone else from the village found a supported to pay for his/her studies.

Some local interviewees told that often the employers treated their employees harshly. Sometimes the employer was described as hitting the table with his or her fist when angry, shouting, speaking a rude way or just clapping his/her hands and chasing a worker away even when the employee was trying to say something. In addition to impolite behaviour towards workers, some employers would react very strongly if employee made a mistake. I was told that sometimes local workers were even beaten by their foreign employers! There had been problems with, for example, counting money or using kitchen technology. Some local interviewees remarked that many things that Europeans took for granted, especially the technical equipment, were new and strange to local people, who were used to cooking over an open fire and eating with their fingers. Sometimes the primary needs caused the problem. I was told that a woman who worked for a foreign resident had nothing to eat at home and she took one mango from her employer. Because of that, according to the interviewee (who was not either of the participants), the employer had decided not to pay a full month's salary for her. The employees were also strictly forbidden to beg or ask any favours from the clients. I was told by the entrepreneur that for that kind of behaviour, the worker would immediately lose his or her job. Local people appeared confused as to why foreigners behaved impolite and harshly towards them. They thought that maybe the reasons were their skin colour and cultural differences.

People in general avoided criticizing foreigners. Some said straight that they needed the jobs and there were no other choices. In addition to labour relations in Chembe, some interviewees and other informants commented on the labour relations in Malawi in general. Even if there were some problems, white employers were generally considered to be much fairer in their dealings than Indians or Chinese who both had much trade in the cities and towns of Malawi. To have a Malawian employer

was said to mean easier communication and interaction than with whites, but perhaps a lower and not always reliable salary.

Two foreign residents commented on the challenges concerning labour relations from their point of view. Sometimes they felt nervous or tired because, according to them, with local workers things happened too slowly or were not done the way they had expected. One foreign resident was frustrated because professional staff was very difficult to find and because of that everything had to be taught to employees, “*starting from a knife and a fork,*” as she described it. Foreign residents also remarked that workers should ask if they had a problem instead of deciding themselves what to do with it and by doing so probably causing more trouble. The other interviewee also said that as long as a white person was needed to solve the problems that workers had caused, the locals should not expect the same wages for the same work. In this particular case, the problem had been that the inventory did not match with sales because of a vague measurement of groceries and beverages and because of inaccurate bookkeeping.

For foreign residents to run a lodge was more a choice of a certain lifestyle than an investment that would have been expected to gain quick or big profits. They hoped to make their living and some wanted to spend nice retirement years in this particular place in the world. However, running a lodge is a business and to keep business running, the money should come from clients and not from entrepreneurs’ personal savings or loans. Thus, customer satisfaction was the highest priority from an economic point of view. To ensure the satisfaction of the clients, the foreign residents had taught employees not to disturb or beg anything from them. In addition, the actions of guides and vendors had been constrained. According to foreign residents, as entrepreneurs they had to deal with such slow and difficult bureaucracy that it seemed that their businesses were not wanted in Malawi. Nevertheless, they acknowledged that the Ministry of Tourism was trying to help the tourism sector, even if the most useful help so far had been an informal network of entrepreneurs and other individual actors and associations in the tourism business.

Tourism in Chembe is in most respects purely a European set up. The actual challenges that were brought up in the data were often very practical and related to the fact that the European style of doing

things requires skills learned while growing up in European culture and with a European upbringing. The education system in Malawi is based on British curriculum and values, but many locals are not educated or they have gone through only few years of primary school. First of all, this means that their skills in English are limited, which affects their possibilities to operate independently in the field of tourism and in the society as a whole. Most locals have grown up without electricity and all the technology that European kitchens are filled with. Most certainly most people who have grown up in the village are not used to the quantity of goods and money that they should handle in tourism-related businesses. In all of the regulated interactions with foreigners, they were directly or indirectly reminded that what they did was not good enough and that the skills that they had were not usable – yet they were considered the lucky ones to have the jobs at all. Among other things, this affected the fact that in Chembe there were not many friendships between locals and foreign residents.

The ownership and management of resources

The most important resource for the people of Chembe is Lake Malawi itself. The lake was seen important because it offers fish to fishermen and attracts tourists to Malawi. Thus, many local people talked about overfishing which has resulted in a lack of larger fish. Waiting for fish to grow and breed is not really an easy option. When the weather is good and the fishermen are expecting a good catch, all the fishermen go out to the lake. At the moment, because of overfishing, the vast majority of the catch are small fish locally called Usiba. In Chembe, as in other villages around Lake Malawi, fishing and agriculture have been the main sources of income. Overfishing is partly related to tourism, since restaurants are good clients of the fishermen, but fish are also transported to cities such as Blantyre and Lilongwe to be sold there. The price of fish due to foreign clients and overfishing has risen and some locals cannot afford it. The only time that interaction between locals and foreigners came up related to the overfishing, was when a local interviewee estimated that *“if there were white people involved, there would not be overfishing at the lake”*. In his opinion, whites in general did things in more reasonable ways and locals should learn from them. Another threat to the lake and to its people mentioned by some locals is Bilharzia. They felt frustrated because many tourists did not buy a relatively cheap medication to prevent it but rather took a serious health risk. The interviewees estimated that if foreigners get sick by Bilharzia, it will decrease the number of tourists coming to the village.

Lake Malawi is seen as a resource also nationwide. The Government of Malawi aims to increase the contribution of mining to 20% of the GDP of Malawi by 2023.⁹² Due to the fact that the lake is now divided into regions where international oil companies can explore for oil, many citizens and NGO's are concerned about the risks of the drilling and "the absence of a suitable legislative and regulatory framework for governing oil extraction". UNESCO is examining the environmental risks to the lake of which only a small part belongs to a national park. The possible oil and gas findings have complicated the dispute regarding the boundaries of the lake between Malawi and Tanzania.⁹³ President Peter Mutharika has asserted that "[t]he law is very clear", and he thinks that "there is very little room for negotiations on the issue of the lake". He refers to a colonial agreement in 1890 claiming that the lake has belonged to Malawi over a 100 years.⁹⁴ Even though the debate concerning oil and gas exploration or a territorial line between Malawi and Tanzania did not come up in my interviews, especially the first mentioned issue could potentially influence locals' lives significantly.

Land, and especially the land on the shores of Lake Malawi, is an important resource for the local people in Chembe. I was told that typically the ownership of the land stays with the local family and a person who builds a lodge and starts to do business on that land pays rent for the use of it. However, the contracts are not always clear and some locals felt betrayed by foreigners. One person commented that when authorities are involved they take the side of the foreigners. On the other hand, a foreigner thought that sometimes locals only claim that they did not understand what had been agreed upon and used the confusion as a knowing strategy to gain from foreigners by, for example, asking more and more money for something.

A few years ago, the tension between local landlord and the owner of the lodge heated up so badly that local men attacked on the lodge. The men were trying to get money from the foreign resident, but during the attack a local security guard was killed. The problem was a dispute over who

⁹² Malawi Mines & Minerals Policy 2013. Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://mininginmalawi.com/key-documents/>

⁹³ Online 25th Nov.2015: <http://mininginmalawi.com/category/lake-malawi-dispute/page/2/>

⁹⁴ New Malawi president stakes claim to lake Nyasa. The East African 14th Aug.2014. Online 25th Nov. 2015: <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/New-Malawi-president-stakes-claim-to-lake/-/2558/2418692/-/125lrc5z/-/index.html>

owns the land upon which the lodge is built. In this case, the lodge owner claimed that s/he had bought the land, not rented it, whereas the original owners claimed that the money that they had received was a rent payment and they were expecting to be paid repeatedly. During my stay in the village, people were waiting for court proceedings concerning the ownership of the land and the death of the guard.

There had also been a dispute over the use of the beach in front of the lodges. Locals use the beach and the lake for washing themselves and doing laundry. However, a lodge owner was said to have had a fence built to stop locals from doing it in front of the lodge. Generally in the village the locals who lived along the beach had sold/rent the land and moved further from the beach to make room for the lodges. Now the lodges are situated as a continuous line along the beach, therefore locals need to do their daily routines in front of and in between the lodges. On the other hand, they were happy and proud of the iron sheet roofs that they now had on their houses further from the lake. These roofs are considered as significant improvements and rise in living standards.

3.1 CASUAL COMMUNICATION

The foregoing descriptions of the structure of formal tourism-related relations in Chembe serves as a background to look more closely the interaction happening informally between the stakeholders. In this section, I discuss the main points of what I call casual communication that were brought up in my data. Sub-categories of this group of interactions are ‘Greetings and general behaviour’, ‘Photography’ and ‘Friendship’. I also present how people reacted to the changes in local culture resulting from the informal interactions and encounters in the village related to tourism. There are examples of how people strove to benefit from encounters with foreigners in a positive sense by exchanging experiences and knowledge but also by using conscious strategies for exploiting tourists for economic benefits. The issues concerning the change were related to a dressing code; the use of alcohol and drugs; and the behaviour of the youth. Interviews are marked with signifying codes in order to identify them representing groups of people with certain determinants and positions in the field. For example, a code ‘1 Worker M 20-40’ refers to the interview number (1) with a person who by his status is related to field of tourism as a worker and who is a male (M) in the age group from 20 to 40 years. A full list of interviews is included as an appendix. In all the quotes from the

interviews, ‘Int.’ signifies interviewee, ‘T’ signifies that a comment was translated to me and ‘K’ signifies my first name (Katja).

3.1.1 Casual interaction and general behaviour

Most often people gave positive answers to general questions such as “*what do you think about the fact that foreigners come here?*”

Int.: Like for our village here, everybody like tourists.

K: You think so?

Int.: Yeah, that’s for sure (22 small scale business M20 – 40).

Locals told that they are happy to see tourists, or that they are hoping that visitors will bring business and buy local products. Very often they also appreciated the possibility to learn new things and get new ideas from visitors. A female interviewee said that she does not really know exactly what good the tourists bring, but “*some of them are nice when they touch children’s hair*” and are in other ways friendly to them. Generally, the communication was seen as working better now when people are used to seeing *azungus* (the whites) in the village and many villagers have also learned to speak a little English. Chilembwe (2014) writes that “before tourism came to Chembe local people knew nothing of other people of the world but now they are aware and relate to tourists with respect and dignity as fellow humans and colleagues in the tourism industry”.⁹⁵ Indeed, in some of the interviews, people told that they like to listen to the stories of the visitors’ home countries or otherwise share experiences. One female interviewee had a special interest and admiration of travelling and she pointed out that the tourists had inspired some local people to travel:

⁹⁵ Ibid.: 82

So, if they talk like interesting stories, we are wow, ooh... We just feel like, ooh, admiring, ooh, had I been, that... yeah. So, sometimes if you... Others, if they get money, they say: ooh, I've got ten thousand, I have to go to Senga Bay, I just want to travel. So, they go to Senga Bay and come back. Next time they go Nkhata Bay. So, which means they have learned something from these foreigners yeah, yeah (3 Worker F20 – 40).

Associating with whites was seen as an opportunity to improve one's life in various ways. Since a little boy, one interviewee had developed an admiration of books even though he was living in an environment without a literate culture. By associating with Europeans he had found a sponsor for his education. The sponsor had also sent him books to help his studies. Another interviewee told he had intentionally associated with foreigners to learn English. By associating with whites, he too had found a sponsor to pay for his education. I will come back in more detail to matters concerning sponsorship in section three of this chapter.

Well, because, as I said [to] you earlier, I'm a person who likes to interact with people. Like sharing ideas and stories. Especially I like to have a chat with white people. Cause normally it's like here, that's how you get to know, like [to] improve your like English, like, so. Being like something that is important in everybody's life. To me, I thought it wise to practice more English through interacting with the whites. Because it also helps in a part of the studies that I have taken because English is like official language in Malawi, yeah (2 A skilled job/managerial duties M20 – 40).

As mentioned above, many people liked the possibility of hearing foreigner's stories and sharing ideas with them. Several examples in my data suggest that often the ideas were not exchanged on a reciprocal basis. A person who had worked for a long time close to foreigners – residents and visitors – thought that the exchange of ideas was sometimes allowed only one way: from whites to blacks. Often these kind of feelings of unequal treatment were expressed related to labour relations. Actors in these situations were most often locals and white residents of the village. However, there were some experiences concerning especially the visitors' behaviour and attitude towards a local interviewee who thought that her skin colour affected some foreigners' attitudes:

Int.: Some of them, they can come, they can treat me like, because I'm black, black, they can treat me like I don't have any knowledge. But because s/he's muzungu [white person], s/he has knowledge. So they not have, they do not want to share what they have and what I know. They always want to be on top.

K: Ok, does it happen often?

Int.: No, it's... like, not all people [who] come here. But there come other people, [who] are selfish. And there come others that know that we are all human beings (13 Worker F 20 – 40).

The very basics of communication – greetings – were mentioned as something that visitors sometimes failed to do properly. When asked for examples of situations in which people felt disrespected by foreigners, some interviewees pointed out that visitors do not always answer when a local person says 'hi' or 'how are you'. Two interviewees criticised visitors who do not want to talk to others but prefer to remain in their own company. One of them hoped that visitors would “*be better people*”, but also noted that “*everyone cannot be nice*”. He wondered why someone would not want to sit with other people when that would have been “*an opportunity to get to know each other and learn something*”. Another interviewee thought that it is suitable to stay in your own company when inside the lodge area, but while walking around the village, one should be open to communication with other people. Local people sometimes felt ignored by visitors, and told that visitors occasionally chase children away which was not seen as a nice thing to do. I was also personally advised to be “*a normal person*”. By normal, the interviewee meant a person who at least answers when someone says hi:

Int.: [...] You know what, you just make sure to be a normal person, you know. That's it. You have to be a normal person. You have to be aware of like what's going on. Anything [that is] taking place, what's going on.

K: What you mean by that... normal person?

Int.: Hm, you know what. As I am a human been, I know what is good, what is bad and which I... I know like how I can handle problems, something like that. Yeah, so... to do... just need to be like, hmm, like a normal person. Whatever might happen in your way.

K: Yeah. You mean that I should be like eh...

Int.: Don't... You shouldn't have to be like this kind of people when somebody says hi, then they don't say hi, they just keep going, you know (22 Small scale business M20 – 40).

In my data, it came up repeatedly that local people felt that they could not and that they were advised not to criticise foreigners regardless how foreigners themselves behaved. This behaviour, which I call *staged contentment* came up concerning a variety of problems caused by tourism in the village. It seemed a chosen strategy to keep foreigners happy and ensure that more visitors keep coming. It was also apparent that especially those with tourism-related jobs could not risk losing their jobs by criticising foreigners. I, as foreigner and tourist myself, represented the group of people to whom frictions inside the community were not supposed to be revealed. Nevertheless, when I asked specific questions people normally answered and spoke about challenges in the community. Typically, however, they continued with some conciliatory words of understanding that tourists come from different cultures than locals, and that locals respect foreigners, or simply by stating that foreigners are not bad. In the quote below, a young woman pays attention to the difference in amount of freedom possessed by locals versus foreigners. In the course of our discussion she referred to all foreigners and especially couples of local men and white women. In my perception, in the quote she refers especially to women. Her comment implies that local people are advised how to behave towards tourists though our dialogue remained vague concerning the question of who had given this advice. Nevertheless, there appears to be a consensus on the matter:

Int.: And other thing is, like, we see tourists, they get drunk too much and they start quarrelling with these locals. But always they are defended, these tourists. They say: 'You people don't fight these. These are people from somewhere, we have to respect them, they are giving us more opportunities, they are sending our children to school. So don't do anything to them.' So, there are more opportunities [for foreigners]. They can move up and down what time they want, because they are well protected. Then nobody can do anything harm to them. Because we know tourists, they are helping Cape Maclear too much. Yeah, yeah.

K: So is this like government has told, officials, or who has told like leave the tourists alone?

Int.: We people and the government also.

K: So it's like eeh ... the community...?

Int.: Yeah. Yeah. They say we have to pay respect to these people, whether they are drunk, let them be drunk. Respect them, don't fight them. Yeah, yeah (3 Worker F20 – 40).

The local people who actively approach tourists are most often vendors, tour guides and children. I myself was directly approached by a man selling a trip to the island, a man selling bracelets, a man selling bags, a man asking for money, a male activist selling the products of his association, a young boy offering to show me around the village and a young boy who taught me how to play the local game of *bao*. I was also approached by many children asking for money in different ways. The children were both boys and girls. According to interviewees and my observations, local women in Chembe do not approach tourists and most likely they do not chat with foreign men. When I asked the reason for that, I was told that most women are not educated and they do not speak English. Even if women spoke some English they were shy to use it. They also intentionally avoided the possibility that men would try to be too friendly or even offer money for sex:

K: I'd like to know, since people have been coming here for decades, do you have friends abroad? Have you made friends with these people coming and going?

Int.3: Yeah.

K: What kind of friendships?

Int.3: Just friendship.

K: With women or men?

Int.3: With women. I don't like men (laughing).

K: You don't like men?

Int.3: I don't like them at all. Too much uhule.

K. What is uhule?

T: Uhule is [...] prostitution (8A Group 3F all ages, respondent 40-50y, partly translated).

Friends

Where the word ‘friend’ was used, in some cases ‘an acquaintance’ might have been more accurate from the Finnish perspective. On the other hand, a friend sometimes referred to a person with whom one had an intimate relationship. In addition, the word ‘friend’ often signified a supporter. To be a friend includes the idea of helping – and those who helped were considered friends. To help, on the other hand, was also obligation and responsibility towards friends as well as members of an extended family.⁹⁶ The following example is about an interviewee’s local friends but its relevance is to point out the nature of benefits and obligations related to people considered to be friends. A local man, in the quote below finds it complicated that he might reach a better economic position than his friends and thus instead of him and his friends sharing and exchanging things, he would only be the giving party:

I’m studying but my friends, I’m missing my friends [who] could be studying with me. Yeah, so we could be together, but they are not studying. Yeah, so for me it’s very hard, cause if I start working they might need me to help them instead we could help each other. So that’s very difficult (1 Worker M20 – 40).

Most interviewees who worked with tourists considered that they had foreign friends of some kind. As one woman put it “*some are friends and some are not like real friends*”. Typically the foreign friends of which the interviewees spoke were the same sex as the respondent. They were people who had visited the village already at least once and were expected to come back again. People had experienced that sometimes the friendships did not last very long. The visitors wanted to share the email addresses, but were “*maybe [...] a friend for a month*”. Another man told that only a few people stayed in touch. According to him, “*people normally forget about Africa when they are back home*”. These short-term friendships sometimes left the other party confused, as in the following example:

⁹⁶ Chilembwe (2014) points out that recently many youths are acting more individually and spending money on clothes and other personal things instead of sharing as it has been before. The idea of family has also changed from extended family toward nuclear family with only the closest family members.

Int.: Eeh, before I had friends, yeah. I was like communicating with friends for sure. But now, they've stopped.

K: Why is that?

Int.: I don't know why did they stopped doing it. I send them the text-messages, they don't answer... the email addresses, letters. They don't do anything. I don't really know why

(22 Small scale business M20 – 40).

As mentioned before, many visitors in Malawi were experienced travellers. Three interviewees discussed the issue from the tourists' point of view, saying that it would be very difficult to stay in touch with all the nice people they met during their journeys. However, some people did at least for a while. When local people's foreign friends were in their home countries, communication happened via email or Facebook at the local internet cafe, at the library or at some of the lodges. Many of those who had friends abroad told that they had received telephone calls from them. Applications like Skype were also in use. One woman said she communicated almost daily with her foreign friend and another said that she keeps in contact with her friend on a weekly basis. Most often messages were sent every now and then, not very regularly. A necessary criterion for such contacts with foreigners was that the local person spoke English. Typically, these people were young adults and had at least secondary level schooling. They knew how to use a computer and/or they had a cell phone. These conditions excluded a large part of the local population from communicating and forming meaningful relationships with foreigners.

Photography

Taking photographs is such an elementary part of tourists' behaviour⁹⁷ that it is clear that people living in tourist destinations have experiences of it. One of my interviewees told me that he had many

⁹⁷ See, for example, Urry & Larsen 2011.

good memories about tourists ever since he had been a child. Tourists had played soccer with him and had given him sweets. The tourists took many photos which they later on sent to him:

I've got a lot of nice pictures. Jumping out of rocks, hiking, yeah, swimming, drumming at nights, having barbecues. [...] I've met lots of people from all over. [...] Yeah, sometimes we meet other people. They don't even give us business, but we are still friends with them. We can show them Cape Maclear, we can sit with them, talk to them, they tell us more about their country (1 Worker M20 – 40).

I was myself approached by a teenage boy who offered to show me some nice places. He hoped that I would take photos of him on the cliffs. It was clear that even though he was not – at least yet – considered a tour guide, he knew which places tourists normally wanted to see and the photos they wanted to have. He took me to Otter's point, pointed out some nice spots to take photos and gave me tips on how to get pictures of the Chiclids, the colourful fish which are the famous attraction of Lake Malawi. Later on I learned that he might be one of those boys in danger of dropping out of school due to tour guiding. I was not much of a catch, though, since I only offered him one lemonade and some photos. I also asked him why he was not at school and encouraged him to attend the next day.

Photography becomes unpleasant from the residents' point of view when the person with the camera does not make an effort to ask permission when pointing his or her camera towards people. Especially the women in group interviews criticized the fact that tourists took photos without asking. They also recommended that if one wants to have photos of children, one should ask the parents or the children themselves. Two women were sceptical of how people would talk about the photos back home. They feared that Europeans looking at the photos might call them monkeys!:

So for the picture they feel that, they say, [...] we hear that these, when they are reaching they country they say, ooh, these are the monkeys we found in Malawi. So they fear that and they say, no, don't take that pictures (9 Group B 2F 20 – 40 translated).

In my own experience, not having children in photos was very difficult. Whenever I took my camera with me, a group of children gathered to pose in front of it. Right away, when I had my first walk in the village, two girls asked me to take photos of them and when I did, they asked me money for it. Normally, however, it was enough that I showed the children the photos I had taken of them. I was told that asking money for photos had started in the 1990s when professional photographers came to the village, took pictures for different purposes and gave money to people they chose to have in their photos. According to the tour guide telling me this, the right way would have been to ask a guide or someone from the village to organise a photo shoot. Participants should have agreed upon a reasonable fee and photographers should have taken photos of particular people, not walk around taking photos and giving away money. Sometimes, travellers might be surprised by the request for money and refuse to pay. These situations were not pleasant for either party. In the example below, a local activist was taking a potential client (a tourist) to the place where he was selling his products but was left without a customer because of the hurt feelings of the tourist. Also the women that the tourist had photographed were not pleased:

I was walking with him, in the village, and eh, he was like to buy our stuff here, so I walked with him around the village when we met two ladies. So he was [...] just starting to take a photo without begging [asking for permission from] the lady. So after he took the photo, the lady said: give us the money, because you take us a photo without our permission. And he tell me that you see John they tell me to give money, is it not free to take a photo? I said no, not necessarily. Because if you need to take a photo of a person, it depends. [...] You need to talk to them: 'Please, can I take your photo?'. If they say no, then you can't. But don't do like that. [...] He said: 'No, I'm not gonna buy your stuff anymore'. I said: 'Ok, go, don't buy any of our stuff'. Because a person is a person. It depends... you can't take a photo because you... [did not] talk with them. You need to talk to them and say, please (23 Activist 2M20 – 40, 40+).

3.1.2 Changes that were considered negative and locals' reflections upon them

As mentioned earlier, the local people thought that because of tourism, the local culture had changed. The changes were considered either positive or negative, or in some cases they were considered

neutral. In his impact analysis, Chilembwe (2014) lists the following aspects of tourism in Chembe: the positive impacts include projects addressing several problems in the village such as bilharzia and malaria and the support for local peoples' education and health. He also mentions improvements in infrastructure and quality of life as well as employment in the tourism sector. Whereas the drawbacks of tourism in Chembe include the displacement of local people (further from the beach which is now rented to foreigners); changes in values and customs; changes in patterns of dress; alcoholism and use of drugs; changes in family structure; prostitution and sex tourism; changes in marriage structure and changes in housing patterns. Factors that came up in my data are in line with Chilembwe's analysis. In following paragraphs, I take a look at the data concerning the changes that were considered culturally and socially harmful to locals.

Dress

Tourist destinations are places for the encounters of people from different cultures and backgrounds. Unavoidably these contacts are affecting participants on both sides, those who live in the destination and those who visit it. The interviewee below brought up the idea of shared space. The village is no longer seen to belong to locals but it is "*also the village of tourists and foreigners*". She points out that the locals "*respect*" foreigners' culture even if foreign women wear clothes that are not considered suitable for local women:

I can say that the whole village knows nowadays that this village is not only for locals, but it's also the village of tourists or foreigners. So we always respect the culture of these foreigners. If they wear mini-skirts or trousers, we always know that this is her culture. And on top of that, now in the village [...], they are copying the foreigners' culture to wear the trousers or mini-skirts. So we do like half and half (7 A skilled job/managerial duties F20 – 40).

Changes in the local culture were mentioned in different contexts. In some cases, this was the thing that people did not like about the fact that foreigners came to the village, even if their presence in many other ways was appreciated. On the other hand, some people pointed out that it is a person's own choice if one wants to behave as foreigners do. In many cases, people commented that *we*, the

locals, are copying the European dressing style and behaviour whereas sometimes people considered that *they* the tourists have changed the local culture. Women's manner of dress was mentioned often. During H.K. Bandas' regime, women were forbidden by the law to wear trousers or mini-skirts. Instead, they were supposed to use *chitenje*⁹⁸ or any dress below the knee. Even female tourists were given such a large piece of a cloth at the airport. One woman noted that to wear *chitenje* is "*our culture and we have to preserve our culture*". Below she refers to tourists' behaviour in the bars and the beach between the lodges and the lake. That is the area where tourists most often spend their time in bikinis and shorts, drinking beer and other alcoholic beverages:

But in these days, because someone is coming. In these lodges, someone has the right to do anything they want, that is. What can we do? (11 A skilled job/managerial duties F40+).

Chamba and alcohol

Another often mentioned change was the increased use of alcohol and drugs. I was told that nowadays many local men were smoking *chamba*⁹⁹ and drinking too much beer. Drinking was not seen to be something that tourism had brought, but as one interviewee remarked, "*because of the tourists, there are now bars everywhere*". On the other hand, tourists were held responsible for bringing *chamba* into the village in the first place and teaching children to use it. *Chamba* was seen as a problem in itself: it was believed to make people go crazy, not to go to work, to fall asleep on the beach and prevent them from understanding their parents. My own impressions were in line with what interviewees were telling me. Regardless of the time or week day, many men were clearly drunk or high on a narcotic substance. Nobody directly offered to sell *chamba* to me in the village, but it was obvious that I could buy it anytime. It was directly offered to me in another village nearby. In the quote below, *the children* are presented as actively seeking business and *the tourists* are the ones accepting their offer. *The tourists*, however, are seen as the initiators when local children start to smoke and to drink beer:

⁹⁸ Chitenje is a large piece of a cloth that women tie around their waist. It is long enough to cover ankles.

⁹⁹ Cannabis.

This happens with people who are... like tourists. The children say: 'I need to get a little money. I have to do business'. Then they say: 'Ok, I sell chamba, Malawian ganja'. They [the tourists] say: 'Ok, go, buy chamba for me for 3000 kwacha, so let's smoke together. Let's smoke together'. So that child, instead of just selling chamba, is now becoming a smoker. [...] Then maybe after, they go together to the bar. They say: 'Let's have two or three drinks'. And that person is becoming addicted to beer. Now I can see lots of bars, lots of bars. They are everywhere in the village. Because people they are used to drink beer since they were very young. So this is another impact. I've been drinking beers, but now I've stopped (17 Activist M20 – 40).

When talking about children, the interviewee is referring to teenage boys who could be called 'beach boys'. 'Beach boys' was a general name for youths and young men from mid-teens to mid-thirties who make their living by unofficial services for tourists.¹⁰⁰ The career path for becoming 'a beach boy' was many times described to me. These were the boys who as a small child had run shouting after visitors: "Give me money, give me money!" A few years later, they hung around the beach with tourists performing some services for a few kwachas. Sooner or later, many of them had dropped out of school because from their point of view, socializing with tourists offered many opportunities and earning money at the beach was more important than school. For boys, an alternative way of making money was fishing, which was another reason for many to drop out of school. Because youths had options for earning a relatively large amount of money in a short period of time through fishing and tourism, work in agriculture did not attract them. When the boys grew older, they started to organise activities such as hikes to the surrounding nature or boat trips to the islands. Some of them started to sell jewellery or other things that tourists would buy. They had already learned some English and they improved their language skills with every tourist they associated with. For youths, just to have some fun as tourists did, was very alluring. The result was that some boys got used to drinking beer and smoking cannabis and no longer had any interest in school. Therefore there were many drop-outs

¹⁰⁰ Peake 1989: 210-213

around the Lake Malawi tourist resorts.¹⁰¹ Below, an interviewee described to me how tourists affect local boys' use of *chamba* and alcohol and I want to clarify what he meant:

K: Adult people do that? Foreign adult people take children to bars and buy them beer?

Int.: Yeah, yeah. Who are like maybe 12 or 15, 16, but they are still at school. So they become friends and I have seen a lot of children who have been in secondary school and now they no longer have the interest, because they met with people who encourage them to smoke or drink beer (17 Activist M20 – 40).

Often the people whose actions were seen to be causing trouble in the cases of *chamba* and alcohol use were *the tourists*. Most likely the situations like the one in the example below did not happen with an intention to cause harm, but rather on account of travellers' lack of consideration. The ones with clearer intentions here were *the children*. Hoping to create income generating friendships with these tourists, they smoke *chamba* with them. Over the course of time, it might become a habit and a problem:

Int.2: Sometimes it's because of like the tourists you know, tourists. Some of the tourists come here just for smoking or whatever. So children same time they learn from tourists. They say: 'Do you smoke?' They say: 'Oh, I can try.' And after they learned [...] that, yeah.

Int.1: They thought, some children, if I can smoke there with him, I can create a good friend, now he, this tourist, can give me money easily. Now they don't want to do that one [to smoke], but they do. They need money from them. They want to create a friend, that they can speak and the tourist can understand. 'Ooh, you want something...' They learn and buy some (23 Activist 2M 20 – 40, 40+).

¹⁰¹ Chakumbira 2013

Peake (1989) describes beach boys' hustling as a crude and competitive business where only very few closest friends of these boys and men are trusted by them. The flipside of this ruthless competition is a public image of 'playboys' relaxing and having fun in bars, using fashionable European clothes and other symbols of affluence.¹⁰² My perception about the beach boy culture in Chembe is in line with Peake's description from Malindi, Kenya. In Chembe, there was competition between the fishermen and the tour guides who appear to compete with each other "in whatever they do" as Chilembwe (2014) writes. From January to May is the best season for fishermen, since that is when their catch is big and they make a lot of money. Whereas guides are most successful during the high season of tourism from June to December,¹⁰³ the last month of the year being the busiest season.¹⁰⁴ Male youths and young men compete with another about the amount of money they make and about how much of it they spend on having fun and drinking beer.¹⁰⁵ As written above, beach boy culture in Chembe had been so aggressive and had received so much negative attention that it had been put under control with help from the Ministry of Tourism. Now tour guides and vendors conduct their trade in a more organized manner while on the informal side of the tourism field they still acted freely and showed much dedication to their role as local hosts, however not without a strive to benefit from tourists somehow.

Some young men in Chembe wore colourful loose trousers called 'happy-pants' as tourists did and they had dreadlocks instead of the short hair worn by most men in Malawi. Chilembwe (2014) describes this change in men's dress and writes that this style was chosen consciously to attract tourists. Beach boys also used many bracelets because "they make them look indigenous" which also attracted tourists.¹⁰⁶ Based on what Chilembwe's interviewees had told him, these changes appeared to be a successful marketing strategy. Their purpose was to give tourists a signal that they have *chamba* to sell.

¹⁰² Peake, R.: 210-213

¹⁰³ Chilembwe, J. 2014: 78

¹⁰⁴ Tourism statistics 2009

¹⁰⁵ Chilembwe, J. 2014: 78

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: 77

Because selling *chamba* is widespread but illegal business,¹⁰⁷ it was also seen as contributing to the corruption of the police. The government had set the police to control the business and sometimes people were arrested for selling it. According to my interviewees, the police were making a lot of money out of these people. Those who were arrested very often bought their way out of the situation with money. One local interviewee worried about the boys and felt sorry that these kind of things had spoiled the people in the country where “*people used to be friendly and did not change their mind*” (i.e. people were not corrupted).

Local people felt the same kind of frustration and feelings of powerlessness about foreigners’ drinking and bad behaviour that was expressed concerning the changes in the dressing code. People thought that they must put up with it whether they like it or not. Tourists were too valuable to be criticised. When I asked if there had been any problems because of foreigners, one interviewee put it simply:

Yeah, but we can’t worry about that, because also they want to make something (laughs). That’s why they’ve opened their business. We can’t even, eeh... we can just say it’s ok, they are teaching us something.

Youth behaviour

In the comments below the local youth, ‘the new generation’, is seen as active and responsible for cultural changes in the area. The female interviewee below brought up the behaviour of especially young local girls:

¹⁰⁷ Online 20thDec.2015. Marijuana cultivation increases in Malawi: <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/17/world/marijuana-cultivation-increases-in-malawi.html>. Legal hemp for Malawi?: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/708649.stm>

As I said this is it, the generation has changed it. We are in the new generation. And we say, especially these small girls they say; that was your culture and that was your old days. They say: 'We have our days. We can do everything that we want.' [...] In old days you can go to play, come [home] at six or five o'clock, but in these days, girls are allowed to go to dances, that was not our culture in those days. Especially girls were under the supervision of elderly people. [...] And now you can see, because these people they have the right to go, they have the right to do anything. So you can see a small girl, like a girl aged fifteen, fourteen, pregnant, because they are free to do anything they like (11 A skilled job/managerial duties F40+).

Phiri (2010) confirms the concern of several of my interviewees. Many youths defended their rights as human beings but did not see their responsibilities as citizens. At the beginning of the 1990s, Malawi was in transition from a single-party to multi-party system. That was due to pressure from the religious community, professional associations, the political opposition living in exile and finally the donors of development aid. At that time, foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were arriving in Malawi with a variety of agendas embracing the ideals of democracy and human rights. Apparently, though full of good intentions, NGOs stepped into a socio-political and cultural situation that they did not fully understand. Phiri writes: "None of these NGOs set out to promote good and responsible citizenship by emphasizing duties and not mere rights". According to Phiri, for example, students in secondary schools were told to vandalize and destroy school property because they were unhappy with the meals or otherwise unsatisfied with the headmaster.¹⁰⁸ Also in Chembe, behind the freedom and arrogance of the local youth the respondent below saw them as appealing to their version of human rights:

Even boys, they are free to go drinking, smoking. If you say something, they say I have the right to do this. [...] And you feel, let's say you slap your boy, you slap your girl or slap your

¹⁰⁸ Phiri 2010: 365 – 366

ch.. either, they go to human rights, I've been abused by my parents. That's what's done (11 A skilled job/managerial duties F40+).

Generally speaking, many people thought that the gender roles were changing. Local women told that now they have more possibilities to educate themselves and to have jobs in lodges than before. Both of these used to be opportunities mostly for young men. Changes in the norms related to dress were seen by some as negative but most often were taken neutrally. Many pointed out that drinking and smoking *chamba* were not welcome changes in boys' and men's behaviour. In addition, two respondents brought up that they did not like the new development that even girls are seen spending their time in bars:

K: About going out in the evenings, like socialising, eh, is it that it hasn't only changed among women but has it also happened with men?

Int.: To our culture, for men, we have no problem with men, because we think that they're always the ones who can, but now...

K: They can do that?

Int.: They can do that, but now even the girls. [...] Cause we see whites having fun during nights, like in the front of the lodges, at the bars, drinking any type of drinks they can decide, to which is not common to our culture. But nowadays it has developed. And I know that it has come because of these tourists. The only bad which I want to explain out of all these things is like the culture as ourselves, our tradition, it's going and the European style of life is coming in (7 A skilled job/managerial duties F20 – 40).

During my visits, I never saw local women at restaurants or bars unless they were working as waitresses, cleaning ladies or in the kitchens. However, in this matter as in many others, people thought that local behaviour is changing because the locals are copying or adopting the European culture and lifestyle. One interviewee also noted that the more educated women are, more likely they are to go out in Blantyre or Lilongwe. In Chembe, very few local women have a higher education. In addition to traditional gender roles, one reason not to see women in bars and restaurants is practical:

it is very expensive. When it came to local women's possibilities to adopt a European lifestyle and their opportunities for finding meaningful friendships or economically beneficial relations with foreigners, these reasons were intertwined.

3.1.3 Summary

A positive exchange of stories and knowledge of one's own culture and home country played a central role in the section Casual Communication. Associating with whites was seen to also improve one's possibilities to proceed in life by forming meaningful social networks. This cultural capital was valued for its own sake on each side. Tourists' and foreign residents' interest in being in the village in the first place was based on an affection for local nature and culture, whereas local people were curious to hear how other people lived in their home countries. An important aspect of communicating with foreigners was that it was an opportunity to learn new skills and improve one's English. However, sometimes local people felt ignored and not respected by foreigners: some had experienced that foreigners were willing to give ideas and teach locals instead of a reciprocal exchange of knowledge, and some felt disrespected when foreigners did not answer their greetings. In addition, some local people did not like when tourists wanted to remain among themselves and did not communicate with locals or even with other tourists. In my data there were recurrent remarks of locals' thoughts about their limited possibilities to react to foreigners' unwelcome behaviour. It was also said that people have been advised not to criticize foreigners. This powerlessness appeared when people at first avoided saying negative comments, and when they did criticize, they continued with conciliatory comments saying, for example, that tourists are not bad and they understand that foreigners have their own culture. I started to call this wariness in locals' comments concerning tourism as *staged contentment*. This behaviour was most apparent in those peoples' comments who had tourism-related jobs which they did not want to risk.

Many locals considered foreign people whom they knew as *friends of some kind*. The friendship included the responsibility to help and those who helped were considered friends. Often friendships did not last very long after a foreign party had returned back home. While it lasted, people communicated via email and telephone. For some, applications such as Skype were used. These forms of communication required a cell phone and access to a computer and network as well as English

skills. Therefore, to maintain contacts with a foreigner was not possible for the majority of locals. The trade directed towards foreigners was carried out by men, therefore people who approach tourists are almost solely male. Women did not approach foreigners like men did for trade or any other motive. I was told that the reason for this was their limited English skills or shyness to use the language. Women avoided especially men since they had experienced many direct or indirect suggestions to sell sex. In my perception, communicating with male tourists was seen as morally questionable.

In Chembe, as in elsewhere, tourists wanted to have photos as souvenirs and memories of their trip. Generally speaking, locals did not like when tourists pointed their cameras at people without asking. From their point of view, it appeared to be taking without giving anything in return. This was also my experience when I used a camera. Some locals also feared that photos of themselves would be laughed at in tourists' home countries. On the other hand, especially children actively tried to pose in photos in exchange for money. In addition, some adults asked for money for photos.

Many people thought that local culture had changed because of tourism. This could be seen in clothing and hairstyles, but also in the younger generation's behaviour in general. Some people thought that tourists had caused the changes, and others thought that the local youth wanted to copy western lifestyles and therefore were actively changing the culture. Many people mentioned the use of *chamba* and the increase in the use of alcohol as drawbacks of tourism. The local young boys actively sought contacts with foreigners in order to make business with them. In these situations, foreigners sometimes used *chamba* and alcohol together with a local youth. In addition to immediate problems caused by using alcohol and *chamba*, many young boys had dropped out of school because of them. Interviewees frequently remarked their powerlessness in the face of all these changes. It also appeared that people were advised not to criticize foreigners.

3.2 INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

In his article 'Sex Tourism', Martin Opperman (1999) states that sex tourism exists everywhere, even if some places are better known for it than others. Nevertheless, he sees the definition of 'sex tourism' as too narrow. Typically, the concept refers to older men travelling from developed countries to

developing countries to buy sexual services that are not available to them in their home country, or at least not at the same price. It has been shown that in some destinations such as Kenya, Gambia and some Caribbean islands it is more common for wealthy female tourists to seek the company of local men. As Opperman points out, in both cases to approach all of these relationships simply as prostitution is often too narrow a view, and parameters such as the intention and opportunity, the length of time, the relationship, the sexual encounter and who travels should be included. By his account, these are important criteria for establishing what constitutes sex tourism and/or for identifying sex tourists.¹⁰⁹ In Chembe, European women used the concept of ‘sex tourism’ a few times when speaking about the phenomenon in the village. Chilembwe (2014) mentions also sex between tourists and local minors without going any more details about the age or gender of the children. He writes: “The lure of this easy money has caused many young people in Chembe village, including children, to trade their bodies in exchange for money and other goods like clothes and any other materials.”¹¹⁰ Given the manifold character of the phenomenon, to label all of it prostitution would be vague at the very least. In the following paragraphs I present what was included in the data concerning all the forms of intimate relationships. This means everything from ‘normal marriages’ to prostitution. In the quotes in this section, I do not use the signifying codes of the interviewees in order to assure that the speakers remain anonymous.

3.2.1 Local men and foreign women

One thing that was common to almost all of the interviews was the notion of the relationships between local men and white women. These were mentioned by all women and most of the activists. Those who did not bring them up were men with more education. To grasp the phenomenon is a challenge because of the variety of the readings of the concept of marriage and the fact that there are many types of relationships to which people refer when they talk about relationships between white women and guides/boys/men/hustlers/beach boys/husbands (all of these terms were used). To address the issue and to study the complex phenomena itself would require setting out definitions and determinants of its factors. In this thesis, I merely look at the surface of the phenomena in order to determine its impact

¹⁰⁹ Opperman 1999

¹¹⁰ Chilembwe 2014: 80

on the structures of interaction in the field of tourism. In other studies, a variety of concepts are used. Pruitt and LaFont (1995) write about ‘romance tourism’ in their article about relationships between female tourists and their Jamaican male hosts. ‘Entrepreneurs in romance’ is how Dahles and Brass (1999) call the Indonesian men who are looking for Western female tourists to be their partners. They approach the issue from these young men’s perspective and see them as beach boys looking for opportunities. Herold, Garcia and de Moya (2001) pose the question of whether we should see the relationships between Western female tourists and the local beach boys in the Caribbean context as sex tourism or as romances.

Int.: And eh, another thing it’s like with these tourists, the bad thing is, like, there are some old women, white women, who are coming for marriages to young boys. And they end the marriage which was there before. So this practice has just come when tourism is in.

K: So did you mean that these older white ladies, that they get married to the boys who already have a family here?

Int.: Yeah, which is bad.

A local use of a word ‘marriage’ includes different forms of living together as a couple either with or without official legitimisation. These different uses of the word came up especially when people estimated how many couples composed of a local man with a foreign woman there actually were. Estimates varied from two couples to about twenty couples. According to Chilembwe (2014), in Chembe “the institution of marriage is regarded as sacred and permanent”. Arranged marriages, which have been the norm, are now becoming rarer, and marriages based on romantic love are more common. The reasons behind this change are seen to be ideas learned from movies and through interacting with foreigners. In addition, in the study, the emergence of intermarriages between people of different Malawian ethnic groups was brought up (Chilembwe 2104:81).¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Chilembwe refers to intermarriages between the Tonga, Yao and Man’ganja whom have moved to Chembe which originally is habitat of the Chewa.

Most of the interviewees brought up relationships between local young men and foreign elderly women and implied or directly said that from the local partner's perspective the motivation to engage in these relationships was poverty. As in following two quotes, dating and transactional sexual relationships were described also in relation to sponsorship for education. Local youths were sent to school and later they formed relationships with women who sponsored their education. Sometimes this was brought up as a process that happened over time: first a foreign person got to know someone whom s/he decided to sponsor and along the way, one or both parties became attracted to each other. In some cases, however, the exchange relationship which provided an opportunity to study was more like a conscious deal between the two parties:

K: Do you have some kind of understanding why it is so? What is behind this?

Int.: Behind this, because people, they are offered with support and money. So you know in a community people are poor. People cannot even manage to have their living. So if they find somebody saying if you want to sleep, if you want to be my boyfriend, I'll be supporting to you everything you need, so people go for it. So it is like an offer.

K: So it's like a business deal?

Int.: Yeah, business deal.

In the account below, the actors who take the initiative are most often *female foreigners* making offers to local young men. Given the flexible meaning of the word 'marriage', the interviewee in the quote below is possibly referring to a range of intimate relationships:

Int.: Ok, sometimes there is this negative impact. Impact whereby, when the tourists don't have, maybe they don't have, she or he has no husband or – mostly I can say a husband – or a wife, they say, ooh, I help you go to school, I help you do this, I want you to marry me. So sometimes that happens.

K: Ok. So the price of getting the school fees is the marriage?

Int.: For some other school children that have been sent to school by their sponsors, they need to have union with them. [...] Because some they do that with reasons. They do that with reasons. They help so that in the future that person can be ... [h]is wife or her husband. So those happen in two ways.

In many cases as in the quote above, the interviewee used the word 'children'. Often also the words 'boys' or 'guys' were used rather than 'men'. In addition to these, people used the word 'husband'. It seems that such a thing as an adult bachelor did not exist. On the other hand, they often spoke about 'old white women'. In addition to the separation between 'whites' and 'locals'/'blacks', this discourse underlined the age difference between the local men in question and their foreign female partners. It was not seen as normal that young men should have relationships with women who were their seniors. When asked how young were the men and how old were the women involved interviewees estimated that the men were between 15 and 30 years of age, most often around 20 to 30, whereas women were from 40 to around 70 years of age. It was pointed out that in Malawi, there are many marriages between locals and foreigners who are of roughly the same age and that the marriage and the wedding are carried out in the 'proper' way. In Chembe, this was not often the case.

Some of my interviewees confirmed that in the cases in which the young local were already married sometimes local wives were pragmatic in their attitudes toward the situation, as long as the husband provided for his local family. That was especially the case when the husband had discussed the matter in advance with his wife. Nevertheless, comments revealed that it is arguable whether these wives did really had any other choice than to accept the situation:

Yet as Africans, most of the time it happens, a lot to them it's ok. 'Let me just sleep with that woman, that one has to help us, she has to give us dollars.' It's like that, doing like business through them, through sleeping with the white women, yeah, that's what always happens. Even some other wives know that, that one is my husband's wife (another woman: husband's wife yeah) but they cannot say anything. It's like them, aah, just accept it. You know that one has to help us. They have to do so, that she [a foreign woman] can help us, so that she has to give us... that money will help you also. Others just accept it just because poor, yeah, yeah.

In some cases, when local wives could not accept the situation they went back to their parents' house with their children, and sometimes this arrangement was made in order to leave the house for the husband and the white woman. Chilembwe (2014) writes about the arrangement as follows: "The husband sends assistance to the first wife [who is] staying at her parents' home and the man would normally tell the new wife that there is a sister somewhere who needs help so that the new lady is aware of the other woman though indirectly."¹¹² Not all the husbands asked their wives, consent nor brought the money home, instead they might spent the money in bars while living in the 'playboy' style described by Peake (1989) or on their own personal pursuits. In the quote below, a female interviewee tells about her experience:

Int.: When they have a wife foreign, they left the citizen of Cape Maclear. They do leave and maybe they had hard life... Because when left they maybe had children, they just leave too the children, they don't care about the children.

K: They don't support?

Int.: No any support.

K: Is this very common?

Int.: It is very common in Cape Maclear.

K: So you have among your friends and family, you know people, I mean ladies and children who's been left when guys go with foreign women?

Int.: Yeah, and I'm the one. I'm the example of that.

Even in cases of agreement between local spouses, women felt jealousy, sorrow and frustration. Feelings of being worthless and without possibilities to compete with white women came across clearly many times. Local women were afraid of family break-ups and unmarried female adolescents

¹¹² Ibid.

thought that their potential spouses were only interested in finding foreign girlfriends. In the example below, women describe their position:

Int.: They [white women] have money, you have nothing, maybe with school you didn't go far. Just somebody who can just sit at home and do nothing. Just like that.

Int.3: You don't know how to speak English. Whether, if you can meet the lady, nothing, you gonna say Iwa Iwa, she cannot hear you. Whatever, you you (Iwa Iwa) but it's nothing.

In addition to feelings of not being able to compare with what foreigners could offer and not being able to communicate or to be heard, the local women also feared that their husbands would beat them and that white women would shoot them. Reportedly, men had intimidated their wives in order to prevent them from contacting the white women, many of whom did not know about the local wives:

T: They say, the wives, they feel like afraid, because the husband they [lie to] the white lady, that 'I don't have a family'. So the wife feel afraid to go and say this is my husband, leave him alone. They feel like they can be beaten [by] their husbands.

K: By the husband?

T: Yeah. And somebody said: 'These white people, we fear them because we've heard that they have gun, they can shoot us'. This is what they say.

K: Ok. So they have heard that white people are carrying guns?

T: They say, yeah.

K: Also ladies or white men?

T: They say ladies. They say, if they go and talk, 'the husband can beat me, whether the white lady can shoot me.

Two interviewees brought up that these relationships contributed to the village's development in a very positive way. It was also noted that it was good for the extended family, who also benefits if someone has a white spouse. Below, an interviewee takes an example of a maize mill:

I can say that there are bad and good things. The good thing is that because of these foreigners are coming to this village, the whole village, I can say that, has developed. Because like our brother or our relatives, they are married to these foreigners. So they are maybe ... [gone] to England or America and only those people who are having like this system they are now well, they are doing good. Like they have built their good houses. They have like managed to run business. [...] Four years ago the whole village... we always [went] to Monkey Bay for our maize flour, because there was not a maize mill. And it's only two guys when they married from abroad, like foreigners, they knew that in our village we were lacking the maize mill and they built the maize mill.

The female interviewee above noted that only “two guys” had gone abroad to live with white women. According to her, local men typically just spent time with white women in order to get money. The young men interviewed by Chilembwe had claimed that the majority of tourist guides live abroad and are funded by foreign women. In my opinion, these claims are exaggerated and are part of the boasting and bragging characteristic of beach boy culture and competition among young men.¹¹³ My own perception lays somewhere in between. It appears that the phenomenon is common enough to keep these young men busy in trying to find women to take them abroad or to give them capital to start businesses.

Volunteer tourism

Chilembwe (2014) in his impact analysis summarizes the phenomenon of volunteer tourism as follows: “These days due to tourism, a lot of tour guides and young men from Chembe village are marrying white old ladies for the benefits they bring such as building them [young men/ tour guides]

¹¹³ Ibid.:79

houses and taking them abroad especially [to] Ireland because of the Irish clinic as mostly these elder women come as volunteers”.¹¹⁴ Chilembwe brings up an important group of actors in the field of tourism in poor host destinations: the volunteers.

A significant number of visitors in the village are international volunteers coming to spend different periods of time in Malawi. Volunteers do work for organisations, for example, in the above mentioned clinic. Another organization inviting volunteers is Chembe Village Project¹¹⁵ which is an umbrella organization for projects concerning health and care for orphans. It is marketing opportunities for tourists for ‘volun-tourism’ in the village. ‘Volun-tourism’ or ‘voluntourism’ is a concept in which foreign visitors work a period of time, starting from few hours, for an organisation and pay a certain amount of money to support the project financially.

According to one of the few studies done on the matter (Sin 2009), volunteers often have many simultaneous motivations. They are motivated by the desire for personal development and adventure, but also by altruism and the desire for the development of the host community. For many volunteers, the main motivation is their desire to travel, to experience and learn something new and different. To volunteer is an opportunity “to perform the desired identities of one who is well-travelled beyond conventional destinations, and who knows and understands the world”. Travel experiences are considered informal qualifications. They are proof of capability in one’s own social network. The volunteers want also to challenge themselves, to step into a new role and to discover a new undeveloped side of their personality. Thus, the main motivation for most volunteers appeared to be their desire to increase their cultural capital – which later would better their positions and opportunities in studies and work and most likely in their personal lives as well. In addition, in this particular study, some volunteers thought that participation in a voluntary program was the most convenient way to travel to a faraway destination. Only a very small minority of the interviewees named an altruistic ideal of contributing to the host community as their main motivation, even if it was often mentioned as one aspect of it (Sin 2009: 489 – 491).

¹¹⁴ Chilembwe 2014: 79

¹¹⁵ Chembe Village Community Project Centre. How to help. Online 13th Oct.2013. <http://www.chembeprojects.org/#/how-to-help/4536561920>

Philanthropy is common nowadays not only among the rich but also among ordinary people of more modest means. Along with the growth of international tourism this has led to a combination of the two, tourism and philanthropy. In the philanthropically oriented tourism of which the ‘voluntourism’ is one aspect, the central idea is ‘to give back’ to the host community to ensure that it benefits from tourism. Geographer Marina Novelli (2015) challenges the idea in her article ‘Are travel philanthropists doing more harm than good?’¹¹⁶ She writes:

The notion that one can “do good” by “giving back” while engaging in leisure or travel is an extremely attractive proposition. However, the reality is that we often fail miserably to fully understand our role as individuals travelling into unknown lands (Novelli 2015).

According to Novelli travel philanthropy is embedded in tourists’ ‘guilt’ about the socio-economic welfare of the people in host communities. Her study¹¹⁷ in 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, of which Malawi is one, has pointed out that travel philanthropy has the potential for sharing much with social entrepreneurship and social justice, but it can also repeat problems known in traditional philanthropy leading to dependency and other issues of sustainability. This was true also in Chembe. Even if tourists’ intentions were mostly good, their actions were not always considered as help, at least not in the long run. While volunteers did much appreciated work in the clinic or in other projects in the village, many of them were said to be involved in relationships with local young men, relationships which caused the break-ups of local families.

A taboo

Some interviewees were more open in speaking about sex, but as Francis Moto (2004) discusses in his article, using euphemisms about sexual intercourse and for example matters concerning HIV/AIDS has been typical in local conversation. This has been seen as a problem, since it has created

¹¹⁶ Novelli 2015: Are travel philanthropist doing more harm than good? Online 10th Dec.2015: <http://theconversation.com/are-travel-philanthropists-doing-more-harm-than-good-44629>

¹¹⁷ Novelli, M. 2016: Tourism and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Current issues and local realities

challenges in educating people about sexually transmitted diseases.¹¹⁸ It was also clear that many local people felt somewhat uncomfortable when speaking about sex and HIV/AIDS. When I asked about contraception, one uncommonly open and relatively well educated woman said that “*because you whites, you are clever, you use condoms, otherwise this village would be full of half-castes running around*”. Whereas another woman of the same age and level of education told about her own pregnancy that she was just having fun with someone “*and then that thing came inside of me*”, referring to a baby. Below, a local woman told me that the money received by local men from foreign women do not go to men’s local families but is spent in bars. She spoke about local men’s relationships with foreign women, and guessed that they do not share their “*own private time*” with these women:

Yeah, most of the men they are doing like that. Like going out with these foreigners, not for your own private time, but they are doing that only to have money.

In my data, the word ‘guiding’ was used to describe a certain type of relationship. I asked about local people’s possibilities for travel, since I was told about local men who had been in Europe. The interviewee chose his words carefully and paused for long periods in between words. In my interpretation, he was talking about a business deal between the parties in which an elderly woman provides for a young man in exchange for his sexual services. According to him, the work that these men were doing was called “guiding”:

Int.: ... They are guiding.

K: Guiding?

Int.: ... That was guiding. Yes.

K: Yeah, so is it...

Int.: Yeah. They... let’s say... I can ... let’s say if I can ... guide you nicely, yeah...

¹¹⁸ Moto 2004

K: So you think that...

Int.: If you can guess the way of my work ... then I ...

K: Ok, so th...

Int.: ... can keep on guiding you anywhere.

K: Ok, so they are making a kind of ... friendships with the customers and the customers are inviting them to abroad?

Int.: Yeah, yeah, like that, sure.

K: Does it happen often?

Int.: Eeh ... not often. Sometimes.

Also, a European woman who was dating a local young man confirmed that the relationships between young local men and elderly white women are common in the village. She also noted that the relationships themselves were taboo and that many men, especially those who were involved, did not want to talk about them. Also my own observations are in line with both of these notions. Only a few of the men working in tourism businesses mentioned these relationships, whereas about half of the activists and all women talked much about the phenomenon. There are several factors at work here. One is that culturally a man is expected to provide for his wife and children which, as a matter of fact, some of them did by using the money obtained from a foreign woman. Nevertheless, in local men's relationship with foreign women, the men were the receivers of money and other material benefits and the foreign woman possessed the economic power. This arrangement might have been one of the reasons for men not to talk about them. As pointed out by Pruitt and LaFont (1995), when the person who travels is a woman and her partner at a tourist destination is a man, both participants are renegotiating their usual gender roles. Unwillingness to be seen with elderly women can also be a strategy for being available if a better 'catch' happens to come around.

Yet another reason lies in the beach boy culture in which young men publicly display wealth and a relaxed lifestyle while the nature of the work done in order to achieve this affluence is strictly kept

secret.¹¹⁹ Peake (1989) writes about “the surprisingly numerous elderly women who visit Malindi, Kenya [site of his study] each year seeking for the companionship of young men.” He continues by pointing out that among beach boys, “[t]here is a business pride in being able to provide sexual fantasy for these women, but a contempt for their eagerness to pay generously for sexual escapism.” In Malindi, as in Chembe, beach boys avoided to being seen with elderly women but openly enjoyed the company of young female tourists “who are always publicly displayed”. He also points out the difference in wealth of these women: young women presumably do not directly pay for sex. In fact, ideally, the men should be seen as paying for their white girlfriends at bars and discos.¹²⁰ Chilembwe (2014) too confirms that from beach boys’ perspective, and from the economic point of view, elderly women are more interesting since young tourists do not have as much money to spend. He himself had not observed marriages between local guides and young foreigners,¹²¹ whereas I saw both types of couples, though I do not know how many of them actually shared a home.

3.2.2 Local women and foreign men

The situations which were easy to separate from other intimate relationships were when one-time sexual intercourse was paid for with money. The word *uhule* or prostitution was used to describe these situations. The participants in these cases were male foreign visitors and Malawian women, whereas, the word prostitution was used only two times when people were talking about the relationships between local men and foreign women. My data suggests that women who worked as prostitutes most likely were not from the village but from other areas. Their clients were mostly Malawian men: drivers, different kinds of small scale businessmen and tour guides. At some point, the chief had chased the prostitutes out of the village, and now they were present in smaller numbers. The peak in prostitution was in the late 1990s. One interviewee told that many of her friends who worked in the business during those days have now passed away because of HIV/AIDS. She also commented that the prostitution was part of the lodge owners’ business. Another interviewee told me that at least nowadays there are many lodges where the prostitutes are not allowed to hang around.

¹¹⁹ Peake, R. 1989: 210-213

¹²⁰ Ibid.: 210-213

¹²¹ Chilembwe, J. 2014: 79

Money was also offered to local women, who felt this to be very insulting. One woman, who had worked in a lodge told me how foreign men had approached her three times. One of the occasions happened during the work, others after work. The first was old man who had asked what could he offer to her if she ‘cared’ for him; the second was a man who had offered her money for sex and said that someone had told him that she was looking for a man, and the third man had flattered her and told how beautiful she was but then said that actually he had a girlfriend somewhere and he only wanted sex with her. The interviewee had said no to all of these suggestions but surmised that if it happened to her, it had most likely happen to other women too. One woman who also had worked at a lodge brought up that it was a very good job since sometimes visitors left good tips but they also gave informal gifts such as clothes and other useful things to people they had met as a client. Below, the female interviewee tells me that she has foreign friends and that they are all women and that she does not chat with men. I asked a follow-up question about friendships and the answer implied that men are making suggestions to some local women when they have the chance to do so:

K: The foreign women, they are happy to talk with you?

Int.: Yes. They are happy.

K: What about if a foreign man comes to talk to you and ask you questions, what would you do?

Int.: (laughing) Aah, I didn't do anything, just the others. Ask can you clean my room, I said yes I can clean your room.

As written above some said yes to suggestions and agreed to have sex for less than €10. The interviewee describes them as “*not intelligent*” and “*poor in mind*”:

That is normal, because they send these [local] boys to look for women, so that they can get money from them. So other women, they are not intelligent, they are poor in mind, if they hear about 5000 [€9,40], they think it's a lot of money. Which is nothing. If they hear they give you

5000, they say ok, call him, and go out with them. So they pay money. They get money. They fuck them. Which is not fair.

As shown above, the interviewee described that *they*, the tourists, send these local boys to look for girls with whom to have sex with. Later, she continued that *the boys* were the active party to persuade girls to agree:

Int.: I can say, men are men, but eh, they have their ways. [...] Those guys, like the tour guides, they make sure to get a girl, because they know that, behind that, they are going to get money. So they make sure to go here and there looking for ladies. [...]

K: So do you mean that local boys they... push local girls to sell sex?

Int.: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Then she confirmed that the initiators or at least strong supporters of the business were *these locals*. Thus, it appears that the girls are not looking for clients, but refuse or agree when someone persuades them:

I cannot recommend that these tourists are bad, because sometimes they are forced by these locals, because they know that if they do business they'll get money. But I can just recommend for them, that they are bad. I have to say these local they force them to get something, that is.

Chilembwe (2014) argues that there are about 20 local women working as prostitutes in Chembe.¹²² In my data, instead of actively seeking clients, these people were described as less educated local girls being pushed to sell sexual services to tourists by local tour guides who wanted to obtain a commission. Also Chilembwe points out the guides' role in this business. Tourists also offered money

¹²² Chilembwe 2014:80

directly to local women and some of them agreed. Both of these practices resulted in most local women avoiding encounters with foreign men.

Long term relationships or marriages between local women and foreign men were something that people did not have many experiences about. The interviewees did not see a problem if there was a couple about the same age “*which is normal in all races*”, as one interviewee put it. In the quote below, the abnormality was seen to be the possible age gap by a female interviewee:

I don't think there would be any problem provided if their ages are close to each other. Because there are a lot of families here in Malawi as a whole country. Some have already married. They end up in church having marriages, as celebrating weddings, so, it's a thing that happens. And maybe if that can be the type of marriage which can happen, then the girls can be involved. Because it has no problem.

One interviewee told me that a woman from Chembe had married ‘a big man’ and moved away with him because of money. She also knew of a young girl from another village who had married ‘a big man’ for the same reason. The term ‘big man’ normally referred to a powerful person. Based on the previous conversation, she was referring to an elderly white man. One respondent thought that there might have been two or three girls in relationship with foreign men. Another one thought there might be one young woman in the village with a foreign boyfriend. As seen in the foregoing quotes, sometimes when people gave the examples they implied that there were also situations in which the local party was female. However, typically people were not aware of these cases or they did not bring them up. When I asked why these relationships do not happen between local women and foreign men, one interviewee judged that when a local woman has a boyfriend or husband she is faithful to him and does not look around for other men, and one male interviewee reminded me that “*most Malawians know that the man is the one who has got the power and he is the boss in the family*”. By that, he was referring to traditional gender roles in which the rules are different for men and women.

Relationships between local women and foreign men were not seen as impossible, but something that does not yet exist in the village. One woman thought that maybe the difficulty of being the first to do it was still preventing these relationships from arising:

I think, yeah, women maybe they feel like to have some families or to find affairs like love affairs with whites, but it's not common. Nobody started it. Maybe, she feels that if I started it, what's gonna be the story towards me ... everybody looking at me to do this. Cause it's a thing that is not common... Then, if you can be the one to start, there are some women coming in. So, I don't know if we are afraid of the rumours, or you to be the founder, the begin of the thing. I don't know, but it's a thing that we are not used to.

I also talked with a woman who could have been 'the one to start' as was described in the previous example. She confirmed that people would indeed gossip about it, but even if she was willing to put up with the rumours, to proceed with a foreign man was not easy. She had another point of view on why local women did not have foreign boyfriends. According to her, local young men were actively preventing these relationships from happening by threatening the foreign man or telling him malevolent rumours about local women. In a quote below, she tells about her own experience:

K: But eh, but eh ..., local boys, they are looking for white girlfriends but they don't allow you to look for...?

Int.: Yeah yeah, this is what happen, yeah. For example, me, it happened to me. Yeah, I had a guy from abroad. He was interested, but people they were just sending emails that your girl is doing cheating. He said why I'm doing that. I was quiet waiting for him. But he said I've heard this, I've heard this, they saw you with a guy. But I say no, I don't know nothing about. Ooh, I know you were still going out with many guys. I said this relationship is not good my friend, it's tough, we better separate.

3.2.3 Same sex relationships

In Malawi, homosexual relationships are criminalised. Men can get sentences of up to 14 years in jail and women up to five years.¹²³ News and reports concerning ‘anti-gay laws’ or ‘sodomy laws’ have been frequent since 2009 when a male Malawian couple tried to get married with a traditional wedding ceremony and they were arrested. Malawi, however is a country which is very much dependent on the goodwill of the international donors. The laws against homosexuality have caused friction between donors and the government of Malawi. Due to its position between voters’ and donors’ demands, the government’s attitude towards the laws has been volatile. During her presidency, Joyce Banda was willing to repeal the laws, but according to her the legislators were not ready to do so. In November 2012, the legislators – the politicians – were willing to suspend the laws,¹²⁴ but a few days later this moratorium was repealed because of the Christian community’s protests.¹²⁵ At the beginning of 2014, UNAIDS, Malawi Law Society and several human rights groups challenged the ‘anti-homosexual laws’ as unconstitutional¹²⁶ and to the surprise of some, the Malawi High Court decided to review ‘the sodomy laws’.¹²⁷ At the moment, the laws still exist. The news has reported that due to expenses, the government cannot afford the legal review procedures, however, in the meantime people have not been reported as being arrested for any sexual acts with a same sex partner.¹²⁸

During my stay in the spring of 2013, the issue was known but brought up cautiously:

¹²³ http://www.humandignitytrust.org/uploaded/Map/Commonwealth_Country_Reports/Malawi.pdf

¹²⁴ <http://www.malawitoday.com/news/127276-homosexuality-malawi-suspends-laws-orders-police-not-arrest-gays>

¹²⁵ <http://jurist.org/paperchase/2014/01/malawi-high-court-to-review-laws-criminalizing-homosexuality.php>

¹²⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/21/us-malawi-gays-idUSBREA0K0H420140121>

¹²⁷ <http://www.nyasatimes.com/2013/11/05/malawi-high-court-to-review-sodomy-laws/>

¹²⁸ <http://76crimes.com/2014/07/14/its-official-no-more-malawi-arrests-under-anti-gay-laws/>. There are also rumours that even if the male couple was released, one of them got immediately married with a woman and the other man disappeared

But they also have bad, say, that I've just heard, but I don't have any evidence. I can say that they bring like, we call it ... married to like a man to a man, like this marriage, so I can say like maybe that one.

The informant told me that there was a group of Malawians trying to find out if there was homosexual behaviour going on. I am not sure whether she meant that the group was operating in the village or throughout Malawi. Either way, she judged these relationships to be very rare in the village since people were afraid to get arrested and sent to prison. Most often, they were mentioned as just another example in a list of unacceptable things deriving from tourism:

Int.: And other thing is with our culture beliefs in this village, you know that time was no, it was like a new thing a man to a man relation, maybe an old woman to marry a young child to be a boyfriend to be a girlfriend, so those are the kind of things which are affecting.

K: And that is something that didn't happen before tourism came to Cape Maclear?

Int.: No no no it didn't happen.

The existence of homosexual men in the home countries of female tourists was also seen to be an explanation for these women to seek local boyfriends:

In their country, men, they get mad, they don't get married like here. They are, like they are gays. So they [foreign women] don't get a man. So they are coming here. Yeah, we are talking like, eh, what I hear, like for other ladies. Cause many girls from outside, they are married to these young people. But they say, ooh, most of these white ladies, they come here looking for men because [...]. Yeah, they say these guys, they are like this in their country [...] that they don't want to get married. They say like that. This is what you hear people talking. Especially boys they talk like this. Yeah.

Only one person talked about homosexual behaviour without emphasising that he was talking about rumours or hearsay. The interviewee told me about older male visitors who buy sexual services from local young men. He estimated that this used to be more common earlier and did not happen often nowadays:

K: So, is it also happening to same sex, like men are offering money to boys?

Int.: Uhum, that was happening, but now I haven't, I don't hear that very often but when I was working in that area that was happening more. More often. There were some boys, who would go, boys from the community who would go with tourist men together.

K: Are they like elderly people or are they like the same age?

Int.: Most of them are like old, is like elderly yeah.

The word 'prostitution' was not mentioned by the respondents, but in the quote below, one of the respondents agreed when I suggested that this might be the case:

Int.: It's just like if it's true, we just hear rumours that these white people, when they come here, they fuck these local men, local guys, they pay them more money.

K: Aah, so like gay sex?

Int.: Yeah, they say, but yeah. I hear these stories.

K: Like one part of the prostitution?

Int.: So, that is.

3.2.4 Summary

Local use of the concept of marriage varied a lot, and therefore it was challenging to estimate what type of intimate relationship people were talking about and how common relationships between locals and foreigners actually were in Chembe. Typically, partners in relationships were a young local man and an elderly foreign woman. Interviewees emphasised especially the age gap between the partners of these relationships. The relationships were brought up also in relation to sponsorship for education. It was estimated that in the case of sponsorship there might have been also couples composed of a local woman and a foreign man, but nobody seemed to be sure about it.

From the local party's side, the motivation was said to be poverty. It was remarked that the problem apart from the age gap between parties was the fact that local men already had a local wife and family. Some of the local wives were said to be pragmatic about their husbands' relationships with white women when the husband still provided for the local family. Nevertheless, comments revealed that they did not seem to have other options. It came up that often men lied to white women that they were bachelors. However, sometimes white women knew about the local wife but despite that, wanted to continue the relationship with the man. Often local women felt themselves worthless and without any possibility to compete with white women. Men were also reported to have intimidated local women to prevent them contacting white women. It was brought up that some of the foreign women in these relationships had come to the village with their own spouses and therefore now two families were broken. It was also pointed out that from the extended family's and even from the community's point of view, economically these relationships had benefitted many. However, from other perspectives these relationships were considered to be harmful. They were also a taboo about which men who were working in tourism, especially male parties to these relationships, did not talk. In Malawi, people have a tendency to talk about sex and things related to it such as HIV/AIDS through euphemisms. The word 'guiding' was used for sexual services that young men offered to elderly women, and the words 'it' and 'that thing' when speaking about HIV/AIDS but also about unborn babies.

Intimate relationships between local women and foreign men were rare and appeared mostly in the context of prostitution. Professional prostitutes were said to come mostly from other villages, because prostitution was too shameful to undertake in one's own village. Clients were Malawian men who had received money from fishing or from tourism, and sometimes clients were tourists. Money was also offered to local girls and women to have sex with tourists. The active agents were said to be local tour guides who were pushing girls to sell sex and sometimes tourists who

approached girls and women directly and offered them money for sex. Romances between local women and foreign men were considered possible but something that had not yet happened. Local young men were also said to be actively preventing meaningful relationships between local women and foreign men. They were reported to spread rumours and spoil women's reputations, which in addition to their youth and beauty was considered to be important cultural capital. Traditional gender roles affected the behaviour of both men and women. Men were more or less allowed to do many things that were not approved of for women, for example, to go to bars or to be unfaithful to one's spouse. Apart from the fear of losing their husbands, local women were afraid that their husbands and/or white women could be violent towards them. Also the fact that local women could not or were too shy to speak English was hindered their possibilities to form a meaningful relationship with any foreigners.

Same sex relationships are forbidden in Malawi, and tourism was seen as contributing to the emergence of these relationships in Chembe. Typically people talked about homosexuality very cautiously and avoided mentioning that they would have any first-hand knowledge of it. However, it seemed apparent that foreign men had paid local male youths for sex. Homosexuality among men in Europe was also seen to be one reason why white women sought Malawian men as partners.

3.3 INFORMAL SUPPORT FOR LOCALS

Foreign residents and visitors were both considered to help locals. The foreign residents' support was brought up especially when speaking of different projects aimed at helping the community in general. A problem or an idea was sometimes presented by someone in the village to one of the foreign residents who then would send emails to others. The proposition was discussed and the foreign residents responded as a group. Typically those who spoke about these projects were activists who had worked in them and the foreign residents themselves. For example, there was a clinic offering affordable healthcare; one foreign resident had focused especially on empowering women through job and trade possibilities; after one of the lodges was burnt down, the entrepreneurs had bought a water pump and organized groups of people to work as firefighters; residents helped schools and/or individual children; some lodge owners offered the possibility for formal education for skilled and motivated workers; one foreign resident had addressed the fact that local people did not have clean drinking water and organized a filtering system and public taps for people to use. The filtered water

had made a significant decrease in deaths and illnesses caused by diarrhoea and other intestinal diseases. One foreign resident was said to offer loans for driver's licences with a long repayment period. With the loan, some locals had created a livelihood as taxi drivers.

Generally speaking, in the village foreign visitors, including volunteers, were considered to be a very important part of local life. One interviewee estimated that "*most [tourists] come here to help*". Indeed, that is what many of them apparently do. In Chembe, visitors who are staying perhaps only a couple of nights, after a casual conversation with a local person are committed to pay somebody's education for many years. Assistance for someone's education was often based on informal personal contact between participants whereas help for HIV/AIDS patients and orphans was directed through different organizations in the form of economic help and/or volunteer work. Interviewees normally did not make a separation between volunteers and other tourists, therefore when talking about help for locals, volunteers were not especially mentioned by that name. Sometimes interviewees' answers implied that a respondent was talking about volunteers' input and in those cases people talked generally about 'help' and did not specify what kind of help they were talking about.

In this section, I discuss what was brought up in my data concerning begging and sponsorship for education. I also take a look at a revealing example of significance of actors' habitus in the struggle by local association members to help the community. In my thesis, I have excluded sponsorship and help directed through organizations, but in this case the association had not yet found a formal structure. These activists were walking along the beach and forging personal contacts with tourists.

3.3.1 Begging

'Malawi is not a cheap country at all', as one foreign resident remarked. Still, one can see Europeans eating and having drinks at restaurants whether they are visitors or residents. They are staying in lodges or living in houses with technology that is still very rare in villagers' households. The Europeans have cars, when for most locals a driver's licence is not a realistic possibility. It is no wonder then that many locals took it for granted that we have money to spare. Provocatively, but honestly, I told one interviewee that sometimes I felt that local people saw me as a dollar bill. The

respondent held a very demanding position in his work, so one could have assumed that he was relatively wealthy. However, I was given an illustrating comparison:

How I explain, this. [...] Sometimes because of the different culture, how people, how tourists eat, how they... I mean lifestyle, I can say a lifestyle of particular tourists. People see their lifestyles. For example, in my family, I can have a budget of 500 kwachas per day [0,90 € per day for the family] that means... it includes breakfast, lunch and dinner, you see. So when people see European, they go to the lodges, they pay maybe 3500 for one meal. So those kinds of things also. Differences. And also because our inborn culture, colour, colour also affects. That's how I can explain. When there's a European, people think there's money (17 Activist M20-40).

In Chembe as in elsewhere in Malawi, some local people approach foreigners and ask for money. Most of them are children, but also adults do it. In towns, many of them are disabled people who beg while sitting in front of the shops, but many adults who ask money are able-bodied and do not appear to be the most deprived. In Chembe, I was told that only men ask support from foreigners. Nevertheless, I was personally asked for money by both a man and a woman. They asked me directly but behaved politely and explained their need. I interpreted that some other people, of which one was a woman, were communicating in very subtle manner about their needs and testing their possibilities to get support from me. Local women in general have less contacts with foreigners and therefore they also have less opportunities to communicate their needs and hopes. In Chembe, the adults who asked money from me, were behaving discreet and tried to explain their situation, whereas the adults who approached me and my family members in Zomba simply asked if we could give them, for example, our t-shirts, phones or bags. Sometimes they just said 'give me money' the same way children did. One time when I refused to give money to a man in his forties who seemed middle-class, he told me to go home since, in his opinion, I was useless in his country. In the university town Zomba especially some young people were openly hostile towards whites. However, their feelings and actions were not so heated that we would have felt directly and personally threatened by them. Some other locals reacted against this kind of hostility towards whites.

One interviewee described how begging used to be much more common also in Chembe: “I can say at first we were relying on begging. When you saw the European passing by, you had to say: *“Hey, can you give me money? Give me money!”*. He continued to criticise some locals’ attitudes. According to him, some locals did not want to work but instead if there was a project in the village they expected to get something out of it without working themselves. *“Begging is a great disease that we are meeting all the time”*, he continued. Some interviewees viewed begging as bad for the locals themselves because in the hope of quick and easy money, some people discarded their meagre but more secure income from another possible livelihood. On the other hand, begging locals made some tourists feel uncomfortable, and it was clear that people in the village thought – and many of them had been taught by someone in the tourism business – that it is very important that tourists are satisfied and not disturbed. Therefore, nowadays local people of Chembe are taught not to beg and in some of the lodges, clients were advised not to give anything if someone is begging.

In the quote below, a well-educated local man who was also critical about some other locals’ behaviour describes dependency on donors which he felt was harmful for the community:

On the other hand, I think there is this dependability of, let’s say, donors from other lands. Let’s say, if somebody comes, maybe they are working in a village, you know, they meet the kids saying: give me pen, give me this give me this, give me this, yeah. In the next day, even if they [the kids] have maybe their own source of the money, they can’t depend on their own, so [they are] waiting the tourist to pass here and [they] do the same thing again. [...] They are going with the same kind of asking not making [attitude] (21 Activist M20-40).

Despite many efforts from some adults in the community, especially children were actively approaching tourists with several strategies for getting something from them. The simplest one and the first that they learned was to run towards tourists with outstretched arm begging: *“Give me money! Give me my money!”*. The technique to pose in pictures and later ask for money was also in use. Children also showed papers with English written explanations for the need of money. The special need for the money could be, for example, to participate in a football tournament in another village.

The fourth technique was the local children's band. The children themselves had built instruments using cans and boxes and then performed parts of well-known songs for tourists. Playing in the band could be considered working rather than begging, but the problem was that the band was playing at the beach also during school hours. My interviewees had differing opinions about the band and some of them also reflected tourists' reactions. An employee of one lodge estimated that the visitors normally liked to experience something different and welcomed the band, but an employee of another lodge judged that the band in the long run might be harmful to these children, since they are skipping classes for it:

K: I've seen one band of the boys and they are playing with canisters and such. [...] What do you think about this? Is it ok?

Int.: That's also not fair, not fair, but because, to them it's their own income generation, but I don't know if that's proper, because some of them, they fail to go to school. So they always attend to the band instead of attending to classes. So I think that's also not good. Sure. [...]

K: What about travellers, have they asked about this thing, that why are these kids here and not at school?

Int.: No, they just feel free, because some of them normally like the local band. So they normally just watch it and dance, sure, not asking. (4 A skilled job / managerial duties M 20-40)

Many local interviewees were expecting more involvement from the visitors. A foreigner should at least ask why these children are at the beach during the school day. If someone wants to help a child who is asking for money, s/he should find out about the child's situation, not just give money. The reason for this was the same as described before: once one child gets even little money, she or he gets excited and runs to tell other children, thus, not only one but perhaps a few children skip their classes in the hope of getting something from tourists. One interviewee warned me laughing, that if I give even a pen to a child, next time "when you walk along the road, you gonna see a hundred children following you".

Women who had moved to Chembe from another village and now lived outside the tourist area estimated that tourism “*brings good things for the citizens of Cape Maclear but nothing for us*”. They also mentioned that they do not beg from tourists in order to avoid rumours being spread about them in the village. Because they did not live in the tourist area in the village and they were not originally locals but from elsewhere in Malawi, these women assumed that it would not be acceptable for them to seek benefits from tourism. My interpreter emphasized many times during the discussion, “*they themselves think so, no one has told them*”, in other words according to her (who was originally from the village), these women excluded themselves from the opportunities that they thought tourists offered to others in the village. A practical circumstance indeed was that they lived in an area further from lodges, which had some effect on their position. However, the women pointed out a more important reason: they did not consider themselves to be ‘citizens of Cape Maclear’ even if they had lived there for many years. Their families had moved to Cape Maclear for fishing, but only the women and their children remained since their parents and husbands had already passed away. They were members of a different ethnic group than the majority of people in the village and they were marginalized already because they were women. These women ‘just knew’ that they were not participants of the game in the field of tourism in Chembe. They did not need to be forbidden by anyone since they had already internalized the limitations on their behaviour. In Bourdieu’s words: “The habitus as the feel of the game is the social game embodied and turned into a second nature” (Bourdieu 1990:63).

3.3.2 Sponsorship for education

The formal education system in Malawi still follows the British curriculum. It has a structure of eight years of primary-, four years of secondary- and four years of university level education. Normally, children start primary school when they are six and finish it when they are 13 years old. Mostly due to late and multiple entries as well as many repetitions, the age of primary school pupils varies from

four years at standard/grade one to 18 years at standard/grade eight.¹²⁹ There are secondary schools of three different kinds. The formal- or conventional secondary schools are for those who are selected by the government on the basis of their success in national ‘Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations’. In addition to these, there are the Day Community Secondary Schools and the Private Schools. Tertiary education lasts from one to five years depending on student’s choices. One can choose between universities, technical and vocational institutions and teacher training (The Educational System of Malawi, World Bank Working Paper No.182, 2010: 13; Education Fact Sheet, SACMEQ).

Since the first missionary schools, foreigners have continued to have an interest in locals’ education. One interviewee described her family’s experiences from the late sixties before the free primary education. Her parents went to sell fish or sometimes they sold maize that was meant to be used by the family just to pay her school fees. Nevertheless, the fees of the secondary school were higher and the family could not afford them. The solution was found through someone who knew someone from abroad:

Fortunately enough, one person had a friend abroad. That woman, that couple, had not children. Then they say they have to help me. Those were the ones who paid my school fees. From form 1 to form 4. [...] That’s why I say that’s the greatest part of foreigners. Because I’m the example. (11 A skilled job / managerial duties F 40+)

The primary school standards/grades one through eight have been free for children since 1994. However, implementing the free primary school policy has been a challenging task, and the government was not fully prepared for it. Together with steep population growth, it led to a drastic shortage of qualified teachers as well as classrooms. One of my informants, a teacher herself, confirmed that when she worked at a primary school, she had a class of 400 children which made teaching very difficult if not impossible. In contemporary public discussion, there have been claims

¹²⁹ The secondary level contains two cycles; a junior - and a senior cycle, with nationally held examinations after each of them. After two years of study, a student must pass the Malawi Junior Certificate Examination (JCE) and after the next two years the final exam; the Malawi School Certificate of Education Examination (MSCE).

that government is considering re-establishing fees for primary school but according to Ministry of Education, the government has only discussed a raise in tuition fees at the secondary level.¹³⁰ Though at the moment there are no actual school fees for primary level, one needs to be able to buy a uniform and pay for some other things like notebooks or exams. The secondary- and tertiary levels can be very costly, and as estimated by my interviewees, are out of the reach of most local people if they do not have any outside assistance. Even those who have a job, for example, in a lodge, might not earn enough to pay for their children's education. The salary is low and there might be many children in the family.

K: Is this like eh, is it happening a lot that foreigners help local people to get to school?

Int.: Yes, it's happening a lot. You can see, most of the parents they don't work and then they hold like small small small businesses, which they can ... afford. Like to me, the time I started [to study], I needed like not less than 800 000 kwachas¹³¹ which my parents couldn't afford. Meeting this gentleman... is the one who helped me a lot (2 A skilled job/managerial duties M20 – 40).

For a question about how common it was that a foreigner paid school fees for local youths, people answered, for example: “most of those educated”, “many”, “not less than 100 [people]” or “maybe 70%”.

That's like, now, others are lucky. Because there are tourists. Most of you white people who come and find this poor children who didn't finish their education, they give them school fees. They say, you go back to school, I pay your school fees. So others they do. Most of them, I can tell they are paid by you white people. (3 Worker F20 – 40)

¹³⁰ Kalonde, L. 2015 No fees in primary schools. All Africa. Online Nov.30th 2015. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201510071756.html>

¹³¹ Equivalent to about €1300 in 2013.

Most of my interviewees had completed at least part of secondary school. If not, they had learned English from contact with foreigners. These two paths for proceeding in one's life – education and associating with foreigners – seemed to intermingle and play a central role in the field of tourism in Chembe. In many cases, people described locals as actively seeking supporters. Some people estimated that foreigners' support for locals might cause jealousy in the community as any other form of good fortune would do. In the quote below, the interviewee does not see this as a problem. He describes finding a sponsor for one's education as 'a play' and 'a system'. He also remarks that the community monitors if someone is trying to collect money for school from more than one supporter:

K: Do you think that that kind of support, does it cause any conflicts between the villagers? If some family gets money from abroad, does it, eh, how others react?

Int.: Umm, that's normal. It's more like a play to them to find like somebody to support them, but I haven't seen like much like, eh, eh, like arguments between those getting support from the foreigners. So, to them it's just like the play. They think that one other day I'll get mine, and then somebody who starts to support me. Because like everyday people are still coming. There's more and more, there's more and more yea, coming. So it's not like... and the good thing is like, eh, those who's got the support already, they are known, you know them already, so you're not allowed to have second person helping the very same person. I see the system, but it's going well. (2 A skilled job / managerial duties M20 – 40)

How does it happen?

There appeared to be several ways in which casual contacts sometimes led a foreigner to pay for education for a local young person. One of them came up earlier in the section on intimate relationships: schooling was offered in exchange for a relationship. As in the example below, it was also brought up several times that tourists asked locals if they could visit their homes. The offer to support a child or a youth was often made during these visits. As a local man put it, "*then you can automatically think I'm supporting her or him*". Below is an example of a woman whose secondary level schooling was paid by a visitor:

K: So how did you meet this person?

Int.: I met him in one of the lodges.

K: And were you working at the lodge?

Int.: Yes, yes. I was working in the beach, then I meet him, he asked me what is your name, I told him Celia, Ok, I'm called John. Can I go to your home to see your home? I said yes. Then he came here and we discussed. So he just said I love you. Because, when I go to our, to my, country, I can assist for your scholarship. Yes.

K: And he did?

Int.: Yes, he did from one until four [secondary school forms].

[...]

K: Did you say, that he said, that I love you?

Int.: Yes.

K: So did you have a relationship with him?

Int.: No he just, yes, he just, he means it's like a friendship.

K: Ok, so you didn't have a relationship?

Int.: No, it's a friendship.

K: Ok. Did you ever meet him after that one meeting?

Int.: No.

(6 Worker F20 – 40)

A local man described a variety of other ways how a supporter and a youth were connected in the first place. One of them was a situation in which a foreigner visited a local school. These visits were organized by different organizations but also happened informally:

Then if other white people come to school, because they do a lot to go to school to visit. If the head teacher has the names of the students who are orphans, if they do, they put them to say we have these orphans who need some support, you see. (15 A skilled job/managerial duties M20 – 40)

With the help of an interpreter, a local woman explained that sometimes a tourist asks from locals if they know someone who needs a sponsor for schooling:

T: She say, [...] like you are here, like tourists, you have just come here but you want to help a student. So you ask me, do you know anybody who is failing to go to school just because of school fees but she's dedicated. I have to say, yeah, I know one, and I have to go to the parents and ask about [her]. [...] I have to tell you that [we] have found one. And you go there. From there you have to go to meet the like the schoolteacher, and you have to start your information and then you are connected. (8A Group 3F all ages, housewives with some education, translated)

In the quote below, a tourist and a local youth have a casual conversation started by a local male and the tourist offers a possibility directly to the youth:

K: So it happens through... So, people are just asking about each other?

T: But others they just meet like I'm moving somewhere I can just meet like a tourist. Hi I'm George! How are you? What do you do? I'm doing this this. Do you feel go back to school? I say, yeah, I feel like that. You say ok, you have to [meet] me at the lodge tomorrow. If I go there to meet you, then you have to tell me to find the school where I can be schooling. Then you start to help me. It's like [that], yeah (3 Worker F 20 – 40).

As described earlier, except for small children, female youths or women did not normally ask for help or approach foreigners for any reasons. Below, the interviewee told that she heard how relatively well

educated men speak to foreigners in order to get the possibility to continue their studies to the highest level of education (tertiary) and she wished that she could do the same. In a discreet way she actually did so when she spoke with me, as did some of the male interviewees, but no other woman did:

Eh, of course they went to school, but they don't go far because of other problems. So if we talk, if we meet, if we chat, I hear men often say: I would like... had it been that I come from a rich country... I would go and go ahead with education or I would go to college. Only those who went far with their education they say so. And even I myself, of course, I did form four [of secondary school] but it is not enough for me. I do sometimes think, had that be that I would go far, I would go to college and do something that my friends have done, yeah (3 Worker F 20 – 40).

Many people estimated that overall there is a big difference in how the presence of foreign people in the village is influencing the lives of local boys and the lives of local girls. The reason for this is quite simple: even if the culture is changing, as was described earlier, most of the girls 'stay at home', whereas boys have more freedom to move around the village. Here again "nothing to do" refers to something that would bring in money such as fishing or tour guiding:

Yes there is a difference because most of the girls stay at home. Normally, they are at home or doing other activities at home. Yeah, but boys always hang around doing lots of different things at the village. So tourists they need to supports the girls because they have nothing to do, they don't go fishing they don't do this tour guiding, they are always at home (16 Activist M20 – 40).

Intermediaries

In my perception, when a relationship was the condition for a sponsorship for education, the deal was made between foreign female volunteers or residents and local male youths, whereas a donor and a recipient typically only met once when the sponsor was a short time visitor. Some of the donations were coming from people living in Europe or in US who did not have any personal contact with the

recipient. They communicated through ‘middlemen and middle-women’. Most often the people in the middle were representatives of societies, churches, trusts, projects or organizations. Residents could operate locally more or less without intermediaries whereas they sometimes took the role of one for visitors. Sometimes the tourists themselves were the intermediaries. When they went back home and showed pictures and told stories of the people that they had met, their friends could make the decision to help someone.

As an example of the costs of such sponsorship, in 2013 I looked at the prices advertised by organizations looking for donors. By paying from approx. USD 330 to 1200 (€265 to 960) per year, one can support the schooling of a local young person. The difference in price is explained by the different types of schools in question. Both projects are founded by foreign residents and are examples of how these residents act as intermediaries between donors and local children and youth. Who chooses, in what kind of process and on what grounds, which children get a sponsor varied greatly. One interviewee told that she found a sponsor by writing a letter to a certain organization. In the letter, she had explained why she would be the right person to be supported. Reportedly tourists were often told that the head teacher is the one who knows to whom money should be given. The tourists also asked from lodges how they could help the village. Therefore, contact with any foreigner was considered as having the potential to help in finding sponsor.

When the initial contact and the agreement about sponsorship had been made, for a visitor the next step was to decide how and to whom s/he would send the money. Many local people do not have a bank account of their own, nor do they have skills to use a computer, therefore an intermediary was needed:

What they normally do is like this, you know. [...] If you go and send emails to each other. So maybe they do go through somebody who's got an address or a bank account, you see. [...] Then you say do you have a bank account, maybe they say my uncle has a bank account, these are the details, I'll send you the details. Then you can just send your cash through me, maybe you can just send it through Western Union, then I can go and get the money from Western Union without any problem. You see, there's no problem on that (15 A skilled job/managerial duties M20 – 40).

A local woman whose education had been paid by foreigners in the early days of an independent Malawi described a situation that recurred a few times in the data. If the intermediary dies, the money which probably continues coming at least for some time might never find the right recipient:

Int.: After passing my examination, I went to college for two years.

K: They still continued your supporting?

Int.: Yeah, from that time... because those people, the funding goes through this person, then for that time s/he died, we lost communication.

K: Ok, they never came here to visit you?

Int.: Nooo. That's why those girls outside, they say if you want to help, don't go through someone. That help should go direct to...

K: ...the school?

Int.: ...the person or to the school.

K: Ok. Yeah.

Int.: Because some people they like to divert.

K: Uhum, so it might disappear in the middle? Ok.

Int.: Uhmm (knods) (11 A skilled job/managerial duties F 40+).

Use and misuse of donated money

Those who used the money for what it was meant benefitted also the others in the village. A man, who now held a good position in a lodge told me his story. Some foreigners had wanted to help the village somehow. The lodge owner had given this man's name to these visitors and he was invited to meet them briefly:

Int.: Yeah, we met just once and it was around six p.m. and they left early in the morning. And since then they never come back. But after my studies they were happy to set up a project sending people to different universities.

K: So they have continued because you did your studies successfully?

Int.: Yes (laughs) (4 A skilled job/managerial duties M20 – 40).

When the donated money was not used by the recipient for school, the reason might have been the basic needs of the family:

K: What do you think, where the money goes if it doesn't go to education?

Int.: Some of them just eh, drink around. Just have fun with the money and some of them, they are like coming from poor families, they feel that better to use the money for food, clothes to earn their living instead of using it for school. Cause even if they can be at school their home is still lacking many things since they are poor. So they just ask the money for the reason of school but at the end because there are lots of problem that they are facing in the family, they just put the money to the primary issues, [rather] than to go to school. And those who are quite wealth, good families, like somehow quite poor but somehow they still can earn their living, then they force themselves that better you go to school to get better, good future. That [their poverty] go away after they are educated (7 A skilled job/managerial duties F20 – 40).

There was a difference in how young men and women used their opportunities. In the example below, the interviewee describes how girls used the opportunity given to them to study whereas boys might waste it. Variations on this were repeated in many interviews:

Int.: Mostly boys are asking the sponsors ooh, I ran out of money, ooh my pencils finished, ooh I need to get transport back home. While the girls they are quiet always, they accept what they have (laughs).

K. And why is that? What would you say?

Int.: I would say that just because the habit that boys need money because maybe drinking or doing other things, yeah.

K: But girls are actually doing the thing they are expected to do?

Int.: Yes (16 Activist M20 – 40).

Why education?

I asked from my interviewees how education affects one's possibilities in the village. One woman explained to me that people in Malawi are farmers and if not that, they are fishermen. Both occupations are seasonable and depend on the weather. "*When there are fish, then we can do what we want*", she said, "*... but if not, there is a big problem*". Apart from the weather, the problem with farming was that to plant maize, a person should first have money for seeds and for fertilizers. If they have that much, they are still dependent on the rains. Apparently in Chembe there was not an irrigation system of any kind. Without or with too little rain, or when it is windy and men cannot go fishing, there is no food. Thus, people need other forms of income. Apart from fishing and farming there were tourism-related jobs offered by foreigners and jobs related to foreign organisations. Therefore education improved one's position in the labour market and in addition to a salary, a job might offer an opportunity to proceed further in one's studies and to better ones position in the labour market. As written earlier, from the employers' point of view, there was a problem with a lack of educated workforce.

Education has a significant influence on people's lives in general. More education means more educated decision-making in different situations, for example, in buying and selling things, when one is renting a land or when a woman is pregnant. Uneducated people do not necessarily know their rights and get easily deceived to sign papers they do not fully understand. My interviewees valued education for many reasons: 'to find a job' was one of the reasons, but also the knowledge itself was mentioned in different ways. A young local woman was of the opinion that, because of her education, she knew better what was good for her. She had finished secondary school but could not afford to

continue further. In the quote below, we are talking about on what basis she refused money for sex while others agreed to take these offers. The word ‘use’ here refers to her earlier comment about local boys ‘using’ local girls by pushing them to have sex for money with tourists:

Int.: Because, I can say I know this because I’ve got knowledge, I went to school. I know many things. But I don’t know for them who didn’t go to school, if they have knowledge of seeing this is bad for them, yeah.

K: So they might be quite easy to use?

Int.: Yeah, many of them, they are used, many of them they are used.

3.3.3 Local people doing community work

In some cases, to work with tourists was seen as a possibility to generate income for oneself but also to benefit the local community. Below is a quote from an educated local person who was able to work as a middleman between the tourists and locals. The organization he was working for was founded by a foreign resident:

As I explained already it was not so much tourism industry but the community work. And to tell the truth much of the money comes from tourists. So I normally work with the tourists to keep things running. Because it’s little that I normally get locally. But with the tourism many things are happening. Part of the tourism side as I said is the challenges that are there at the beach. When, they come the contribution they make goes to the village. So that’s how I’m in between. So I normally get associated with tourism to get help for the community (21 Activist M20 – 40).

An interviewee in the quote below points out the difference between his and white volunteers’ possibilities to operate in an organization that relies on support from foreigners. He is a well-educated local man with a good position in an organization. Nevertheless, he had experienced that he is not

trusted by potential donors because of the colour of his skin and because of different lifestyles between locals and foreigners:

Int.: And also even organisations, when they want to support an organisation and there's a European [person], they support with confidence. You can see that.

K: What do you mean they support with confidence?

Int.: Confidence, they feel like when there's a European within the community, within the project, that means things will go on well. That's what I'm saying, those procedures. I can say even in, how things are organised. So the first reason I can say is one; lifestyle, where we're coming from. And the colour, that's what people see" (17 Activist M20 – 40).

On the non-touristic side of the village, there was an originally local association which helped half-orphan children to get things like pencils and paper or school uniforms. They sold a variety of products made from recycled paper with techniques learned in a workshop which was organized by a foreign organization. In this case, the children were known to these activists and they participate making the products after school. The activists wanted to use the same approach as the others who worked with foreign organizations: to work with tourists in order to help the community. However, they had experienced that they were not heard nor respected by foreigners. They thought that this was because of their skin colour, because they were not educated and because they speak English differently than whites. They described how they had tried to present the idea of community work to foreigners for some time already, but they had not been heard nor taken seriously. They had also written proposals to the government in order to get some basic funding for their work. They did not get anything, while at the same time other organizations which had foreigners to help them got the government's support. The interviewees said that it would have helped if there were an umbrella organization building bridges between local associations such as theirs and potential supporters and donors. The interviewees emphasized that they do not want to ask just for money, but they had much to offer in forms of local knowledge and cultural understanding. The problem was how to get in touch with foreign people in the first place and how to make them listen and understand what they are trying to say.

Several things were hindering their possibilities to help their community. The first factor, as they said, was the language itself. The English spoken by most of the villagers was not the same as the English spoken by those for whom it was a mother tongue. It is also different from the English spoken by Europeans, even if they were native speakers of languages other than English. For these activists, the most difficult skill to handle appeared to be the official written English needed in order to write applications, proposals, registrations and such. The second significant factor was general lack of trust of local people. As written before, in the village both foreigners and locals trusted foreigners more than locals. According to the activists, it seemed that in foreigners' opinions, originally local people could not do anything by themselves, and in order to be trusted they needed a white person to explain to other whites what they were doing. Thirdly, these interviewees did not have the right kind of social networks to help them to go forward with their community work. All three factors were intermingled and reinforced each other: These men did not have right kind of social networks because they were uneducated, poor locals who spoke broken English and therefore they were not understood or considered trustworthy by whites and wealthier people.

As pointed out, language is one aspect of habitus which excludes these local men from the networks in which decisions are made and people or organisations are considered trustworthy. Inequalities in linguistic competence are present in the daily interactions among people in Chembe. When an uneducated local person who speaks 'broken' English encounters a foreign person or even an official of his or her own administration, the situation could be described as follows: "It is not two persons who speak to each other but, through them, the colonial history in its entirety, or the whole history of the economic, political, and cultural subjugation of blacks [...]".¹³² Bourdieu (1977) noted already in his book 'Outline of a Theory of Practice' how language is one of the aspects that forms a person's habitus. He argued that separation between linguistics and sociology was artificial and unfortunate, since language and even dialect has much to do with an individual's habitus and therefore with his or her position and capital in the fields of the social world. He described a typical situation in which a local person learned the language of the colonizer: "In this case the dominated speaks a broken language [...] and his linguistic capital is more or less completely devalued, be it in school, at work,

¹³² Bourdieu 1977: 46 – 47. In this quote, Bourdieu was talking about encounters between the French and Algerians and African Americans and powerful white Americans.

or in social encounters.” The devaluation of local languages and replacing them by English which started during the colonial period has had a great impact on the lives of local people in many social fields in Malawi. In addition to this, English is widely used in international tourism and therefore a person without skills in English lacks one of the most important types of capital in all tourism-related interactions in Chembe.

3.3.4 Summary

Foreign residents helped the community typically with projects such as providing a filtering system to clean water from the lake, offering affordable health care in the clinic, collecting money for teachers and so forth. The most appreciated form of help from visitors was financial support for children to go through secondary school and sometimes graduate from a university. Foreign visitors typically sent money to families or schools to pay for pupil’s fees and other costs. Often, they operated through intermediaries. Intermediaries were often local people who had bank accounts and email addresses. Foreign residents had founded trustees and aid organizations and therefore they also played the roles of intermediaries between other foreign people and those who needed help in the village. Sponsorship for education was also provided as a part of a transactional sexual relationship. The young people of the village were actively seeking foreign sponsors. The most active were young men. It was also thought that many foreign visitors came to the village to help.

There were a variety of ways in which the contact between a recipient and a donor was formed. The visitors asked from people in lodges how they could help the locals. They were advised to contact the headmaster in the school or to provide support via some of the organizations working in the village. Often the visitors found families to help via local intermediaries. It was also typical that the donor and the recipient found each other through casual conversations. Often visitors asked directly about education which gave the locals the possibility to explain that they could not afford it without help. In other cases, local young persons who associated with foreigners gave them tactful hints, implying what kind of help would be welcome. From these kinds of conversations had started many contacts that had continued for years and helped many young people to achieve secondary or even tertiary level education.

There was a big difference in how the presence of foreign people was affected the lives of local boys compared to local girls. Even if the culture was changing, most girls stayed at home, whereas boys had more freedom to hang around the village. At home, girls did not have opportunities

to find money like boys did when they moved around the village and communicated with people. Many boys and young men met more foreign people than did girls and young women. Because of this, they improved their English skills and received more opportunities to find sponsors to help them. When given an opportunity to study, girls most likely used it, whereas boys sometimes wasted it. Often the misuse of donated money was due to primary needs such as food or medicine, but sometimes boys just wasted the money by drinking beer and smoking *chamba*. For this reason, some visitors chose to support primarily girls.

Many local people were involved in community work that somehow involved tourists. Foreign residents and local activists served as middlemen between tourists and those who needed the help most. Most of the aid organisations had been founded by foreigners and the local activists could most beneficially work through them. When some activists tried to work on their own, they felt that government and organizations did not trust them, but rather trusted projects organized by whites. One reason for this, they estimated, was the broken English they spoke. They thought that they were not heard or understood by foreigners, whom they had to approach in order to get money. In addition, they did not have right kind of networks since their networks consisted mostly of other poor people did not help them raise money. Thus, in order to actively help a poor community from the inside was more difficult than to organize help as an outsider.

4 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Factors influencing agency in the social field of tourism

In the more regulated tourism-related interactions, the participants' socio-economic position, skin colour, level of education, gender and English skills appeared to be the most important determinants of their positions in the field and thus, of their possibilities to gain something from 'the game'. Relatively wealthy and educated white people were in powerful positions. Local educated people who were involved in tourism had succeeded in their personal pursuits first of all by being able to make a basic living but also to make improvements in their homes etc. They appeared to be innovative and had somewhat positive visions about their future. Most of these people had managed to get secondary or tertiary education with the assistance of foreigners. In terms of the significance of gender in more regulated interactions, girls got some special attention from foreigners to compensate their otherwise fewer opportunities to find a livelihood in the village. In addition, some foreigners focused on supporting local adult women. English skills played a significant role in people's possibilities to operate in the tourism field of Chembe since it was the working language of tourism and official language of Malawi. Accordingly, broken English hindered people's possibilities to fully operate in the field.

When it came to informal interactions in Chembe, the above-mentioned determinants were challenged in some respects especially by local children and the so-called 'beach boys', that is, male youths and young men operating more or less unofficially with tourists in order to benefit from them in one way or another. They had been in school for a short time or not at all, their limited English skills were based mostly on earlier contacts with foreigners, and they came from poor families. Nevertheless, the actors in these groups successfully improvised and created several strategies for approaching tourists in order to gain something from these contacts. Even if in the regulated interactions with tourists the beach boys' actions tended to be constrained by foreign residents, the community, and even state officials, they appeared to play a central role when it came to informal, unregulated contacts with

foreigners. Also, visitors including volunteers were active players in the informal interactions. In my data, one often mentioned group of actors was elderly foreign women. These women possessed a powerful position in the more regulated tourism-related interactions because of their wealth and European education. Based on the fact that they were repeatedly mentioned as having intimate relationships with local young men, they appeared to be active players also in the informal side of the touristic field of Chembe. Many of these elderly foreign women who were involved in these relationships with local young men were said to be volunteers who stayed longer periods of time in the village. Some interviewees also implied that foreign female residents had relationships with young local men. In both of these cases, intimate relationships were considered to represent exchanges for money and a European life style. It also came up repeatedly that foreign women paid for local male youths' education in exchange for a relationship. People assumed that there have also been relationships in which the local party was a woman and the foreign party was a man but assumed that these were rare.

Gender and English skills were the main factors influencing local peoples' possibilities to gain benefits from informal tourism-related interaction in Chembe. As pointed out, in addition to children, those who were active local players in the field were poor, black, uneducated men whereas poor, black, uneducated women were almost completely missing from the field and participated to "the game" only through these men, of whom many were their husbands and sons. Looking at the tourism field as a whole, the factors which played a central role in the regulated interactions (the participants' socio-economic position, skin colour, level of education, gender and English skills) appeared to be pretty much the same in informal interaction. The position of local uneducated women was the least desirable in the field of tourism. In addition to above mentioned factors, some local men actively prevented local women from forming contacts with foreigners except in cases of prostitution from which the men themselves wanted to profit. For housewives and uneducated women in general, the situation on the informal side of the tourism field was even more challenging than on the formal side of it. Those women who worked in the tourism sector had some informal interaction and even friendships with foreign visitors. This informal interaction was desirable because it held the possibility to find a sponsor for education or other personal pursuits. Those women who did not work in tourism sector did not often find these opportunities in the informal sphere of the tourism field either.

Children

Both local girls and boys were active, visible and audible actors in the field of tourism. They had developed many strategies for getting money from visitors. They simply approached them and said, “*give me money!*”; they also showed tourists little papers written in English and explaining some particular need for money. In addition to these strategies, when they saw a camera they ran to pose for tourists’ photos and then asked money for them. They also played in a band with instruments they had made themselves. All of these strategies can be considered as showing initiative on the part of these children. Apparently, they were encouraged by other children and even by some adults. The flipside of these activities, however, was that children learned that they could get money from tourists simply by begging and therefore some children, especially boys, dropped out already from primary school. This was a well-known phenomenon around the lake in tourist destinations, also in Chembe.¹³³ Locals considered this to be a worrying aspect of tourism even if some drop-outs managed to develop a career as tour guides or vendors by associating with tourists. The community had addressed the problem and tried to keep the children and adolescents in school. When boys were in their teens, some tourists enabled and encouraged their alcohol and drug use. Often the children themselves looked for opportunities to create friendships with foreigners in order to do business with them. Sometimes the shared experiences of smoking *chamba* and drinking beer in the course of time resulted in alcohol and drug abuse. Directly, this affected the behaviour and habits of local boys and men, but indirectly also local families and therefore the community as a whole. It seemed that local people were powerless in the face of this issue.

Beach boys

According to my data, the most active local players in the tourism field were male youths and young men who actively associated with tourists and were sometimes called ‘the beach boys’. They

¹³³ Chakumbira, 2013: Interview in Malawi Institute of Tourism, Blantyre.

approached tourists in order to sell their products and services and they were also active in casual interaction with tourists. They wanted to enjoy a European lifestyle, educate themselves, start a business of their own and perhaps to travel abroad. Even if a relationship with any white woman could presumably offer these possibilities, only young foreign girlfriends appeared to be objects of pride whereas relationships with older foreign women were a taboo that men did not want to talk about. On the other hand, in economic terms, elderly women were the more profitable choice. Generally speaking, sexual capital is widely used in tourist destinations and Chembe is no exception to this. The relationships between young local men and elderly white women, both visitors (especially volunteers) and residents were the most discussed issue in my data. The motivation from the locals' side was repeatedly said to be poverty. It was estimated that also many foreign women were active in looking for a local partners or even that this was their primary reason to come to the village. For one's part, this estimation explains by cultural differences in local and foreign women's behaviour. For most Europeans, casual conversations and friendships between women and men are normal and do not necessarily carry any intentions for intimate relationship from either side. For local women in Chembe, talking with unknown men would not be considered decent behaviour. I was also told that friendships between men and women which would "be only friendships" do not exist in Malawi. Therefore, the behaviour of European women was sometimes interpreted locally in Chembe differently than it would have been interpreted in a European context. Nevertheless, this cultural difference does not change the fact that intimate relationships between local young men and elderly foreign women do apparently occur. In terms of gender issues, these relationships were considered the primary problem concerning the social sustainability of tourism in the village. While these relationships offered many opportunities to young men, they had a major negative impact on the lives of the local women because they increased their insecurity and caused the break-ups of local families.

Activists

Most of the people whom I classified as 'activists' were doing some community work for organizations originally founded by foreigners or at least with the help of foreigners. Some did not feel themselves respected according to their somewhat demanding positions. They estimated that the reason was their skin colour. Some of them were very active also when it came to informal interaction with foreigners, while others were family men who did not hang around with whites after work. Some of the local activists wanted to help the community through tourism independently, outside the

organizations. They were willing to start their own associations to produce products to sell to tourists, but so far it had seemed impossible without white participants. These men were born in the village and had worked at the beach as vendors and guides since the 1980s, therefore they knew the field well. They had also learned many practical skills that presumably should have helped them to proceed in their pursuits. However, it would appear that their habitus prevented them from stepping into another position in the field of tourism. They thought that, because they were locals, that is, blacks and because they spoke broken English they were not taken seriously or trusted by foreigners or by some locals. Their practical challenge was the formal written English needed in order to write proposals and register their association. They also lacked the necessary social networks in order to proceed in their pursuits. Among other important aspects, their experiences illustrated the career path of beach boys. When boys became grown men they wanted a different type of livelihood for themselves. They also knew about the difficulties that local people were facing and tourism's part in creating them but on the other hand they also had ideas about the opportunities foreigners could offer in addressing these challenges. Many of the people I called activists had a history of originally being beach boys themselves.

People in tourism-related work or having their own business

Young adults who had tourism-related jobs were also active but behaving in a more discreet manner than children and beach boys. Typically, they had passed at least part of their secondary schooling and appeared to have ambitions and hopes for further education. Some of them had passed tertiary level education. To pay for their education, they had received assistance from foreign residents, foreign visitors or religious organizations. Support for locals' education was one result of casual interaction that actually strengthened some locals' possibilities and position in society in the long term. They had business ideas and ideas about how the village should be developed. They hoped for an entertainment centre to organize concerts and events where people – both locals and tourists – could socialize outside of bars. A state owned hotel was also suggested in order to address the situation in which almost all of the lodges were own by foreigners. In their personal lives, they wanted to invest in improvements in their homes and they were enlightened about health issues.

Local men working in the tourism sector or having their own businesses were in a relatively good position also in the informal side of the tourism field. They knew 'the game' well, they already had good jobs and meaningful networks that enabled them to interact with foreigners also informally,

plus they had much more freedom to act than local women did. They seemed to have relatively good contacts with white foreigners and avoided commenting about tourism-related problems in the village. They seemed to be somewhat guarded when they talked with me, on the other hand, they communicated with self-confidence, sounding out my intentions. Most of them appeared to trust their personal possibilities for livelihoods or for bettering their living standards even if they also had worries about some phenomena in the village.

Those women who worked with foreigners had somewhat better positions in the field also in informal interactions compared to their uneducated peers and housewives. They spoke English and they 'knew the game' from a different perspective than did the other local women, therefore they were able to play it in a discreet manner and according to the strict limitations set by their foreign employers as well as by their role as women in their community and culture. Thus, they did not approach foreigners, but if they were approached by foreign female visitors they could form friendships with them. That meant exchanging emails or phone calls every now and then. They seemed to owe a great debt of gratitude to foreigners who had assisted in their education and were shy to ask for more help. They also avoided criticizing foreigners and chose their words carefully.

Local uneducated women

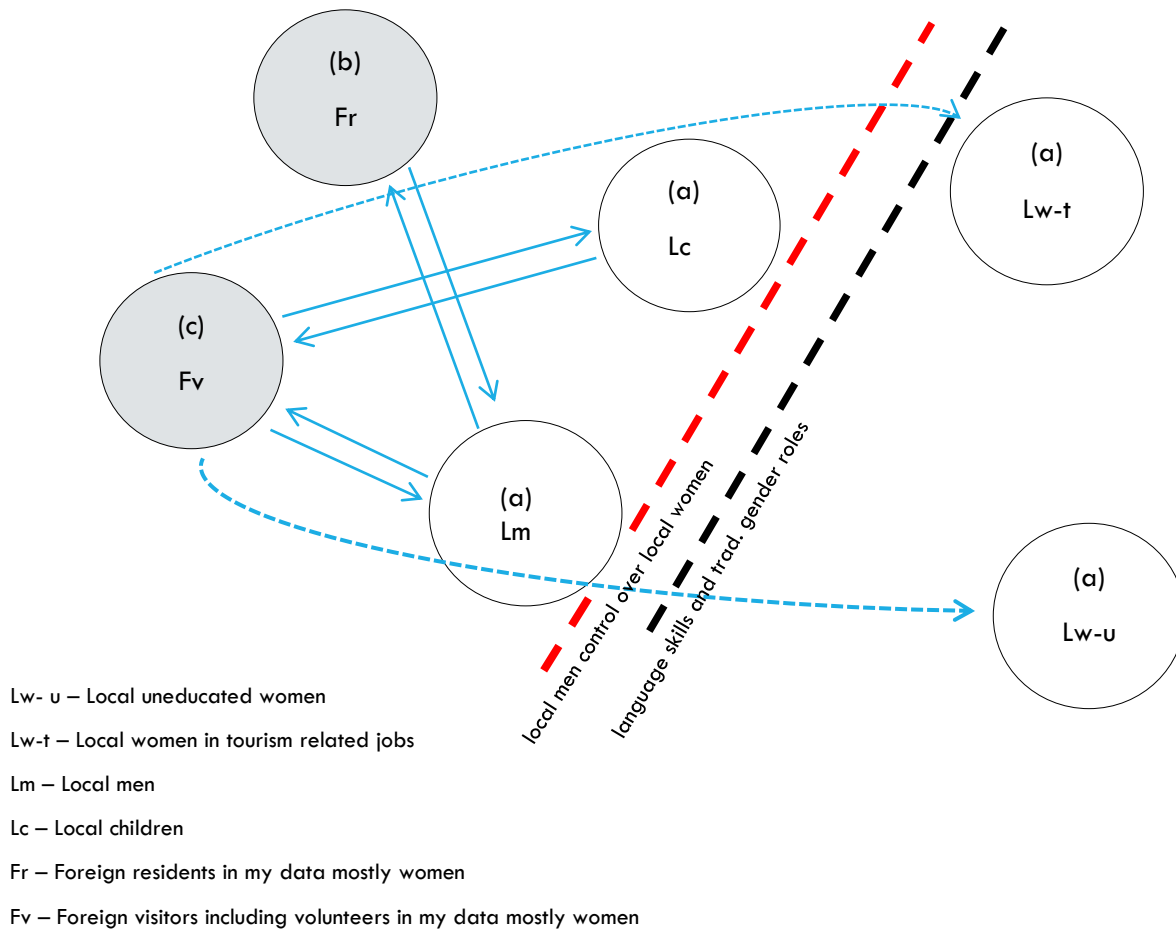
Local uneducated women were almost outside of the field of tourism as active players, instead they participated in it only through local men. In many respects, their position on the periphery of the field was the least beneficial. In an economic sense, their small businesses such as selling fish or pastries were directed toward locals and their profits were very small. Due to traditional gender roles, lack of education and their limited language skills, they had less contacts with foreigners in the first place. This already hindered women's possibilities to form meaningful relationships with foreigners and/or to find a sponsor. In addition, local men were sometimes said to have actively prevented them from having contacts with foreigners. I also had this experience during my visits. Many women were participants of the game indirectly – and against their will – because their husbands were associating with white women. If the husband provided the local family with the money he received from a white woman, some local wives accepted the situation. On the other hand, they did not seem to have any other choices but to accept it or to move back to their parents' home. Many of the local women felt powerless because they thought that they were not able compete with foreign women whom they

considered wealthy and educated. In addition, they could not say anything because they were afraid of their husbands and even the white women.

Even if they did not have the possibilities to form meaningful relationships with foreigners, some local women sold sex to tourists. These contacts were described to me in a manner that suggested that the women themselves were not actively seeking clients. Rather, local young men, in the hope of commissions from tourists, were pushing women to do this. The women who had agreed to sell sex were described as ‘those who have no knowledge’, that is, uneducated. At what point these local women started to consider themselves as prostitutes and how selling sex affected their lives and identities were not discussed. Most professional prostitutes came from other villages because to work in one’s own village was too shameful. Their clients were sometimes tourists but mostly locals who had earned money through tourism or fishing.

Being a local uneducated woman in Chembe meant being doubly powerless or, in the case of women from ethnic minorities, even three-fold powerlessness. The women from ethnic minorities who had moved from another village considered themselves outsiders when it came to the field of tourism. Their livelihoods were based solely on selling usiba and their children did not associate with foreigners. Nevertheless, from tourists’ point of view, they were part of the cultural attractiveness of the village and they had to interact with us, the tourists, who walked further from the touristic area with our cameras and questions. They possessed the cultural capital of ‘exoticness’ which was willingly used by foreigners but nothing was given back in return. The presence of foreigners had not raised their living standards. One woman remarked that we, foreigners, came there with our questions but what they needed from us were the answers about how to survive. Unfortunately, that approach had already failed in many ways, thus, I basically had to tell her that I did not have those answers. Later on, the interpreter confirmed the frustration and even cynicism that I could sense in these women’s attitudes. Apparently, they had heard many undelivered promises from whites.

Main lines of tourism-related informal interaction between locals and foreigners



Informal interaction by categories

Most people in Chembe gave somewhat positive comments regarding tourism in general. Casual interaction, especially between locals and short time visitors, offered mutual possibilities to learn new skills, to deepen one's understanding about lives in other places of the world, to satisfy one's curiosity and to enjoy each other's' company – simply for its own sake. Most of us, foreigners, wanted to experience and learn something new and different and by doing so to increase our cultural capital. Touristic photographs of locals served as mementos for ourselves but also as the symbols of our journeys which we experienced as achievements. Foreign residents wanted to make a livelihood based on the cultural and natural attractiveness of the village and its people. Local people had already met other researchers, journalists and photographers, who all wanted to step into their private space and document their everyday lives for one reason or another. What the locals wanted in return was – to

put it simply – opportunities. Every foreign person who arrived at the village was considered by many locals as an opportunity to improve one’s skills, earn some money and to find a sponsor. Nonetheless, there were still significant tourism-related issues in all areas of informal and formal interaction, such as local boys dropping out of school, local men’s increased use of alcohol and drugs, uncertainty in local women’s lives and the break-ups of local families. Below is a summary of my main perceptions of locals’ experiences regarding informal interaction with foreigners in three sections of this thesis:

Casual Communication

- + Mutual positive experiences and exchange of knowledge and skills.
- Increase in boys’ and men’s use of alcohol and drugs and therefore domestic problems.
 - Local people’s feelings of powerlessness to react to these phenomena.
- +/- Changes in a local culture of which some were judged as negative but some as positive or they were taken neutrally.
 - Local people’s feelings of powerlessness to react to negative changes in culture.

Intimate Relationships

- + Opportunities for uneducated young men. Lasting intermarriages between locals and foreigners had resulted in investments in the village.
- Increase in vulnerability of local women and families. Break-ups of local families.
 - Local women’s feelings of powerlessness at being unable to compete with wealthy white women.
 - Locals’ general feelings of powerlessness to react, since many of these foreign women were involved in helping the community otherwise.

Other Informal Support for Locals

- + Great positive impact on locals' education at the secondary and tertiary levels by sponsorship directed toward education in a variety of ways.
- Especially boys drop out from primary and secondary school levels because of money received from tourists. (Also money from fishing resulted in male drop-outs.)
 - + The community had reacted by educating tourists not to give money to begging children, and a group of locals were told to monitor the beach. Children who were seen during school hours were sent back to school.

Powerlessness

One thing that came up repeatedly in my data was local people's feelings of powerlessness in the face of the negative consequences of tourism. This was due to their dependency on the positive outcomes of tourism-related *informal* interactions such as sponsorships for locals' education, and all the transactions from foreigners to locals in tourism-related *regulated* interactions, such as job opportunities and the help to the community provided by foreign aid organizations and trustees.

The powerlessness was related to the fear that if they criticized foreigners' behaviour, they might lose the potential positive opportunities offered by them. This is understandable also in the situation in which poor people had only a little to gain but could not risk losing that too. The powerlessness resulted in what I call *staged contentment* by those who had some room to operate in the field and gain from it. This *staged contentment* was manifested when local people avoided speaking about the negative sides of foreigners' presence. When they sometimes did, the criticism was followed by conciliatory words. They thought that it was not wise or that they were not even allowed to interfere or criticise foreigners' misconduct. Thus, in the game, especially those who had tourism related jobs had chosen a very discreet strategy not to rock the boat, since even with all its faults, it appeared that tourism had improved their personal economic situation and increased the living standards of the community as a whole. The situation of local uneducated women was somewhat different. Only a few of them gained anything from tourism but they did not approach foreigners even to criticize or tell their points of view because they could not speak English, because it was not considered appropriate for them to do so, and because they were afraid of their husbands

and even white women. They literally did not have much room to operate and for them to resign themselves to their position appeared to be almost the only option.

Distrust in the society and the community

In addition to powerlessness, distrust of the local people by both locals and foreign residents hindered the possibilities of locals to fully operate in the field of tourism and sustained the unequal structure of the field. This came up especially when locals worked for foreigners or wanted to help the community through tourism. People were worried that money received from foreigners would be misused by other locals and that local projects were merely facades to collect the money for personal use rather than for the cause in question. During our stay in Malawi, we witnessed and were told about several cases of small scale fraud and corruption. As presented in this thesis, these happened also on a large scale at the highest levels of power in the society. The system itself appeared to work according to a different logic than its façade would suggest. Many people with whom I spoke did not trust politicians or those who held power in other positions in society. In their attitudes, it was considered as an inevitable fact that the society is what it is, that is, unequal and corrupt. For this reason, using it to one's own advantage appeared the most as a reasonable choice also for some ordinary citizens as shown by Rasnack (2004).

In addition to the fact that both locals and foreign residents did not trust locals, there were obvious frictions also between these groups of actors. One foreign resident commented to me that it does not matter how long one stays in the village, "*they [the locals] will never let you in*". The wall in between the groups was confirmed by a local woman remarking that "*there is a very big distance between a foreigner and a local*". These and other comments illustrated the clear separation between the groups of participants in informal interactions. This boundary was especially strict between powerful foreign residents and those who held the least power in the field, that is, local women. There were several reasons for this. In formal interaction, foreign residents held powerful positions due to the economic transactions they made, upon which many locals were dependent. Unidirectional dependency between individuals is an arrangement which does not support open and equal friendships. Cultural and social differences caused frictions in work relations and it was repeatedly brought up that those in powerful position, that is, foreign employers, tended to behave harshly towards local employees.

This understandably hindered informal communication between these group of actors. In addition, wealthy foreign women's relationships with local young men caused difficulties in local families and this threat meant that local women lived in constant uncertainty. In these relationships foreign women used economic capital which local women lacked. Female volunteers who stayed for longer periods of time and foreign female residents were rather a threat than potential friends for local women whereas friendships existed between short-term female visitors and local women. Local men working in tourism-related jobs appeared to have somewhat closer relations to foreign residents than local women did. Local men had friendships also with short-term male visitors.

Despite the fact that I did not see nor hear anything about 'racist' acts or comments as such, 'racial' separation was very much alive in Chembe. Many locals in the tourism field were struggling against something that appeared to be a naturally given 'structure of the game'. As pointed out by scholars and activists the concept of 'race' is an ideologically and politically loaded construction. During the colonial period, it was used to rationalize European attitudes, policies and practices toward conquered peoples. These attitudes, policies and practices – not 'racial' differences as some people still seem to think – have constructed inequalities among different groups globally. With this 'racial' worldview it has been ensured that some groups possess low status and therefore stay powerless, while others "are permitted access to privilege, power and wealth" (see, for example, the AAA Statement on Race 1998).¹³⁴ Indeed, the dichotomy between local blacks and foreign whites was present in almost all the interactions I was told about.¹³⁵ It carried with it the connotations of recipient | donor, passive | active, unreliable | trustworthy and even unintelligent | clever. It could be heard in casual speech among both the local people and foreign residents, not only in Chembe but also in Zomba where I lived. On the other hand, only rarely did I notice this in the attitudes of short-term visitors. This implies that while becoming socialized in the psychological sense and integrating into a society, over the course of time a person learns and adopts the logic of the society. This perception was also confirmed by some locals who said that often foreign people behaved well when they first came to the village but later changed their behaviour and started to act rudely towards locals. All the above mentioned negative connotations ascribed to local blacks are everything that white foreigners are

¹³⁴ American Anthropological Association, Statement on race, 1998. Online 22th March 2016: <http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>

¹³⁵ With the exception of few comments on labour relations with people from India or China or on Asian and black African tourists.

assumed not to be: ignorant, unreliable and passive recipients of help. This deeply rooted dichotomy sustained the unequal social structure since discourses by their character create and sustain power relations in societies (see for example Fairclough 1989 and 1992).

Final thoughts

In a travel guide to Malawi, an author invites tourists to the village in which “visitors are exposed to everyday African life in an unforced manner very different from any other lakeside resort in Malawi”.¹³⁶ Indeed, from the terraces of any of the lodge along the beach, one can see women doing their laundry with a bunch of small children running around them. What we – tourists – are not exposed to is the constant uncertainty in which these women live because of our actions. These are the mothers and wives of the boys and men with whom many short-term visitors and volunteers spend their leisure time in bars and at the beach. Many of the sons of these women learn to receive money from visitors, start to drink beer, smoke *chamba*, and finally they drop out from school. Enabled by tourists, many of the husbands of these women also drink much alcohol. Some of their husbands find a foreign woman to have fun with for few days and soon they’ll find another foreign woman. Or, they find someone with whom to stay a longer period of time, even permanently. Those men who consider themselves the lucky ones find someone who is willing to pay for them to travel to Europe with her. Not all of these foreign women know that “when they [the local men] are around [their] twenties, they all are married already”, as one interviewee put it. Thinking back about my first trip to the village on the back of the *matola*, I no longer wonder why the local women with whom I then travelled did not seem being too happy to see me – a middle-aged white woman coming to the village on my own.

Tourism and especially ecotourism have been launched globally as poverty reduction strategies namely by UNWTO. Malawians, among others, are hoping that tourism will bring much needed foreign capital into the country. With this thesis, I have taken a look at how interactions really work in a poor host community where local people live their everyday lives while relatively wealthy people come to enjoy their leisure time. I have focused on informal grassroots-level interaction between locals and foreign visitors and residents. Local people in Chembe seemed to appreciate tourism

¹³⁶ Briggs 2010:134

because of the opportunities that it offers to locals. However, for these opportunities especially uneducated women have paid a high price. Reflecting upon the TIES' principles¹³⁷ (see page 3 in this thesis), I suggest that all tourism-related actors in Chembe should pay attention to the impacts of tourism on the social, behavioural, and psychological aspects of life in the village. It is also important to take gender into account: instead of empowerment, informal interactions especially between foreign women and local young men significantly worsened the position of local uneducated women in the community. It also affected their self-esteem in a negative way. Generally speaking, local men had much more freedom to interact informally with foreigners than local women. Because of that, they also had more opportunities to find foreign sponsors for their studies or for starting their own businesses. However, in many cases these opportunities did not come without a price either. Some men were expected to have sexual relationships with their foreign sponsors who in these cases were said to be typically elderly white women. While both parties in these relationships between young local men and elderly white women got something that they wanted, they both also lost respect of many in the community. Some young men used their sexual capital as a strategy to benefit from foreign women. This sexual capital appeared to have more value in the tourism field than local knowledge or skills did.

The rules of the game – of the configuration we can call tourism-related informal interaction – gives freedom to certain groups of actors, while limiting the actions of others. Problems in local families and family break-ups as well as increase in locals' alcohol and drug use are considered consequences of this interaction in the village. Even though the community had already reacted in order to stop children and youths from dropping out from school, there were still significant challenges resulting from foreigners' presence. The one issue related to almost all others was locals' perception of powerlessness in tourism-related interaction. The challenge is how to regulate what is supposed to be informal, spontaneous and free – as informal interaction by its character should be. To address the issues, stakeholders should not be afraid to speak and they should all be heard. In the key position to address the above mentioned issues are those somewhat educated persons who already work in tourism related jobs, including local activists. They are in a position from which they potentially

¹³⁷ 137 TIES- Principles of Ecotourism. Online 30 Nov.2015. <https://www.ecotourism.org/book/ecotourism-definition>

understand the interests and challenges from both local and foreign residents' point of view. Another key position is held by foreign residents. They could enable the atmosphere in which local people would not have to be afraid of losing their jobs, clients or referees if they wanted to discuss foreigners' presence in the village. The education of both locals and foreigners on the above mentioned issues is crucial and foreign residents are in a position to communicate and educate volunteers and visitors to behave in responsible ways. However, it is a delicate and complex task to address such issues especially because some of those in key positions – locals and foreigners – are themselves involved in causing these problems.

Coming back to complex questions about my role as a tourist in a destination where people are deprived, I would conclude that in order to enjoy a holiday in a poor host destination, I would like to feel that I am participating in a fair trade, not exploiting or being exploited. I would like an opportunity to show my interest and respect for local people and their cultures in my choices as customer. Chembe appeared to me as a 'beach and party' destination with many opportunities for aqua sports and other such activities. As such, it indeed is beautiful and lovely destination for a holiday. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking about the potential of Chembe to offer also cultural programs for visitors. As pointed out before, European knowledge and skills are highly appreciated in the village. What I would like to add to tourism-related interaction in Chembe, formally and informally, is the reciprocal exchange of knowledge. As a European tourist myself, I would love to stay some period of time in Chembe learning the basics of the Malawian languages and cultures, beliefs and traditions. I would love to learn some bits of local everyday life and livelihoods with both men and women since their skills differ from each other. I would like to learn, for example, the Malawian style of fishing as well as the Malawian way of cooking. Most importantly, I would be ready to pay a reasonable price for the opportunity to learn and experience these things. I would like to pay it this money to local entrepreneurs or associations and I would love to see the positive pride of being local and possessing local knowledge. In other words, I would like to see an increase in the value of the cultural capital that local people already possess.

Even if in this thesis, I have pointed out many challenges related to tourism in Chembe, it is good to remember that local people highly appreciated the support for education and other help provided by foreigners. Generally speaking, they appeared to think that in economic terms, tourism has indeed

improved the living standards of many in the village. Some of them thought that tourism has enriched their lives also because they now have a possibility to exchange experiences and knowledge with people from different cultures. Does the Malawian government rely on this opportunistic “play” or “system” to find sponsors instead of themselves ensuring that people have equal possibilities to attain secondary and tertiary level education? Are the above mentioned improvements and opportunities enough to compensate for the social challenges which have arisen? *And what if tourists stopped coming?* This scenario appears to be the greatest threat of all – but is it really? These are some of the questions that remain.



Picture 5: Tourists and locals playing volleyball on the beach. Chembe 2013. K.Vuorensyrjä.

In suggesting a reciprocal exchange of knowledge between locals and tourists, as well as among foreign and local residents, and an increase in the value of cultural capital possessed by local people, both men and women, I am basically saying what has been said by many before me. In the early 1960s, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Finance Dunduzu Chisiza called for an exchange of knowledge to ensure the positive development in Malawi which was soon to become independent. In a speech given in 1962 he remarked: “If a foreign expert was to give sound advice

to Africans he must first understand their beliefs and culture.” He continued: “At the same time it is the duty of the African people themselves to interpret their culture for the guidance of the foreign experts”.¹³⁸ Five decades later this advice is still current and sound.

¹³⁸ Phiri 2010: 254-255

5 APPENDIX – INTERVIEWEES

Interviewees Malawi, 2013: Ident. No.				
No.	Sex	Age group	Status	
18	F	40+	Entrepreneur	Fr
14	M	40+	Entrepreneur	L
24	M	20-40	A skilled job/ managerial duties	L
2	M	20-40	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
25	F	20-40	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
26	F	40+	A skilled job / managerial duties	Fr
4	M	20-40	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
11	F	40+	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
15	M	20-40	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
7	F	20-40	A skilled job / managerial duties	L
21	M	20-40	Activist	L
16	M	20-40	Activist	L
23	M X2	20-40, 40+	Activist	L
17	M	20-40	Activist	L
1	M	20-40	Worker	L
5	F	20-40	Worker	L
13	F	20-40	Worker	L
3	F	20-40	Worker	L
6	F	20-40	Worker	L
20	F	20-40	Tourist	Fv
19	F X3	20-40	Tourist	Fv
12	F	20-40	Housewife/ small- scale business holder	L
22	M	20-40	Housewife/ small business	L
8	F X3	20-40, 40 +	Housewife/ small business	L
9	F X2	20-40	Housewife/ small business	L
10	F X15- 20	All ages	Housewife/ small business	L

Interviewees' status			
	F	M	Age group
Entrepreneur	0	1	F 40+ M 40+
A skilled job/ managerial duties	3	3 (1)	F 20-40, 40+ M 20-40
Activist	0	5 of which 3 had a salary	F M 20-40, 40+
Worker	4	1	F 20-40 M 20-40
Housewife/ small-scale business holder	1	1	F 20-40 M 20-40
	8	11 (1)	
Local women group interviews	F	M	Age group
A – local F	3		20-40, 40+
B – local F	2		40+
C – local F	15-20		All ages
	20-25		
Fr – Foreign resident	F	M	Age group
Entrepreneur	(1)	0	40+
A skilled job / managerial duties	(1)	0	40+
	(2)		
Fv – Foreign visitor	F	M	Age group
Tourist	(3)	0	20-40
Tourist	(1)	0	20-40
	(4)		
Background information	F	M	Age group
Ministry of Tourism		1	40+
Malawi Institute of Tourism	1		40+
Interviews Total	29		
Interviewees Total	46 – 51 people		

6 REFERENCES

Pictures

Picture 1 (page 7) Map of Malawi by Shaund [CC BY-SA 4.0-3.0-2.5-2.0-1.0 via Wikimedia Commons

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0-3.0-2.5-2.0-1.0>),

Online 28th Dec. 2015: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Malawi_map.png

Picture 2 (page 24): David Livingstone Depicted Freeing Slaves, Africa, ca.1845-1860. Public domain.

Online 28th Dec.2015: <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll123/id/64992>

Picture 3 (page 25): Chilembwe and family by National Archives of Malawi (National Archives of Malawi)

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Online 28th Dec.2015: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chilembwe_and_family.jpg

Picture 4 (page 50): Two matolas with tourists and locals in 1980's. Stapled on postcard of Malawi. From personal archives of Mr.Stevens', a local man who built the first lodge in Chembe.

Picture 5 (page 138): [Tourists and locals playing volleyball on the beach](#). Chembe 2013. K. Vuorensyrjä.

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