

**ASPECTS OF ISIXHOSA POETRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
SELECTED POEMS PRODUCED ABOUT WOMEN**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

by

MHLOBO WABANTWANA JADEZWENI

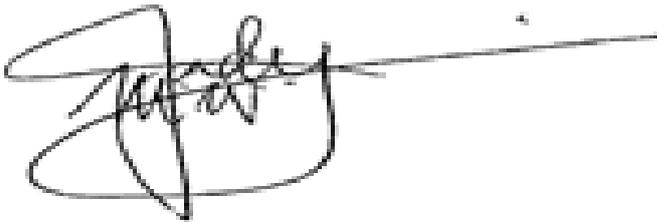
January 2013

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR RUSSELL H. KASCHULA

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not, in its entirety or part, been submitted at any university for a degree.

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'J' followed by a surname, and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

DATE: _____ 27-09-2013 _____

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of modern and *izibongo* (praise poetry) techniques in representing women in selected isiXhosa poems. The main interest of the study is to determine whether the same techniques to depict men are used when writing about women. It is also the interest of the study to ascertain how gender issues are dealt with in the selected poems.

Seminal studies on *izibongo* by eminent scholars in this field show a serious lack of critique and little recognition of women in African languages' poetry in general and in isiXhosa in particular. Pioneering studies in Nguni poetry about women have thus recommended that serious studies on poetry about women be undertaken.

The analyses of selected poems by established isiXhosa poets show that modern poetry conventions are significantly used together with *izibongo* techniques. These techniques are used without any gender differentiation, which is another point of interest of this study. There are however instances where images specific to women are used. Such use has however not been found to be demeaning of women in any way.

Poems where modern poetry forms and conventions are used tend to deal with subjects who have international or an urban area background. Even though the modern poetry conventions are used with *izibongo* techniques the presence of the modern literary conventions is prominent. This is the case particularly with poems about women in politics.

That some female poet seems to accept some cultural practices that are viewed to be undermining the status of women does not take away the voice of protest against this oppression by some of the selected poets. These two voices, one of acceptance and the other one of protest are used as a basis for a debate around a need for a literary theory that addresses the question of African culture with special reference to isiXhosa poetry about women.

The success of the selected poets with both modern and *izibongo* techniques is a good sign for the development of isiXhosa poetry in general and isiXhosa poetry about women. It is strongly recommended that continued research of a serious nature concerning poetry about, and produced by women, be undertaken.

ISISHWANKATHELO

Kolu phando kugxilwa ekuqwalaseleni iindlela izithako zesihobe sale mihla nezezibongo zomthonyama ezisetyenziswe ngazo ukuzoba abasetyhini kwisihobe sesiXhosa kwimibongo ekhethelwe olu phando. Owona mdla uphambili ngowokuba ingaba izithako ezisetyenziswa emadodeni ziyasetyenziswa na naxa kubhalwa ngabasetyhini. Kananjalo kukwanomdla ukuqwalasela indlela evela ngayo imicimbi ephathelele kwezesini kwimibongo ekhethiweyo.

Uphando olukumgangatho ophezulu olwenziwe ziingcali zophando ngezibongo zomthonyama lufumanise ukungathathelwa ngqalelo kwabasetyhini oluxhomisa amahle kwisihobe seLwimi zesiNtu ngokubanzi ngokukodwa kwisiXhosa. Oovulindlela kuphando lwezibongo zomthonyama zesiNguni bandulule ukuba kwenziwe uphando olunzulu kwisihobe esingabasetyhini.

Uhlalutyo lwemibongo ekhethiweyo lubonakalisa ukuba izithako zesihobe sale mihla zisetyenziswa kunye ngendlela enentsingiselo nezezibongo zomthonyama kwaye zisetyenziswa ngokungenamkhethe ngokwesini. Le yenye into olu phando olujolise kuyo. Nangona kunjalo kukho iimeko apho kusetyenziswe imifanekiso-ngqondweni ehambelana nesini. Kuyo yonke loo nto akukhange kube kho nto ibonakalisa ukunyeliswa kwabasetyhini ngokuchongwa kwaloo mifanekiso-ngqondweni ihambelana nesini.

Imibongo esebenzise kakhulu izithako zesihobe sale mihla ithambekele kwabasetyhini abamveli yabo okanye abanamava amazwe aphenesheya kolwandle nabo bangcambu zabo zisezidolophini. Nangona kule mibongo kusetyenziswe izithako zesihobe sale mihla ifuthe lezibongo zomthonyama livakala kakhulu. Oku kubalasele kwimibongo engezopolithiko.

Nangona abanye ababhali basetyhini bengathi bayazamkela ezinye izinto zenkcubeko yesiNtu oko akuwavali mlomo amakhosikazi angababhali avakalisa ukuyikhalazela kwawo le ngcinezelo ngokwenkcubeko. Ezi zimvo, olunye ilokuyamkela imeko injalo ngeli lixa olunye lukhalaza, zisetyenziswa njengesiseko sengxoxo yemfuneko yethiyori eza kuchaza inkcubeko yesiNtu ngokuphathelele kwisihobe sesiXhosa esingabasetyhini.

Impumelelo yababhali abakhethelwe olu phando ekusebenziseni izithako zesihobe sale mihla nezithako zezibongo zomthonyama luphawu oluhle lokukhula kwesihobe sesiXhosa

ngokubanzi nesesihobe esingabasetyhini. Kundululwa ukuba kukhuliswe isihobe esingabasetyhini ukwenzela ukuba kube nokwenziwa uphando olunzulu ngesi sihobe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly thankful to my supervisor, Prof Russell H. Kaschula, for his encouragement and guidance throughout this study. Prof Kaschula has been an extraordinary supervisor, and I admire him for his patience with me during and especially towards the end of this study.

I wish to thank the staff of Rhodes University's Library for assisting me in finding my way through the library and pointing me to the relevant resources.

My colleagues at Rhodes University's African language Studies' Section inspired me in many ways during the conception and writing of this thesis. Family, without you I would have been lost at Rhodes! Thank you very much!

I am most grateful to my 1972 Matric teacher at St Johns College, Mthatha, a colleague and friend Dr Sydney Zanemvula Zotwana who up to this day is always supportive of my academic endeavours. Camagu Zikhali!

Many friends and family members who have supported me in many ways over the years I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

To Prof Jeff Opland of SOAS, England, thank you very much for sharing your personal collections with me during the writing of this thesis. Your instant and selfless help with help is highly appreciated.

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

I thank my dear wife Nokuzola for her understanding when my mind was on my studies. Thank you Sibakhulu!

Thanks be to God for giving me courage and strength to take on this work and finally finish it!

DEDICATION

To my late parents, Meshack Tamsanqa, “Ah Zwelixelile!” and Ruth Nomthika “MaKhumalo” Jadezweni who taught me to love, appreciate and respect people. I dedicate this thesis to them. Thank you very much “TJ” and “RR”!

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	iii
Isishwankathelo	iv
Acknowledgements	vi
Dedication	vii
Chapter 1: Setting the Scene	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Aim of study.....	1
1.3 Scope of study.....	6
1.4 Methodology and approach.....	7
1.5 Organisation of study.....	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Izibongo – Overview.....	10
2.3 Modern poetry.....	18
2.3.1 Informal elements.....	20
2.3.2 The formal elements of a poem.....	26
2.4 Metaphor.....	65
2.4.1 Literal-core theories.....	67
2.4.2 Metaphorical proposition theories.....	68
2.4.3 Modern theories of metaphor.....	70
2.4.4 Conceptual metaphor theory.....	71
2.5 The portrayal of women in African literature.....	76
2.5.1 Gender myths.....	77
2.5.2 Gender myths in oral literature.....	79
2.6 Conclusion.....	96
Chapter 3: Poetry about women in general	98

3.1 Introduction.....	98
3.2 Jolobe, J.R. Ilitha.....	99
3.2.1 Informal elements.....	103
3.2.2 Formal elements.....	104
3.2.2.1 Form of the poem.....	104
3.2.2.2 The title.....	105
3.2.2.3 Prosodic elements.....	106
3.2.2.4 Pacing.....	107
3.2.2.5 Tone.....	108
3.2.2.6 Gender issues.....	108
3.2.3 Summary.....	109
3.3 Burns-Ncamashe, S.M. Le Nt' Intombi.....	110
3.3.1 The informal elements.....	114
3.3.2 The formal elements.....	116
3.3.2.1 The title.....	116
3.3.2.2 Repetition.....	118
3.3.2.3 Pacing.....	118
3.3.2.4 Metaphors.....	120
3.3.3 Summary.....	120
3.4 Ndlazulwana, T.N. Ubufazi.....	120
3.4.1 Informal elements.....	122
3.4.2 Formal elements.....	122
3.4.3 Gender issues.....	123
3.4.4 Summary.....	124
3.5 Moropa, K. (ed). Ramncwana, S. ITshawekazi elihle.....	124
3.5.1 Informal elements.....	127
3.5.2 Formal elements.....	128
3.5.2.1 The title.....	128

3.5.2.2 The prosodic elements.....	128
3.5.2.3 Repetition.....	129
3.5.2.4 Pacing.....	129
3.5.2.5 Metaphors.....	130
2.5.3 Gender issues.....	131
3.5.3.1 The use of the female suffix –kazi.....	131
3.5.3.2 Physical appearance.....	132
3.5.3.3 Positive stereotypes.....	132
3.5.4 Summary.....	133
3.6 Mahlaba, G.N. Nawe Unakho.....	133
3.6.1 Informal elements.....	135
3.6.2 Formal elements.....	135
3.6.3 Summary.....	136
3.7 Opland, J. (ed.) Mqgqwetho, N. Umphanga kaMama.....	137
3.7.1 Informal elements.....	151
3.7.2 Formal elements.....	153
3.7.2.1 The title.....	153
3.7.2.2 The prosodic elements.....	153
3.7.2.3 Pacing.....	155
3.7.2.4 Death.....	156
3.7.2.5 Metaphors.....	156
3.7.2.6 Metaphor and simile.....	157
3.7.2.7 National issues.....	160
3.7.2.8 Izibongo features.....	161
3.7.3 Summary.....	161
3.8 Jadezweni, M (ed. & author). Mpola, N. Ngumama wam.....	162
3.8.1 The informal elements.....	166
3.8.2 The formal elements.....	166

3.8.2.1 The form of the poem.....	166
3.8.2.2 The title.....	167
3.8.3 Prosodic elements.....	167
3.8.3.1 Rhythm.....	167
3.8.4 Pacing.....	168
3.8.5 Tone.....	169
3.8.6 Metaphors.....	169
3.8.7 Gender issues.....	170
3.9 Summary.....	173
3.10 Conclusion.....	174

Chapter 4: Poetry about women in traditional leadership

Positions and in politics.....	178
4.1 Introduction.....	178
4.2 Mqhayi, SEK. Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke.....	178
4.2 Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke.....	182
4.2.1 The informal elements.....	182
4.2.2 Formal elements.....	184
4.2.2.1 The form of the poem.....	184
4.2.2.2 The title.....	185
4.2.2.3 Prosodic elements.....	185
4.2.2.4 Pacing.....	186
4.2.2.5 Tone.....	188
4.2.2.6 Gender issues.....	188
4.2.2.6.1 Family background and ancestry.....	188
4.2.2.6.2 Motherhood.....	189
4.2.2.6.3 Mother Africa.....	190
4.2.2.6.4 Married woman.....	190
4.2.2.7 Metaphors.....	191

4.2.2.7.1 Death.....	191
4.2.2.7.2 The strong woman.....	192
4.2.2.8 Izibongo techniques.....	192
4.2.2.8.1 Opening and closing formulae.....	192
4.2.2.8.2 Repetition.....	193
4.2.3 Summary.....	194
4.3 Mama, S.G. UNobomi.....	195
4.3 UNobomi.....	200
4.3.1 The informal elements.....	200
4.3.2 Formal elements.....	201
4.3.2.1 Form of poem.....	201
4.3.2.2 The title.....	202
4.3.2.3 Prosodic elements.....	202
4.3.2.4 Pacing.....	203
4.3.2.5 Tone.....	203
4.3.2.6 Gender issues.....	204
4.3.2.7 Metaphors.....	206
4.3.2.8 Izibongo techniques.....	206
4.3.3 Summary.....	208
4.4 Yali-Manisi, D.L.P. UMfikazi uNkskz uNozizwe Sigcawu.....	239
4.4.1 The informal elements.....	239
4.4.2 The formal elements.....	241
4.4.2.1 Form of poem.....	241
4.4.2.2 The title.....	242
4.4.2.3 Prosodic elements.....	242
4.4.2.4 Pacing.....	243
4.4.2.5 Tone.....	245
4.4.2.6 Gender issues.....	245

4.4.2.7 Metaphors.....	246
4.4.2.8 izibongo techniques.....	250
4.4.3 Summary.....	251
4.5 Jadezweni, M (ed. & author). Ngqongqwana, S. A! Nosimo!.....	252
4.5.1 The informal elements.....	258
4.5.2 The formal elements.....	259
4.5.2.1 Form of poem.....	259
4.5.2.2 The title.....	260
4.5.2.3 Prosodic elements.....	260
4.5.2.4 Pacing.....	261
4.5.2.5 Tone.....	262
4.5.2.6 Gender issues.....	263
4.5.2.7 Metaphors.....	264
4.5.2.8 Izibongo techniques.....	265
4.5.3 Summary.....	268
4.6 Conclusion.....	269
Chapter 5: Poetry about women in religion, education	
And health.....	273
5.1 Introduction.....	273
5.2 Mqhayi, S.E.K. UMaya Khoboka.....	273
5.2.2 UMaya Khoboka.....	276
5.2.2.1 The informal elements.....	276
5.2.2 The formal elements.....	277
5.2.2.1 Form of poem.....	277
5.2.2.2 The title.....	277
5.2.2.3 Pacing.....	278
5.2.2.4 Tone.....	278
5.2.2.5 Gender issues.....	279

5.2.2.6 Metaphors.....	281
5.2.2.7 Izibongo techniques.....	281
5.3 Mqhayi, S.E.K. Umka John Knox Bhokhwe.....	282
5.3.1 The informal elements.....	291
5.3.2 Formal elements.....	292
5.3.2.1 The title.....	292
5.3.2.2 Pacing.....	293
5.3.2.3 Tone.....	293
5.3.2.4 Gender issues.....	294
5.3.2.5 Metaphors.....	296
5.3.2.6 Izibongo techniques.....	297
5.4 Mqhayi, S.E.K. Unkosazana Minah Thembeka.....	299
5.4.1 The informal elements.....	303
5.4.2 The formal elements.....	305
5.4.2.1 The title.....	305
5.4.2.2 Pacing.....	305
5.4.2.3 Tone.....	305
5.4.2.4 Gender issues.....	306
5.4.2.5 Izibongo techniques.....	308
5.5 Mama, G.S. AA! Nobantu!.....	319
5.5.1 The informal elements.....	319
5.5.2 The formal elements.....	321
5.5.2.1 The title.....	321
5.5.2.2 Pacing.....	321
5.5.2.3 Tone.....	322
5.5.2.4 Gender issues.....	323
5.5.2.5 Izibongo techniques.....	326
5.6 Conclusion.....	331

Chapter 6: General Conclusions	334
6.1 Introduction.....	334
6.2 Summary comments on poetry about women.....	334
6.3 Conclusion.....	338
REFERENCES	339

Chapter 1: Setting the Scene

1.1 Introduction

Evidence from the earliest studies by Schapera (1965), Cope (1968), Jordan (1971), Kunene (1971) to the more recent studies by Opland (1998) is proof that poetry is a well-established literary genre, both as oral and written poetry in the African languages of Southern Africa. Praise poetry, in particular, in isiXhosa, and generally in the African languages, is always composed for and directed at men, particularly leaders in the social and political life of a community. This trend is rather disquieting as women seem to be marginalised and yet it is common knowledge that there have always been women in traditional leadership positions and they have occupied those positions not only as tokens, but have acquitted themselves well as leaders, as in the case of Charlotte Manyhi Maxeke, who distinguished herself in education and in politics, as Mqhayi (1943: 43) describes her. This and many other instances where women perform well should be acknowledged in some way. In a quest to redress this imbalance there is a pressing need to write about the poetry about women in isiXhosa.

1.2 Aim of study

This study focuses on the way women are represented in isiXhosa poetry and explores the poetic techniques as well as praise poetry techniques employed in this form of poetry in isiXhosa. Praise in this instance is used to refer to all the statements and remarks that are made about women in written poetry. Such remarks or comments need not necessarily be positive, but can also be critical of some kind of unbecoming behaviour.

Praise poetry, as further defined by Mafeje (1967:193), has been studied for all the African languages of South Africa, including the Nguni languages such as isiXhosa and isiZulu. However, these studies are all concerned with praises of men such as kings and chiefs and various persons of authority. As far as can be ascertained, no in-depth study so far has been undertaken which focuses on the portrayal of women. This is in spite of

a variety of poetry written about women as well as poetry by women in the Southern African languages in general, and in isiXhosa in particular.

A number of studies on isiXhosa poetry have been conducted. Of these, those outlined below deal with isiXhosa poetry as part of the research but they also provide a general overview of how women are perceived in isiXhosa poetry.

In a doctoral study entitled *The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni* Vilakazi (1945:46) makes a very important remark:

Very little has been said about the share of women in the literature of the Nguni people. This may be due to the general attitude towards women who are believed to play no active part in Nguni society.

It is true, as in all nations on earth, women, generally speaking, do not belong to the nobility of genius and invention; romance and reason, morality, idealism, mysticism and revelation. They emphatically are not supermen.... But it would be

unfair not to quote what the Nguni poets have said about women.

This remark refers to both why women are overlooked as well as what needs to be done. Vilakazi agrees that the role of women needs to be acknowledged. By devoting a chapter of his study to poetry about women, Vilakazi gives a hint of what can be done in order to give full credit to women. In Chapter II of his study he identifies four female poets whose work receives attention. He discusses the praise poetry of Mnkabayi, Monase, Mamchoboza and of Ntombokuphela kaMdlalose. All these women have distinguished themselves as well as, if not more so than, their male counterparts. The analysis presented in the chapter is, however, limited due to the scope of the study – an overview of both oral and written literature of isiNguni. Because of its broad nature Vilakazi's study could not conduct an in-depth investigation into poetry about women. Vilakazi can only be commended for this pioneering study for speaking out, as early as

1945, in favour of acknowledging the contribution made by women to isiNguni literature and to society.

Qangule (1979) in a study entitled *A Study of Theme and Technique in the Creative works of S.E.K.L.N. Mqhayi* presents a cursory investigation into female heroes in a chapter on patriotism. He discusses the poetry about Charlotte Manyhi Maxeke, Minah Thembeke Soga, uMaya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka) and Umka John Knox Bhokwe. All these women distinguished themselves in various ways in South Africa and Mqhayi acknowledges their role. Their value to the country unfolds when Mqhayi, writing about Charlotte Manyhi Maxeke, recommends,

Menzelen' ilitye lokukhunjulwa

Ze siqhayisele ngal' amavilakazi.

Az' angaz' alityalwe emhlabeni;

Az' angaz' alityalw' eAfrika!

(Build a monument to her memory,

And with it spite the lazy ones.

So that her people should not forget her

So that she should not be forgotten in the world,

So that she should never be forgotten in Africa.)

From this stanza the fact that Charlotte Manyhi Maxeke was an eminent person cannot be disputed. Perhaps Qangule's study should have paid more attention to other eminent women and it should have given a more in-depth analysis of such poems. For example, in the poem "Umka John Knox Bhokwe" the verse, "Sithumel' umfazi wendoda" (We have sent a wife of a heroic man) evidence of the bias against women emerges. Women live in the shadow of their heroic husbands. This study also deserves credit for acknowledging the role of women in however small a way.

A study entitled *The Relationship between Praise Poetry and Poetry in Zulu and Xhosa* by Wainwright (1987) gives little credit to women as oral artists in the following remark,

I have recorded women praises on public occasions such as the Transkeian independence celebrations but such instances are rare by comparison with the incidence of male iimbongi at such events.

Besides this passing remark, Wainwright does not deal with poetry about women in isiXhosa.

A very useful basis for the study of poetry about women is provided by Mtuze (1990) in his dissertation entitled *A Feminist Critique of the Image of Woman in the Prose Works of Selected Xhosa Writers (1909 – 1980)*. A great deal of the study deals with prose, but Mtuze discusses three poems about women written by three different authors. Of significance about the poems is the inclusion of a poem by a female poet, Nobantu Ndlazilwana. Her poem entitled “Ubufazi” (Being a woman) reflects female protest against male domination. As regards this, Mtuze (1990:130) observes,

Ndlazulwana vehemently challenges the treatment meted out to women. She sees women as being exploited, abused and sacrificed as the weaker sex.

A poem entitled “Umfazi wokwenene” (The perfect wife) selected from Mema’s (1980) anthology evokes the following comment from Mtuze (1990:127):

The most and best up-to-date example of male stereotyping but highly idealistic view of the woman comes from a poem by a very talented and highly educated poet, ... whose poem reflects current male stereotypes remarkably.

From this remark it can be observed that Mema describes the perfect wife through a biased male eye. Mema obviously views “woman” in her “traditional” role.

The impact of the political turmoil in South Africa on women is described in a poem entitled “Umama ontsundu” (The Black mother) by Satyo (1986:48). The poem

recounts the hardship a black mother would endure as a result of her child or children being detained, killed or sentenced to death for political reasons.

Mtuze's (1990) study provides an invaluable basis for the study of poetry about women. Besides the theoretical basis of the study, the three poems cited in the study indicate some trends in poetry about women, viz. poetry about women protesting against male domination; stereotyping of women by men; and poetry about the political suffering of women.

As observed from the overview above, praise poetry in general is concerned with the praises of men, especially chiefs and people of authority. Such praises have been studied within the oral and written tradition in the African languages of Southern Africa. It is, however, encouraging to note that a study on women's poetry by Lisa McNee (1997) entitled *Senegalese Women's Praise Poetry* has been published. Although the study is outside of the African languages of Southern Africa, it is reason enough to motivate an in-depth study in isiXhosa as well. With the emergence of various black leaders both male and female in fields such as politics, the genre of praise poetry in the African languages has seen a revival. It is therefore inevitable that more and more poetry about women is produced and continues to be produced as their profile is enhanced in society. The post-1994 era in South Africa has promoted the production of more poetry about women. This study investigates the poetic techniques employed by poets who write about women during the post-apartheid period, be they women or men. The contribution made by women poets during this era may be regarded as a response to the call made by Butler (1999:4) who states,

...the development of a language that fully or adequately represents women has seemed obviously important considering the pervasive cultural condition in which women's lives were either misrepresented or not represented.

The extent to which women are represented in the selected poetry certainly contributes towards the attempt to rectify women's omission from the institutional mainstream, as lamented by Hoza (2009:9). It is through the trickle of poetry written

by women about women after 1994 that the voices of women are to be heard and more serious research on the poetry about women is likely to be undertaken.

1.3 Scope of study

This study focuses on the poetic qualities as well as the praise poetry techniques exemplified in the selected poetry of various isiXhosa poets in their praise of women, focusing on the category of women about whom the poetry is written, i.e. whether it is only women with authority that are praised or whether this poetry also covers other aspects of the lives of women. A critical analysis of the depiction of women in the poetry – as has been done in the case of praise poetry concerned with men – is eventually made.

Poetry about women is selected from works by, among others, Yali-Manisi, D.L.P., Mqhayi, S.E.K., Jolobe, J.J.R., Burns-Ncamashe, S.M., Nobantu Ndlazulwana *et al.*

Included in this study are poems selected from poetry written by the only known isiXhosa woman poet Nontsizi Mgqweto, who was in the forefront of poetry on women's issues as well as criticism on national issues in the period 1920-1930. She wrote approximately 90 poems, which have only appeared in a newspaper of that period, namely *Umteteli waBantu*, because the poems are highly critical on political issues and would not have been published under the government of that period. Poems about women from her anthology will be selected for analysis.

The emergence of poetry about women after 1994 also forms part of the focus of this study. Poetry about women by both men and women in the anthology entitled *Nawe Unakho/You Too Can* Volumes 1 and 2 (2002) as well as from *Umdiliya Wesihobe* compiled by Jadezweni (2008) is selected.

As regards the selection or choice of poems mainly by women poets, this study investigates the poetic techniques employed by women poets as opposed to those employed by male poets when portraying their subject, i.e. woman. This selection is

constrained by the limited number of poems and the quality of the poetry thus far written in isiXhosa. Some of the selections will therefore be compromised by the social circumstances in which the poetry was written. Suffice it to say that quality will as far as possible be the main consideration in the selection.

1.4 Methodology and approach

The various poems about women selected from various published anthologies by established poets are classified into themes, namely:

- ♣ Women in general;
- ♣ Women in traditional leadership positions and politics;
- ♣ Women in religion, education and health

The poems about women are firstly analysed within a theoretical framework provided by Dobyns (1996) within which the various elements of poetry are selected and a distinction between the formal and informal elements in a poem is made. The formal elements to be considered are: language, texture, pacing and tone which are imposed upon the informal elements of action, emotion, setting and idea. A more detailed discussion of these elements is provided in Chapter 2. In dealing with the formal elements of the poems the study pursues the following questions:

- (a) What are the main events or elements in the poem? How are these events or elements distributed in the poem?
- (b) Is it possible to determine the time and place of the action?
- (c) What is the meaning, idea, concept or intention of the poet?
- (d) What emotion does the poet want to create?
- (e) What are the various aural and visual qualities of the poem?
- (f) In what way does a rhythmic pattern contribute to anticipation, surprise and tension?

After the analyses of the various elements of the poems have been completed, the most highly acclaimed poems will be selected to establish the specific qualities of the poetry about women, and the literary-analytical properties of the way in which women are portrayed in isiXhosa poetry. The main concern is to examine the ways in which women are portrayed within the context of a specific poem and theme. The significance of each aspect or technique employed in each poem as well as within a specific theme is examined. It is thus crucial in this investigation to examine whether the techniques employed are integrated within the structure of the poem. The emphasis is thus on those poems in which these techniques have been successfully integrated.

As isiXhosa poetry is heavily influenced by praise poetry, or put differently, praise poetry is the forerunner of modern or written poetry, it is pertinent that the features of praise poetry or its “oral residue”, as referred to by Lord (1960), be investigated. As these features are integrated with the other techniques of modern poetry within the poem, the analysis deals with them as they occur with the other techniques employed by the poet.

Studies in various African languages in mainly folklore are used to identify gender stereotypes that prevail among African communities and find themselves established as if they are true. The anthology of essays edited by M.E.M Kolawole (1998) entitled *Gender Perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach* is used as a basis for the identification of established gender stereotypes from folklore. Because this anthology consists of contributions from both women and men, it is considered reasonably authentic for purposes of giving a balanced view of gender issues. Other sources dealing with gender have also been consulted.

1.5 Organisation of study

The study is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Setting the scene and introduction presenting the aims, scope and methodology and approach of the study.

Chapter 2: A critical review of relevant recent works on the theory of poetry paying special attention to praise poetry, modern poetry and gender issues.

Chapter 3: Poetry about women in general.

Chapter 4: Poems about women in traditional leadership positions and in politics.

Chapter 5: Poems about women in religion, education and health.

Chapter 6: Conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of *izibongo* or praise poetry studies, modern poetry theory and gender studies. The salient points of each study are provided in order to provide a basis for the analysis of the selected poems about women. The framework used for the analysis of each poem is drawn from Dobyns (1996). The various aspects of the poems are dealt with within this framework.

2.2 *Izibongo* – Overview

The overview of the studies on praise poetry will provide a sound basis for the understanding of modern poetry. Okpewho's (1992) study, as summarised below, captures all the salient points identified by Maake (1994) in his study entitled *Trends in the Formalist Criticism of "Western" Poetry and "African" Oral Poetry: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Case Studies* in respect of the literary scholars like Schapera, Cope, Jordan, Kunene and Opland who pioneered research into African oral poetry. The most comprehensive survey of the field of oral literature which combines critical adroitness with a judicious amassing of illustrative texts is made by Okpewho (1992) in his study entitled *African Oral Literature – Backgrounds, Character, and Continuity*. This study is therefore regarded as comprehensive in as far as the investigation into African oral literature is concerned. Okpewho (1992) reviews most of the studies on oral literature. His review includes an overview of praise poetry. The relevance of his exposition of the stylistic qualities of praise poetry to this study is evident. Of these, repetition, parallelism, imagery, allusion and symbolism have been identified by Kunene *et al.*, as already noted in Chapter 1. Only techniques that have not been identified already by the other critics are therefore discussed in this chapter.

Okpewho (1992:83) identifies piling and association as another stylistic technique employed by a praise poet. This is a technique used to achieve fullness of expression. This is done by piling or coupling one detail or idea to another, so that the whole performance builds up to a climax. This can be achieved by taking the last detail in one

line of a performance and placing it as the first part of the next line. This is parallelism, which Ntuli (1984:194) explains as having each unit in the first member of a verse balancing with another unit in the second member verse. In other words one unit in the first member is repeated in the second member, the difference being that the other unit whose counterpart in the second member is not the same word.

Association, as Okpewho (1992:86) explains, is closely linked to piling as the ideas and details that follow one another from the first are not linked by an exact similarity between them, but by some kind of approximate relationship, i.e. association between them.

Ideophones are identified as vital in the expression of thought in African oral literature. Okpewho (1992:92) describes an ideophone as a stylistic device that relies on sound. Simply defined, an ideophone is an “idea-in-sound”. From the sound of the word one can get an idea of the nature of the event or the object referred to. Ideophones are words unique to African languages. They are simply sounds used in conveying a vivid impression in the most economic of ways.

Digression is an instance where a performer departs for a moment from the main line of the subject of the poem to address an object (or person) at the scene of performance or to comment on an issue which may be closely or remotely connected with the main subject. Okpewho (1992) identifies two types of digression, namely, external and internal digression. External digression, according to Okpewho (1992:96), is prompted by an element outside the subject of performance. Internal digression occurs when the oral artist feels the need to comment briefly on an issue that arises within the poem. Okpewho (1992:97) goes on to say that internal digressions are generally useful for expatiating on a detail that the performer feels may not be immediately clear to the audience, or for throwing light on aspects of morality or social history.

Okpewho's (1992) study seems to use Lord's (1960) concept of the formula as propounded by Milman Parry as a basis of the stylistic qualities of the praise poem.

The divergent views on the relevance or reliability of the formula to written poetry are articulated in a number of studies, as observed by Kaschula (1991). Notwithstanding the scepticism expressed by literary scholars against the notion of a formula, there is sense in what Lord (1960:30) recommends when he states,

Students of epic have now willingly applied themselves to the study of the repeated phrases by textual analysis, by counting repetitions, classifying similar phrases and thus extracting the technique of composition by formula manipulation.

A poetry heavily influenced by orality finds this approach quite useful as a basis for analysis. The next step from this basis is obviously the analysis of the adjustments made to the basic formula, as Lord (1960:34) points out. What the critic needs to be careful of is to adhere rigidly to the formula without considering all the factors that make the particular poetry. Okpewho's (1992) study presents one with a whole range of approaches to praise poetry, so that one is reasonably equipped to apply critically those approaches to the poetry about women.

In his study entitled *Xhosa Poets and Poetry* (1998) Opland pursues the views he expressed about isiXhosa praise poetry in his 1983 study. In this regard Opland (1998:5) notes that there are four activities involved in the production of isiXhosa praise poetry. These he identifies as: general improvising, memorising, the refined improvising of the imbongi and writing. He states further that any isiXhosa praise poem is a product of at least one of these activities. This is indeed what he observed in Yali-Manisi's poetry in as far as improvisation is concerned. Improvisation entails drawing from memorised poems. Opland (1998:5) notes that literate poets also get caught up in this practice, for as they write their poetry, they have their poetry performance in their minds. In addition, in their memory they have the poems which they have heard or read before.

Opland (1998:43) describes *izibongo* (praise poems) as short sentences commemorative of notable actions and events in the life of a subject. Opland (1998:85) refers to these as essentially exercises in individuation, a term he borrows

from Yankah (1983), encapsulating in a concatenation of discrete nominal references the distinctiveness of a person, comprising often elliptical allusions to the lineage, the physical and moral characteristics, and the actions in the subject's public career.

The praise may run into a number of lines forming coherent couplets, triplets or longer stanzas, but the stanzas are not necessarily presented in any coherent order, and their order of presentation, or indeed their inclusion or omission, may vary from performance to performance. This is what improvisation entails. Opland (1998:11) describes improvisation as that process employed when a memoriser learns a poem by heart and whenever he or she performs, he or she repeats the poem with few – if any – verbal alterations. This is precisely how praises have been handed down for generations. Perhaps, this also explains why these poems have certain phrases or words which are obscure.

The basic structure of praise poems consists of praise names extended into praise verses or praise stanzas. Names are therefore the irreducible core of praise poems. About names, Opland (1998:89) states that a man or woman may be referred to or addressed in many different ways, sometimes by one of many alternative names, sometimes by patronyms or teknonyms, sometimes by names reserved for use by particular people, sometimes by names reserved for use only in certain contexts. Each one of these names is then qualified, amplified and extended by a clause.

For the interpretation of isiXhosa praise poetry Opland (1998:111) proposes an interpretation that proceeds from an appreciation of the structure of association and contrast. In as far as association is concerned, the names would be central as they are given on the basis of some association. Contrast is achieved through what Opland (1998) refers to as the polar oppositions in praise poetry. IsiXhosa praise poetry is dominated by the tension of opposites. This is illustrated in the examples from Yali-Manisi's poetry as presented by Opland (1998). Yali-Manisi's poems open with a sequence of appositional phrases and engage images that contrast with one another.

Opland (1998:111) suggests that nominals can serve as markers in a structural analysis. In setting out the poem, one may start a new line or a new stanza with a core nominal. Successive lines are marked by selected conjunctions that extend the preceding line, like “kuba” (because) or “kanti” (but) or by relative clauses; or by repetitions that signal parallel constructions or by constructions that negate the preceding statement. This forms the crux of the structural patterns of a praise poem, as observed by Opland (1998).

In an article entitled “Representation of masculinity in the contemporary oral praise poetry of Zulu men” Turner (1999) presents a range of predominant poetic features in male *izibongo* in isiZulu. The mention of male virility and sexual attractiveness is regarded as the theme of these poems. As these poems are composed by men, Turner (1999:199) claims that the men are therefore able to control and manipulate everything said in them. Many of these poems therefore make use of references to virility, sexual prowess, physical attractiveness, strength and fighting ability, with sexual prowess being the most predominant. These are male stereotypes reinforced and entrenched through *izibongo*. Turner (1999:202), however, makes a very significant point when she points out that masculinities are not static. She goes on to state that they change over time and are influenced and affected by changes in society.

To stimulate debate and research in the field of masculinities and *izibongo*, Turner (1999:202) sets up a number of questions which are relevant to the study of the poetry about women as well. The questions are:

What are other vehicles for the expression of masculine ideas? How different are the perceptions of masculinity between urban and rural contexts? How do the perceptions of masculinity vary between the youth and their elders, between women and men? What are women’s perceptions of the ideal male figure? How has hegemonic masculinity changed over the past 50-100 years?

The key question of all is whether this form of social expression is adapting to changing social conditions. An answer to this question is to be found in an article by Kaschula and Diop (2000) entitled “Political Processes and the Role of the Imbongi and Griot in Africa”. This comparative study of the tradition observes (2000:18) that poetry by poets like Bongani Sitole and Zolani Mkiva is more evaluative in its approach and function. Contemporary issues are evaluated in their poetry. Besides, the thematic content of this poetry has been broadened to reflect the important issues of the day, be they religious, political or social. In this regard a comparison of a poem performed in 1960 in Senegal at the time of their independence shows thematic similarities with the one performed in 1994 during South Africa’s liberation. Kaschula and Diop (2000:19) observe that both poems lack reference to genealogy. Both poems are international, as they refer to the two leaders’ international exploits. This issue is also observed by Jadezweni (2000) in an article entitled “The inauguration of President Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994: The Dawn of a New era in Xhosa Praise poetry”. Kaschula and Diop (2000:19) state further that the poems also appeal for unity, reconciliation and prosperity.

In an article entitled “Praising the graduates: the repeated phrase in Xhosa oral poetry”, Neethling (2001) clearly illustrates that praise poetry easily adapts to the changing circumstances, as Zolani Mkiva’s poetry is performed in a totally different environment from the traditional one for which this tradition was initially intended. It is therefore obvious that praise poetry is adapting to the various changes to which it is exposed in its area of performance. It is therefore important to observe whether these changes with time occur in the poetry about women as well.

In his book entitled *Voicing the text – South African Oral Poetry and Performance* Brown (1998:87) sheds more light on the personal praises. He states that personal praises are inter-textual because some texts are self-composed, while others draw from existing praises. This explanation acknowledges the effort made by the poet in the production of his poem.

With critics who regard praise poems as products of improvisation only, there is an obvious oversight. Brown (1998) also observes that the formal principle of praise poetry is that of 'naming'. These names are qualified by epithets, many of which are customary such as animal images. Some of these epithets may be drawn from *izibongo* of other chiefs or kings. Most epithets are, however, drawn from nature. Brown (1998), like the other critics of this genre of poetry, observes that simple repetition and parallelism form an integral part of praise poetry.

The text of praise poetry is thus based upon cycles of repetition revolving around a concatenation of images. In this thought-provoking and impeccably researched study Brown (1998:77) states that the influence of praise poetry on black literary production has been pervasive. This observation is regarded as highly significant for this study.

In an article entitled "The two Supporting walls of Imbokodo and Independence Have Fallen Over'. Functions of Ndebele Verbal Art during the Time of their Unrest", Groenewald (2001:240) conditions that the most universal feature of praise poetry is probably its individualising function. This is true as these poems constitute their subject. The functions of praises are captured in an abstract which Groenewald (2001:240) quotes from Gunner and Gwala (1991) in which it is stated that praising illuminates the figure involved. *Izibongo* are names that identify and give meaning and substance to an individual. *Izibongo* create for the individual a sense of worth and wholeness and relate to individual self-esteem. Within the praises, individuality and the outlines of personal qualities are always in play. In as far as composition is concerned, the artist who is the poet makes use of re-contextualisation, which enables him to steal or to make use of phrases from other praises learnt or heard previously.

It is clear from the views of the critics reviewed above that praise poetry is a product of a very complex tradition. An invaluable point about praise poetry is made by Schapera, who observes that this poetry is not a preserve for men only. This point has significance for this study as praise poetry has always been regarded as intended for men only. The balance created by the observation that praise poetry consists of both praise and criticism makes one more curious to investigate the techniques employed

to express these two feelings. It is also in this way that rhythm is achieved through the balance of thought. Parallelism, linking and chiasmus, some of the techniques employed to give concrete and artistic expression in emotional and rhythmical language of the personal features and actions of the subject of praise, also stand out for investigation.

The determining structure of this poetry of an individual consists of a praise name as a basis; the opening statement is followed by an extension of this initial statement. This extension is further developed and closes with a conclusion. The poem as a whole consists of an opening formula followed by the body of the poem and finally a closing formula. As the formula is the determining structure, everything is presented in terms of these formulae. The genealogical and physical references are presented within these formulae. Instead of stanzas the tendency is to use paragraphs as units of thought when analysing this poetry.

Most critics seem to prefer the term "improvisation" to describe the process of production of this highly creative poetry. The term, improvisation seems to take away the amount of effort taken to produce this highly artistic poetry. A consideration of the stylistic techniques such as repetition, parallelism, piling and association, idiophones, digression, imagery, allusion and symbolism rules out any trickle of imitation, as improvisation also suggests. The reason for the perception that this poetry is a product of some form of imitation can possibly be found in its dynamic nature as praise poetry changes with the times. This tradition adapts to the changes to which it is exposed. However, its literary contribution is invaluable.

As regards the interface between praise poetry and literacy, Mona (1994:6) remarks as follows about isiXhosa written (modern) poetry:

It has become conventional that a scientific study of Xhosa written-poetry be conducted within the framework of the analytic couple: traditional-modern. In terms of this approach, traditional written-poetry is profoundly informed in its form and content by the indigenous oral forms, while modern written-poetry is profoundly

informed by the Western literary canon. The traditional-modern dichotomy has a bearing on the scope of research and methodology. A researcher usually either confines himself to traditional or modern written poetry, and analyses and interprets his data against indigenous or Western poetic conventions.

The interaction between oral and written literature is noted by Kaschula (2002:66) when he states:

Oral and written literature are literature in their own right – interacting at some point, remaining autonomous in many ways, backed by the same culture and society and performing the same function of commenting on that society and the world in general.

That oral literature is the forerunner of written literature is made clear when Kaschula (2002:66) quotes Horton and Finnegan who write:

One must remember that oral literature preceded writing, lives alongside writing, influences writing, and yet also manages to stand alone.

These observations are the most compelling ones for this study as it finds its basis in praise poetry.

2.3 Modern Poetry

This section provides a theory of modern poetry. The relevance to isiXhosa poetry of some of the aspects has not as yet been tested as the idiosyncracies of this language may not be amenable to the techniques applied to European languages. Maake (1994:279) cautions against indiscriminately imposing Eurocentric analytical methods to African oral poetry as well as being one-dimensional when embarking on poetry analysis by not allowing for innovation on the part of the poets.

The scheme proposed in this section bears in mind both the fact that isiXhosa poetry has its own distinguishing features that may not comply with certain poetic techniques that are to be found mostly in European languages. This consideration, however, does

not limit isiXhosa poetry to what is standard to the language without considering that poetry allows for more improvisation and innovation.

The scheme below is proposed for the analysis of selected poems about women:

- The informal elements of a poem which consist of:

The main events or elements of a poem

The meaning of the poem

Emotion

Setting and

Tension;

- The formal elements of a poem based on certain established patterns or rules of poetry. Special attention will then be paid to:

The form of a poem

The title to a poem

Prosodic elements – metre and rhythm, line break, repetition

Rhyme

Pacing and

Tone.

As a major element of poetry, metaphor receives special attention. Simile is treated together with metaphor as these figures often occur very closely together. Because of the concurrence of poetic elements, it is inevitable that some elements will be dealt with together under one heading. Metre and rhythm are such elements that are dealt

with jointly under one heading. Elements that are central to the study of a poem receive more elaborate treatment.

2.3.1 INFORMAL ELEMENTS

a) The main events or elements in a poem

The reader looks at the number of stanzas and or verses of the poem. The reader's attention is then drawn to the division of the poem into the main events, i.e. divide the poem into meaningful parts or units or sections or happenings. The way in which these parts are distributed in the poem is also of interest to the reader. This will enable the reader to divide the poem into specific units.

b) The meaning of the poem

The reader is interested in establishing what the meaning of the poem is. The reader wants to know what the idea, concept or intention of the poet in the poem is. What is the plan or purpose of the poet? How can the poet engage the interest of the reader? How can the poet attract and keep the interest and attention of the reader in the poem?

c) Emotion

In *The Chambers Dictionary* (1998:527) emotion is defined as:

A moving of the feelings; agitation of mind; any of various phenomena of the mind, as anger, joy, fear or sorrow, associated also with physical symptoms; feeling as distinguished from cognition and will.

In *The World Book Encyclopedia* (1994:228) it is stated that emotion is usually considered to be a feeling about or reaction to certain important events or thoughts. Riccio (1980:22) defines emotion as any one of the states designated as fear, anger, joy, surprise, grief, disgust, hate, and so on. Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1992:203)

regard emotions to be a result of coarse cognitive evaluations that elicit internal and external signals and corresponding suites of action plans. Johnson-Laird and Oatley (ibid.) state further that these emotions have cognitive rather than physiological causes.

A remark which sums up the definitions presented above is made by Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1992:202) when they state that emotions are distinctive states caused by recognisable events of which people can be consciously aware. This is true as both *The Chambers Dictionary* (1998) and *The World Book Encyclopaedia* (1994:228) define emotion as a state that comes about in reaction to something an individual is conscious of. Riccio's (1980) definition explicitly states what these reactions lead to. According to Riccio (1980) the stimuli lead to fear, anger, joy, surprise, grief, disgust, hate, and so on.

d) Poetry and Emotion

On the basis of the theories of emotions it can be concluded that the emotions resulting from a stimulus or stimuli result or lead to some activity like running away from the situation, crying, laughing, etc. Besides this myriad of reactions, there could be verbal responses too. Poetry is one such response. Pilkington (2000:142) states that poetry is primarily an expression of emotion (or feeling). He cites Wordsworth who wrote that all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. This overflow of these emotions follows a sequence, as suggested by Larkin cited by Pilkington (2000:143). This sequence is referred to as stages. There are three stages in the writing of a poem. The first stage is when a person becomes obsessed with an emotional concept to such a degree that he/she is compelled to do something about it. What he/she does is the second stage, namely to construct a verbal device that will reproduce his emotional concept in anyone who cares to read it, anywhere, anytime. The third stage is the recurrent situation of people in different times and places setting off the device and re-creating in themselves what the poet felt when he/she wrote.

The stages mentioned above map out the process involved in the writing of a poem. A poem is conceived after an experience (an emotional experience) and put into print for the consumers to read and critique it (the work). It is in this emotional aspect that a poem finds its character. A poem is therefore a result of an emotional experience. In describing the qualitative properties of emotions, Pilkington (2000:144-145) ends by stating that literariness can be characterised in terms of the attempt to express something that cannot be properly or fully said – or even implied. The description of literariness provided by Pilkington (2000) here is similar to the description of intellectual emotion provided by Boulton (1953:104), who refers to it as a condition in which great poetry is written and is found in human love, but defies description. It is therefore clear that emotion is central to poetry in particular and to art generally.

In Shipley (1970:118) art is referred to as the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling. It is stated further that the whole work of art is an isomorph of feeling and that passion determines the form. Dobyns (1996:12) is specific about the function that emotions play in a work of art. He states that the most successful poem is an expression of formally heightened emotion that seeks to establish an intimate relationship with the reader, in part making the reader a participant in the creative process. This remark therefore identifies two role-players – the author and the reader. The author is propelled by emotion to produce an excellent product, i.e. to achieve the sublime. The reader, on the other hand, is drawn in in the process of producing the work. The reader can be part of this process by, among other things, empathising with the speaker in the poem. This is possible if the emotions are engaged in the crafting of the work.

The *Dictionary of World Literature* edited by Shipley (1970:289) states that one way of expressing emotion in art is by finding an 'objective correlative', in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; so that when the external facts which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. The remarks above give a clear picture of how emotion finds expression in art. The artist finds an appropriate subject through

which to express his emotion. The emotion in the piece of art is presented through a chain of events that can describe the particular emotion. It is through this description or chain of events that the emotion can be evoked.

Shiple (1968) adds that it is no novelty to state that the artist must create the combination that will produce the effect he desires. These combinations point to the formula that was referred to earlier. It is therefore important to link the combinations within each formula in order to get the desired effect. A pertinent point is, however, made about these combinations when it is stated that the same combination may evoke different emotions in persons of different backgrounds and experiences. This point can be extended to specifically refer or encompass cultural diversity as well.

The means by which a poet's emotions are expressed are the key to the understanding of the emotions expressed. Emotive language or emotionally charged words are the means by which emotions are expressed. Beckson and Ganz (1989:72) describe emotive language as language designed to evoke or express emotional reactions toward its subject, as opposed to referential language. Ward (1981:184) describes emotive language as the use of words and phrases intended to do more than convey their literal and rational meaning, and to play upon the feelings or passions of the hearer or reader. Ruse and Hopton (1992:101) state the same when they describe emotive language as language used to express feelings or arouse an emotional response.

What is clear from the descriptions of emotive language given above is that language in a poem has to be organised in a way that will express feelings and elicit emotional responses from the readers. As regards this organisation, Pilkington (2000:142) provides examples of rhetorical devices that can provide a heightening of emotions in a work of art such as a poem. These devices are epizexis, which is an immediate repetition of a word; anadiplosis – a word at the end of one verse is repeated at the beginning of the next; epiphora – the same word is repeated finally in successive sentences or verses; epanados – this is the repetition of words in reverse order.

The *Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* edited by Preminger A. et al. (1974) states that emotion in poetry involves two people, a writer and a reader, and therefore a discussion of the role of emotion can be divided accordingly. It is argued, however, that the emphasis in poetry falls on the reader because a good poem moves the reader. An emotion may be aroused for purely aesthetic purposes – for "delight" – or else as an indirect means of inciting virtue, i.e. for didactic purposes.

In the argument as to whether a good poem arouses strong emotions and a bad one does not, there seems to be agreement that a good poem is inclined to arouse strong emotions. This view is also likely to be cancelled by the view that one's emotional reaction is subjective. A poem therefore has numerous readers whose reactions may differ, thus undermining the view that strong emotions equals a good poem. This argument is raised in order to caution a critic against stock responses, i.e. stereotyped responses.

The emotion of reading poetry was simply called pleasure, referred to more specifically as aesthetic pleasure. Another view was that it entailed catharsis. This view is dismissed because it restricts poetry to dealing only with pity and terror.

In trying to account for the reader's emotion, it is recommended that a critic should remember that any good poem has an element of the specific and the individual, i.e. a poem arouses a particular and even unique emotion. This definiteness of emotion can link up with the precision of good poetry. A response to poetry is highly complex and reading a poem a matter of emotional accommodation and adjustment.

About the emotion of the poet, it is stated that a poem itself can never offer conclusive evidence that the poet did not feel a certain emotion nor that he did. This can perhaps be established through his biography. A view that what a poem expresses is clearly not the emotion of the poet before he began writing a poem, but it may be his original emotion and the writing of the poem helped him to discover it more.

Two types of emotions are identified by Alexander Samuel as cited in Preminger (1974:220). These are: the material passion – the passions appropriate to the subject;

and the formal passion – the passion proper to the artist, which guides him in unifying his choice of words into an expressive whole. This is an equivalent of the aesthetic emotion of the reader. The critic should attempt to indicate that the poet, although in the grip of an emotion, is also in control of it, i.e. he is possessed by his emotion but also possesses it.

It is clear that emotion plays a very important role in the creative process – it makes the writing of a poem possible. The poet starts from his own emotions; the emotions can be the subject of a poem, or they can fuel the writing of a poem.

As poetry is instigated by emotion, it is therefore critical that this aspect forms part of the tools for the analysis of the poems selected for investigation. A closer look at emotions is likely to yield highly valuable results in the analysis of poetry about women. This is because of the likelihood of gender-specific emotions expressed by the poets writing about women. As gender is central to this study, it is therefore important to draw emotion as an aspect when dealing with the poem.

e) Setting

Setting consists of the time and place of the main elements or events of a poem and the meaning or significance of such time and place to the poem. But it is not always necessary to establish where the events or action takes place in a poem. The setting in such an instance is usually an imaginary one, or it is a mere construct which can be deduced from diction, in most cases.

f) Tension

Through suspense or surprise, tension is created in a poem. The reader thus wants to know what is going to happen. The author should be able to create and control anticipation. The poet wants the reader to anticipate something, to expect something because he introduced certain issues or concepts. Tension is a very useful technique when investigating the use of pacing in the poem. How tension is established in the poem is part of the interest of this investigation.

2.3.2 THE FORMAL ELEMENTS OF A POEM

a) The form of a poem

In *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* edited by Cuddon, J.A. (1998:327) form is defined as follows:

When we speak of the form of a literary work we refer to its shape and structure and to the manner in which it is made (thus its style) – as opposed to its substance or what it is about. Form and substance are inseparable, but they may be analysed and assessed separately. A secondary meaning of form is the kind of work – the genre to which it belongs.

Deutsch (1974:56) provides a more precise definition of form. She refers to form as:

The metrical and stanzaic organization of a poem. The form may be a conventional one, established by long use, such as the pattern of a ballad, a sonnet, etc.

Both definitions point to form as emanating from some principle of organisation. Form also refers to the genre of a poem. In *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:420) form is described as the most ambiguous term. Matterson and Jones (2000:9) state that form is sometimes considered an abstruse subject, difficult to understand; in extreme cases it may be considered a distraction, an unnecessary complexity, a barrier between reader and text. Both views are to be considered as a caution when dealing with the topic of form. Special attention needs to be paid to the perception that form can be considered a distraction, an unnecessary complexity and a barrier between reader and text. This consideration is essential in view of the recommendation made by Matterson and Jones (ibid.) that form is or should be the starting point of any analysis of poetry. They state that form distinguishes poetry from other kinds of writing or communication. It is therefore important to know all the salient features of this aspect of a poem.

As regards form, three levels are identified in *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:420). It is stated that at one level form can refer to the minutiae of the text, at another to the shape of the text itself, and at a third, to the characteristics a text may share with others. These three levels are clearly demarcated, thus making it easy to have a clear view of form. The least encompassing level, however, regards form as referring to metrical patterns as well as lexical, syntactic, and linear arrangements. At this level the term has much to do with matters of technique and style, as well as the various implications that emerge from those aspects. This is the case where a poet's use of, for example, heroic couplets shows his sense of the world or what a certain form says about literary history.

Another view considers form as structure. Structure is the overall "mode of arrangement" of the text, i.e. the way textual materials are organized so as to create shape. Deutsch (1974:57) also regards structure as another term for the formal aspect of a poem. She states further that when not synonymous with form, structure means the arrangement and development of images, metaphors, statements, and situations in relation to the theme. Structure is therefore concerned with organisation, which is what form is about. The importance of this organisation is best captured in the consideration of the significance to the poem of the way a poem looks when analysing it, as mentioned by Matterson and Jones (2000:9).

Boulton (1953:1) refers to form as one ingredient of beauty, as form implies some kind of definiteness or coherence, shape of some kind. Boulton (1953:1) continues and states that there seem to be two kinds of beauty to which we respond in a poem. This is the beauty of form and the beauty of splendid formlessness. This beauty is made possible by the fact that a poem has its own inherent laws that make it easy for the poet to exploit the license he/she has in writing poetry. Because of poetic license, the poet is able to manipulate the materials at his disposal in such a way that they result in some form or formlessness. The pleasure that we derive in poetry and as a result of this manipulation is usually dependent more or less on formal beauty.

b) Form and content

Form and content are inseparable. It is therefore impossible to comment on the one without making reference to the other. In this regard Matterson and Jones (2000:12) comment:

The relationship between a poem's form and content is organic, each is contingent upon the other, and therefore one cannot be dissociated from, or discussed without the other: they exist dialectically. The implication of this kind of view is that form is content.

This view is shared by Boulton (1953:9), who states that it is always misleading to separate the physical and mental form of a poem as these are interrelated. For Boulton (1953), the physical aspect represents "form" and the mental represents "content". In the introduction to his book, Chick (1988:1) makes it clear that form plays a vital role in a poem's expression. He writes:

Whereas form in literature is usually considered ancillary to content, the emphasis in this study is reversed. We are examining form for its own sake, much as one would when analysing a musical composition. To a large extent, it is the form, the method of communication and the organisation of the presentation which determines how the content will be received. Inherent in the elements of form and their combinations, lie countless possibilities for expression.

It is clear from the remarks above that form is as important as content is in a poem's expression. It is therefore important to observe the organic relationship of these two concepts, viz. form and content, when analysing a poem.

c) Form

Boulton (1953) postulates two types of form, namely physical form and mental form. Physical form, she states, means that much of the form of poetry can be perceived physically by the ear and eye, without any intellectual process occurring. The physical form is the appearance on paper, and much more important, the sound of poetry. It may be either the sound when poetry is read or the sound we hear mentally when we

read it ourselves. It includes: rhythm, rhyme, intonation and various kinds of echo and repetition.

Mental form might be described as content in the usual sense of the word when applied to literature; it includes grammatical structure, logical sequence; the pattern of associations; the use of a dominant image; the pattern of image and emotion. The mental form can be regarded as what is referred to as the internal form in *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:421). Internal form refers to the work's internal totality and the correspondence of that wholeness to the external world – microcosmic mirroring of experience.

Physical form

By looking at a printed page, even before we read a poem, we are able to notice the form of a poem. We are therefore able to say, this is a long poem or a short one. These refer to physical form. By hearing a poem read aloud we find that the physical form of poetry is mainly a pattern of sounds. These sounds are selected and organised in such a way that they form patterns. These patterns are made up of resemblances, repetitions or sharp differences of vowel and consonant sounds placed in relation to one another. A poor reading of a poem – stumbling, mumbling and monotonous – can spoil a poem. This is proof that intonation is part of the physical form of a poem. Shaped poems or poems fitted into pictorial shapes on the printed page represent the physical form. By looking at the shape, the reader is able to figure out what the poem is about.

Mental form

In order to highlight the importance of the quality of the content of a poem, Boulton (1953:98) presents the types of poems in descending order of size. She refers to each type as an intellectual structure, meaning that which can be reasoned about and defined in words. She further cautions the reader against the temptation of thinking that either largeness or smallness is an indication of merit. Boulton (1953:99) also states that types cannot usually be sharply defined. She states further that there will

be possible subdivisions, exceptions, overlaps and intermediate types. This view is shared by Lennard (1996:25) who states that the range of possible forms is huge because any of the specified elements of a given form may be varied, creating sub-groups which overlap. The classification of poems in accordance to the mental form, therefore, is likely to vary from reader to reader due to the overlaps, among other things.

The poems selected for analysis are examined for form within the framework as proposed in this section. It is in the interest of this study to establish whether poets writing about women make a conscious effort to engage form also when producing poetry about women. As physical form entails a lot of creativity, it is in the interest of this study to see whether that is used by the selected poets.

Boulton's classification of poetry

Boulton (1953) classifies poetry according to length as described below:

Epic

An epic is the longest kind of poem. It tells a story, generally a well-known one and always one of heroic action. The action is not trivial. There is generally a good deal of physical or spiritual conflict, or both. The style of an epic is very dignified, generally rather ornate and formal; the figures of speech used are often very elaborate. It is often prompted by nationalist feeling. It is the oldest form in the history of any literature.

Epic narrative

This is a poem in the dignified, formal style associated with the epic, or in some other highly ornamented style, telling a story of heroic action or suffering, but with one simple action and without the length and complexity of the true epic. It can be read in one sitting.

Simple narrative

This is a 'round unvarnished tale' in which the style is simple and direct and the story all important. In English poetry "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by S.T. Coleridge is an example of a simple narrative. In this form of poem the reader is thrilled by the simplicity and directness of style.

Verse essay

A verse essay is a piece of thoughtful verse on some topic of interest, neither a story nor an expression of personal emotion. It may be of two kinds: a didactic verse essay giving good advice or information or discussing something in a calm way.

Ode

A fairly long and stately poem written on some occasion or addressed to some person, thing or personified quality.

Lyric

A fairly short poem expressing emotion. Originally, it always meant a poem intended to be sung. A lyric is fairly simple and musical in diction. Most short poems may be classed as lyrics. The sonnet is lyrical in subject though perhaps not in form. A subdivision of a lyric is the elegy which is a poem, long or short, of mourning or on some sorrowful theme.

Epigram

This is a very short poem (usually two, four or six lines, crisply and concisely written) with a stinging climax. Its function is to display wit.

This classification will be used first and foremost in dealing with the content of the poem.

Mental form: logical sequence

This form pertains to the logical sequencing of events in a poem. In a narrative poem, for instance, the story is the most important concern; therefore its logical narrative structure is of the essence.

Mental form: the use of associations

It is important to note the point by Boulton (1953:117) that association in poetry must obviously depend for its effect on things that are common to many people, not things that are suggested to a very few individuals only. This is important, as associations must not be obscure so as to have an impact and/or significance. The associations of a word must thus be picked up easily from the context by many people. The organisation of these associations is important for a better understanding of a poem.

Mental form: patterns of imagery

In general a poem may have a series of images that support or contradict one another, or a single dominant image on which the sequence and structure of the poem depend.

A poem may consist of a collection of unrelated images. There may also be a poem with a single central, dominant image and builds the whole structure of the poem around it. An image may also recur in a long poem so often as to be its dominant image. Such an image may also recur in a specific poet's works.

Functions of form

Deutsch (1974:56) defines form as that which gives definite shape, emotional power and beauty to the materials of man's experience out of which the writer has composed his work. This all-encompassing definition regards form as a synthesizing principle. It is therefore form that pulls everything together in a poem. Matterson and Jones (2000:15) state that awareness of form is absolutely crucial if we are to talk about poetry at all. This awareness therefore makes it possible for us to distinguish between poetry and prose. With this awareness there is also a question of the meaning which different poetic forms carry. Each form has a different meaning from the other. Before any reading of the poem, the very mention of the word, "ode" presupposes radically

different attitudes to the subject as opposed to an "elegy" to the same subject. This is all possible as a result of formal conventions.

Matterson and Jones (2000:18) state that poetic forms can be used as means of stressing rather than undermining content. This function pertains to the appropriateness of form to the subject, because certain forms are more appropriate or more enriching than others for certain subjects. For instance, it is more appropriate to perform *izibongo* (praise poetry) for the king than to write a sonnet for him. Another example is a form made of encoded meanings. This form can be useful in times when a writer could face imprisonment or even death for writing about unpopular views or beliefs.

Sometimes form and content can be in conflict. Matterson and Jones (2000:16) illustrate this point by citing Bruce Springsteen's song, "Born in the U.S.A.". This song was misunderstood to be expressing patriotism rather than criticism of President Ronald Reagan. The response was governed by the dictates of the song's form. This song is an anthem, and thus traditionally a vehicle for patriotic assertion. The content of the song was overwhelmed and even reversed for some of its listeners by its authentic form. This is most likely to occur in poetry that purports to praise, i.e. praise poetry in isiXhosa.

d) **The title of a poem**

In the introduction to the book entitled *The Title to the Poem*, Ferry (1996:1) traces the word from Latin as "titulus" which makes the title synonymous with "inscription", "written words". In this sense a title is defined as words inscribed above the text of the poem. This is taken a step further by Van Zyl (1992:535), who defines the title as:

Enige gegewe in 'n tipografiese opskrif-posisie by 'n poësietekst kan as gedigtitel of deel daarvan beskou word.

From the two definitions offered it is clear that a title is written above the text of the poem. Van Zyl (1992:535), however, adds that what is written above the text of the

poem may be part of the title. This implies that part of the title can constitute a part of the body or text of the whole poem. Van Zyl (1992:535) adds another critical point with regards to the title to the poem. He states:

'n Gedig kan 'n titelose bestaan voer.

In this regard Ferry (1996:1-2) states:

The expectation of wording in the space above a poem is largely a development of printing. In the earliest European manuscripts, where poems were copied onto scrolls, longer ones were identified by some sort of name or label, usually given after the poem as a practical signal to the reader that the scroll had been unwound as far as the end of the poem. If any wording appeared before the poem, it most often consisted of incipit, "here beginneth", followed by the opening phrase.

This segment of history confirms the view that a poem can be without a title. However, Ferry's (1996:1-2) information introduces another role-player, the printer or publisher, who would make his input in order to guide the readers. This introduction, which was commonly used in medieval manuscripts as stated in *The Chamber's Dictionary* (1998:811), points to the preoccupation the authors of that period had – they merely submitted the body of the work (poem), the rest would be decided and done by the printer. This also leads to the conclusion that the title would be given after the poem had been written. Ferry (1996:3) concurs with this view for she states that the title would usually (with exceptions) be presumed to be formulated after the text of the poem. She takes this further and states that the poem would need to exist even if it is in the poet's mind, before the titler could choose what to say about the poem. It is therefore clear from the above that the poem (its text) precedes the title. Against this view however, Ferry (ibid.), once again cites the case of poems written about a specific occasion. She maintains that their title would precede every aspect of the poem except the poet's decision to write it. It can therefore be concluded that some titles precede the writing of the text of the poem. Generally the title is given after the poem has been written.

Ferry (1996:2) describes the title to a poem as the wording above the poem. She states that it is visually set apart from the text by shape, spacing, and in print, often by a variety of typographical features (as are marginal glosses, which perform some interpretive functions of a title). The prose after the title can be regarded as marginal glosses as it provides background information to the poem. Ferry (1996:2) tactfully selects the words "visually set apart" in describing the place where the title is in relation to the text of the poem. This careful selection of words suggests an awareness of the relationship between the title and the body of the poem. Van Zyl (1992:535) suggests:

'n Mens kan die verhouding tussen titel en gedigliggaam dikwels ook 'n interaksie noem.

Ferry (1996:2) obviously realises that there is an interaction between the title and the text of the poem. This interaction further suggests the coexistence and co-operation between the two. This aspect is dealt with below.

Some titling conventions

Some poems do not have individual titles but carry the title of the anthology. Each individual poem therefore conforms to the demands of the title of the anthology. In cases like this one (where the poems do not have titles) the poems are merely numbered. The numbering may also be in the form of dates of when each poem was written.

The title of a poem can consist of a fragment of the poem completed by the text of the poem. In biographical poems the name of the person can precede the various subtitles that will be used in the middle of the poem. Although the poem has a title, the subtitles to the episodes constitute part of the titling conventions. The value of these "tussentitels", as Van Zyl (1992:536) refers to them, is discussed under the functions of the title.

Some poets give titles that are not at all related to the text of the poem. Ferry (1996:3) regards such titles as similar to "Untitled". This equation is arrived at because of the violent assault these titles make on the authority claimed by the presence of a title.

Lipman and Sharp (1980:19) sum up the conventions of titling as follows:

The title can be about the subject of the poem. It can be about the place or time of writing the poem or the place and time of the events referred to in the poem. It can be many things, literal or poetical. But the poet might also want to write a poem about the problems of finding just the right title for a poem.

The above provide unlimited scope for the poet who wants to give a title to his poem. From these guidelines it is clear that theme and content are to be used as a basis. Some poets choose to use the form of the poem as the title. The case at hand is the sonnet. A poet can entitle his poem "sonnet" and simply number them, e.g. Sonnet I, II, III etc.

The functions of the title

Although the title and the text or body of the poem interact or exist together, a distinction between the two must be made. This is essential because the title has its definite functions within the dyad. The identifying function that a title performs in a poem can be considered to be its primary role. The title identifies the poem, initially. It then goes on to provide some information about the poem, in one-way or another. This is possible because, as Ferry (1996:1) suggests what occupies the title space claims association with what follows it. It is precisely this placing which gives the title the authority because it tells someone who presumably has not yet read the poem something about it. Ferry (1996:1) goes on to provide the way in which the title provides information. She states that the title may choose to offer information or may in varying degrees withhold it in another exercise of authority. Withholding information would be deliberate on the part of the titler. The intention with such an exercise would most probably to stimulate interest in the reader. In order to achieve this goal the titler is either selective or secretive about what he leaves out in favour of

what he includes. These choices are powerfully expressive of the title's interpretive authority.

The title can provide access into the poem through its framing power as suggested by Ferry (1996:213). A title, for instance, can be in such a way that it stipulates the form, genre or code. The reader therefore knows beforehand what to expect in the body of the poem. In this way the title has provided direction to the reader. The rest of the poem simply extends on the title and gives it a new dimension.

The title fills up the gap left out in the body of the poem by contributing to the whole structure of the poem. It can become part of the motoric moment in a poem by being part of the movement of the action in the poem. This is also possible where the title extends a certain metaphor in the poem.

The title can be part of an outline of the poem. The examples given by Van Zyl (1992:535) are "Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird" by Wallace Stevens and "Die sewe vrese" by Ernst van Heerden. In this case the poem follows exactly the guide provided by the title for instance the title must provide thirteen ways of looking at a blackboard in the case of the poem by Wallace Stevens. The same holds for the poem by Ernst van Heerden. In this poem the seven fears are described.

The sub-titles help demarcate the poem. They also help in maintaining the link between the title and the various parts of the poem. In other poems in isiXhosa, this link is achieved through the use of marginal notes or glosses.

A title can provide information which is only known to the insider. This is the case when the title is given by someone else other than the poet himself. The title might give information about the authorship or the circumstances in which the poem was written. A poem entitled, "Sir Walter Raleigh the Night before His Death", an example given by Ferry (1996:12), is one such case.

A title tells the reader ahead of time what he otherwise could only find out for themselves by reading to the end of the poem. This function can be attributed to its grammatical function which Ferry (1996:211) describes as follows:

Grammatically the title of a poem acts as a statement, comment, observation, or signal about the poem that is inseparable from the reader's experience of the whole without being contained in the text.

This function highlights the value of the title to a poem – It is inseparable from the whole poem while operating alone. It is this function that gives prominence to the interaction between the title and the text of the poem. The importance of this interaction and the special importance of the title to a poem is best described by Van Zyl (1992:536) who concludes:

Die gedigtitel kan dus in 'n verskeidenheid van taalverbintenisse staan t.o.v. die gedigliggaam of selfs naasliggende gegewens en is 'n teksgedeelte wat beswaarlik by 'n deeglike lesing buite rekening gelaat kan word.

The relationship of the title with the body of the poem alludes to the multi-referential nature of poetic language. That a close reading of a poem will seldom overlook the title is an indication of the important role the title plays in a poem. Any title in whatever visual form, therefore, ought to receive attention from the reader.

e) Rhythm

Brooks and Warren (1960:493) define rhythm as a regularly patterned flow of sounds or movements. Heese and Lawton (1988:23) are more elaborate in their definition of rhythm. They define the word 'rhythm' as meaning 'flow' which is the sense of movement created by the writer's use of emphasis and tempo. The flow or movement that is referred to in both definitions is obviously not without organisation as reference is made to it being created. The writer therefore crafts this flow. In discussing free verse Strauss (1993:123) states that poets have always insisted that no verse is 'libre' [i.e. no verse is free] for the man who wants to do a good job. This statement definitely

alludes to the creativity that is involved in the crafting of a poem. The poet is in absolute control of the elements of poetry at his disposal – rhythm being one of them.

That rhythm is to be found in prose as well as observed by Brooks and Warren (1960:494) who state that poetry tends to be more elaborately patterned than prose. This is a very important point about the rhythm of poetry. The statement does concede that natural rhythm occurs in prose as well, but poetry has a rhythm unique to it. The rhythm of poetry is thus regularized and systematized.

In respect of specialised crafting of poetic rhythm, Coombes (1953:17) refers to rhythm as a matter of methodical emphasis, of words given by the quality and pressure of emotion and thought behind the words. This observation leads to another important quality of rhythm. Coombes (1953:18) makes the remarks that the rhythm of our everyday language is always and continuously being given subtle variations by our shifts of feeling and mood by our interest and the kind of interest in what we are saying, or by our lack of interest; and under the stress of powerful and complex feelings how much more suggestive and variable does the rhythm become. These remarks introduce an important aspect of rhythm, its complexity and variability. It seems essential for rhythm to be varied. Central to this variability and complexity is feeling. Coombes (1953:18) goes on to state that depth of feeling and conviction impels the best writers to write in a more marked rhythm than that of ordinary speech. This point also gives a distinction between the rhythm of ordinary speech and that of verse.

In his description of rhythm Strauss (1993:126-127) states that rhythm is made up of a large variety of factors none of which can be separated from the others: the repetition of stresses, the spacing of them, the quickening and slackening of the speaking voice, the kinds of effort required to pronounce words and the way they fall on the ear (the texture of the verse); the speed of the ideas, the concentrations and relaxations of meaning; the tensions caused by divergence from the expected rhythm; the tensions and resolutions introduced by rhyme, the organisation effected by rhyme; the tensions

and cross-rhythms produced by any one of these factors playing against another; sometimes also the appearance of the words on the page.

The remarks made above give a clear picture of the operations involved with rhythm. The tensions that occur between the different modes of expressing meaning in a poem seem to be central in poetic rhythm. Of great interest about rhythm is the remark that the very appearance of the words on a page is rhythmically organised. The uniqueness of poetic rhythm is alluded to by Strauss (1993:124-125) when he sketches out the conventions governing the writing of a poem or verse. He makes it clear that the writing of verse is governed by conventions. He states further that there are rules which guide to prevent the poet from falling foul of the natural laws of poetry. He sticks to them or breaks them by his own choice or at his own peril.

The laws that are referred to above have to do with consistency. A poet cannot afford to fall out of time. This, however, does not mean he cannot vary his rhythms. Neither does it mean he cannot make a deliberate calculated break which enables him to shift into a new time, marked rhythmically in a different way. But he may not throw whole lines together that do not fit together metrically and have no reason to fit together.

The laws and rules mentioned here point out to the discipline that a poet has to submit to. Simply stated, the writing of a poem is not a haphazard exercise. It is a game played according to its rules. For a critic an understanding of the laws and rules of poetry writing constitutes what Lennard (1996:xiii) refers to as the basics for the understanding and ability to judge the elements of a poet's craft.

Rhythm can be regarded as a distinguishing factor in poetry. This is so because of the unique nature of poetic rhythm. According to Brooks and Warren (1960:1), many people feel poetry is rather peculiar and even useless. The two reasons advanced for this view are (1) the 'way of the saying', and (2) the 'nature of the said'. The 'way of saying' refers to the strongly marked rhythms, the frequent appearance of rhyme, and the figurative language etc. The 'nature of the said' refers to the fact that poetry

generally contains neither a good, suspenseful story nor obviously useful information. Because of these two aspects, then, poetry may seem both unnatural and irrelevant.

As regards the pattern, rhythm is described as the repetition in time of a perceptible pattern. Our concern in poetry as spelt out by Brooks and Warren (1960:2) is aural (heard) rhythm of sound. In this regard Woolfe and Hampton (1984:199) state that all the sound patterning in a poem affects the rhythm, which will stumble or flow, speed up or slow down, depending on the use of hard or soft sounds, long or short words, repetition, rhyme etc. Heese and Lawton (1988:23) also make mention of sound's being central to rhythm. They state that other elements which affect the nature of the sense of movement created by the poet's words are combinations of different metrical patterns, pauses, length of words, ease or difficulty of pronunciation. It is therefore clear that sound is the most important element of rhythm.

It is quite critical to ascertain how rhythm is established in isiXhosa poetry about women. As isiXhosa is a different language from the European languages whose examples are used by the critics cited in this section, it is important to look at the techniques used by the poets writing in isiXhosa to achieve the same effect, if not more, as achieved by the poets in English poetry, for instance.

f) Metre

Heese and Lawton (1988:23) describe metre as the repetitive and symmetrical pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables on which a poem is based. Boulton (1953:17) makes no distinction between metre and rhythm as she says both refer to the pattern of stresses. However, rhythm is described as all encompassing when it is stated that it means every possible aspect of the pattern of stresses. On the other hand, metre is described as meaning the symmetrical, repetitive pattern of stresses. Rhythm thus includes metre, but metre is a relatively small part of rhythm. Heese and Lawton (1988:23) concur with this view when they state that the basic metre of a poem is only one of a complexity of elements contributing to the overall rhythm of a poem.

Abrams (1999:159) identifies four types of metre, namely:

1. Quantitative metre, which is established by the relative duration of the utterance of a syllable and consists of a recurrent pattern of long and short syllables;
2. Syllabic metre depends on the number of syllables within a line of verse, without regard to the fall of the stresses;
3. Accentual metre depends on the number of stressed syllables within a line, without regard to the number of intervening unstressed syllables;
4. Accentual-syllabic metre observes the metric units that consist of a recurrent pattern of stresses on a recurrent number of syllables (The stress-and-syllable type). Of importance in this type of metre is the relation to each other of the accented and unaccented syllables, as observed by Brooks and Warren (1960:496).

Brooks and Warren (1960:497) state further that we do not need the concept of 'feet' in syllabic verse, because our only concern in this type is with the number of syllables to the line. However, in accentual-syllabic verse which counts stresses as well as syllables, its basic unit has to be a combination of an unaccented syllable (or syllables) and an accented syllable. Hence, the line in accentual syllabic verse consists of so many units of this sort – that is, so many metrical 'feet'.

In describing quantitative verse Boulton (1953:21) uses the example of Greek and Latin verse, which is patterned into long and short syllables. This type of verse gets its name from the arrangement of long or short syllables.

In accentual verse, metre is determined by the pattern of stronger and weaker stresses on the syllables composing the words in the verse-line; the stronger is called the "stressed" syllable and all the weaker ones the "unstressed" syllables. The perception of a strong stress is not an absolute quantity, but relative to the degree of stress in the adjacent syllables.

Abrams (1999:160) identifies three major factors that determine where the stresses (in the sense of the relatively stronger stresses or accents) will fall in a line of verse. These are:

1. Word accent – In words of more than one syllable, the stress falls on the first syllable.
2. Monosyllabic words – Where the stress will fall depends on the grammatical function of the word (we normally put stronger stress on nouns, verbs and adjectives i.e. in English). The 'rhetorical accent' or the emphasis we give a word because we want to enhance its importance in a particular utterance also determines where the stresses will fall.
3. The prevailing "metrical accent" – the beat that we have come to expect in accordance with the stress pattern that was established earlier in the metrical composition.

If the prevailing stress pattern enforces a drastic alteration of the normal word accent, we get a wrenched accent. Wrenching is sometimes deliberately used for comic effect.

Boulton (1953:31-32) compares the variation of metre to musical counterpoint. She says the function of basic metre is to provide a regular undercurrent, a kind of pulse-beat of the poem, over which the interesting variations are heard. Unless we recognize the basic metre, by ear at least, not necessarily by name, we cannot appreciate the variations. What happens when we hear a poem and like the rhythm is that we quickly (probably after the first line) learn to expect a repetition of this pattern; we keep receiving shocks of different kinds, which are pleasurable. These variations in poetry fulfil a function much like that of counterpoint in music. In skilfully written poetry, the variations on the basic metre generally coincide with important words or with changes of emotion.

Brooks and Warren (1960:500) describe rhetorical variation as variation of metre forced by considerations of expressive emphasis – to spell out the emotional situation for the reader. This is a dramatic way of representing a situation. Such a variation tends to slow down the movement of the line because in order to mark the secondary stress the reader hesitates for a moment. Rhetorical variations serve to give expression and vitality to the verse. They relieve a verse of the mere monotonously mechanical

beat. In *Literary Terms: A Dictionary* (1960:235) it is written that a careful writer arranges his rhythm so that they intensify the expression of what is said. The ability to employ rhetorical variation can be ascribed to the author's intention to be more expressive.

A very important point made by Brooks and Warren (1960:498) is that metre cannot violate the natural accentuation of a word. Though metre cannot violate the natural accentuation of a word, it may metrically recognize minor or secondary accents in a word. This is especially important to remember when dealing with isiXhosa poetry, a language with no stress but tone. It is, however, important to note that some innovative poets impose accent on a language like isiXhosa in crafting their poetry. This is nevertheless hypothetical at this stage of the study and will be explored more fully in the chapters that follow.

About the organisation of the metre, Brooks and Warren (1960:499) remark that naive readers may believe that the more neatly the stresses of normal conversation are made to conform to those of the metrical pattern, the better the poem is. They may even admire the tidy workmanship of such verse. Monotonous regularity is what will kill the vitality of human speech in such a poem. Good verse does not subside into numbing regularity. Heese and Lawton (1988:23) recommend that to a skilled poet the regular metrical beat (which leads to boredom) is a foundation, a norm from which to depart and return. This departure from the usual provides pleasure to the reader who enjoys variation. These deviations from the basic metre of a poem are often described as "irregularities" or worse still "abnormalities". This suggests that a deviation constitutes a flaw, an irony when one considers the contribution a deviation makes to the quality of a poem. In fact very few good poems are absolutely regular. Deviations from the basic metre are often the means whereby the poet creates a particularly subtle and expressive rhythm.

In line with deviation from the usual, Boulton (1953:19) writes that a word may be stressed or unstressed according to its importance in two different sentences. She cautions against stressing, which is contrary to the stressing of normal speech. We

have to pay attention to the meaning when stressing a sentence, for otherwise we may pass on our misunderstanding to everyone who hears us.

As isiXhosa is a tone language the issue of stress therefore is unlikely to be of relevance to its poetry save for instances of innovation.

g) The use of pauses

The rhythm of a poem is strongly affected by the writer's use of pauses. These may be indicated by punctuation or simply by the syntax. Sometimes pauses are indicated by the meaning of the words. A slight pause within the line (which need not be indicated by the punctuation) is called a caesura. A caesura does not affect the metrical count.

Apart from stops within the line, the rhythm of a poem is also affected by the number of stops at the ends of the lines – these are end-stopped lines (a distinct pause at the end of the line is written).

Enjambment or run-on-lines is a case of a line that carries on into the next without an obvious pause. This phenomenon impacts on the rhythms of the two lines involved.

The extensive use of pauses throws the emphasis fairly heavily on certain words. This also is likely to create a slow tempo. The use of polysyllabic words, the use of words which are difficult to pronounce and constant shifts in the metrical pattern all contribute to a change in the rhythm of a poem. On the other hand, the extensive use of the enjambment, shorter words, words which are easy to pronounce and a consistent metrical pattern, are elements conducive to the creation of a faster rhythm.

As pauses constitute the physical form it is important to investigate how the poet employs pauses to achieve the desired effect in what he / she wants to communicate in the poem. It is also in the interest of this study to establish whether pauses are used merely decoration or used with significance to the meaning of the poem.

h) Types of rhythm

It is a misconception to think that a good poem is a smooth and musical one. The 'best' rhythm for a poem is the one which best expresses the

poet's feelings and thoughts. The rhythm must be an organic element, combining with all other elements involved to create the most satisfactory whole. The function of rhythm therefore should be organic.

Regular rhythm

This is rhythm with regular metre without any deviation. There is constant use of end-stopped lines. The beat is predictable making it difficult to concentrate on the meaning of the words.

In spite of the above remarks it is important to bear in mind that it is not possible to lay down rules about the use of rhythm. It is not easy to say a variable rhythm is bad or good, nor can we say an even rhythm is good or bad. We can simply comment on the suitability of any given rhythmic pattern when considering it as an organic element in a poem as a whole. Its relationship to the quality of the feeling being expressed is particularly important.

Flexible rhythm

This type of rhythm entails deviations from the norm, i.e. basic metre. These deviations, reversals and additions surprise the ear and hold the interest of the reader.

Free verse

Some poems are written in lines of varying length, having no specific metrical pattern. This is called free verse. It is usually, but not always, unrhymed.

As pointed out earlier, an absence of metre does not indicate an absence of rhythm. A poet may create his own stress patterns instead of being bound to conventional ones. This is possible with innovation.

The way in which free verse is set out may at first seem entirely arbitrary. However, if a poem is good, a close examination should show that the organisation of lines and stanzas is functional. This is significant as much of the delight to be derived from the

reading of poetry stems from the pleasure experienced in contemplating patterns which are not only decorative but significant.

i) Why does a poem require rhythm?

Rhythm is texturing of language. Rhythm imitates and echoes the rhythms of the heart and lungs creating a physiological link between the reader and poem (Dobyns 1996:54). This is in line with the view held by Brooks and Warren (1960:2), who state that rhythm is a natural expression and not an artificial aspect of poetry. They state explicitly that poetry is an expression of the experience of life. This is true as rhythm is deeply involved in the experience of, and expression of, emotion.

Brooks and Warren (1960: 495) make an interesting observation as regards the function of rhythm. They mention that a paradox about rhythm is that the strongly marked rhythm of verse also tends to create a hypnotic effect. The characteristic quality of the hypnotic state is a sharpened focus of attention and heightened suggestibility. This is a very important function as it impacts on the readers. Readers are influenced by metre to free their imaginations from the bonds of the ordinary world and to accept what Coleridge (as cited by Brooks and Warren (1960:495) calls the “willing suspension of disbelief”. Coleridge writes further that metre tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and attention. With regards to the relevance of this view to poetry a living example is children's poetry where rhythm reinforces imagination, among others.

j) The line break

Dobyns (1996:108) states that there are two clear rhythms to be found in a traditional metric poem. These are the rhythm of the sentence and the rhythm of the line. Counterpoint in this instance is easy to employ. Using counterpoint is a very clever technique, as illustrated by Gerald Manley Hopkins in *Current Literary Terms* by Scott (1965:66); two rhythms are in some manner running at once. Counterpoint, so to speak, is a mixture of the rhythm of lineation and syntax (Dobyns 1996:108). It is as a result of this mixture or combination of rhythms that the cadence of the stanzas is

established and maintained. The observation made by Dobyns (1996:111) that every line in a poem must justify its individual existence is indeed true. It is true that where a poet breaks a line this is never a matter of accident. This is so because the line break is part of both the form and content of a poem.

k) The manipulation of repeating elements

A remark made by Heese and Lawton (1988:63) that repetition creates pleasing echoes akin to rhyme, without the restrictions of regular end-rhyme, is relevant to isiXhosa poetry. It is relevant because this language does not use a device like rhyme in the strict sense as the Germanic languages do. In isiXhosa poetry rhyme is used in a way that a naïve reader would regard as arbitrary. This is however not the case, because when it is used, it is used with effect. Repetition of whatever nature presents the readers with a pattern and it is pleasurable (Dobyns (1996:124). Dobyns continues and state that even a single repetition presents us with the familiar and therefore with the known world. This points out to repetition for effect. This type of repetition is the one where, for instance, a word is repeated in order to draw attention to it. This is in any case the same with the other elements that are repeated.

Dobyns (1996:125) identifies two general ways of using repetition, viz. to set up patterns that the reader will correctly anticipate; and to surprise the reader with repetitions like rhyme where he or she did not expect it. This is one of the major ways of manipulating surprise.

Any poem may have dozens of repeating elements occurring in both predetermined and seemingly random positions. In free verse, however, the placing of those elements appears to be more unpredictable but they are not arbitrary. One would be tempted to think repetition or the placing of certain elements in isiXhosa poetry is arbitrary. This is not the case as already stated earlier. This will be further supported from the research in the chapters that follow.

Repeating elements may be part of the content or form of a poem. Repeating elements that primarily affect the content of a poem add to the information given in

the poem. On the other hand, those that primarily affect the form can be either visual or aural. Visual repetitions derive from the appearance of the poem on the page – the shape of the poem and whether there are lines and stanzas of equal length. As soon as we see the appearance of the poem on paper we anticipate certain qualities even before we read it. According to Dobyns (1996:126), the most common repeating element is aural. Dobyns (1996) continues and states that there may be dozens of repeating aural elements in a poem vying for the attention of the reader. These elements increase and release tension and emphasize content. Some elements such as end-rhyme emphasize the line.

The use of repeating elements may entail the balancing and/or repetition of syllables, words, phrases, sentences, lines and stanzas of similar length. The repetition of phrases encompasses the repetition of syntactic structures. Repetition may also entail the recurrence of rhyme, in fact, all aspects of form that can be used to give the reader a sense of symmetry.

Before exploring the repeating patterns in isiXhosa poetry it seems appropriate to cite Dobyns (1996:129) who states:

There are many kinds of repeating patterns, but a common poetic technique, as we have seen, is to surprise the reader with the pattern, establish it, threaten to remove it and then return to it.

It should, however, be noted that these variations in the employment of repetition depend solely upon how innovative the poet is.

l) The couplet

Most of these couplets are sentences that are linked up by enjambment with clearly marked punctuation. The majority of these couplets have a causal relationship.

m) The refrain Heese and Lawton (1994:60) describe a refrain as a line or several lines repeated at regular intervals throughout the poem. Abrams (1999:263) adds that the line is repeated with slight changes sometimes. This refrain is usually at the end of

each stanza, Abrams (1999:263) adds. The functions of a refrain are given in *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* edited by Preminger A. et al. (1993:1018) as being to emphasize or reinforce emotion or meaning by catching up, echoing, and elaborating a crucial image or theme. It also gives pleasure in its repetition of sound, and it serves to segment and correlate rhythmical units and so unify the poem.

Another remarkably interesting function of a refrain is identified by Boulton (1953:89) as a kind of a hypnotic conditioning of the mind in which we are less critical of what is being said to us. A refrain may thus help to bring the audience into a receptive mood. Boulton (1953) adds that this would be an aspect of a religious ritual.

A warning about some refrains is sounded by Boulton (1953:90) when she says that some refrains, as in some rhymes, contain topical allusions which are now lost. This is an important caution to heed especially with isiXhosa poetry whose poetry might draw its refrains from, among others, folktales.

n) Tone

Richards (1929:181) proposes four points of view from which nearly all articulate speech can be regarded. These are: sense, feeling, tone and intention. These points of view to be considered when dealing with highly articulate speech point out to the overlap and concurrence of the elements of a poem. In dealing with tone, therefore, intention must also be dealt with. Tone and intention are obviously inseparable. Richards (ibid.) states that the speaker has ordinarily an attitude to his listener. At the same time the speaker has a purpose conscious or unconscious with what he says i.e. the effect he is endeavouring to promote. It is this purpose that modifies the speaker's speech.

Heese and Lawton (1988:157) cite Abrams who states that critics have emphasised that a literary work is a mode of speech. This definitely sheds light on Richards's view above. Heese and Lawton (1988:157) continue and state that to conceive a work as an utterance suggests that there is a speaker who has determinate personal qualities, and

who expressed attitudes both toward the characters and materials within his own work and towards the audience to whom he addresses the work. In as far as personal qualities and attitudes is concerned, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (1998:920) offers the following definition:

The reflection of a writer's attitude (especially towards his readers), manner, mood and moral outlook in his work; even perhaps, the way his personality pervades the work.

The definition offered by the dictionary points out to attitude and personality. The definition also presupposes an audience who are readers. As regards the attitude to the audience Beckson and Ganz (1960:282) state that in general critics use the term attitude to refer to the author's relationship to his material or to his audience, or both. These attitudes as they appear in the work itself constitute or determine a tone of the work.

The intention with tone is clearly spelt out by Gibbons (1979:70), who states that tone refers to that aspect of an author's manner of writing which indicates the kind of response which he wishes or intends the reader to have. Writers do this by providing a series of cues or signals to indicate the kind of response they are after. It is therefore the reader's prerogative to detect these and respond to them accordingly. The complex nature of writing is pointed out by Beckson and Ganz (1960:282) when they state that a speaker indicates tone, at least in part, by changes in voice and manner, but a writer must rely on the verbal devices at his command. A writer therefore has a more difficult task, a product of which should make it more difficult for the readers to pick up all the cues for their responses to the tone.

The difficulty of picking up the cues is made more complex by the fact that tone is communicated through the use of language on an inflectional level (Riccio 1980:173). In poetry writing, this must be achieved through the sense of the context the poet establishes and through the revelation of the poet's attitude towards theme and

audience. The writer sets the frame of reference. Within that frame, the writer and the audience collaborate to experience the poem.

Both Brooks and Warren (1960:112), and Gibbons (1979:70) regard the word "tone" as a metaphor from the tone of voice in speech or song. Gibbons (1979:70) describes tone as referring to all those highly subtle modulations and inflections of stress and pitch and speed of delivery which tell a listener how the speaker would like him to respond or which tell him what particular category of response is being sought. As regards the various modulations, for instance, the same sentence or word can be spoken in countless different tones of voice. It is only a reader who is vigilant who will be able to catch the tone of the speaker or writer in the case of poetry.

Another aspect of tone is introduced in the *Dictionary of World Literature*, where tone is referred to as the attitude of a work as revealed in the manner, rather than stated. It is therefore clear that the manner in which the tone is presented is crucial. For instance, the mood or the creation of a mood, or the devices that create it, stems from the manipulation of the materials of the art. The dictionary lists punctuation, figures, choice of words, condensation or amplification: the entire and not always or altogether consciously manipulated set of symbols that comprise the work reveals the author's intention, hence establishes his tone. These can be regarded as the materials of the art. Deutch (1974:185) states that the formality or colloquialism of the vocabulary, its vagueness or precision, the simplicity or complexity of the style, the energy or languor of the rhythms, the character of the stanzaic pattern, the use or abuse of certain technical devices, all contribute to the tone.

These materials of art are confirmed by Dobyns (1996:158), who states that tone can be established both by the manner of the telling i.e. the choice of diction, syntax, pacing, conditionality – and by what is told. It is therefore clear that the manipulation of the materials of art takes place in all the aspects of a poem in order to express the tone.

Three constituents namely speaker, audience and materials are at play in a poem as identified thus far. The materials consist of the contents of a poem. It is these materials that get manipulated to express the tone. It is now critical to identify the speaker and the audience.

o) The speaker

Brooks and Warren (1960:112-113) regard a poem as, in one sense, a little drama. They say a poem is an utterance. There is therefore someone who utters it. The speaker in a poem is probably what is referred to as a "fictive speaker" in *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:1293). This may be the case but there are also poems in which characters speak. The characters in such poems are the speakers. Most lyrics have also got a speaker. According to Brooks and Warren (1960:113) the song (lyric) expresses a human response. There is therefore a speaker. The poet might be talking to himself. In some poems we are scarcely aware of the identity of the speaker. In other poems a personality may enter and identify himself / herself as "I". In such a poem the attitude of the speaker becomes a very marked feature. In some poems there can be more than one speaker. In such a poem the dialogue is as objective as the one in a drama.

p) Audience

In a poem where the speaker talks to himself the audience is not specified. It is shadowy. The speaker might have been provoked by what he sees and begins to express his feelings to himself. Of importance to the speaker is what provoked the utterance. Brooks and Warren (1960:113) maintain,

Even in this talking to one's self, there is a sense of audience, and a law imposed by this sense. One can express one's self to oneself and thereby understand one's self, only by treating one's self as an audience – and that means by respecting the form of what is said so that anyone quite distinct from self might be able to get the full force and implication of what is being expressed.

The observations made in this extract point out to the importance of the nature of the utterance. The utterance, of course, refers to the materials. The respectability of the materials in terms of its artistic manipulation is what will give the necessary impact on anyone other than self. If the speaker talks to himself and has become effective with that, there is no way that such an utterance cannot have an impact on another individual.

The audience may also be shadowy – not specified. Sometimes the poem is addressed to a real person. It may be woman or a man. However, there does not have to be a particular person, historical or fictional to whom a poem is directed. The reader may be the audience referred to as "you" with the author taking a particular attitude towards the reader.

The audience does not have to be a person at all. A plant or a season can be addressed. Abstractions like jealousy, fear, fame etc. can be addressed. The abstractions can be used as dramatic focus for human attitude with which the poem is concerned. Once again, it must be noted that the reader is the final audience of the poem. The reader becomes the audience because he must draw the meaning of the poem, however obscure it may be.

When dealing with the informal aspects of the poem the speaker and audience are to be identified before any other aspect is attended to. IsiXhosa poetry is likely to obscure both the speaker and audience so that the reader who becomes the audience can use other routes to get to them. The success of the poet with these devices depends upon creativity.

q) The function of tone

In setting the scene for the function of tone Dobyns (1996:151) cites Philip Larkin who identifies the reason for the writing of a poem as being an obsession with an emotional concept. The writer then proceeds to write and in the writing attempts to recreate that same emotional concept in the reader. The attempt to recreate this emotional concept in the reader might be the writer's intention with his writing. The author's intention

controls both the means of the poem, (how it was written) and its ends (why it was written).

The poem's intention is found both within the meaning of its words and its sound. It is found in the individual sound of the words and in their relation to one another. In trying to get at the meaning of the words a reader needs to note that there are three types of meaning to be found in a word or expression. These are the denotative, connotative and intonative shades of meanings. The denotative is a word's primary meaning. A word's connotative meaning includes its secondary meanings as well as its symbolic and cultural dimensions.

Intonation as defined by Dobyns (1996:152) is the emotional shading given by the word's stress and pronunciation. It also indicates whether the sentence is interrogative, declarative or exclamatory. In a poem intonation must be inferred from the context and/or from the mechanical or formal devices such as typeface, punctuation marks, line breaks, metre, rhyme, the onomatopoeic value of sound. Intonation assists readers discover the intention of the writer. Intonation, on the other hand, is determined by tone as tone controls how we read a word's denotative and connotative values. Dobyns (1996:152) describes tone as the way in which the manner of the telling is included in what is told. The manner of telling therefore becomes part of the subject matter.

The success of a discourse depends largely on tone. Its effectiveness consists in the tactful selection of content and in the adjustment of style to influence a particular audience. Emotion, description, idea, beauty of language are some of the aspects of that tactful selection. It is clear therefore that tone is the work's pervading spirit or atmosphere or aura as described in *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:1293). What this means is that there is a space between the speaker and the subject matter. That space, therefore, is tone. This is the emotional distance, so to speak. Dobyns (1996:154) illustrates this emotional distance by using a newspaper article as an example. In a newspaper article the reporter can use a particular slant that he wishes us to see the events in a particular way. He may want us to see it as

good or bad or horrifying etc. It may also be a cultural slant which he employs in order for us to see things in a particular way. Of importance in this case is the distance that exists between the speaker (author) and his subject matter.

Dobyns (1996:154) finds four aspects that govern the tone in the meaning of words. Emotion is identified as one. These emotions are love, hate and everything in between them. These emotions would have to be graded in accordance with their different levels of intensity. These would be qualitative aspects of tone. The second aspect would be voice. These would be the types such as ironic, sincere, cynical, gullible etc. They can also be graded according to shades of colour. Another aspect would be conditionality. This is where the speaker says, "I do feel sad", "I should feel sad", "I could feel sad", "I might feel sad", etc.

The fourth aspect is intensity or distance. This points out to the extent of the emotion, voice and conditionality. This is the level of these aspects i.e. how strong or weak each one is. One finds the fourth governing aspect of emotion all embracing as it is a kind of a check for the three aspects. Finally, the four aspects are the primary elements determining tone in the denotative and connotative meaning of words. The choice of words in a poem is heavily dictated to by tone. For instance, a word has dozens of synonyms. How does the poet then decide which synonym to use in a given situation? It is the tone that he wishes to employ that partly determines the choice of a synonym.

To get to the emotional centre of a poem in order to discover why the poem was written one has to look at the tone. In order to detect tone, the reader must look at the emotional value of both the key words as well as the surrounding words. It is also through the writer's tone that credibility is established. A poet whose tone, for instance, varies unaccountably loses credibility immediately. It is difficult to believe such an author.

When reading a poem a reader starts off by searching for its tone. It is tone that allows the reader to anticipate and have a sense of what will happen next. This anticipation of what will happen next is suspense, an element that affects tone. It is only when we

discover the tone that we get grounded otherwise until we discover tone, we remain up in the air. In order to discover the tone Dobyns (1996:158) proposes that we should divide the subject matter into descriptive, intellectual and emotional content. These three therefore establish tone. The three aspects of content answer the question, how? In other words, how does the poet describe the subject? How does he think about his subject? How does he feel about his/her subject? Having established these three, it is important to then consider how each one of these relationships is going to evolve.

In some poems it may not be easy to establish tone quickly. Tone may be obscure. Readers therefore read to establish the tone as well as the poet's intention with the poem. An interesting version, however, is the apparent absence of tone. Dobyns (1996:160) regards this apparent absence of tone as a version of tone itself. Such a tone may be indifference to the subject. The author may ignore the subject therefore avoid expressing any view or opinion about the subject. An ingredient can be imposed on top of the content of a poem. Such an ingredient can be drawn in to convince the readers of something. This device is sentimentality. The poet can add his sentiments about a subject in order to convince the readers.

Dobyns (1996:163) identifies earnestness as a tone meant to convince the readers of the truth of the speakers' feelings in the absence of sufficient evidence. It is an attempt through the manipulation of tone to convince the reader that the material is indeed heartfelt and that the writer was compelled to write because he or she was unable to remain silent. This kind of tone can be regarded as a form of propagandising.

Tone is affected by the sound of the words as well as the elements imposed on the language. These elements are used to emphasize specific words as in rhyme, alliteration, assonance, consonance and the onomatopoeic value of words. Certain sounds in a poem lend themselves to the expression of certain emotions. In a good poem the tone comes equally from the sound and sense of such sounds. It is however important to note that a good poet always has tonal attentiveness to the sounds of the language. This points out to the uniqueness of each language that language must

therefore be dealt with in accordance to the nature of its sound systems, among others.

As sound is one among the many elements of a poem the other elements function in an equally the same way to influence tone. Dobyns (1996:167) regards metre as an equally subtle way of influencing tone. A combination of metre, line length and strategy create emotional expectations that in turn create tone. As regards the elements in a poem, Dobyns (1996:170) maintains that no element of a poem's construction can be accidental unless the poet is using accident as a strategy. This means the very construction i.e. how it is printed on paper, has a function. The way in which a poem is constructed as printed on paper can establish a certain tone.

According to Brooks and Warren (1960:115), tone is an indication of the meaning of the poem. As tone and theme are not absolutely different the tone helps give shape to the particular theme. Tone also has much to do with the emotional power of the poem and its claims upon the readers' sympathies.

Tone is an aspect of a poem's individual quality. This is a feature which is established by keeping the tone constant. As stated earlier a tone that varies without any reason discredits the author. However, such a tone can be regarded as a quality of the individual poem. Tone can also describe a poet. In this case, a poet may be inclined to adopt a certain tone towards certain subjects. In this way he earns himself a distinguishing feature.

Tone is particularly important in isiXhosa *izibongo* as it is through tone that certain meanings can be articulated. Certain words in isiXhosa are written in exactly the same way but when tone intervenes different meanings can be derived. A poet who is creative exploits this aspect of the language to good effect.

r) Rhyme

Rhyme as defined by various scholars (e.g. Preminger, A, et al. 1974; Abrams, M.H. 1999) is said to be based on the sound identities of words. Rhyme therefore comes

only from sound-identities between real words, given their accepted pronunciation, accentuation, articulation and usage. In tracing the origin of rhyme Preminger (1974:706) mentions the limited number of sounds any language has to be the reason that compels poets to resort to trying various combinations and permutations of those few sounds. A poem as stated earlier is a product of various combinations. Sounds in the case of rhyme are a part of these combinations and permutations.

Heese and Lawton in *The Owl Critic* (1968:30) state that rhyme consists of sounds which reflect each other or words that echo each other. Rhyming verse is pleasurable because it emphasises rhythmic patterns by creating expectation, the gratification of which pleases the ear and satisfies our natural love of repetition. Rhyme is most satisfying when it is not only decorative but meaningful.

Reaske (1966) in *How to Analyze Poetry* states quite clearly that it is the sound, not the spelling that determines whether or not the sounds are identical. Half-rhyme or near-rhyme occurs when the final consonant sounds of rhyming words are identical but the vowel sounds and preceding consonant sounds differ. Examples of rhyme in isiXhosa poetry are given later in this thesis.

Lesoro (1989:13) in his M.A. thesis: *End Rhyme as a device in Southern Sotho poetry* mentions three distinguishing features of rhyme as it occurs in SeSotho poetry:

Degree of syllabic correspondence

A certain number of syllables are made to rhyme. The number of syllables that rhyme can vary from one to four or even more.

Region of occurrence

In defining rhyme, *The World Book Encyclopaedia* (1994:259) specifies a region of occurrence in stating that rhyme usually occurs at the end of lines. It can also occur within a line. This is called internal rhyme. It must also be noted that rhyme is not necessarily confined to the end of the lines. Rhyme can also occur internally thus linking up certain parts of the poem.

Acoustic

congruence

This refers to sameness of sound/pronunciation of words intended for rhyme. The examples presented above have been selected strictly on the basis of sameness of sound. It is, however, possible that some of them are examples of repetition as dealt with later in this text. The feature acoustic congruence is of interest when dealing with rhyme because of the two (2) types of rhyme that occur, viz. full rhyme and eye rhyme. Full rhyme occurs when the syllables of words intended for rhyme have the same pronunciation as in the examples cited above. Eye rhyme is a case where the words look the same but their pronunciation differs.

Functions of rhyme

- a) With its organising function, rhyme succeeds in presenting a poem as a specific type (genre), e.g. as a sonnet. The alternating rhyme schemes also serve to further subcategorize the poems.
- b) It is rhyme that marks stanzas or paragraphs. In other words, rhyme demarcates a poem into units and keeps the units apart. It is through rhyme that the poem (sonnet) is divided into octaves / quatrains / sestet / couplets.
- c) Rhyme links the rhyming lines/verses together. The semantic content of the rhyming words might differ but through rhyme a relationship is established.
- d) The second line of the rhyming verses ought to add to the first line's thought.
- e) Some poets use rhyme for emphasis and point. Rhyme in such instances enhances the intensity and subtlety of meaning.
- f) Poets who want to express thought succinctly employ rhyme.
- g) Together with rhythm, rhyme makes verse easier to memorise as both devices are entertaining as in the case of children's poetry.
- h) Rhyme gives a sense of finality, of indisputability to the poet's conclusions.

With regards to rhyme it is in the interest of this study to investigate the

success of the poets with innovation with rhyme. As isiXhosa as a language cannot conform to rhyme per se it is therefore important to see how isiXhosa poets make an effort to emulate the world literatures when it comes to this device.

Pacing: the way in which a poem moves

Dobyns (1996) states that a poem communicates as much through the manner of its telling as through what is told. In this case it means that all the elements of a poem function together even if there are overlaps. The manner of telling a poem is as vital a means of communication as what is told in a poem.

Pacing is one of the linguistic qualities that make up a poem's form. This form refers to both physical and mental form. Pacing as one of the devices employed by the poet, works separately but also mixes and overlaps with the other devices. Dobyns (1996:131) defines pacing as controlled variations in the forward momentum of the poem. This forward momentum of the poem is influenced by the reader's anticipation and desire to know as well as the natural forward movement of the sentence and the speed of the flow of information from the poem to the reader. The poet has a way of controlling this flow. He/she always plays off what the reader knows against what he or she does not know.

The poet makes the reader want to know thus uses the reader's ignorance as energy to move down the page. What is likely to happen in this case is that the reader may learn the answers he or she was looking for or he or she may not learn them at all. If the reader does not learn at all, he or she becomes frustrated. This is not the preferred result; therefore the poet balances the two. He or she balances the reader's expectations against his frustration. The poet should guard against frustration overwhelming expectation because if that happens then the writer has lost the reader. The poet must imagine a reader picking up the poem, looking at it, reading the first line, and then deciding to read the second. The writer must imagine a reader moving from indifference to curiosity to interest to anticipation. The poet has to create in the

reader a desire to know. This demands that language must be chosen and arranged in the most effective way possible. What this means is that unless a poet's language is precise and interesting, exact pacing is impossible.

The reason why a reader picks up a poem and reads it is to be moved and entertained. It is this expectation that the poet should be aware of when writing his poem. If, for instance, the reader cannot feel the writer's passion when reading the poem, he or she will have none. It is therefore important for the reader to know why the writer was driven (moved) to write the poem. This must be clear in the poem. If it is clear enough then what a reader partly looks for in a piece of writing shall be discovered. What a reader partly looks for in a piece of writing is discovery.

The reader's approach to the poem is greatly influenced by the poem's visual shape on the page. If the poem is long or short, symmetrical or asymmetrical, has long or short lines, this affects the reader's expectation. A reader is mostly propelled through the poem by energy. This energy comes from many sources but the earliest comes from the reader's interest and sense of expectation. The reader takes in the size and shape and estimates the effort needed to read the poem. The reader then takes the title as well. All these influence the reader's expectation. The combination of the poem's visual appearance and title with the initial few words influences the reader's expectation and decision to trust. After that, expectation is joined by the forward movement of the sentence to create what truly may be called pacing.

A poem has emotion, ideas, physical setting, language, image, rhythm and tension. The success of the poem lies in these being made important in the title or in the first line or two. Even the gentlest poem must be assertive. Expectation leads the readers into the poem but the momentum of the language carries us along. Both form and content create further energy and expectation to propel us through the poem. In order to control pacing, the poet must have an awareness of the reader's sense of expectation, on the one hand, and frustration, on the other; trust, on one hand, and suspicion, on the other. As readers we must have a sense of trying to catch up, of being on the verge of understanding. The poem must stay ahead of the reader and never let the reader

relax to his own pace. If the reader finds that the poem is too far ahead then the reader may be frustrated. On the other hand, if the reader too easily grasps what the poem is attempting to say because the writer has been too slow or too obvious, the reader's energy level will drop and he/she will lose interest.

Pacing is controlled by tension and tension is energy. This energy comes from language and the reader's anticipation. Even the reader's trust is a form of energy. Pacing is like a hand pressed in the middle of our backs, pushing us along. The writer chooses where we must rest. The reader moves forward by a process of asking questions and finding the answers. The reader must be teased a little with his/her ignorance. He/she must be made to want to know more. Even at the end of the poem it is best to leave the reader with questions that can be answered only by returning to the page. If the reader's questions are answered too easily, the reader will lose interest. This is another case of being too obvious. In trying to find answers the reader will be favourably rewarded if surprise is experienced. Surprise is one of the writer's most effective tools in pacing. This can be in the form of a shift in form or content anticipated by the reader. What is imperative with surprise is that it must arise out of the needs of content.

The anticipated pleasure of discovering pattern, shape and "radiance" (the requirement that literature should satisfy and illuminate by its verbal surface" leads us to begin reading a poem. Pacing is constantly influenced by this expectation of pattern, shape and radiance. The reader's fear is that the whole structure will collapse back to chaos. The poet constantly controls this fear by creating tension to speed or slow pacing.

In a narrative poem pacing is influenced by the clarity of the narrative and its development. This clarity is what establishes the reader's trust in the poet. The reader's trust is also established by the poet giving a precise description of the physical setting of his poem. In a lyric poem pacing is influenced by the clarity of whatever it was that drove the poet to make the poem. Since all poems contain lyric and narrative

elements, these two types of clarity are constantly being juggled to affect the pacing of the poem. It is therefore important for the poet to observe clarity constantly.

Anything that the poet does to vary the speed of the flow of information will increase or decrease the tension, which in turn speeds or slows the pacing. For instance, to enjamb a line creates tension and so speeds the pacing. The greater the tension, the faster the pacing, which can be further affected by using words with initial or terminal letters that either elide or bang against each other. Above all, the natural momentum of the language must directly affect the flow of information and consequently, the reader's expectation and desire to know.

The moment the primary information is delayed or interrupted by secondary information there is a chance to influence the movement of the sentence and so increase or decrease pacing. Furthermore pacing is affected by the kind of sentence that is used, whether exclamatory, declarative or interrogative; how these sentences are varied; how the simple, compound and complex sentences are varied; and how the length of the sentences are varied within the entire text. It should also be realised that primary and secondary information exist not only in the sentence but also in the line, stanza and poem. How secondary information is used to delay primary information is a major device of pacing.

It is important for the poet to maintain a balance in setting up expectations because in setting up expectations because to create more expectations than the poem satisfies will frustrate the reader. For instance, it is counterproductive for a poet to use the sonnet form and yet write an elegy. The elegy is not only a shock in this case, but an extreme disappointment to the reader.

Language is information and information is energy. If pacing is the force of that energy, then proportion is its distribution. Proportion is primarily affected by the arc the poem makes - the fact that it has a beginning, middle and end. Proportion is also affected by the poem's length and the need for every word, sound, effect, etc., to contribute to the purpose of the poem. Purpose implies that any poem has an ideal number of

words of a certain quality and that to go over or under by even one syllable is to violate the laws of proportion and so weaken the poem. Where the poet starts the poem and the reason for the placement of every successive word is partly controlled by the need for proportion. If the poem is too long or too short, then exact pacing is impossible because the movement of the language becomes separated from the requirements of content. It is however worth noting that proportion is not a technique but a quality that influences not only pacing but also tone and the aural qualities of the language.

At the close of the poem we must not only feel that our expectations have been met but that our lives have been increased, if only to a small degree. This is possible if the poet has been able to control pacing thus exerting control over his/her poem. It is therefore of critical importance for all poets to learn to control pacing so as to be able to control their poems.

Pacing is a technique that isiXhosa poetry is likely to engage more as the poems are heavily influenced by orality which engages pacing a lot. The heavy presence of *izibongo* techniques in modern poetry is likely to provide isiXhosa poets to take advantage of those and engage them in pacing.

2.4 METAPHOR

In a dissertation entitled *Metaphor in Zulu: Problems in the translation of biblical metaphor in the book of Amos* Hermanson (1995) presents an overview of the theories of metaphor. He goes on to identify various metaphors in Zulu. This section therefore presents an overview of the theory of metaphor and its application to Zulu as undertaken by Hermanson in the study mentioned above. The relevance of this Hermanson's study is beyond any doubt to the present study as isiZulu is in the same family of languages (Nguni) as isiXhosa. It is therefore highly unlikely that the findings by Hermanson will be irrelevant to isiXhosa.

Hermanson (1995:5) starts off by giving Aristotle's definition of metaphor. Aristotle defines metaphor as applying to one thing the name of another. Metaphor therefore

functions by analogy. A definition taken from *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1959) defines metaphor as the application of name or descriptive term to an object to which it is not literally applicable. *The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (1990) defines metaphor as an imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else which has the qualities that you are trying to express. About the derivation of the word "metaphor" Hermanson (1995:50 cites Treble and Vallins (1965) who write

Metaphor, derived, through French from Greek "meta" in the sense of "change" and "phero" "I bear", meaning, therefore, a change of significance.

The numerous definitions in dictionaries and books seem to agree that metaphor is a comparison, a substitution, or a similarity. This view is derived from Aristotle's definition. Metaphor is seen as a deviant form of language, the main function of which, according to these commentators, is to say in a more picturesque way something which could be said equally well without the use of metaphor.

From the discussion of the traditional views of metaphor emphasis is placed on the literal-core theories. These are the comparison, substitution and similarity theories. Johnson (1987) is cited as classifying these theories and says of them:

The most long-standing and commonly held view is that metaphor is cognitively reducible to literal propositions. At best it can be only a forceful or convincing alternative way of reporting on an independently existing state of affairs, whose proper description would be given by literal concepts and propositions.

These theories are based on the objectivist view which Johnson presents as cited by Hermanson (1995):

The objective world has its structure, and our concepts and propositions, to be correct, must correspond to that structure. Only literal concepts and propositions can do that since metaphors assert cross-categorical identifies that do not exist objectively in

reality. Metaphors may exist as cognitive processes of our understanding but their meaning must be reducible to some set of literal concepts and propositions.

2.4.1 LITERAL-CORE THEORIES

Substitution theories

According to these theories, metaphor is simply the substitution of one word for another. This means, according to Aristotle and Quintilian, metaphor is just another way of saying what can be said literally. Metaphor is an improper word which substitutes for the proper one, but which is presumably replaceable at any time. A metaphor is the use of a word to mean something it doesn't "properly" mean. It is, however, important to avoid the conclusion that all metaphoric language is deviant as implied earlier on.

Comparison Theories

The comparison theories also place the focus of metaphorical meaning on the word, and see metaphor as a succinct comparison. In this sense then metaphor is a substitute for a simile. Johnson (1987) is cited as saying such theories treat metaphors in the canonical "A is B" form as elliptical similes equivalent to the assertion "A is like B in certain respects". Our ability to process the metaphor depends on our seeing that the A-domain (e.g. temporal relations) shares certain properties and relations with the B-domain. The distinctive feature of comparison theories is their insistence that the similarities revealed through the metaphorical transfer exist objectively in the world and are expressible in literal propositions. There is then on this view no such thing as an irreducible metaphorical concept or proposition. There are only metaphorical utterances and thought processes whose meaning reduces to sets of literal propositions.

About the comparison theory Johnson (1987) states that

It holds that literal concepts and propositions have meaning only insofar as they can map onto mind-independent realities objectively in the world. It treats literal meaning

as basic and foundational. Thus, whatever meaning a metaphorical expression has must consist of a set of literal similarity statements. It is via this literal core of meaning that a metaphor has any cognitive function at all.

Similarity theory

This is a theory that is classified with the comparison theories. Hermanson (1995) cites Van der Merwe (1983:10) who describes metaphor as a word, the literal meaning of which serves as a picture of that with which it is being compared.

2.4.2 METAPHORICAL PROPOSITION THEORIES

Emotive theory

This theory is also known as the tension theory. This reference results from the fact that it sees the two referents in the metaphor in tension. The seemingly false statement produced in this tension is, however, meaningful in that it expresses emotive import. The metaphor presents the emotive feelings of the author and stimulates similar and other emotional feelings in the hearer.

Interaction theory

The emphasis in this theory is not on the word but on the sentence. The interaction is between the "tenor" (its underlying subject) of the metaphor and the "vehicle" (the mode in which it is expressed). Metaphor therefore creates similarity between the "tenor" and the "vehicle". The distinctive cognitive content of the metaphor is the consequence of this interaction.

The salient features of the Interaction Theory are given by Kittay (1987) as follows:

1. Metaphors are sentences not isolated words;
2. A metaphor consists of two components;
3. There is a tension between these two components;

4. These components need to be understood as systems;
5. The meaning of a metaphor arises from an interplay of these components;
6. The meaning of a metaphor is irreducible and cognitive.

These features make it clear that in a metaphor both the vehicle and the topic (the primary subject) belong to systems. Hermanson (1995) cites MacCormac (1985) who argues that metaphor results from a cognitive process that juxtaposes two or more not normally associated referents, producing a semantic conceptual anomaly, the symptom of which is usually emotional tension. The conceptual process that generates metaphor attributes similar features of the referents to form an analogy and identifies dissimilar attributes of the referents to produce semantic anomaly. The degree of similarity and dissimilarity determines the truth value of the metaphor. MacCormac (1985) makes an important point about metaphor. The production of metaphor, according to MacCormac, arises from a deeper cognitive process that creatively envisages new possibilities for meanings. The most important aspect of metaphor, as observed by MacCormac (1985), is the creativity that presents a potential for new meanings.

Interanimation theory

Soskice (1989) is cited as stating that he prefers Richards's view, which establishes that meanings are things determined by complete utterances and surrounding contexts, and not by individual words in isolation. Metaphor is therefore not "some word being used metaphorically", but metaphor is the interanimation of words in the complete utterance. Metaphor is thus an intercourse of thoughts as opposed to a mere shifting of words or a substitution of term for term. It is therefore thoughts that are active together. This means that a metaphor has one true subject which tenor and vehicle conjointly depicts and illumine that a full, interactive, or interanimative theory is possible. A metaphor is genuinely creative and says something that can be said adequately in no other way, not as an ornament to what we already know but as an embodiment of a new insight.

2.4.3 Modern theories of metaphor

Conceptual Theories

Lakoff, Johnson and Turner (1980) are linguists who developed a theory of metaphor that states, "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another."

The basic claims of this theory are summarised as follows by Jackendorff and Aaron (1991:18):

1. A metaphor is not a 'figure of speech', a linguistic object. Rather, it is a conceptual or cognitive organisation expressed by the linguistic object. As a consequence, many different linguistic expressions may evoke (or invoke) the same metaphor.
2. Metaphoric expressions pervade ordinary language – they are not just used for artistic purposes. These everyday metaphors reveal cognitive and cultural conceptions of the world.
3. Metaphor in poetry is not a distinctly different phenomenon from metaphor in ordinary language. Rather, poetic metaphor exploits and enriches the everyday metaphors available to any competent speaker of the languages.
4. The act of reading texts is a cognitive process of bringing one's construal of the world to bear on the concepts evoked by the text.

There is sense in the remarks made by Jackendorff and Aaron (1991:22). They believe that the conceptual theory needs to be modified by the addition of a criterion of incongruity, a more restricted ambit for the term "metaphor". Jackendorff and Aaron believe that metaphorical interpretations arise through pragmatic resolution of incongruity. The two remarks are invaluable to the study of metaphor in poetry.

2.4.4 Conceptual metaphor theory

Hermanson (1995:35) expresses his preference for the conceptual metaphor theory as a way of analysing the basic metaphors of a language and their entailments. This preference is taken in respect of translation. For the analysis of metaphor in poetry the value of this theory is also crucial. In describing the theory Hermanson (1995:34) cites Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who write:

The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.

This cognitive linguistic theory also postulates the existence of basic conceptual metaphors which can be invoked and/or extended by competent members of a language community. This theory is complemented by the relevance theory, which explains that without the proper relevant context, metaphor fails as communication. This is crucial in poetry as the context provides excellent foregrounding to a metaphor. According to Hermanson (1995:35) this means metaphor is used and understood, not only within an individual sentence, or larger text, but also within the context of a certain situation, and within a certain society or group, speaking a specific language and having a specific culture.

About the novelty of poetic metaphor, Lakoff and Turner (1989) are cited as saying that great poets can speak to us because they use the modes of thought we all possess. What the poets do is to use extensions of the same general and ordinary metaphorical conceptions which we all use. In other words, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) continue, poetic metaphors are an extension of conventional metaphors. Hermanson (1995) among others, identifies the following categories of conceptual metaphors in isiZulu:

The people are Animals Metaphor

People are Birds

People are Reptiles

People are Insects

People are natural Phenomena

People are Plants

People are inanimate Objects

People are abstract Concepts

People are Seasons

Hermanson (1995:114) is highly commended for drawing examples from literary works by acclaimed isiZulu authors like B.W. Vilakazi, C.L.S. Nyembezi, D.B.Z. Ntuli etc. The authenticity of his examples is therefore beyond doubt. That Hermanson is aware of the dynamic nature of language in general and specifically metaphor is obvious in his observation:

Many of these conceptual metaphors have existed in Zulu from time immemorial, although we have suggested that others have been accepted into the Zulu conceptual domain as the Zulu have been brought into contact with other languages and cultures and have enjoyed new experiences through education, travel, and exposure to new technology. With poetry rooted in creativity the remark made above has an implication for poetic metaphor as well. For freshness, a poet easily borrows from new contact, and thus produces a new brand of metaphor.

Dobyns (1996) discusses metaphor in Chapter 2 under the title "Metaphor and the Authenticating Act of Memory". An important point about the relationship between the reader and the text is made when Dobyns (1996:12) states

...the most successful poem is an expression of formally heightened emotion that seeks to establish an intimate relationship with the reader in part by making the reader a participant in the creative process.

The significance of emotion in a poem is very important as it is an ingredient by which the reader becomes engaged in the creative process of the poem. Metaphor is thus regarded as one way in which the poem's relationship with the reader may be strengthened. In the category of metaphor Dobyns includes simile, analogy and allegory. These are categorised with metaphor because they are forms of comparison that exist to heighten the object of comparison.

In an attempt to define metaphor Dobyns (1996:139) cites Suzanne Langer who writes,

A metaphor is not language, it is an idea expressed by language, an idea that in its turn functions as a symbol to express something. It is not discursive and therefore does not really make a statement of the idea it conveys, but it formulates a new conception for our direct imaginative grasp.

The role of metaphor in a poem is clearly stated in this remark – it makes an idea fresh or new and thus stimulates the reader's imagination. This is crucial because when readers are more sophisticated about language, they become less engaged when expression is simple. Poets therefore must seek ways to make emotion fresh. Metaphor therefore is one way in which a poet can heighten emotion. A metaphor can exist to heighten just a small part of the poem or it can be the entire poem. To be successful, however, the metaphor must be functional rather than decorative, i.e. it has got to further the general intent of the poem and it must be necessary to the reader's understanding and involvement in the poem. Any decorative use of metaphor is purely rhetorical; the author is trying to convince the reader by what amounts to technical effects rather than by content.

About the constituents of a metaphor Dobyns (1996:14) states that a metaphor consists of the object half and the image half. The image half is not successful when it is open-ended or when the mind cannot fully encompass it: that is, when it creates the impression that it could give additional meaning each time the reader returns to it. The image half of the metaphor has the greatest possibility of touching the reader the more closely it works as a symbol. To support this view Dobyns (1996:14) cites Yeats,

who says metaphors are not profound enough to be moving when they are not symbols. When they are symbols, they are the most perfect of all. The open-ended quality of the image half of the metaphor allows it to become to some degree mysterious. It is this mysteriousness that helps engage the reader more and more.

When someone accuses a poem of being vague, this often means that the object of a metaphor is unclear or that the relationship between object and image is imprecise. The purpose of the metaphor is to heighten our sense of the object. If we do not know the object, that heightening cannot occur. Image without object is non-functional since its contemplation will not increase our understanding (of the poem). This, however, is not to suggest that the object must be always stated, but even if the image stands by itself, let's say to create a mood, we have some sense of an object, even if it is only the slightest inference.

Every metaphor is based on withheld information that the comparison given by the metaphor tries to uncover. Implied in each metaphor is the question of how the image is like the object. The reader becomes a participant by authenticating the comparison from his or her own memory and/or imagination. In this way the reader gets knowledge about something unknown or only partly known by making it analogous to something he or she can imagine.

There is an element of surprise in a metaphor. This element is brought about by the incongruous comparison between the object and image. It is usually an unexpected combination. Surprise can distract the reader and cause him/her to overlook the logic of the metaphor. This is of critical importance because the success of a metaphor lies in its being logical. A metaphor must conform to our knowledge of the unknown world. The metaphor must also be precise.

The more the metaphor involves the entire mind, the greater its chance of success. This alludes to the right brain-left brain involvement. The left-brain works with information that comes word by word thus leading to verbal structures of argument and persuasion. The right brain works with imagination – nonverbal perception. The

metaphor in this way succeeds to get the two halves working together. The metaphor presents information verbally, thus forcing the left-brain to process this information. When it comes to the relationship between the object and image, the right brain is engaged to imagine the reason for the comparison. This leads to a large chunk of nonverbal perceptions elicited by metaphor. This is one of the great strengths of poetry and this is what can make a poem convincing. It is stimulating to a reader to merge the nonverbal perception created by the metaphor with the intellectual argument of the poem. A wise poet usually links argument and metaphor at the conclusion of the poem in such a way that the nonverbal perception completely absorbs the verbal argument.

A metaphor can surprise us with a piece of information that it feels we know but did not realise we knew until the metaphor revealed it to us. This happens during the process of authentication when we realize we, in fact, knew the information that surprised us initially.

The successful metaphor confronts one part of the mind with another – either right brain with left brain, or unconscious and conscious. This confrontation results in a heightening of the reader's relationship with himself or herself. Consequently, the degree to which we call a metaphor precise is perhaps the degree to which the metaphor is authenticated in this confrontation between the two parts of the mind. Furthermore, it is the function of metaphor to create this confrontation.

The reader must recognise the metaphors. Recognition can be divided into intellectual, physical and emotional components. A case for intellectual recognition is $5 \times 5 = 25$; a case for physical recognition is the smell of wine; love is a case for emotional recognition. Any recognition may be made up of all three parts, although one may predominate. The degree to which the reader becomes a participant in the poem is the degree to which he or she is involved in these acts of recognition. In recognition the different parts of ourselves get involved. Physical recognition involves the five senses, viz. smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch. Intellectual recognition primarily involves the conscious mind, i.e. the left-brain, while emotional recognition involves the

unconscious, i.e. the right brain. For this act of recognition to take place, therefore, the intellectual, physical and emotional contexts of the poem must be discoverable.

Obscurity in a poem has been condemned but if it serves as a tool it may be praised. When is used as a tool, it works to force the reader to ask questions that will direct him or her to an understanding of the poem. For instance, it is thinking about the relationship between the three types of context and events of the poem that understanding is reached. Some poets leave things to suggestion, hoping that the reader will find the answers. Suggestion, however, will not work until the reader has enough information to ponder. It then becomes easy when the reader can contemplate the relationship between its parts. This relationship includes the metaphors used in the poem. The metaphors must relate to the poem as a whole.

The relevance of the theory and examples presented in this section is a matter of debate for most scholars working on metaphor. Kövecses (2010:195) devotes a whole chapter discussing the universality of conceptual metaphors. The question he poses to open the discussion is: Are there any conceptual metaphors that can be found in all languages and cultures? In response to this question Kövecses compares examples of conceptual metaphors from English with genetically different languages. The languages with which the comparison is made are: Chinese, Hungarian, Japanese, isiZulu, Polish, Wolof and Tahitian. The observation made by Kövecses (2010:209) is that some conceptual metaphors which include happiness and anger may be universal. Based on this finding the conceptual metaphors identified by Hermanson (1995) are thus more likely to feature in isiXhosa due to the closeness of linguistic features of these languages.

2.5 The portrayal of women in African literature – gender stereotypes

This section focuses on the representation of women in mainly African oral literature. As oral literature is created and generated by the community it is regarded as the authentic voice of the people. The opinions expressed through oral art are those of the

community. The references and images used in oral literature will inform the analysis of the selected poems written about women.

The main concern in this section is gender myths that lead to gender stereotypes such as, among others, the social stereotype of women being confined by sexual decorum and the dictates of the social stereotype of the “lady”, as cited by Lockett (1993:29). Lockett (1993:45) goes on to cite more stereotypical references such as “Black Mother” and “Mother Africa” that pervade English literature.

As a basis for the exposition of the misrepresentation of women in African literature the anthology of essays edited by Kolawole (1998) is used. The essays in this anthology are written by both women and men, thus providing a balanced picture of the gender scenario. This also attests to the inclusive nature of gender in the African context as observed by Kolawole (1998:2). The genres analysed by the different scholars in this work cover folktales, praise poetry, songs and proverbs. The languages whose oral art is analysed include Yoruba, Akan and English. Other sources used in support or together with Kolawole draw examples from Shona, XiTsonga, isiXhosa and isiZulu. The examples selected from proverbs, in particular, are merely selected to illustrate the point of gender bias in oral art.

An important recommendation is made by Kolawole (1998:xiii) when she states that rethinking images and perceptions of women is an important process in the search for an appropriate and dynamic social space for women. This is valid as it is important to first scrutinise the perceptions of women before restoring the distorted images that women have been carrying with them for centuries as the findings in the studies consulted. This section therefore closes with recommendations on how the cause of women can be advanced through literature in general and through poetry in particular.

2.5.1 Gender myths

Myths are dealt with in this part jointly with culture as culture is what defines any people as encompassed in Molarra Ogundipe-Leslie’s definition as cited by Kolawole (1998:10) who states:

Culture will be seen in its broad, comprehensive and total meaning; not as a conglomeration of superficial aspects of life such as dance, dress, hairstyle and naked women.

Culture as defined here is the total product of a people's "being" and "consciousness" which emerges from their grappling with nature and living with other human beings in a collective group.

Kolawole (1998:11) goes on to state that culture is a strong source of self-expression. The power of culture in misleading society is experienced in instances where it is manipulated to achieve specific purposes by individuals while it is a useful excuse for teleguiding the society. This is to be seen in gender inequity, which is a product of the manipulation of culture in many African societies. Often people believe the practices to be informed by culture when in fact they are a result of deliberate manipulation by individuals.

It is common knowledge that many women do not wish to change the harmful traditional beliefs because they desire to maintain the status quo. Thousands of women suffer in silence not because tradition imposes reticence on them, but more because of their own acceptance of the situation. This is in spite of the dynamic nature of culture.

By way of advice to women loyal to culture, Kolawole (1998:27) proposes the following:

For culture to be meaningful, it needs to be interrogated, sieved and explored to make an otherwise alien concept indigenous and meaningful to the ordinary African woman.,

A more precise definition of culture by Raymond Williams (1983) as cited by Milestone and Meyer (2012:2) in their study on contemporary culture states that culture can refer to

intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development a particular way of life of a group or historical period or texts and practices which produce meaning.

This is an enlightening definition of culture. It makes it clear that culture should make a contribution to development or in the advancement of the community. This can be done through the texts and practices that produce meaning or rational practices. In other words practices and or texts that do not make sense but are merely adhered to just because they are cultural practices must be abandoned. This is true if one considers the three levels of culture as observed by Satyo (2001:8) who writes:

There appears to be a lived culture of a particular time and place only fully accessible to those living in that time and place. There is also a culture of a period, which is recorded culture of every kind from art to the most everyday facts.

This observation supports the definition cited by Milestone and Meyer (2012:2), which advocates that culture ought to make sense to those who embrace it. The definitions cited above certainly are a call to feminists to liberate women who are slaves of culture. Should women heed the call from feminists they will be active moulders of society instead of being passive suffering victims.

2.5.2 Gender myths in oral literature

Kolawole (1998) identifies three types of gender myths in women's oral literature, namely negative and positive myths about women, and certain male myths. This provides a balanced depiction of gender myths.

These myths are so established that society regards them as law or as being part of their lives. Kolawole (1998:16) aptly alludes to a Yoruba proverb which suggests that after a long period the leaves used to keep traditional black caustic soap become an integral part of the soap. She explains the proverb to mean that in the context of mythic metaphors or allusions to women, over a long period, the images stick and become part of the individual who has absorbed them.

Negative myths about women

In an essay entitled "Sexuality and socialisation in Shona Praises and Lyrics" Chimhundu (1995:147) provides a comparative discussion of imagery, meaning and

function in Shona traditional praises and modern songs by popular Shona bands with particular reference to gender politics. He makes an interesting observation when he points out to the double standards maintained in Shona literature. According to Chimhundu (1995:148), on the one hand, literature projects the idealistic image of the woman as a symbol of beauty, family stability and the moral fibre of the whole nation and, on the other hand, where socially prescribed norms and expectations are not met by women in particular, the poets, novelists, playwrights and singers alike all portray those women characters who do not conform to sexual stereotypes as deviant and then punish them by ridicule, marginalisation, ostracism and sometimes even death. This is an interesting observation about Shona literature. Depending upon how much each side of this trend is represented in the writings, this literature can be said to be striking a balance in as far as the representation of women is concerned.

With regards to sexuality, Chimhundu (1995:148) states that traditional perceptions of women relate to sexuality and procreation, which is the only traditionally legitimate reason for love-making in Shona society which regards marriage as the most important institution. This is followed up later (1995:151) when he states that all forms of Shona literature accord the highest status and esteem to married mothers, who are contrasted with the despised prostitutes and loose women (*mahure*). Married mothers are praised for their beauty, fertility, dignity, kindness, generosity, loyalty and hard work. Machaba (2011:14) cites Masuku (2005), who states that in Zulu folktales the woman is portrayed as a labourer, witch, femme fatale, bold and daring, a woman who rebels against her culture, the barren woman, and a woman who shows perseverance in marriage and who in turn is rewarded for that.

This observation is confirmed in the remark made by Naana Jane Opuku-Agyemang (1998:92) in an essay entitled "Gender-Role Perception in the Akan Folktale", when she states that the ideal wife must be a good home maker, primarily defined by the cooking and caring skills. She states further that there is no emphasis on any other skills except cooking. Humility is another admired quality of the ideal wife. Intelligence is hastily dismissed as ill-temper, a result of bad upbringing. This is illustrated later

(1998:97) with an example of a man who was disgruntled with his wife because she would talk back to him whenever there was disagreement. He then married a wife who had no mouth. This one was more troublesome than his wife who had a mouth. He then asked for the return of the wife with a mouth as she was not as troublesome as the one with no mouth.

What the wife must do is summed up when Opuku-Agyemang (1998:96) states that a woman must imprison her thoughts if she wants to be happy in marriage. This seems to find justification in the fact that a woman is selected and her duty is to consent. This is also the case with polygamy, the man is free to marry several women, the wife is expected to consent.

On parenthood, Opuku-Agyemang (1998:99) states that the emphasis is explicated largely as a woman's role, with the defining criterion being the biological reproduction of offsprings. This is a diminishing of the role of women in as far as parenthood is concerned, because women are known for their role in the upkeep of the home, including the wellbeing of the husband whose role is always recognised because of the patriarchal nature of Yoruba culture.

In Yoruba literature women are consistently depicted through negative images. A case in hand is of the proverb cited by Kolawole (1998:19): "Ile t'obinrin tin se atoto arere, igi arere ni hu nibe" (Any family that allows the woman to be vocal will see the abnormal growth of the wild *arere* tree inside the home (the *arere* tree emits terrible odours and only grows wild)). This is interpreted to mean that when a wife is vocal in taking decisions in the home, an abnormal environment results. In other words, a wife who is vocal is bad influence in a home therefore a woman must remain quiet or silent.

Anny Wynchank (1998:125) states that in Yoruba the calabash represents the female. She then cites the case of the "broken calabash" which is a reference to a girl who has lost her virginity. It is the spherical shape of the calabash that conjures up an image of fecundity and femininity. This is one of those references that equate a woman to property.

In another instance in Yoruba culture a wife who does not bear a baby boy is castigated by her in-laws. She is not regarded highly in this particular culture and in many other African cultures because she cannot give birth to an heir to the family. Kwatsha (2009:131) mentions that in Indian culture a woman brings honour and power to her family when she gives birth to a boy. This illuminates the importance attached to a male child in patriarchal societies.

The woman's marginal role in leadership is expressed through the proverb cited by Kolawole (1998:21) "Iyalode ko ni dagba ko ni o un fe je oba ilu" (The woman chief will never aspire to the king's throne). This is an indictment on women as they are portrayed as having very low self-esteem.

According to Kolawole (1998:21), the songs that are composed and sung during a wedding depict marriage as a negative and dreaded institution for girls, whereas men enter marriage feeling triumphant. The girls expect the worst when they venture into marriage, therefore the songs prepare her mind to tolerate abuse and violence.

The metaphorical dimensions of the Yoruba term, *Iya* as explained by Opefeyitimi in his essay entitled "Myths and Women of Power in Yoruba Orature" (1998:46) yield connotations such as "power", "treachery" and "wickedness". These connotations of the term "women" represent females in a negative way. Opefeyimi further argues that the word "women" plausibly contended can be said to be derived from three underlying words, namely "woe", "of" and "men". "Woe" implies "problem", "trouble", "burden" and even "trap". The word woman is therefore constituted of "woe" and "man" – "Woo" is to "lure", "entice", "seduce", "inveigle" and "decoy". The act of wooing men by females underlie the word "woman", which is a bad act often condemned by the community. The same act also implies power and control.

When a husband dies very often the in-laws accuse the widow of having bewitched him. This leads to ill-treatment of the widow concerned. Kolawole (1998:25) adds that many women still prefer to maintain the status quo on issues affecting widow's rights, bridewealth or lobola, inheritance, female genital mutilation (FGM) and a host of other

practices. In support of this attitude they quote the kinds of proverbs and/or folktales that work against women as the norm or status quo. This can be the reason why many men and women are being ruled by these gender beliefs without realising it. They believe them to be the rule of life.

Potrayal of women in proverbs

In his essay entitled "Gender Bias and Images of Women in English and Yoruba Proverbs" Yusuf (1998:64) remarks that English and Yoruba proverbs compare women to animals, food, plants, property and trouble. These proverbs therefore de-personify or dehumanise women. Women are presented as defective or as detestable as the things with which they are compared. In this regard it is observed from a set of proverbs that one Yoruba and one English proverb state that pork has a higher value than a wife. The other English proverbs portray woman as worse than stupid and mischievous plants and hellish trouble.

It is through proverbs that the woman is relegated to the kitchen. Kwatsha (2009:131) cites Jones and Olson (1991), who explain that according to a Pakistani proverb, the place of women is in the home or the grave. She cites a similar North American saying which goes that a woman should be kept barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen.

Yusuf (1998:64) cites proverbs from Arora (1993) and states that they de-personalise or dehumanise women. The proverbs cited are:

Women and objects

Women are like guitars, when they' re not being played / touched they don't produce any sound

A woman is like a guitar: in order for her to warm up you have to strum / stroke her.

A woman, a shotgun, a guitar and a horse are not to be lent.

In these proverbs women are implicitly and explicitly compared with non-human objects.

Women and animals

Women in state affairs are like monkeys in glass houses.

There are three faithful friends: an old wife, an old dog and ready money.

Women are overtly compared with repulsive animals such as monkeys and dogs as is the case in the examples quoted.

Women and food / plants

Getting a wife is no big deal; it's money for soup that's hard to find.

This proverb undermines a woman in that she is represented as being a burden to a man. The man must feed her.

Women and property

The man who marries a beauty marries trouble because she claims to be related to everybody.

An old man marrying a young girl is like buying a book for someone else to read.

Both proverbs declare that a woman is not to be trusted in a relationship.

The examples of proverbs presented in the section that follows are drawn from *Zulu Proverbs and Popular Sayings* collected by James Stuart (1949)year).

Umendo humkhumula nsika (Marriage deprives the parents of the good services of their daughter).

Ungunonkenkezan' ufuz' unyoko (You talk too much and resemble your mother)

The first proverb represents the woman as some kind of tool to be used and marriage as an institution that is hostile as suggested by "deprives". The second proverb alludes to the stereotype of the vocal woman who is a nuisance. The daughter who is vocal is

then regarded as being a bad wife. Bad behaviour is, of course, taking after the mother. One wonders about the role of the father in instances such as this one.

A selection of proverbs from the book entitled "*Vutlhari Bya Vatsonga (Machangana)* * *The Wisdom of the Tsonga – Shangana People* by Junod, H.P. and Jaques, A.A. (1957) is provided in this section. The selection is of a few proverbs that provide a portrayal of women in a negative way:

Nhwanyana lwe i mpama (This girl is very beautiful. ("Mpama is a little dancing stick well carved")). The girl in this proverb is compared to an object. Her beauty is therefore compared with that of an object made by a human being, probably a man.

Ntlhamu wu phase xihari (The trap has caught a beast – This is said when a man has found a wife.) This is one of the most appalling representations of women. The image of the beast is suggestive of the slave role which a wife is made to play in a marriage situation. She may be very beautiful but she looks and is treated just like a beast.

U nga voni mankhinsa-nkhinsa, leswi i mafundza yo hlomisa- Va Transavaal va ri. U nga voni vunkhinsa-nkhinsa, i mano ya hlomisa. (Do not be impressed by the activity of the girl. These are good manners (the Transvaal people: a trick) only for getting married.) This proverb states that a woman is not to be trusted as she will do anything to impress a man so that he can marry her.

Nuna wa xitekela (tshengwe) a rima nsimu yinwe (This polygamist ploughs one field only. This is when a polygamist really loves only one of his wives.) The imagery from the agriculture domain is very belittling of a woman. It is dehumanising to be exact.

Wansati a fana ni xigalani emmirni (A wife is alike the tick on one's body. Marriage brings trouble).

A wife is therefore seen as a parasite on her husband. She is there to milk the man of his possessions. This is a very repulsive image of a woman. On the whole the selected proverbs represent women in a negative way. They are portrayed as objects, as animals, as insects, and as people not to be trusted. As proverbs draw from the oral

traditions the stereotypes are believed and accepted without being questioned by society.

Men versus women – unequal partners

Chimwundu (1995:149) makes the point about the patriarchal nature of Shona society when he presents the reference to God as “*Baba*” (father), a male reference. God in Shona society and in many other patriarchal societies is represented as male and never as “mother”. Men are associated with what is superior, as Chimwundu (1995:150) illustrates in the case of the genital organs, where the female organ is referred to as “*hari*” (pot) and the male organ “*rukuni*” (piece of firewood or stick). He adds that not infrequently the male organ is referred to as an instrument of discipline in traditional Shona love poems. These terms suggest inequality between men and women. Men are superior to women. A sharp twist in this aspect and domain is recorded when Chimwundu (1995) cites Mashoko (1988), who states that equality between sexes seems to be achieved only during intimacy, which he says is “The game that makes people equal”.

Opuku-Agyemang (1998:104) presents a subtle observation about the success of women when they go out to work in a domain meant for men. She reports that in one Akan story in which women go fishing, the campaign ends in tragedy. A more revealing account is given when Opuku-Agyemang (1998:105) reports that examples of males as hunters abound in Akan folktales. She also reports that one of the folktales shows women hunting for snails, among the most harmless of all animals. She goes on to state that snails, deer and leopard may provide both food and medicine, but the hunter who comes home with a leopard will be greeted by the whole community for his resolve and prowess; his name could pass through song into the history of his community. A woman who comes home with a basketful of snails would have proved some physical energy, but not enough to merit chronicling. Besides the mere fact that women are relegated to a less important hunting activity, it seems as if nothing from them gets any recognition simply because they are women.

Another interesting case in Akan folklore is a story of a dog that married a cat, but embarrassed the cat (his wife) in the presence of the community. Cat divorced Dog because she had lost her social standing because of Dog's stupid act of singing the wrong lyrics at the funeral of his mother-in-law. Opuku-Agyemang (1998:106) says that women characters in Akan folktales seek to bolster the status of their husbands, since the diminution of the man's station or standing directly violates the woman's social standing. It is for this reason that Cat is very angry and divorces Dog. The community backs her up. The interpretation of this instance is that the wife lives in the shadow of her husband. In other words whatever the husband does, be it good or bad, is used as an image for his wife.

On confidentiality, Opuku-Agyemang (1998:107) observes that women cannot be trusted to keep secrets. That men are capable of keeping secrets is implied in this assertion. The integrity of women is certainly under great doubt as a result of stereotypes such as this one.

With regards to the role of men in Akan folktales, according to Opuku-Agyemang (1998:109), there is no tale in which a woman dies and a man is called to "come and weep". Otherwise, when a man dies women are called to "come and weep". It is clear from this observation that women are meant to cry whereas men do not.

Most folktales involve long travels often on foot. In all these journeys we do not see women taking part. They are often at home taking care of the children and cooking for their husbands.

About authority in the tales, the characters whose political and social status would legitimize their commands are the kings, heads of the village who are males, and also adult males and sometimes mothers. In this list women feature in very limited ways, while children would appear to have no authority at all. This is again an instance where the power of the woman must only be displayed at home over her daughters, especially because she is the one who must instil in girls the kind of behaviour

desirable in the tale (often for marriage). Otherwise in instances where a woman displays authority, she is portrayed as being unnatural.

Opuku-Agyemang (1998:113) finds that the man is more successful than the woman in enforcing discipline at home. An interesting observation made is that even stupid instructions are obeyed by both women and children. This happens because everybody believes that it is culturally correct to obey the husband without questioning anything. Any woman who questions her husband's command is labelled as being disrespectful. This view is also noted by Anny Wynchank (1998:129), who observes that Yoruba women are portrayed as subordinate and subservient and do not threaten the male. Machaba (2011:4) also states that in a marriage relationship, a woman is a minor who must submit meekly to her husband and whose purpose is to serve and satisfy him.

Machaba (2011:12) cites Little (1980), who declares that women are defined mainly according to their relationship with men. The following defines women according to this point of view:

Girlfriends and good-time girls;

Wives;

Free women;

Mothers;

Courtesans and prostitutes; and

Political women and workers.

The whole set defines women in a belittling manner. The definitions provided are definitely a result of the chauvinism of men, which passes these negative moral and physical judgements on women.

With regards to the relationship between men and women, Ilesanmi (1998:36) asks "Are women mere appendages to men?" The answer to this question is as follows:

“No, women held political and economic position in Yorubaland in the distant past. These women are said to have acquitted themselves well in this domain”.

Ilesanmi (1998:36) adds that men may possess physical and political powers; women possess greater power of endurance coupled with psychological, cultic, menstrual, lunar and water powers. This is quite a revelation in that women are acknowledged for what they are capable of. In fact this leads to the debate which Ilesanmi (1998:40) raises with regard to the relationship between men and women: she maintains that men and women cannot be seen as forces of opposition because they are binary forces of complementarity. This is true as men and women exist together and will flourish if they complement each other.

Chimhundu (1995:155) provides an outline of key images of desirable qualities and attributes in Shona courtship praises. These images are the negative stereotypes of women that Shona society lives with. Below are the images with elaboration for each image:

Key image: Kindness

Elaboration: Cares for the young and helpless. Feeds them and provides for them.

Key image: Generosity

Elaboration: Gives freely. Gives to all

Key image: (Married) motherhood

Elaboration: Fertile. Nurses children. Nurses husband.

Key image: (Physical) beauty

Elaboration: Neck: Long and slender

Skin: Smooth and shiny

Nose: Straight

Teeth: White with gaps

Eyes: Bright with life

Legs: Smooth, shiny shins

Key image: Fitness

Elaboration: Gait: Graceful

Pace: Brisk

Buttocks: Large, firm

Key image: Personality

Elaboration: Dignified; Pleasant; Softly spoken; Respectful; Patient; Loving; Lovable

Key image: (Known) ancestry

Elaboration: Clan; History; places; People; Praise names.

Key image: Family (background)

Elaboration: Good family; Well brought-up; Cultured

The above provides a menu for men when looking for a woman for marriage.

Positive myths of women

In an essay entitled, "The significance of the myths of women in socio-political role-sharing among Yoruba people" Ilesanmi (1998:31) states that women are normally highly respected among the Yoruba. She states that homage is always paid to them at every cultural gathering as follows:

Mo juba eyiniya wa

Eyin ti a ko aye le lowo

E je ko ju wa I se

Iba, iba lonii awo

Iba oko

To teri kodo ti o ro

Iba obo

To teri kodo ti o se ...

Apake, eri mi re e o, awo

Eri m' mo fi e du ...

Iya, mo a juba e leni

Iya olokikiiganjo

Iya anobo akojedo

Iya anobo alolo bi eni loso aro

Amulese po orofo

Arugbo eye abiye tiele

Afejefoso ala

Iya oloju ege.

[I pay homage to you, our mothers.

You who hold the reins of the world

Let life be positive for us.

Homage today to *awo* (cult members)

Homage to the penis

That droops without drops.

Homage to the vagina

That droops without oozes...

Mother, my head, here it is

Apake, here is my head, awo

My head I give to you to protect...

Mother today, I have come to pay you homage

Mother-who-stores-palm-oil-in-leaves...

Mother-of-nocturnal-revelries

Mother-whose-vagina-no-penis-dares-split

Mother-whose-vagina-is-as-soft-as-an-iron-dyed-cloth.

Rose-footed-like-the dove

Lush-feathered-aged-bird

She-who-with-blood-washes-clothes-immaculate

Pearl-eyed-mother.]

In this poem it is clear that Yoruba women are honoured for their womanhood as mothers (*iya*), the main function of women which no man can undertake for them. Through their privileged knowledge about life women control the world especially at the cultic and mysterious levels, much more than men are privileged to do. In Yoruba culture there is a male deity called *Ifa* who acknowledges the positive contributions of women in the development of human history. The resilience of women is beyond all doubt as depicted in this poem.

Ilesanmi (1998:35) states further that if *Iwa* (the essence of good character) is attributed to women, the place of women in Yoruba culture cannot be seen as a degradation of feminine quality. Ideally women are seen as virtuous and virtue is a female in Yoruba culture.

It is quite remarkable that in Yoruba culture women play a protective role of *Aabo* for all men, which is a great tribute to womanhood. This happens through the cultic power of women which makes them to be often associated with witchcraft, which is not seen as a negative system in ancient culture of the Yoruba. The positive role which witchcraft plays is when political leaders, warriors, family heads, professionals, priests and priestesses seek the support of witches in this ancient culture. They seek this protection because witches possess almost supernatural powers, thus women are equated with these agents who possess this power.

About men Ilesanmi (1998:38) observes that their chauvinism passes negative moral and physical judgements on women. In this regard it is observed that in Yoruba the beauty of women is recognized, but greater value is placed on good character. By good character it can be assumed that it is when a woman is submissive to the man. This is also a case when a woman is loyal to cultural practices whose origin is myths. As stated earlier in this section, such myths are not to be questioned.

A quotation from *The International Thesaurus of Quotations* cited by Opefeyitimi (1998:45) reads

“Only the women of the world are women, the rest are females”. This quotation makes the point that Yoruba women, by virtue of their being and disposition, are highly regarded. Another linguistic item which Yoruba culture and folklore exploits for its expansive meaning is *ifa*, whose meaning becomes “women”; according to Opefeyitimi (1998:46), the connotations include “power”, “treachery” and “wickedness”. It is worth noting that even though there are negative connotations attached to the term, “power” is a positive quality worth noting.

It cannot be disputed that women have more power than men as shown in the examples of proverbs, where a woman is said to be able to impress a man who eventually marries her. There are various instances when women demonstrate a power which men cannot counter.

***Izibongo* (praise poetry) and women**

The word, “*Izibongo*” as explained by Mafeje (1967:193) translates to “praises” and is a recording of praise names, victories and laudable characteristics of the subject. *Iimbongi* performs these praise poems which are a product of *ukubonga* (to praise). These terms have been explained by several scholars of Nguni oral art. Jordan (1957), Opland (1983), Gunner and Gwala (1994) and many others make an effort to refine the understanding of the concept. There is consensus that *izibongo* are not only about praising, they also incorporate condemning unbecoming behaviour. J Mafeje (1967:194) cites Jordan (1957), who says *iimbongi* had the licence to make sharp criticism of the habits of their subjects.

Gunner and Gwala (1994:2) add that *izibongo* are primarily concerned with naming, identifying and therefore giving significance and substance to the named person or object. The person is linked with his or her community, lineage and origins through *izibongo*. Under normal circumstances everyone should qualify to be praised irrespective of status and power. There should also be recognition of the performances irrespective of gender. In an essay entitled, “Clashes of interest: gender, status and power in Zulu praise poetry” Gunner (1994:185) states that there is a simple division of power and marginality between male and female expressions within the genre (praise poetry). She adds that there is a further division between the praise songs for men of status, power and authority, and those men who are outside this group but who utilise the genre in its unofficial rather than its official guise. She makes the point that Zulu praise poetry is a form that is in many ways closely related both to power and patriarchy.

As the preserve for men, Zulu praise poetry enunciates the values of the rightness of war and conquest, and of wars fought necessarily by men (Gunner (1994:186). She states that the pervasive tropes of the poetry, contained for the most part in the praise names, align the poetry as male and martial as in examples like: the shield spattered with blood; the assegai red with blood even at the haft; the bull with the gored flank;

the river flowing with blood. The images cited in this part are typical male territory, a war zone.

In as far as the marginalisation of women is concerned Gunner (1994:186) cites the case of the path-breaking praise poem to FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) which, according to her, Alfred Qabula performed for the first time at Curries Fountain in Durban in 1984. She states that women appear very little in this poem and when they do it is usually as items of conquest, occasionally as schemers and plotters. It is clear that *izibongo* place women on the margins and ascribe very limited categories and also use repulsive references to them.

With regards to the events where *izibongo* are performed, Gunner (1994:192) states that men's *izibongo* are part of the flamboyant dancing and praising which draw large audiences of men and women, and are the central performance pieces at weddings and other occasions. She adds that women's popular praises are rarely performed publicly in a large arena as part of a public occasion. They are usually performed only for other women, during a rest from work in the fields, or in certain houses of the homestead during a wedding where there will only be women present. According to Gunner and Gwala (1994:2), this also applies to *izigiyo*, which are women's praises and dances that hardly ever touch on war, but instead focus on the things close to their lives. These are things like money (or lack of it) or absent lovers heard of in inaccessible places such as "Number 4 Jail" in Johannesburg. The *izibongo* of women, according to Gunner (1995:192), in their compressed autobiographical way can recall courtships, boys with whom they fell out, and men whom they have outlasted. Sometimes they talk about romantic love. Other women's praises talk about desertion or neglect in married life. They can also be scornful of men's promiscuity. Polygamy is also scorned by women as misused sexual energy. Women's praises are clearly personal accounts of their experiences in life. They are performed privately as men do not value them highly. This is a great pity, because women are known for their verbal acumen especially in telling folktales. Kolawole (1998:27) states that traditionally many oral genres are part of the women's domain. No man ever tells folktales and yet women

who have proved themselves in this genre are never recognised for their role. With regards to non-recognition of women, Kolawole (1998:16) states that it is the attitudes and beliefs about women which validate women's liminal space in specific societies, or trivialise women's achievements in areas of visibility and power. It is clear that because of these attitudes and beliefs women get put in certain social spaces that limit empowerment.

From the observations made in this section of the study, it is clear that many gender myths, as observed by Wynchank (1998:129), are designed for society by the rulers, obviously to secure and reinforce their power. The folktale of the dog and the girl, as analysed by Neethling (1991) in the article entitled "Eating Forbidden Fruit in a Xhosa Narrative" illustrates the point of domination of women by men very vividly. Neethling (1991:84) explains that the dog symbolises male chauvinism, male dominance and the sexual abuse of women by men. This is from the experience of the girl, because the dog forced her to do domestic chores and later forced her to have sex with him. In each instance she obliges as the dog threatens her. This symbol clearly demonstrates the various scenaria sketched out in this section of the study.

Neethling (1991:86) ends off his article by making a recommendation for more feminist studies in African languages that will investigate the role of women in oral literary forms. This needs to be extended to written literature, because of its accessibility to researchers. The results of these studies will emancipate and empower women.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the theoretical material that will be used in the analysis of isiXhosa poems about women. I concur with Maake (1994:88), who observes that certain Western theoretical tools can be used in the analysis of African oral poetry. This is likely to happen at the same time as the relevance of African literary theories that have been developed by authors of modern literature in these languages. As the study consists of modern poetry, it is likely that some Western theories will be more

relevant than in the case of oral or praise poetry. Where relevant, these theories will be applied. In some instances the interest will be on innovation.

The theory of *izibongo* or praise poetry as presented in the chapter is to be used, as *izibongo* are the forerunners of modern isiXhosa poetry. It is in the interest of this research to observe the extent to which the techniques from *izibongo* are used by modern poets of isiXhosa especially when writing about women.

As the studies on gender overviewed in the chapter draw mainly from African literature of different languages, their relevance to isiXhosa is of interest in the analysis of the selected poems. The analysis of the poems which is done in Chapter 3 onwards follows the framework as provided in the theory as presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3: Poetry about Women in General

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the selected poems about women in general for their literary features as they occur in *izibongo* and modern poetry. The gender issues discussed are infused into the literary aspects of the poems. The poems are analysed individually using the framework for the analysis provided in Chapter 2. This framework is however not followed rigidly, but instead the poem is dealt with as the poet employs the techniques or presents information as in the case of informal aspects. At the end of each analysis a summary of the main features of the poem is presented with an evaluation of all the techniques used. The end of the chapter draws a conclusion based on the analyses of the poems.

As outlined earlier in the study in Chapter 1, the poems are selected from various poetry anthologies by different poets. The poems selected are mainly by established poets. The selected poems are translated into English. In chronological order, the following poems are selected for analysis:

1. Jolobe, J.J.R. (1959) *Ilitha "UNojaji"* pp. 3-4. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
2. Burns-Ncamashe, S.M. (1961) *Masibaliselane "Le Nt' Intombi"* pp. 53-54. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
3. Ndlazulwana, T.N. (1986) *lingxangxasi "Ubufazi"* p. 27. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
4. Moropa, K. (ed.) (1995). *Nambitha Isihobe*. "ITshawekazi elihle" by S. Ramncwana p. 29. Pretoria: Kagiso Publishers.
5. *Nawe Unakho / Le Wena O Ka Kgona/ You Too Can / U Kan Ook* (2002) "Ubuntombi" by G.N. Mahlaba p. 127. *Bhisho: Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture*. Opland, J. (Editor and Translator) (2007) *The Nation's Bounty – The Xhosa Poetry of Nontsizi Mgqwetho.* "Umpanga kamama" pp. 43-49. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

6. Jadezweni, M. (Compiler and author) (2008) Umdiliya Wesihobe *“Ngumama wam endimthandayo”* by Noluthando Mpola pp. 10-11. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

3.2 Jolobe, J.J.R. (1959) *Ilitha “UNojaji”* pp. 3-4. Johannesburg: Afrikaanse Pers Boekhandel.

1

Umfokazi othile owazalw' eyimfama,
Ingxilimbel' engxathu indoda ngesibili,
Wazeka inzwakazi kwiintombi zezwe lakhe.
Njengamadoda onke, wavuy' akuba nendlu.

2

Yayilibhongo lakhe ukumphatha umfazi,
Ngesiko lokuphathwa komfazi wakwaXhosa,
Ukuze ahlonelwe nguNojaji umkakhe,
Nangamadoda onke kwiimbutho zeziselo.

3

Wabopha umnqophiso onzima nowakwakhe,
Ilulama lomfazi ukuthobel' umthetho,
Ukuhlonel' ukwenda negama lakowabo,
Kungakumbi elomzi weziyalo zolwendo.

4

Yehla yon' intlekele indululwa libhongo,
Kwaba kancinanana wabethwa lo mfazana,
Kuviwe ngesikhalo esikrkr' elalini,
Ilugcalagcal' olu indoda kaNojaji.

5

Belusakusukela umelwane ngenceba,

Lujonge ukulamla, lufike le ntokazi
Ihleli ityundyuthwa kalusizi yimfama.
Lufumane luthi nqa kuthen' ingabaleki.

6

Yaqhubeka le ntlalo ingundaba-mlonyeni,
Bambi banovelwano, isininzi sasola.
Kwakubuzw' afumane uNojaji axhole
Ngomnwe amehl' ephantsi, angatsho nelimdaka.

7

Ngaminazan' ithile yayishushu imfama,
Yabuya emthayini yafuna uNojaji.
Akubanga kudala savakal' isikhalo
Nesithonga sentonga, lubethwa usizana.

8

Kwafikw' ehleli njalo imkhuthalel' indoda,
Yangamahalihali kulanyulwa ngabantu.
Emzuzuwini yathotha isongela ngokuthi,
"Ndakukwenzakalisa!!" Yatsho seyimqibile.

9

Wayenodumakazi wacholwa elutywamba,
Zaqingqitha iintsuku engekho zingqondweni,
Ebhuda ngoNombeko umsakwab' owendela
Kwilizwe elikude, emxelel' iimfihlelo.

10

Wabesakuthi, "Dade, ndendela emfameni,
Yandivala umlomo yathi, 'Mhla wabaleka
Ndikubetha, loo mini ndokuxhela ngebhozo
Amathumb' uwaphathe ngezandla. Uyandiva?'

"Ndaqononondiswa ndafungiswa ngale nto,
 Ihlale ilihlebo. Ndibulawa sifungo."
 Yachacha intokazi selavela ihlebo.
 Yayalw' imfama yeve, waphumla uNojaji.

NOJAJI

1

A certain man who was born blind,
 A huge ugly one with the body of a man,
 He married a beautiful girl of the girls of his country.
 Like all men, he was happy to be married.

2

It was his pride to treat the wife,
 In the custom of treating an umXhosa woman,
 So as to be respected by Nojaji his wife
 And by all the men at the drink gatherings.

3

He sealed a very difficult covenant with his wife,
 A humble woman in obeying law,
 In respecting marriage and her maiden name,
 Especially her marriage home.

4

A disaster occurred stirred by pride,
 And shortly this young wife would be beaten,
 A shrill cry would be heard in the village,
 Nojaji's husband very furious.

5

The neighbours would respond with mercy,
Intending to stop the fight, and find this lady
Sitting being mercilessly beaten by the blind.
And wonder why she does not run.

6

This life which was talked about continued
Some had sympathy, the majority were suspicious.
When asked Nojaji would scratch
With her toe on the ground, and say nothing.

7

One day the blind man was drunk,
He returned from the drink party and looked for Nojaji.
In no time the cry was heard
And the sound of the stick, the poor one is being beaten.

8

The man was found hitting her heavily,
And people tried hard to stop him.
After a while he stopped and threatened,
"I will hurt you!" Having already hurt her.

9

She had a big headwound and was picked up lame,
Days passed by with her in a coma,
Confused talking to Nombeko her sister who got married
To (a man who lives in) a far away country, telling her the secrets.

10

She was saying, "My sister I married a blind man,

He gagged my mouth saying "Should you run away
When I beat you, on that day I will slaughter you with a knife.
You will carry your intestines by hand. Do you hear me?"

11

"I was assured and made to take a vow about this thing,
It must stay a secret. It is the vow that kills me now."
The lady recovered and the secret had been divulged.
The blind man was warned and he listened, Nojaji was relieved.

3.2.1 Informal elements

According to Sirayi (1985:12), James James Ranisi Jolobe, one of the leading authors of isiXhosa, studied theology and the BA degree at the University of Fort Hare. Sirayi (1985:12) states that his major subjects for the BA degree were English and Ethics. The influence of English literature and his religious background are evident in his works.

The poem, "*UNojaji*" is about a very ugly man who is blind and who marries a beautiful girl by the name Nojaji. In order for him to be respected by his wife and other men, he beats her regularly, a cultural practice of managing a wife, according to him. The neighbours would intervene but each time the blind man comes home after drinking alcohol, he would beat her again. Nojaji is described as a humble woman who respects her marriage home. In spite of the beatings she would not protest, but instead she would submit to her husband.

One day the blind man came home drunk and beat her until she went into a coma. In her coma she was heard talking as if talking to her sister saying that she took a vow never to run away when her husband beats her. She agreed to this, because her husband threatened to kill her should she run when he beats her.

After this disclosure the neighbours reprimanded the husband who then stops beating his wife Nojaji.

As for the meaning of the poem, Sirayi (1985:121-122) sums this up as follows:

In “UNojaji” insensitive behavior evokes laughter because it is the opposite of what it should be – we expect her to elude her husband since he is blind.

But as the poem unfolds we realize that matrimonial restraints or vows which every society holds are responsible for her insensitive behavior. Immediately reflection leaps into our minds and suggests a valid and tangible reason for her odd behavior which stems from the desire and determination to respect marriage vows so as to maintain the marriage. Nojaji admits:

Ndibulawa sisifungo

(I am killed by vows)

Moving from the initial reaction we now sympathise with her as we know that her failure to fulfill her marriage vows could lead to the disintegration of the marriage.

In spite of all these observations Nojaji should have used her own judgement in a situation like this one. Her behaviour is against the meaning of her name which is “the one with judgement”. The reader cannot help but laugh at her for not saving herself from the blind man.

These events can happen in any home where a husband and wife live. The events in this poem happen at Nojaji’s house where she lives with her husband.

What strikes the reader immediately is that the husband is ugly and the wife Nojaji is beautiful. The wife is described as humble and obedient to her husband. On the other hand, the husband is a violent person. These two totally different individuals are the cause of the tension in the poem. The reader attempts to seek a way in which the two could be reconciled.

3.2.2 Formal Elements

3.2.2.1 Form of the Poem

This satirical poem can be divided into four parts as follows:

Part 1 – Consists of stanzas 1, 2 and 3. In this part the poet introduces the man and his wife. The problem or cause of strife in the poem is also introduced. The vow taken in stanza 3 makes the reader curious to know what the outcome will be of this vow. This part can be referred to as the exposition, because it is in this part that the conflict in the story is introduced.

Part 2 consists of stanzas 4, 5 and 6. It is in this part that the blind man starts beating his wife. This behaviour continues with everyone talking about it.

Part 3 consists of stanzas 7 and 8. This is the climax of the story as the husband beats her until she passes out. This is expressed quite dramatically when the poet writes in verse 4 of stanza 8,

“Ndakukwenzakalisa!” Yatsho seyimgqibile.

(“I will hurt you!” He said, having already finished her).

The use of *“seyimgqibile”* is ironic because, in fact, he had finished (killed) her already.

Stanzas 9, 10 and 11 constitute Part 4 of the poem. This part contains the revelation when the wife in a coma reveals the secret – the vow she had to take. That she took a vow not to run is not only humorous but also an anti-climax, because of the ridiculous reason why she would not run when her husband who is blind beats her. That the husband learns a lesson after this and behaves well is pleasing to the reader.

3.2.2.2 The Title

The poet uses the name of the wife for the title. The name Nojaji translates into English as “the one with judgement”. The reader therefore expects Nojaji to use her judgement on all the issues concerned with her life. The poem is about her as the title states.

3.2.2.3 Prosodic elements

The rhythm of this poem is suited to a narrative as the poem is a narrative satire. Each one of the parts is demarcated by a change in rhythm, as in stanza 4 where the poet narrates that a crisis or drama occurred. This part is characterized by line-breaks in instances where there is counterpoint as in stanzas 5 (verse 2) and stanza 6 (verses 2 and 4). In stanzas 7, 9, 10 and 11 this technique is employed throughout with great effect. In stanza 10 verse 4 the poet employs a full-stop which lends finality to the threat,

“...Mhla wabaleka

Ndikubetha, loo mini ndokuxhela ngebhozo

Amathumb’ uwaphathe ngezandla. Uyandiva?”

(...Should you run

When I beat you, on that day I will slaughter you with a knife

And you will carry your intestines with your hands. Do you hear me?)

It is the change in rhythm which slows down in this part that the threat to kill is not to be taken lightly. This is further expressed through the very emphatic “Do you hear me?”

The rhythm in this poem is slowed down by stanzas 9 (verses 3 into 4) and 10 (verses 2, 3 and 4). That Nojaji is in a coma is captured vividly through the use of these run-on-lines. It is obvious she could not speak comprehensibly and fluently.

The selection of long words also slows down the rhythm of this poem. Words such as “*belusakusukela*” in stanza 5 verse 1; “*yangamahalihali*” in stanza 8 verse 2 and “*ndakukwenzakalisa*” in stanza 8 verse 4; “*wayenodumakazi*” stanza 9 verse 1; and “*ndaqononondiswa*” in stanza 11 verse 11. By their very nature these lexical items slow down the flow of the verse in each instance where they are used.

The poet selects words that contain similar sounds to achieve a specific effect. In stanza 1 verse 2 the poet describes the husband as *“Ingxilimbel’ engxathu”* (tall ugly). The *“ngx”* sounds repeated to describe the physical appearance of this man paint a vivid picture of this tall and ugly person. Against these ugly sounds the poet selects and repeats the liquid *“l”* sound to describe the beautiful, humble and obedient wife in stanza 3 verse 2, *“Ilulama lomfazi ukuthobel’ umthetho”* (The humble wife who obeys the law). That this couple is tangential both in physical features and temperament is described effectively through the use of these two opposing sounds.

The poet makes extensive use of sound in this poem. Jolobe experiments with techniques that otherwise comply with English. In stanza 4 verse 2 the poet experiments with internal rhyme and writes, *“Kwaba kancinanana wabethwa lo mfazana.”* The morphemes marked in bold to a certain degree serve the role of rhyme. In isiXhosa, however, this is mere repetition of morphemes with sounds that are similar. The same technique is used in stanza 6, verse 2, *“Bambi banovelwano, isininzi sasola”*. The repetition of *“ba”* and the sibilant *“s”* is typical Jolobe innovation with sounds.

3.2.2.4 Pacing

As the poem is a narrative satire the four parts into which it is divided provide the points where the reader is urged to read further. The first part introduces the husband who is extremely ugly and yet his wife is very beautiful. The reader is interested to know what happens between these two different individuals.

In stanza 4 verse 1 Part two begins with the statement, *“Yehla yon’ intlekele...”* (A disaster occurred...). The suddenness in this statement catches the readers’ interest and forces them to read further. More energy is thus engaged in this reading. The same applies to Part 3 and Part 4. Each one of these parts also begins with a narration which is bound to attract the reader to want to read further in order to get to know what happens after the introductory statement.

This narrative (the content and structure) is very similar to a folktale (*intsomi*). The opening stanza echoes the formula, “*Kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi*” (Once upon a time). As the story continues the events that take place are unbelievable. The very fact that such a beautiful girl is married to an ugly and blind man is unbelievable. The beatings that continue with the wife not leaving the man are strange. The discovery of the vow she took is similar to dramatic irony. This in itself is typical *intsomi*. Part 4 is similar to the closing formula, “*Phela phela ngantsomi*” (Here ends the folktale). This is a pleasing end with the blind man having been reprimanded and he stops beating his wife. The wife lives in happiness thereafter. This is a pleasing end as the villain is found out and the wife who had to endure pain is now free.

Jolobe succeeds in drawing the interest of the reader through the use of *intsomi* structure. The reader’s energy is used throughout the poem because of the way in which the information is structured.

3.2.2.5 Tone

In a humorous way Jolobe condemns the abuse of women by men. He also takes a swipe at women for not getting out of abusive marriages timeously. Nojaji should have been clever enough and divulged the secret.

3.2.2.6 Gender Issues

In stanza 1, verse 4 the poet states,

Njengamadoda onke, wavuy’ akuba nendlu.

(Like all men he was happy when he got married.)

In this verse there is a sense of the woman being a possession of the man. It is no wonder he was proud to treat Nojaji in the way a woman is treated in isiXhosa culture. This is the instance where culture is used as an excuse to act in a way that is unbecoming as observed by Kolawole (1998:11). The wife does not act against the

unbecoming behavior of her husband as she has to comply with cultural values. In stanza 3 verses 3 and 4 the poet writes,

Ukuhlonel' ukwenda negama lakowabo,

Kungakumbi elomzi weziyalo zolwendo.

(In respecting marriage and her maiden name,

Especially her marriage home.)

This kind of behavior as observed by Kolawole (1998:11) is in line with cultural expectations that make a married woman to be obedient irrespective of circumstances.

In stanza 3 verse 2 Nojaji is described as,

"Ilulama lomfazi ukuthobel' umthetho"

a description that fits in with Chimhundu's (1995:155) desirable images of a good woman as outlined in Shona courtship praises. That she is a humble and obedient woman shows when she is being ill-treated by her husband who beats her all the time when he is drunk.

It is also remarkable that Nojaji does not seem to think for herself. Her blind husband rules her and she simply obeys. That the husband changes after the reprimand is an indication of his being amenable to discipline, a virtue that Nojaji could have exploited. She ought to know her husband more than anyone else. Nojaji is represented as an obedient being who does not object to ill-treatment.

3.2.3 Summary

The poet uses satire to condemn unbecoming behaviour by men towards their wives. This narrative poem is similar to a folktale whose function is, among other things, didactic. This satirical poem does exactly that in that it educates women to stand up to

abuse by men. Jolobe condemns the notion that culture cannot be questioned. This comes out in the exaggeration of Nojaji's obedience in the poem.

Jolobe uses sound in the poem in the most innovative ways to illustrate certain points in the poem. It is through this innovation that Jolobe stands out as a literate poet of his time.

3.3 Burns-Ncamashe, S.M. 1961 *Masibaliselane "Le Nt' Intombi"* pp. 53-54.

Cape Town: Oxford University Press

1. *Le Nt' Intombi*

Ngumntu onexabiso
Ngumntu onenquleqhu,
Kunina nakuyise,
Nekhaya ngokubanzi
Ngenxa yento ayiyo
Angad' ab' ulimele.

2. lintlungu ezingaye

Neendleko ezingaye,
lingxolo ezingaye
Neenyembez' ezingaye,
Nokuba zezovuyo,
Nokuba zezentlungu:

3. Inkom' exhelwa ngaye,

Nomdudo okwangaye,
Ngenkxwaleko ekuye,-
Ubumfam' obukuye, -
Ibhokhw' exhelwa ngaye,
Konke kuphela nguye.

4. Nehlwempu malizeke
Lize kuzal' intombi;
Nehlwempu malihlahle
Libiye ubuhlanti;
Ukuba linentombi
Liza kuba neenkomo.

5. Ixabiso lomfazi
Kukuzala iintombi.
Ixabiso lentombi
Kukuzisa iinkomo.
Ukungena kweenkomo
Bubutyebi kuyise.

6. Indoda enomthetho
Iwuwisel' umfazi.
Umfaz' osimo sihle
Ugcin' intombi yakhe.
Intombi enesimo
Ithobela unina.

7. Iba ngumzekel' omhle
Intomb' eva unina,
Nonin' ova uyise.
X' ingumolokazana
Iva uninazala,
Ova uyisezala.

8. Intomb' ethand' unina,
Unin' othand' uyise,
Idla ngokumthobela,
Imel' ukumhlonela
Uyise njengonina,

Imthand' iphelelise.

9. Intomb' ebonw' injalo

Lisok' elinobuntu,
Noko lingenankomo,
Yotsho ngomzi woyolo,
Nomyeni onoxolo,
Nokwenda kube njalo.

10. Le nt' umntu oyintombi

Liqhayiya lekhaya,
Liqhayiya lohlanga,
Sisihombo sesizwe,
Bubutyebi bendoda,

1. She is someone with value.

She is someone who makes an effort,
For her mother and her father,
And for her home in general,
Because of who she is,
She may even be injured.

2. The pain about her

And the expenses on her,
The complaints against her
And the tears about her
Even if they are of happiness
Or even of pain:

3. An ox that is slaughtered,

And a feast on her behalf as well,
Because of a pain she is suffering, -

The blindness in her, -
A goat that is slaughtered on her behalf,
Everything is in her name.

4. A poor man must get married
So that he can get a child who is a girl
Even a poor man must get branches of trees
And build a kraal;
If he has got a daughter
He is going to get cattle.

5. The value of a wife
Is to give birth to girls.
The value of a girl
Is to bring cattle.
The coming in of cattle
Is wealth to her father.

6. A man who has order
Sets it for his wife.
A wife who is well-behaved
Looks after her daughter,
A daughter who is well-behaved
Obeys her mother.

7. She sets a good example
A daughter who listens to her mother
And a mother who obeys her husband.
When she is a daughter-in-law
She obeys her mother-in-law
Who obeys her father-in-law.

8. A daughter who loves her mother
 A mother who loves her father
 She usually obeys him
 She ought to respect
 Her father like her mother does,
 And love him fully.

9. A girl who was seen like that
 By a kind bachelor
 Even though he has no cattle
 She will build a happy home,
 And have a husband who loves peace,
 And her marriage life will be like that.

10. A person who is a girl
 Is the pride of the home,
 She is the pride of the tribe
 She is the decoration of the nation,
 She is the wealth of the man,
 She is loved by the heaven.

3.3.1 The informal elements

Burns-Ncamashe was an acclaimed “*imbongi*” (oral poet) who lived in Gqumahashe in Alice in the Eastern Cape. His poetry is characterized by *izibongo* (oral poems) features. One example is the anthology entitled, *Izibongo zakwaSesile* (1979).

The poem, “*Le Nt’ Intombi*” features in his anthology of short stories entitled, “*Masibaliselane*” (1961).

The poem describes a girl – what a girl is with an emphasis on her value to her family. The poet states that a girl brings happiness to her family. This she does by bringing cattle in the form of *lobola* when she gets married. It is for this reason that a wife who gives birth to a girl is highly regarded as the poet states,

Ixabiso lomfazi

Kukuzala iintombi.

(The value of a married woman

Is to give birth to girls.)

The mother teaches her daughter good manners and thus the daughter sets a good example to the community. This kind of behavior thus gets her to marry – men are thus looking for a well-behaved girl to marry. Her family is proud of her. The nation is also proud of the girl as she brings wealth to men (fathers).

The whole poem is an expression of love and appreciation for the child who is a girl. Stanza 10 fully expresses this emotion:

Le nt' umntu oyintombi

Liqhayiya lekhaya,

Liqhayiya lohlanga,

Sisihombo sesizwe,

Bubutyebi bendoda,

Ithandwa naliZulu.

(A person who is a girl
Is the pride of the home
She is the pride of the tribe
She is the decoration of a nation
She is the wealth of a man,
She is even loved by the Heaven.)

There are two contrasting views expressed in the poem – the first one comes forth in stanza 1, verse 6 when the poet writes,

Angad' ab' ulimele

(Even if she is injured (meaning: she fell pregnant before she got married.)

The opposing view to this one is expressed very clearly in stanza 10 when the poet writes,

Liqhayiya lekhaya,

Liqhayiya lohlanga,

Sisihombo sesizwe...

(She is the pride of the home,

She is the pride of the tribe,

She is the decoration of the nation...)

These views create a tension in the poem. The reader wonders how the two views can be reconciled and therefore reads further to find out what the poet is going to say about the girl in the end.

The crucial role of the mother in the upbringing of a girl comes out very clearly in the poem. The mother brings her daughter up in a manner that will get her married because she is a well-behaved individual. By getting married she thus brings wealth to her home.

3.3.2 The formal elements

This 10-stanza poem is written in a simple and lucid style. Each stanza consists of 6 verses of two to three words and has a lyric nature. This style which is simple seems to fit in with the nature of the girl who is the subject of the poem.

3.3.2.1 The title

“Le Nt’ Intombi” expresses endearment through the use of a negative reference *“nto”* (thing). It is through the use of this negative reference that the positive aspect of the girl comes out more vividly.

The title flows into the poem as if representing how the girl grows into life and becomes an adult person. It also represents good upbringing. The metre of the poem does not change. It is constant ranging between 8 and 10 morphemes throughout the poem. In instances where the metre is likely to change, the poet employs ellipsis as in “*Intomb’ ethand’ unina,*” (A girl who loves her mother). Had the poet not elided the vowels in this verse the verse would have been, “*Intombi ethanda unina*” which would have impacted on the rhythm by slowing it down.

The entire poem is strictly formulaic in true *izibongo* style. The two verses of the first stanza in the copulative construction echo S.E.K Mqhayi’s “*ITshawe laseBhritane*” in *Inzuzo* (1943). The verses are,

Ngumntu onexabiso.

Ngumntu onenquleqhu...

(She is a person who has value.

She is a person who makes an effort...)

These two verses serve the same role as, “Hoyina-a-a-a!” (Don’t you listen to me?), a typical opening formula in *izibongo* often associated with Mqhayi. The closing verse,

“Ithandwa naliZulu”

(She is also liked by heaven)

can be substituted by the usual *izibongo* closing formula, “*Ncincilili!*”. The whole body of the poem is more of piling up of details, in that the facts stated build up on one another towards a climax. Another *izibongo* technique employed is counterpoint in stanza 2 in verses,

Nokuba zezovuyo,

Nokuba zezentlungu:

(Even if they are of happiness,

Even if they are from pain.)

Piling and counterpoint are stylistic devices that also feature in *iintsomi* (folktales).

3.3.2.2 Repetition

There is a preponderance of lexical repetition in the poem in instances like, “*Ngumntu*” (She is a person) in stanza 1 verses 1 and 2. This repetition is in the initial position in these verses. In the second stanza the repetition of “*ngaye*” (about her) occurs in the final position in all the verses. This kind of repetition where positions are changed is typical piling. The preoccupation of the poem with wealth is suggested through the repetition of “*inkomo*” (a cow) throughout the poem. This is quite significant as “*inkomo*” is a traditional amaXhosa symbol of wealth.

The more dominant sounds repeated in the poem are “z” and “l”. Both sounds by their very texture of being soft and resonant hint at the love and endearment a girl enjoys primarily from her parents. On the other hand, the “z” sound features in the words, “*zuza*”(get) and “*zisa*”(bring) thus bringing across the view that a girl brings and gives wealth to her father as already pointed out earlier. The father obtains cattle once his daughter gets married.

3.3.2.3 Pacing

The sequence in which the events in the poem are presented makes the reader want to read further. In stanza 1 the poet hints at the possibility of a girl falling pregnant before she gets married, in this way raising an ethical issue. After this the poet proceeds to the phase where everything is about the girl, as suggested through the use of “*ngaye*” (about her). This suggests that everything at a girl’s home is about her, thus demonstrating her importance to her family. She is a special individual to her family.

Stanza 4 marks a transition from the point of focus of the poem, which is the girl, to social commentary where the poet takes a dig at a poor man “*ihlwempu*” and advises

him to get married so that he can get a wife who will give birth to a girl. Generally among amaXhosa a man who is poor is not respected. It is only once he owns cattle that he gains respect. It is for this reason that the poet makes this tongue-in-cheek comment, which is social commentary. When the girl gets married she will change the socio-economic status of her family. This deviation catches the reader's interest in the poem. This is typical *izibongo* style similar to digression, as observed by Okpewho (1992:96).

Stanzas 6, 7, 8 and 9 outline the requirements and the foundation for a girl who is marriageable. This is where piling, which is explained by Okpewho (1992:83) as coupling one detail or idea to another so that the whole builds up to a climax, is employed in order to get the reader to reader further ahead. These stanzas, in fact, echo the *intsomi* entitled *Ixhegokazi nepeni egoso* (The old woman and a penny that is bent) in *The Stewart Xhosa Readers: Standard 1* edited by W.G. Bennie (1957: 19-21). The old woman picked up a penny that was bent and went to buy a pig. On her way back home with the pig, the pig refused to go through the gate. In this *intsomi* various items are called upon to get the pig to go through the gate. They first refuse until right in the end the cat started the chain by getting the mouse to run to the rope and the rope went to the cow and the cow went to the water which went for the fire and the fire went to the stick and the stick hit the dog and the dog ran at the pig, which eventually ran through the gate into the sty. The identified stanzas follow exactly the same pattern as this *intsomi*.

Stanza 10 provides a satisfactory ending to the poem as it consists of praise for the girl and closes with a religious statement, "*Ithandwa naliZulu*" (She is loved by heaven) thus lending finality to the idea. This closing verse is a reward for what the Bible (in Ephesians Chapter 5:22) advises as alluded to in stanza 6. A girl who obeys her mother's instruction is therefore a saint.

3.3.2.4 Metaphors

There are two very distinct metaphors in the poem. These metaphors can be regarded as constituting the main image of the poem, as the poem is about a girl who brings wealth to her father. The metaphors that capture this concept are in stanza 10:

Sisihombo sesizwe,

Bubutyebi bendoda...

(She is the decoration of the nation, She is the wealth of the man...)

This metaphor reduces a girl to an object, as she is referred to as something one wears in order to look smart. She is also compared to money, which is a symbol of wealth. Rephrased these metaphors can be expressed thus: A girl is an object, or A girl is money. In terms of gender views this is undermining of women. This view about a woman is typical male chauvinism.

3.3.3 Summary

On the whole the poem expresses great love and appreciation for a girl. In typical *imbongi* style the poet draws in social commentary into the poem. This is also built into the *izibongo* style of the poem through repetition, piling, digression and also the use of *iintsomi* structure as a basis. It is accepted in amaXhosa culture that a girl brings in *lobola* to her family. The stereotype of a girl being wealth for her family is informed by this cultural view. The use of a key image through the metaphors of wealth is the distinguishing feature of this poem.

3.4 Ndlazulwana, T.N. (1986) *lingxangxasi "Ubufazi"* p.27 Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.

Ubufazi

1. Mandibe sisichenge phezu kweliwa na;
Mandibe yindawo yengqushu na;

Mandibe lidini lenkohlakalo na;
Kuba kusithiwa ndinkenenkene ndingumfazi?

2. Ndiyayizam' imizam' iphumelele,
Ndiyayifezekis' iminqwen' izaliseke,
Kodw' amalungel' andinawo
Kuba kuthiwa ndibuthathaka ndingumfazi.

3. Asingabo bonk' abafaz' abacudiselekileyo,
Ayisithi sonk' abant' ababandezelekileyo,
Asingomzi wabafazi wonk' ohluphekayo,
Kwilizwe labafazi kulapho ndivela khona.

4. Amalinge am awa phantsi,
Imiyalelo yam ayinamzalisekisi,
Imizabalazo yam ayinanzwa bani
Kuba kuthiwa andinamandla ndingumfazi.

A Woman

1. Must I be exposed over a rock;
Must I be a place for rubbish;
Must I be a sacrifice to cruelty;
Because it is thought that I am weak because I am a woman?

2. I make efforts and succeed,
I fullfil wishes and succeed,
But I do not have rights
Because it is thought that I am weak because I am a woman.

3. It is not all women who are oppressed,
It is not all of us, who are suffering,
It is not all women who are suffering
From the world of women that is where I come.

4. My efforts fail,
No one carries out my commands,
No one takes notice of my efforts
Because it is thought that I am weak because I am a woman.

3.4.1 Informal elements

Ndlazulwana protests against the bias against women who are perceived to be weak and therefore are subjected to ill-treatment. They have no rights whatsoever. Nothing is recognized of what they do just because they are women. She rejects the blanket view that all women are weak.

3.4.2 Formal elements

This four-stanza poem of four verses each can be divided into two parts that are demarcated by stanza 3, which has no refrain. The refrain "*Kuba kusithiwa ndinkene-nkene ndingumfazi*" clearly marks the three stanzas as protest against the

stereotypical view that women are weak and therefore cannot achieve anything. Stanza 4 laments the non-recognition of women in spite of the views expressed in stanza 3, where the poet states that not all women are needy as expressed in the verse,

“Asingomzi wabafazi wonk’ ohluphekayo.”

(It is not all women who are suffering).

She speaks from experience and is the voice of the voiceless:

“Kwilizwe labafazi kulapho ndivela khona.”

(From the world of women that is where I come.)

She has thus first-hand experience of what she is talking about.

In stanza 1 the poet bewails her vulnerability through a series of rhetorical questions which are metaphorical as well. She asks whether a woman must be exposed to danger by hanging over a cliff, a very dangerous situation. She also asks whether she must be a place where all the rubbish is thrown, a demeaning situation. She also sees women as sacrifices as a result of cruelty. Women are therefore always exposed to danger, they are undermined and they are victims of cruelty.

The metaphors *“phezu kweliwa”* (over the cliff), *“yindawo yengqushu”* (a rubbish dump) and *“idini lenkohlakalo”* (the sacrifice for cruelty) highlight the vulnerable situation in which women are. Women are not respected at all.

The efforts that women make to succeed are nullified by non-recognition. The use of counterpoint in stanza 2 illustrates the efforts they make which are suppressed. The verse, *“Kodw’ amalungel’ andinawo”* (But I do not have rights) is an anti-climax after all the efforts women make to be recognised.

3.4.3 Gender issues

Women are represented as tender and weak. The refrains in the three stanzas, viz. stanzas 1, 2 and 4, carry the synonyms, “*ndinkene-nkene*”, “*ndibuthathaka*” and “*andinamandla*” that describe women as weak. Stanza 3 marks a very clear view of self-assertion by the poet who is a woman. She states very emphatically that she is not necessarily weak just because she is a woman. In this regard Opuku-Agyemang (1998:104), citing examples from Akan stories, observes that a woman who comes home with a basket full of snails would have proved some physical energy, but not enough to merit chronicling. She adds that the mere fact that women are relegated to a less important hunting activity makes it seem as if nothing from them gets recognition just because they are women. This echoes what Dlazulwana says in her poem, “Ubufazi”.

3.4.4 Summary

The central message of the poem is conveyed through a technical device, the refrain. It is through this refrain that the poet condemns the stereotypical belief that women are weak and therefore do not deserve any rights and recognition, for that matter. This poem is the voice of the voiceless.

3.5 Moropa, K. (ed.) (1995) *Nambitha Isihobe “ITshawekazi elihle”* p. 29 by S. Ramncwana. Pretoria: Kagiso Publishers

1

NguNondwe elibizwa yimbongi;
NguSylvia elibizwa ngumlungu;
Ngumdakakazi omnyama ongeva sepha;
Ngumafungwashe kuyise nonina.

2

Yintw' emehlo alubhelu okwentakazana;
Yintw' entam' ende ngathi ngusikholimanzi;

Yintw' ethi yakuhleka kuvel' izinxonxo;
Yintw' ethi ukunyathela ngathi umhlaba iyawucekisa.

3

Lufafakazi olusukileyo egadeni;
Lubhelukazi olumanz' andonga;
Yintw' emashiya aqhamileyo ngathi ngumthi wepesika;
Nondwe, Sylvia sithandwa ndisendleleni.

4

Ndaqal' eDikeni ukwalamana neTshawekazi;
Lali ekuthiwa nguNtselamanzi;
Ndadlwengulek' umxhelo ngoko nangoko;
Suka kodwa ndanentak' emangalisayo.

5

Kusuku lokuqala ndibuye nemand' esikhova;
Okwesibini yangen' intak' endlwini;
Ndibethe mabini, mathathu ndangena ndonke;
Ndabuya umlomo ungahlangani yimincili.

6

Ndikhumbula loo mini yokudibana kwethu;
Ntsas' ehlobo eyayizole kunene;
Kuvakal' uPhezukomkhono kuphela;
Sasiphantsi komthi womgwenye.

7

Ndisawakhumbula amazwi akho Nondwe;
Usithi ndingabi ngudludla nazo;
Loo mazwi asankenteza nanamhlanje;
Kakade la mazwi ayetheth' ukuthini?

8

Imini nobusuku ndicinga ngawe Tshawekazi lam;
Kuba ubumnandi andibuboni ngaphandle kwakho;
Sobaliselana ngezo mini xa sihlangene;
Kaloku le ndlu ndihleli kuyo ineendlebe.

THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS

1

She is known by the name Nondwe by the poet;
She is known as Sylvia by white people;
She is a dark beauty;
She is the first born to her father and mother.

2

She has bright eyes like a little bird;
She has a long neck like the blue-crane;
When smiling there comes dimples;
She walks gently on the ground.

3

She is very tall;
She is beautiful;
She has hairy eyebrows like a peach tree;
Nondwe, Sylvia my lover I'm on the way.

4

I first saw her in Alice;
At the village called Ntselamanzi;
I was taken up there and then;
But I was afraid in a strange way.

5

On the first day I came with nothing;
On the second time there was hope;
I said a few words and I was accepted;
I was very glad.

6

I miss that day we first met;
It was a sunny summer's day;
Only a bird song was heard;
We were under a tree.

7

I still remember your words Nondwe;
Saying I must not get taken up by all;
Even today those words are still ringing;
By the way, what did those words mean?

8

Day and night I think about you my Princess;
Because there is no happiness without you;
We will tell each other about those days when we meet;
Of course, the house wherein I stay has ears.

3.5.1 Informal elements

Ramncwana writes about his beloved Nondwe from whom he seems to be separated. The poet expresses intense love for Nondwe. He met her for the first time in Alice at the village Ntselamanzi. It was then that he proposed love to her. This was in spite of the fear he had of this beautiful girl. When she accepted him, he was filled with excitement. He remembers that they sat under a tree on that clear summer morning. The birds sang in the tree above them. He remembers Nondwe's words when she cautioned him against falling in love with all the girls.

The poem starts off with fear on the part of the young man, but when he is accepted the emotion is great excitement. The romantic moment under the tree is the highlight of this poem. The poem ends off in a rather sad mood, when the poet hints at the absence of his lover who he misses so badly. He hopes to meet her one day.

The mixture of fear and excitement in the poem creates tension in the poem. Also, the intense love ending off with the sense of loss, which gives a sense of sadness, is another reason for tension in the poem.

3.5.2 Formal Elements

3.5.2.1 The title

The title of the poem, "*ITshawekazi elihle*" is very striking. It catches the reader's attention immediately because of the use of the royal clan name, "*Tshawe*" and the epithet, "*elihle*" (who is beautiful). The reader immediately expects beauty in the poem.

3.5.2.2 The prosodic elements

The poem is in eight stanzas of four verses each. The poem can be divided into three parts: The first part (stanzas 1, 2 and 3) gives the names and physical features of Nondwe. This part has the features of a ballad in that the poet sings a song for Nondwe when he tells her he is on his way to her as he says,

"Nondwe, Sylvia sithandwa ndisendleleni"

(Nondwe, Sylvia my love I am on my way to you).

The second part (stanzas 4 and 5) is the narration of when they met for the first time. Stanzas 6, 7 and 8 deal with the memories the poet has of the girl. This is the romantic part of the poem.

Stanza 1 is characterized by the copulative construction "*ngu*" in giving the names of the girl. This feature, the copulative construction and naming, is a feature of *izibongo*.

Stanza 2 also assumes the same pattern and uses the construction “yi”. In both stanzas the regularity with which these sounds occur renders this first part melodious. The alliteration on the liquid sound “l” in stanza 3 adds to the melody of the first two stanzas. Melody is an essential ingredient of a ballad as it is sung to a character.

On the whole the poem employs sounds which paint a romantic mood and situation in that the sounds dominant in this poem are such sounds as the sibilants, “s” such as in stanza 3 verse 4, “*Nondwe, Sylvia sithandwa ndisendleleni*”. This is remarkable as the “s” sound is also woven in to include the English name, Sylvia. The “s” sound also features in stanza 6, verse 4, “*Sasiphantsi komthi womgwenye*” and in stanza 8, verse 3, “*Sobaliselana ngezo mini xa sihlangene;*”

On the whole the rhythm of this poem is slow and dignified so as to capture the mood of the poet. Through this highly controlled rhythm the poet expresses adoration for his lover who is not there anymore. He misses her very much as stanza 8 suggests. He thinks of her day and night.

3.5.2.3 Repetition

The morphological repetition that features in stanzas 1, 2 and 3 is very significant in that it features in the part of the poem where the description of Nondwe is being given. Throughout this part of the poem the repetition of the copulative constructions “*Ngu*”, “*Yi*”, and “*Lu*” makes it imperative for one to look at Nondwe, an effect desired by the poet as he describes the lady in his heart.

3.5.2.4 Pacing

The poem opens with a description of Nondwe. The reader is unlikely not to be attracted to this description as it paints a vivid picture of a beautiful lady. The reader reads through to verse 12 when the poet addresses Nondwe directly and says, “*Nondwe, Sylvia sithandwa ndisendleleni*” (Nondwe, Sylvia, my love I am on the way to you). It is this address that gets the reader to move with the poet to Nondwe. The address is some beacon between the first part and the second as it stands alone. The

reader is curious to hear or read about what the poet is bringing to his lover.

The second part, which begins in stanza 4, gives background to their relationship. It narrates when and where they met for the first time. The end of this part is how he expresses his love for her and his emotions when he was accepted by Nondwe. In this regard the poet writes, *“Ndabuya umlomo ungahlangani”* (When I came home I was all smiles).

This beautiful and positive end of part 2 propels the reader to want to know what happens in their relationship which is recounted in part 3 covered in stanzas 6, 7 and 8. In this part the poet reminisces over the days when they met and what she said to him. This part which captures the good memories of the poet finishes with the poet expressing his loss of his beloved Nondwe. He feels very lonely without her being there anymore. This sad ending is even compounded by the suspicion the poet expresses when he writes, *“Kaloku le ndlu ndihleli kuyo ineendlebe”* (Of course, the house wherein I stay has ears). It is not clear why the poet would suspect that someone might overhear him and report him to some authority. The reader is left to debate this part with other readers. This is a good way to end a piece of writing like this poem.

The poet succeeds in attracting the reader and propelling him to read the poem to the end. The variation which is brought about through the distinctly different episodes or parts of the poem help the pacing, hence the success in this aspect.

3.5.2.5 Metaphors

The metaphors that are key to this poem are found in stanza 4:

“Ndaqala eDikeni ukwalamana neTshawekazi” (I met the Princess for the first time in Alice)

The verb *“ukwalamana”* yields a conceptual metaphor, “The princess is a supernatural figure”. This is derived from what happens when a person sees a supernatural spirit. Such a person suffers a stroke, which is ascribed to having come face to face with a supernatural spirit.

“Ndadlwengulek’ umxhelo ngoko nangoko” (I was taken up there and then) can be expressed with the conceptual metaphor framework as “Love is a rapist”. The emotion described in this verse clearly describes the poet as having lost control over himself during the moment when he met Nondwe. She probably was the one who took control over him instead, because as he writes *“ndanentak’ emangalisayo”* (I was afraid in a strange way).

Both metaphors illustrate the power of love over an individual. For both metaphors the comparison is drawn from a completely unexpected domain, thus adding uniqueness to the experience of the poet. He definitely lost control of himself when he met Nondwe.

3.5.3 Gender Issues

3.5.3.1 The use of the female suffix -kazi

It is remarkable that the poet decides to use the name of the royal clan of amaXhosa, *Tshawe* for Nondwe. That her name is Nondwe as given by *imbongi* is consistent with her royal status as accorded via the name *Tshawe*. To give her the female status the poet decides to add the suffix *-kazi* to the name *Tshawe*. This suffix denoting female is employed in stanza 1 verse 3 when the poet describes her complexion. He refers to her as *“Ngumdakakazi”* (She is a dark beauty). When describing her height in stanza 3 he refers to her as *“Lufafakazi”* (she is a very tall one). In this case the suffix catches both the extension for “very” as well as the female meaning. Her complexion is once again described through the female extension *-kazi* when he writes, *“Lubhelukazi”* (She is a bright one).

The use of the suffix *-kazi* in this poem indicates to the reader that the subject of the poem is a female. Her complexion and her height are indicated in female terms. She is therefore dark in complexion in a female way; she is tall but in a female way; she comes from the ruling clan amaTshawe, but she is a Tshawe who is a female, hence *Tshawekazi*. This could also be explored from gender controlling point of view – that the suffix can be interpreted as demeaning. It is demeaning when it refers to a Tshawe

who is female – a female being less of a Tshawe if men are regarded as the true Tshawes.

3.5.3.2 Physical appearance

Eyes: In stanza 2 her eyes are described as “*alubhelu*” (yellow, meaning bright). They are compared to the eyes of a little bird (*intakazana*). The diminutive which could be both demeaning and endearing.

Neck: In stanza 2 her neck is described as being long and it is compared to that of a blue-crane (*usikholimanzi*).

Face: She has dimples in her face (on the cheeks) as described in stanza 2.

Walks: She walks with gaiety as described in stanza 2, “*Yintw’ ethi ukunyathela ngathi umhlaba iyawucekisa*” (She walks gently on the ground.)

Eyebrows: Her eyebrows are described as being bushy like a peach tree (stanza 3 verse 11).

The comparison in bird similes for her eyes and her neck is stereotypical as a girl is often referred to as a little bird by young men. Her eyebrows are compared with a peach tree, which comes from the same domain as a flower with which a girl is compared in isiXhosa. The use of the simile for these comparisons is possibly informed by bias against women. Her physical appearance deserves a device of lesser status from the metaphor which is a device reserved for men.

3.5.3.3 Positive stereotypes

In describing her family background in stanza 1, verse 4, the poet mentions that “*Ngumafungwashe kuyise nonina*” (She is the first-born daughter of her parents). A first-born daughter is highly trusted by her family. Nondwe is portrayed in that way in stanza 7, when she exhorts her lover not to take on all the girls. What she said on that day is still remembered by the poet even though it sounds like a long time ago. That she has a strong personality is also felt in stanza 8, where the poet states that he

cannot live without Nondwe. The name *Tshawekazi* is therefore fitting in this instance, because she seems to carry the charisma of royal people.

The dramatic nature of the poem reinforces the description of Nondwe's beauty as it pervades the poem.

3.5.4 Summary

To introduce Nondwe the poet employs naming, a device used by *iimbongi* to praise their subjects who are often men. The descriptions of Nondwe's physical features and personality tally with the outline of images of desirable qualities and attributes in Shona courtship praises provided by Chimwundu (1995). The comparison with birds is another stereotypical description of Nondwe. The use of a linguistic feature, a suffix – *kazi*, is another technique that possibly demonstrates bias against the woman. This is further supported by the choice of similes ahead of metaphors is another evidence of bias against woman.

A turn is taken in the last part of the poem where the woman influences the man positively. That a woman has a strong personality is illustrated in this last part. This romantic poem is written in very beautiful language suited for this type of poem, which is a ballad.

3.6 *Nawe Unakho/ Le Wena O Ka Kgoni / You Too Can / U Kan Ook* "Ubuntombi" by G.N. Mahlaba p. 127. **Bhisho: Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture.**

Ubuntombi

1

Ntombazana encinane yiba nebhongo

Kuba uyintyatyambo entle yelizwe

Ngenxa yokuba awukaze uthintwe

Yindoda ebuntwini bakho
Mhla utshata yiva yiva ubunzulu
Bokunikezela ngobuntombi bakho
Kwindoda oyithandileyo
Wakhetha ukuba ibe ngumyeni wakho.

2

Ukwenda uyintombi
Kuyokwenza ube namandla
Okuhlala emzini ude uthi noba ucinga ngokuhamba sekukubi
Uthi: “myeni buyisa ubuntombi bam kuqala ndizokuhamba”.

A girl

1

Young girl be proud
Because you are a beautiful flower of the country
Because you have never been touched
By a man in your person.
When you get married feel the intensity
Of giving away your virginity
To the man who you love
And chose him to be your husband.

2

To get married while you are still a virgin

Will give you the courage, even when you consider leaving when things are bad

To say: "My husband first return my virginity then I will leave".

Will give you the courage, even when you consider leaving when things are bad

To say: "My husband first return my virginity then I will leave".

3.5.1 Informal elements

Mahlaba is a fairly new poet who emerged when a call was made for writings by female authors for the *Nawe Unakho* project co-ordinated by the Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in 2002. The poem is selected for what it says about women.

The poem of two stanzas of 8 and 4 verses respectively is a direct address to a young girl (representing any young woman) who must be proud of her being. The young girl is called upon to remain pure until she gets married. She will thus be proud if she achieves that. This (her purity before marriage) serves as a condition should the marriage not work. She can claim her virginity back from her husband from whom she is getting divorced.

The poem is about the dignity of a girl. She is being conscientised to maintain her dignity at all times. Virginity is used to represent her real self. The reference to virginity challenges the popular stereotype of the penis which is an organ of power and superiority. The poet pays homage to the woman in a similar way as the Yoruba do as cited by Ilesanmi (1998:31).

3.5.2 Formal elements

The use of the double diminutive in verse 1 of stanza 1, "*Ntombazana encinane*" (Young girl, who is young) emphasises the fact that this is a young girl who is being addressed. This kind of repetition is employed again in verses 5, 6 and 7 of stanza 1,

when the poet illustrates the experience of a girl as she gives herself for the first time to the man she loves with whom she is married. The poet writes,

“Mhla utshata yiva yiva ubunzulu

Bokunikezela ngobuntombi bakho

Kwindoda oyithandileyo.”

(When you get married feel the intensity

Of giving away your virginity

To the man who you love.)

The depth of the emotion is captured through the repetition of *“yiva” (feel)*, an experience that has no comparison.

The beauty of a girl is also illustrated through overstatement in verse 2 of stanza 1. The girl is referred to as *“uyintyatyambo entle”* (you are a beautiful flower), a general reference to a girl in isiXhosa. The epithet *“entle”* is intended to illustrate the purity of a girl. She is an asset of the nation as she belongs to *“yelizwe”* (of the country).

In stanza 1 verse 4 and in stanza 2 verse 12 the poet uses the words *“ebuntwini”* and *“ubuntombi”* when she refers to the essence of the girl. Both references refer to the girl’s virginity, which could have been referred to as the vagina. That a girl’s real person is described in euphemistic terms for the vagina also suggests the self-respect the poet wants to instil in the girl.

The use of the direct speech in the last verse of stanza 2 demonstrates the confidence with which a girl who heeds the warning would state her terms in the event of a dispute.

3.6.3 Summary

The poet's is a voice of women against exploitation by men in a marriage. The effect of the message lies in the fact that it is in direct speech, a direct address to women, so to speak. Self-respect is what the poet advocates to women.

Repetition has been used throughout this poem. It is through this repetition that the poet succeeds in emphasising her message to women.

3.7 Jeff Opland (ed. and transl.), *The Xhosa poetry of Nontsizi Mgqwetho*. 2007, "Umpfanga kaMama" by Nontsizi Mgqwetho pp. 42-49. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

[The spelling of the surname "Mgqweto" is retained as the family spells it in accordance with the spelling conventions of isiXhosa as presently accepted.]

UMrs. Emmah Jane Mgqweto.

Intombi kaZingelwa UmCwerhakazi,

eyayithandwa kakhulu ngabantu;

nangabantwana bayo.

1. Nkunkuthela enkulu masakubulele; 5
Dumabarhwaqele;
Owaduma barhwaqela kwa Mgqweto,
Wathabatha intsika yomzi wakhona;
Wabashiya bekhedamile.

2. Usizi ke lwayicanda iNgoji, 10
Ukuthabatha kwaKho elo xhegokazi;
Kwasifundisa,

Ukuba apha asinakhaya.

3. Xa ususayo ukuphefumla kwabantu,
Baze babhubhe; 15
Makusifundise nathi,
Ukubugqala ubukumkani bamazulu.

4. IHewu lonke jikelele,
Belisithi ukumbiza nguMhamha;
Kuba ebenothando olunzulu, 20
Nobunye bentliziyo;
Kwiirhemente zonke.

5. Ingalo zakhe wayengazoluleli,
Abakhe abantwana bodwa;
Kodwa ezolulela nabantwana, 25
Balo lonke ilizwe

Camagu!

6. Inyawo zakhe zasezityabukile,
Kukuhamba ethandazela nabagulayo;
Banoyolo ababhubhele eNkosini,
Abazono zisongelwe egazini leMvana, 30

Camagu!

7. Umlomo wakhe onobubele,
Wawungadinwa;
Ukuthandazela abantwana babantu,
Abakwilizwe lezihelegu laseRhawutini. 35
8. Nako ke! Mninintozonke!
Usindulule ngoxolo, isicakakazi sakho,
Ke uluvo lokufa kwaso;
Zelubonakale entlalweni yethu.
9. Namhla ingubo yakwaChizama ilele yodwa, 40
Ngokuswel' umambathi;
Awu kufa ulutshaba,
Nesaphetha sakho.
10. Loo mzalikazi wethu,
Xa wayethandazela elimiweyo, 45
Ubesitsho ngentlombe emnandi;
Zidume neendonga zendlu yakuthi,
Babhitye nabangaphandle.
11. Ubewutsho Umthandazo batyhabatyheke,
Zibuye nezihange emadotyeni; 50
Bawubone ubuqaqawuli bawo,

Nabamphoxe ezinkalweni njengesikhova.

12. Kwikhaya lakhe loxolo iJerusalem,
Wayedla egodusa;
Le ndlovukazi—enyawo zinentsente, 55
Isandulela endleleni yobomi.
13. Msingakazi obubele,
Behla ngemilambo;
Namhla mabube ziingqimba,
Phezu kweJordan. 60
14. UThixo Uluthando,
Kodwa olukaMhamha ebantwini;
Belunjengemibethe yaseHerimone,
Elalayo entabeni ezo zeZiyoni.
15. Isibane sothando lwakhe, 65
Besinjengemingcunube;
Etyalwe ngasemijelweni yamanzi adlayo,
Phakathi kwazo iinyibiba.
16. Akunalusizi kufa,
Akunako ukucengwa; 70

Bubuninzi beenyembezi,
Akunakushukunyiswa.

17. UKristu usishiyele umzekelo,
Ukuze silandele emkhondweni wakhe:
Zakuthi izindlu zethu zimile uqaqqa, 75
(*Oleseshayo makaqiqe*).
18. Bekuthi ukuba kwenzakele umntu apho emzini,
Nakuba uwiswe lihashe,
Lo mzalikazi wethu abengowokuqala
Ukubaleka ukuya kuloo ndawo, 80
Ephethe ibhekile yamanzi Tarhu!
19. Umhambi ngendlela ebengazange abuze mntwini,
Ukuba amanzi acelwa phi na;
Ebetsalwa sisibane sobubele,
Esivuthayo emzini kaMhamha aze asinge khona Camagu! 85
20. Kuyadlul' iingqondo zethu,
Ukushiywa ngulo mzali;
EmaCwerheni—nakwaChizama,
Bampompoza ezikrákrá

21. Ebengazange ayokulala, 90
Equmbelene namntu;
Ebengazange avuke kanjalo equmbelene namntu,
Kwakulawula uxolo kuphela:
Emphefumlweni wakhe Camagu! Mazulu!
22. Ubesithandazela isixeko 95
SaseRhawutini;
Ngathi uyasibona,
UbuSodom nobuGomora baso.
23. Azinge—UmCwerhakazi, 100
Icandeki intliziyo;
Athiyele namachanti eNyangweni,
Zitsho neentaba zeNkonkobe zikhangelane.
24. Ngubani na ongekhe akoyike, 105
Wena Nkosi;
Angalizukisi,
Igama Lakho.
25. Ubesitsho lo mzalikazi wethu,
Athi Nkosi: Khawuyale imfazwe;
Nokuphalazwa

- Kwegazi labantu. 110
26. Amemelele ke! Athi Nkosi,
Gcina ilizwe;
Kuyo ingozi yomlilo
Neyemigodi neyamanzi.
27. Neyeziphango zezichotho, 115
Nemibane—
Neyeenkumbi,
Neyendlala neyezifo Tarhu!
28. Amemelele ke! UmCwerhakazi,
Athi umhlaba wethu, 120
Mawube njengentsimi;
Esikelelweyo nguWe Bawo.
29. Yiba ngumxhasi wabalupheleyo
Unike ukuthandana;
Nobunye bentliziyo, 125
Kubantu baKho bonke.
30. Zonke ke izihlobo,
Mazaneliswe ngulo mbiko;

Ezihleli ngomanyano,

Lwabathandanayo Camaguni!

130

“Banenyhweba abayenzayo imiyalelo yaKhe ukuze babe nelungelo kuwo umthi wobomi bangene ngamasango kuwo Umzi:—Tarhu Hallelluya!”

Mama’s death

Mrs Emma Jane Mgqweto,

daughter of Zingelwa of the Cwerha clan,

much loved by the people

and by her children.

1 We give thanks, All-Mighty, 5

Thunder-and-They-Shudder:

the Mgqweto home shuddered when you thundered,

you seized its central pillar

and left them bereft.

2 Grief cleft the Ngojis 10

when you seized this old woman

and showed in so doing

our home is not here.

- 3 When you blot out life
and people pass on, 15
teach us to look
to the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 All of Hackney
knew her as Mama:
she bore limitless love, 20
the selfsame heart,
for every creed.
- 5 Her arms enfolded
not only her children,
enfolded the children 25
of every nation. Mercy!
- 6 On blistered feet she made her rounds
to pray at the side of the sick.
Blessed are those who die in the Lord,
whose sins are washed in the blood of the Lamb. 30
Mercy!
- 7 She expressed compassion,
incessantly praying

- for Joburg's children
in the land of horrors. 35
- 8 Lord of all creatures,
you summoned your servant in peace,
as we suffer her death
may our lives be illumined!
- 9 The Chizama blanket's folded 40
with no one to wear it today.
Oh, Death, you're the foe,
with your bow and arrows.
- 10 In prayer for the world
this mother of ours 45
would sing a sweet song of praise;
inside the walls of our home resounded,
the people outside grew lean.
- 11 She swayed us with her prayers,
the wayward found new paths, 50
even those who shunned you, Father,
now perceived their splendour.

- 12 She grazed homewards to Jerusalem,
for her a haven of peace;
with callused feet this cow elephant 55
smoothed life's path for us.
- 13 Torrent whose kindness
flushed river courses,
gush today
in springs above Jordan. 60
- 14 God is love indeed,
but Mama's love of people
was Hermon's morning dews
bathing Zion's hills.
- 15 The light of her love 65
cascaded like willows,
edged with lillies,
sustained by water.
- 16 Death, you're heartless,
unperturbed; 70
a torrent of tears
leaves you unmoved.

- 17 Christ set an example,
we follow his footsteps:
grass will grow on our graves 75
(Reader, take note).
- 18 When trouble struck a home—
perhaps a fall from a horse—
our mother was always first
to rush to the scene, 80
cup of water in hand. Mercy!
- 19 No need for a traveller
to ask if there was water;
drawn by Mama's glowing compassion
he'd make straight for her home. Peace! 85
- 20 This parent's departure
leaves us stunned;
among Cwerha and Chizama
bitter tears are shed.
- 21 She went to bed 90
free of anger;
she woke again free of anger;

peace reigned supreme
in the depths of her soul. Peace! Heavens!

22 For Johannesburg 95

she'd offer prayers,
noting it's Sodom
and Gomorrah.

23 This Cwerha daughter
bared her heart: 100

sprites fled the thresholds,
the Winterberg swivelled.

24 Who is there, Lord,
who would not fear you,
refuse to exalt 105
your holy name?

25 Our mother would pray
for an end to war:
"O Lord, put an end
to the letting of blood. 110

26 "Lord," she implored,

- “shield our land
from the threat of fire,
of the mines, and of floods,
- 27 “of tempest and lightning, 115
of locusts,
of whirlwind,
of hunger and plague.” Mercy!
- 28 This Cwerha implored,
“Father, pour blessings 120
on this land of ours
so it bursts into bloom like a garden.
- 29 “Support the aged,
so all your people
unite with one heart 125
in love for each other.”
- 30 May all her friends,
dwelling as one
in love for each other,
hear this news of her death. Peace to you all! 130

“Blessed are those who have followed His teachings, so they enjoy the fruits of the tree of life and pass through the gates to the heavenly homestead. Mercy! Hallelujah!”

3.7.1 Informal elements

Nontsizi Mgqweto is an unknown female poet whose poetry was published in *Umteteli waBantu*. She was in the forefront of poetry on women's issues as well as criticism on national issues in the period 1920-1930. She wrote approximately 90 poems, which appeared only in a newspaper of that period, namely *Umteteli waBantu*, because the poems are highly critical on political issues and would not have been published under the government of that period in South Africa.

This poem is a tribute to Mrs Emmah Jane Mgqweto on her passing on. This tribute was posted as a death notice in *Umteteli* of 2 December 1922 on page 6. That it is a death notice emerges in the last stanza of the poem when the poet writes,

Zonke ke izihlobo,

Mazaneliswe ngulo mbiko;

(May all her friends

Accept this death notice)

The preface, in prose form, to the poem captures her biography. She is the daughter (maiden surname) of Zingelwa of the Cwerha clan. In the preface it is also stated that her children and people loved her very much.

The postscript, which is also in prose, is from the Book of St Luke 11:28. The text alludes to the good life Mrs Mgqweto lived. She lived according to the will of God as alluded to in the text.

The poem is a mixture of sadness and praise in celebration of Mrs Mgweto's life as she was loved by everybody in Ngojini, in the Hewu district. The poet, however, takes a swipe at death as she says,

Akunalusizi kufa,

Akunako ukucengwa;

Bubuninzi beenyembezi...

(Death you are heartless

Unperturbed

By the torrent of tears...)

In typical *izibongo* style Mgweto engages in social commentary in condemning war in stanza 25, when she writes,

Ubesitsho lo mzalikazi wethu,

Athi, "Nkosi, kha uyale imfazwe;

Nokuphalazwa

Kwegazi labantu."

(Our mother would pray

For an end to war:

"O Lord, put an end

To the letting of blood of the people.")

That she condemns death and at the same time war creates tension in the poem. The reader wonders what her (Mgweto's) preoccupation is in the poem.

3.7.2 Formal elements

This poem is an elegy written in 30 stanzas of 3 to 5 verses each. There is a refrain in stanzas 5, 6, 18, 19, 21, 27 and 30. This refrain, a typical *izibongo* technique, varies between “*tarhu!*”, “*camagu!*” and “*camaguni!*” These interjections feature during traditional ceremonies to appease the ancestors. They are therefore appropriate in especially a case when someone old has died. These interjections in this poem also provide some emotional relief to the bereaved – some kind of *catharsis* in dramatic terms.

3.7.2.1 The title

The title, *Umphanga kaMama* (Mama’s death) immediately captures the subject of the poem. It be located about the death of the poet’s mother. The preface and the postscript, both in prose, give more clarity on who the subject of the poem is and also about death.

3.7.2.2 The prosodic elements

The opening stanza features sounds that are significant in the whole poem in that they represent the imaginary act of God when “fetching” Mrs Mgqweto. It is an abrupt and fearful act by God. The sounds also conjure the fearful nature of God. The sounds feature in the following verses:

Nkunkuthela enkulu masikubulele,

Dumabarhwaqele,

Owaduma barhwaqela kwaMgqweto.

(We give thanks All-Mighty

Thunder-and-They-Shudder:

The Mqgwetho home shuddered when you thundered.)

The repetition of the sounds “nk” (the alveolar nasal) in verse 1 paints a clear picture of a great individual. This image is further supported by the hard sounds “d” (alveolar voiced plosive), “rh” (glottal fricative) and “gq” (voiced palatal click) in the subsequent verses.

The poet nevertheless thanks God. This is done in the belief that Mrs Mqgweto is in the comfort of The Almighty now that she has died. God is also being thanked for the life of Mrs Mqgweto.

The poet also employs alliteration on “ba” in stanza 5, verse 23 when she writes,

Abakhe abantwana bodwa,

(not only her children,)

In stanza 7 alliteration is used when the poet writes,

Ukuthandazela abantwana babantu Abakwilizwe lezihelegu laseRhawutini

(incessantly praying for Joburg’s children)

The alliteration on the sounds “ba” and “l” paints a prayerful and sombre mood. These sounds also give a suggestion that Mrs Mqgweto was mother to all the children of Ngojini.

The rhythm of the poem is slow, in line with its mourning tone, but changes to a fast pace when the poet celebrates the life of the deceased Mrs Mqgweto, for instance, in stanza 1 where the poet thanks God for the life of Mrs Mqgweto. This celebratory type of rhythm is repeated in stanza 8, when the poet presents the event of the death of her mother as one that should make a difference to the lives of those who know how kind she was during her life.

3.7.2.3 Pacing

The poem divides into five parts, the first part being the first three stanzas of the poem in which the poet announces the death. This part is similar to what *the imbongi* does when they draw the attention of the audience. Once the audience listens, then *imbongi* continues, which is what Mgweto does in this poem. She goes on to describe her mother, whom everyone called “*mhamha*”, a sign that she was mother to everybody in Hewu. That she is called “*mhamha*” is a sign that she is not just a mother “*umama*”, but someone whom everyone looks up to as their mother, hence the spelling “*mhamha*”. This is covered in stanzas 4, 5, 6 and 7. Part three begins in stanza 8 and closes in stanza 15. This part is concerned with religious work she did in the area. There is also intercession for the Chizama family, as there is no one to take over from her as expressed in, “*Namhla ingubo yakwaChizama ilele yodwa,*” the poet makes an appeal to God to intervene as the family looks for someone to come into her place.

Part four addresses death and rebukes it for being merciless. Stanza 16 of this part specifically rebukes death, but the rest of the stanzas up to stanza 28 describe Mrs Mgweto’s kindness and generosity as well as how she would pray. She prayed for everyone as well as concerning national issues. Part 5 consisting of stanzas 29 and 30 is a plea to God to unify His people. She also offers her condolences to the Mgweto family and relations.

The way in which these parts are arranged in the poem make the reader curious to want to know what is going to happen next and thus continues to read further. The suspense is created when the poet moves from one episode to the other, as when the death is announced in part one to the second part, where the poet calls for intervention by God on behalf of the Mgweto family. This arrangement of episodes succeeds in pressing the reader to read further. This continues with the rest of the episodes in the poem. The arrangement is similar to piling, which is additive in the manner of creating a build-up.

3.7.2.4 Death

Death is referred to in euphemistic terms as in stanza 2 verse 9 when the poet writes,

Ukuthabatha kwakho elo xhegokazi

(when you seized this old woman)

Death is represented as having taken the old woman. The act is thus not being described in its blatant manner. This shows respect for death as it is an act of God.

Stanzas 29 and 30 give a suggestion of death as a unifier. This happens through the sharing of the pain of the loss of the beloved “*mhamha*”. The poet ends off by pleading with God to help the family to be more united.

3.7.2.5 Metaphors

The pain that is experienced in Ngojini because of the death of Mrs Mgqweto is captured in the most precise metaphor in stanza 2 verse 1 when the poet writes,

“Usizi ke lwayicanda iNgoji”

(Grief cleft Ngoji)

This verse describes sadness as having cut the Ngoji area into two parts. The process of cutting is a most painful one. The intensity of the pain is clearly painted in this way. In conceptual terms the metaphor represents sorrow as a knife’s cutting blade.

In stanza 12 verse 54 Mrs Mgqweto is referred to as,

Le ndlovukazi eenyawo zinentsente

(With callused feet this cow elephant)

This metaphor refers to Mrs Mgqweto as an animal. The conceptual metaphor is, “A woman is an animal”. This comparison refers to her huge body as well as her resilience. Her feet are described as having scales, which means she is someone who has had to endure unbearable and hard circumstances.

Her friendliness is compared with water. In other words, friendliness is water. This is represented in stanza 13 when she writes,

Msingakazi obubele,

Behla ngemilambo;

Namhla mabube zingqimba,

Phezu kweJordan.

(Torrent whose kindness,

Flushed river courses;

Gush today

In springs above Jordan.)

Her kindness is exuberant as captured through hyperbole in this stanza. There is also something very cleansing and pure which is encapsulated in the metaphor of water representing femininity and a life well lived.

3.7.2.6 Metaphor and simile

Mrs Mgqweto’s love is described through biblical metaphors in stanzas 14 and 15. Each metaphor in these stanzas is followed by a simile in a manner similar to elaborative detail in *izibongo* in the case of namings, as identified by Kuse (1978). In stanza 14 the poet writes,

UThixo uluthando

(God is love)

a metaphor thanking God for the life of Mrs Mgqweto, who was given to the family by God out of love for the family. The flow of this love is like dew in Hermon as it waters the hills of Zion. Both comparisons in the form of metaphor and simile respectively describe the nature of love this mother had; it was incomparable to earthly objects; hence the biblical comparisons, thereby building on the metaphor of the waters of the Jordan River as mentioned above.

Mhamha's (i.e. the late Mrs Mgqweto's) love is compared to the light in stanza 15 when Mgqweto writes,

Isibane sothando lwakhe

(The light of her love)

and elaborates on the metaphor with a simile which states,

Besinjengemingcunube

Phakathi kwazo iinyibiba.

(cascaded like willows,

edged with lilies,)

Both the metaphor and simile paint her love as being fresh and natural. The use of willows and lilies in the comparison brings out the freshness and naturalness more precisely.

The use of metaphor and simile in this complementary way is highly effective in describing the type of person *mhamha* was.

In stanza 19 Mrs Mgqweto is described as having a magnetic personality when the poet writes,

Ebetsalwa sisibane sobubele

Esivuthayo emzini kaMhamha aze asinge khona.

(drawn by Mhamha's glowing compassion

he'd make straight for her home.)

Those in need would go to her house attracted "*ebetsalwa*" by her kindness. The metaphor "Love is light" is once again employed in this instance. That there is life in *Mhamha's* house is described through the relative, "*esivuthayo*" (which is burning). Once again this metaphor captures kindness as a fire. Love is fire; Life is fire. Where there is life it is as if there is a fire that is burning. Without the fire of life we are reduced to nothing, mere ashes.

The pain and sorrow as a result of the death of *mhamha* is described in stanza 20 verse 90 when the poet writes,

Bampompoza ezikrakra,

(bitter tears are shed).

The tears they shed are bitter because of the pain of death. These tears also flow uncontrollably. They flow like a river. The conceptual metaphors in this case are "The tears are a river" and "The tears are bitter".

When Mrs Mqgweto prayed she would pray as if she is looking at the city of Johannesburg (stanza 22) and the poet continues in stanza 23 to describe how intensely she would pray to the extent that

Icandeke intliziyo

(Bared her heart.)

The metaphor, “Prayer cuts open” describes the emotion involved when praying. The effect of this prayer is described in the metaphors that follow in the same stanza 23 when she writes,

Athiyele namachanti eNyangweni

Zitsho neentaba zeNkonkobe zikhangelane

(sprites fled the thresholds,

the Winterberg swivelled.)

The image created by *amachanti* (sprites) in verse 101 is drawn from the world of myths. It is through this image that this metaphor adds a strong sense of the supernatural as prayer transcends the world of the living. Mrs Mgqweto therefore offered the most powerful prayers for everybody. The effect of her prayers is experienced when the mountains swivelled.

3.7.2.7 National issues

In stanzas 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 it is evident that the poet also concerned herself with national issues including condemning war as she writes in stanza 25,

“Nkosi kha uyale imfazwe;

Nokuphalazwa

Kwegazi labantu.”

(Lord put an end to war

And the letting of blood of the people.)

Her concern for all the people is also expressed in stanza 30, where she appeals to all relations to Mrs Mgqweto to accept the news of her death and live in peace and unity.

3.7.2.8 *Izibongo* features

The poet's concern with national issues is typical of *izibongo* in honour of a hero who is often a man. This elegy by a female is therefore crossing a boundary which is gender related and very significant. The first stanza features a typical *izibongo* opening formula used to draw the attention of the audience. The stanza carries the namings for God in the form of "Nkunkuthela" and "Duma Barhwaqele". *Izibongo* techniques also feature in the form of the refrains, "Camagu!", "Camaguni!" and "Tarhu!"

Tone is exploited in stanza 17 in verse 74 when the poet writes,

Zakuthi izindlu zethu zimile uqaqqa

(grass will grow on our graves).

The alliteration of the "z" sounds is significant as the sound resonates throughout thus reinforcing the view of taking the good example from Mrs Mgqweto. The good example she left behind after her passing on lives and continues to spread like the "z" sounds.

3.7.3 Summary

This elegy opens with a prelude in prose form to introduce the subject of the poem. The end or postscript is also in prose. This is quite unusual but useful in this poem in that it introduces information that the poem would not easily introduce. The imagery used is typical *izibongo* imagery which is often used for men. Mgqweto addresses national issues in the poem, another aspect of *izibongo*.

The tribute is paid within a narrative, thus making it easy for the poet to manage pacing. In the midst of the narrative the poet addresses and scolds death, a technique similar to digression in *izibongo*.

The use of metaphor alongside similes achieves great success in the poem. This is quite unusual. The poet portrays *Mhamha* as a true mother figure with all the features expected of a mother as outlined by Chimhundu (1995

3.8 Jadezweni, M. (Compiler and author) 2008 *Umdiliya Wesihobe, “Ngumama wam endimthandayo”* by Noluthando Mpola pp 10-11. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

1

Ilizwi lakhe ndiyaliva ndisaliva linkenteza nangoku.

Elo lizwi limyoli kunene lentombi kaGila uMaManci.

Intokazi ibisakutsho xa izitsho “mna ndiyintombi kaGila”.

UGila ke liZotsho umdengeentonga uWabane uManci.

Ndibenethamsanqa lokulibona elo xhego lithandekayo.

UMaZotsho yena lowo ke ngumama wam endimthandayo.

2

X’ ebalisa utsho ukuba bona babengangoboya benja,

Kuba kaloku uGila lo wayezeke isithembu;

Atsho nokuba uMaKhuboni ozala yena wayeliqad’ elikhulu.

Ntomb’ emnyama kodwa enomkhitha amazimyo emhlophe qhwa.

Isikhuthali sehomba selunga ke intombi kaGila.

UMaQholo lowo ke uWabane ngumama wam endimthandayo.

3

Lichule ke aqwele kumsebenzi wezandla;

Yindlezana ebithi yakukuphekela usal’ umunc’ iintupha.

Imvuzemvuze esandla sanda kudle nothathatha.

Umzi wale ntokazi ubuhlal’ uwayizela ngabancinci nabadala,

Atsho nokutsho ukuba umz’ ongangenwayo ayingomzi lowo.

UMaManci lo ke ngumama wam endimthandayo.

4

Ubelukhusel' usapho lwakhe isikhukukazi sokwenene.

Athethelele nokuthethelela wen' uwaziyo amaqhinga enimba.

Hayi khona ke kunyana wakhe okuphela kwakhe!

Wakumkhalimela hayi kaloku mnye yena nina nibathathu.

Ulusebenzel' usapho lwakhe exolel' ukuzijaca.

Eso sikhukukazi ke ngumama wam endimthandayo.

5

Sonwabile ke silusapho lukaMaZotsho umama wethu.

Sonwabile esithe wambu ngaloo ngubo yothando lwakhe.

Sifundile kuloo mabali abesigcina ngawo de sozele.

Sibazile bonke abelungu awayebaphangelele singababonanga.

Usifundisile ukuMthemba uYehova nathi salinganisa yena.

Loo mthandazi ke ngumama wam endimthandayo.

6

Ngaminazana ithile ngabusuku buthile obungenakulibaleka.

Yalala intombi kaGila kanti ilele undolala ayisekho.

Yaqala yee thaa into ebekad' eyithetha buncokorha.

EkaGila intombi mhl' ihamba iya kusuka ilale tyum.

Nangoku akukho bani wakhe wathi uyicim' amehlo.

Waphumla uMaZotsho, uMaQholo umama wam endimthandayo.

My Mother

1

I still hear her voice ringing even now.

That beautiful voice of Gila's daughter MaManci.

She would pride herself and say, "I am the daughter of Gila."

Gila is of the Zotsho clan, the short one in stature but great in deeds, Wabane, Manci.

I was fortunate to see that handsome old man.

MaZotsho is my mother who I love very much.

2

They were many in her family, so she tells us,

Because Gila was a polygamist.

And she tells us her mother MaKhuboni was the third wife.

She was a lovely dark-complexioned girl with bright white teeth.

Gila's daughter was diligent, neat and kind.

MaQholo, Wabane is my mother who I love very much.

3

She is good with her hands.

She is a kind person who when she cooked, you loved her food.

A very kind person who provided food to many people.

Her house was always full of both young and old people.

She would even say that a home where no one comes is not a home.

MaManci is my mother who I love very much.

4

She would protect her family just like a true hen.

She would defend those she sympathised with just like a mother!

Especially her son who is the only one!

She would defend him against the three daughters.

She worked very hard for her family.

That hen is my mother who I love very much.

5

As a family of MaZotsho, our mother, we were happy.

We were happy with her covering us with that blanket of love.

We learnt from those stories which she would tell until we fell asleep.

We knew all the white people for whom she worked even though we did not see them.

She taught us to trust God and we followed her.

That person who prayed hard is my mother who I love very much.

6

One day on a night that will not be forgotten,

Gila's daughter went to sleep never to wake up again.

This she often told us and we thought it was only a joke.

She would tell us that when she passes on she will simply sleep;

Indeed, no one had to close her eyes.

MaZotsho went to rest, MaQholo, my mother who I love very much.

Analysis

3.8.1 The informal elements

Noluthando Mpola was an acclaimed choral music conductor who lived and worked in Port Elizabeth until her death in 2010. She was a prolific poet whose poetry was often a tribute to eminent people. Most of her poetry has not been published yet. Her contribution to the poetry anthology compiled by Mhlobo Jadezweni entitled *Umdiliya Wesihobe* (2008) was the first of her work to be published.

The poem “*Ngumama wam endimthandayo*” is a tribute to her mother MaManci, who was the daughter of Gila, a man who was a polygamist. MaManci’s mother, MaKhuboni, was the senior wife. MaManci was dark in complexion with bright white teeth. This very diligent, neat and kind mother was good with her hands. She also cooked very well. She was very protective of her family especially her only son. She taught her children to trust God and they followed in her footsteps. The poem is about the love a mother has for her children. Love is thus the main emotion in the poem because the poet expresses intense love for her mother.

The prediction by MaManci that she will die in her sleep provides tension in the poem, for the reader is, on the one hand, appreciating the love the poet expresses for her mother while the death comes as a shock. The poet regards the way in which her mother died as heroic. This is consoling to the reader.

3.8.2 The formal elements

3.8.2.1 The form of the poem

The poem in praise of MaManci consists of six stanzas of six verses each. Each stanza closes with a refrain. The first two stanzas (1 and 2) introduce the mother and give details of her family background. Her father Gila was a polygamist. His clan names are Maqholo, Wabane and Manci. Her mother MaKhuboni was Gila’s third wife. Stanzas 3 and 4 describe her personality including how hard she worked. She was adept with her hands and cooked very well.

Stanzas 5 and 6 describe the happiness they enjoyed at home with their mother. She taught them to trust God. This part closes with MaManci dying in her sleep as she had always predicted, but her children did not think it would indeed happen in this way.

3.8.2.2 The title

The title, “*Ngumama wam endimthandayo*” (It is my mother who I love) is a fragment from the refrain, thus making its presence in the poem felt throughout. The refrain echoes the title throughout the poem.

3.8.3 Prosodic elements

3.8.3.1 Rhythm

The verses throughout are punctuated by a caesura which slows down the rhythm of each verse. An example of this is presented as it occurs in stanza one below:

Ilizwi lakhe ndiyaliva // ndisaliva linkenteza nangoku.

Elo lizwi limyoli kunene // lentombi kaGila // uMaManci.

Intokazi ibisakutsho xa izitsho // “mna ndiyintombi kaGila”.

UGila ke liZotsho // umdengeentonga // uWabane // uManci.

Ndibenethamsanqa lokulibona elo xhego // lithandekayo.

UMaZotsho yena lowo ke // ngumama wam endimthandayo.

In each instance the caesura places emphasis on the lexical item that follows. In verse one for example the emphasis is on “*ndisaliva*”, thus suggesting the long-lasting teachings the mother had on her children.

In verse two the poet highlights her mother’s clan name, MaManci, followed by her introducing herself proudly as, “*mna ndiyintombi kaGila*”, which is made prominent by the caesura. Through the clever use of the caesura the poet introduces MaManci’s father and incorporates his character, “*umdengeentonga*” (the one short in stature but great in deeds) to this introduction. The caesura gives prominence to the physical

feature of being short in stature but great in deeds and further prominence is given to the clan names, “Wabane” and “Manci”.

The emotion of love is expressed in verses 5 and 6. Through the selection of long words and the use of the caesura, love finds more expression in these verses. In verse 6 the poet even improvises on alliteration with the “l” sounds in, “*lokulibona elo xhego lithandekayo.*” Even though this is mere concordial agreement, the attempt is commendable as these sounds are properly foregrounded in the stanza and in the verse itself. The refrain in stanzas 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 has an unmarked pause (caesura), but in stanza 6 the first pause is marked followed by a caesura. In the preceding stanzas the caesura places emphasis on the part “*ngumama wam endimthandayo*” (she is my mother who I love...), which is also the title of the poem. The caesura thus links the title with the whole poem. The same verse is slowed down by the caesura and the marked pause, thus rendering the verse as the slowest in the poem. This is quite significant as the mood is that of mourning therefore a slow rhythm is appropriate. The whole poem is characterised by the unmarked pauses suited for a poem paying tribute to a respected and loved person like MaManci.

The refrain also unifies the poem and it also contributes to the build-up to the climax of the poem, which is when MaManci dies in her sleep. The refrain reinforces the theme of love through its recurrence throughout the poem. It is the refrain that gives the poem the sense of a musical composition.

3.8.4 Pacing

The reader is enticed to read on as soon as mention is made of her (MaManci’s) voice, which the poet can still hear even after her mother’s death. The verse reads thus,

“Ilizwi lakhe ndiyaliva ndisaliva linkenteza nangoku.”

(I still hear her voice still ringing.)

The use of the direct speech where MaManci says "*mna ndiyintombi kaGila*" raises the interest to read further and find out what happens in the end. In these words the reader hears her voice.

After this part the poet introduces Gila, MaManci's father, and goes on to describe her as a kind and generous person who is good with her hands.

The refrain punctuates each one of the phases in the narration of events. The refrain further heightens the urge to read further as it builds gradations in the poem.

The last stanza (stanza 6) of the poem opens with the phrases, "Ngaminazana ithile ngabusuku buthile" (On a certain day on a certain night), a typical *intsomi* (folktale) formula used by narrators to attract the interest of the listeners to the story. These phrases or formulae indeed attract the reader's interest to read on; at the same time they serve as a beacon for the sudden twist of events in the poem. It is this twist that heightens the suspense in the poem. The last event in the poem is the sudden death of MaManci. The reader thus finally knows what happens. This is a clever way of managing and manipulating pacing in order to evoke as much attention from the reader as possible. The refrain, in fact, is the main controlling device of pacing in this poem and this is achieved very successfully.

3.8.5 Tone

The mother is presented as a model of a mother. MaManci is proud of being the daughter of Gila and express this view with regards to her whole family through the clan names that are provided by the poet. The poet is proud of the type of mother MaManci is. The prediction of her death presents her as someone above humanity (she had superhuman powers). This is the main reason why MaManci is an extraordinary person to her daughter, the poet.

3.8.6 Metaphors

In stanza 4 MaManci is referred to as "*isikhukukazi sokwenene*" (a true hen) and the refrain states "*Eso sikhukukazi*" (That hen), which is the main metaphor or envelope in

the poem. Restated as a conceptual metaphor it yields "a woman is a bird", an image used by other poets when referring to a woman. This metaphor describes how MaManci protected her children. A hen protects her chickens against all sorts of dangers, including the cold as she covers them under her wings. The intention with this metaphor is therefore to describe the way in which MaManci would protect her children.

In stanza 5 verses 1 and 2 describe how happy they were with their mother MaManci/MaZotsho. The repetition of "Sonwabile" in these verses provides a clear picture of the happiness in the family. They are very happy. What made them so happy is because MaManci, "...esithe wambu ngaloo ngubo yothando lwakhe." Within the conceptual metaphor framework this yields "Love is a blanket". This metaphor describes the warmth in MaManci's house as a result of her love. Her love was like a blanket to her children.

3.8.7 Gender issues

In dealing with gender issues the desirable qualities and attributes of a woman as drawn from Shona courtship praises provided by Chimwundu (1995:155) are used as a guide in this section.

Kindness and generosity

In stanza 3 MaManci is described as a kind and generous person. She cooked very well too, thus making her a good mother. Because of all these virtues her house was always full of people. The poet writes thus,

Yindlezana ebithi yakukuphekela usal' umunc' iintupha.

Imvuzemvuze esandla sanda kudle nothathatha.

Umzi wale ntokazi ubuhlal' uwayizela ngabancinci nabadala,

(She is a kind person who when she cooked, you loved her food.)

A very kind person who provided food to many people.

Her house was always full of both young and old people.)

Motherhood

In stanza 3 the role of the mother to cook well for the family is presented in

Yindlezane ebithi yakukuphekela usal' umunc' iintupha.

(She is a kind person who when she cooked, you loved her food.)

The food she cooked would be so delicious that you would suck your fingers.

In stanza 4 MaManci is described as,

Ubelukhusel' usapho lwakhe isikhukukazi sokwenene.

(She would protect her family just like a true hen.)

To protect the family is the role of a mother because she is always with the children.

This is an observation made by Opuku-Agyemang (1998:99,) who states that women are known for the upkeep of the home.

As a mother she made her family happy. In stanza 5 the poet writes,

Sonwabile ke silusapho lukaMaZotsho umama wethu

Sonwabile esithe wambu ngaloo ngubo yothando lwakhe.

trans?

MaManci also told stories at night to the children. From these stories the children were not only entertained but also learnt a lot. In this regard in stanza 5 the poet writes,

Sifundile kuloo mabali abesigcina ngawo de sozele.

(We learnt from those stories which she would tell until we fell asleep.)

She also taught the children about spiritual matters. She writes,

Usifundisile ukuMthemba uYehova nathi salinganisa yena,

trans?

It is clear from this verse that maManci was a highly religious person. This is further corroborated when in stanza 5, verse 6, the poet refers to her as,

Loo mthandazi...

(That person who prayed hard...)

Fitness and Personality

In stanza 2 verse 5 the poet describes MaManci as,

Isikhuthali sehomba selunga...

(The diligent, neat and kind...)

This describes her fitness as well as her personality. She was a healthy, neat and kind person.

Ancestry and Family

The poet introduces her mother as daughter of Gila and goes on to mention her clan names Manci, Wabane, Zotsho and MaQholo. These clan names refer to her ancestry.

Her mother came from a polygamous family. They were therefore many children in her family as described in,

"babengangoboya benja"

(They were numerous / many)

MaKhuboni, MaManci's mother was nevertheless the senior wife of Gila. The poet attributes MaManci's generosity and kindness to this background, where she grew up sharing with other children. This is implied in stanza 3 verse 5 when the poet writes,

Atsho nokutsho ukuba umz' ongangenwayo ayingomzi lowo.

(She would even say that a home where no one comes is not a home.)

This is informed by culture, as Kolawole (1998:11) states that culture can be manipulated to achieve specific purposes by individuals. In this instance MaManci believes that a polygamous home has many children and therefore there are always people at that home. In her view polygamy is the way to establish a home.

3.9 Summary

The poet expresses her love and pride for her mother very successfully in this poem. The refrain is the main technique she employs to express her love and pride for her mother. The refrain also adds musicality to the poem.

Her family background is introduced through the series of clan names which she employs to praise her mother, MaManci. That MaManci comes from a polygamous family is a strong cultural aspect of this poem, which is used as a fallacy to describe a good home. The poet condones polygamy by suggesting that it is a cultural practice that leads to a good home.

Story-telling to children is what every mother does to her children. MaManci also teaches her children to trust God, which is what all mothers teach their children. That she is overprotective of her children is what all mothers do to protect their children. In a sense MaManci is depicted as everybody's mother in the area.

The metaphor "*isikhukukazi*" reduces MaManci to a bird, which is a description used in isiXhosa culture for a female. The pain of death is toned down by the pride expressed over the way in which MaManci dies, having predicted how this would happen. The poet forgets completely about the pain and instead focuses on how she died. She thus

dies after a heroic life, hence the praises by the poet. This also confirms her strong religious character.

3.10 Conclusion

The selected poems about women in general employ *izibongo* techniques with great success. Poems by Burns-Ncamashe and Mgqweto are the ones that have a strong presence of orality in them. Ncamashe was an *imbongin* hence the heavy presence of *izibongo* techniques in his poem (Opland 1983). Even though Mgqweto was not recognised as an *imbongi*, her poetry reveals her talent in this field (Opland 2007).

It is also striking that the poems by these two poets are full of Biblical allusions. Burns-Ncamashe uses the Bible as a reference to justify his stereotypical portrayal of women. Mgqweto's poem sounds heavily influenced by the style of paying tribute by Christian women's organisations. She must have been a member of her church's women's organisation. The elegy is an affirmation of the important role women play. The metaphors employed in the elegy particularly attest to this view.

Mpola's tribute to her mother has similarities with Mgqweto's. Mpola also acknowledges the role her mother played within her family. Of special note is the role of educating her children to trust God. Her mother's family background is seen by Mpola in a positive light as it is what makes her mother love all the people. This is a cultural stereotype which Mpola draws into her poem to depict her mother in a heroic manner. The refrain used in this poem makes an invaluable contribution in depicting the emotion of love through its musicality.

The use of the structure and references from folktales is another technique used by Burns-Ncamashe, Mgqweto, and Jolobe in their poems. It is this narrative technique that contributes immensely to pacing in their poems.

Jolobe excels in the use of modern poetry techniques in his poem "*UNojaji*". This satirical poem is a brilliantly crafted piece of work on the ills of society. That the satire is directed at both men and women makes it even more successful. The trick played on

the readers is incredibly clever in facilitating pacing. Throughout, the reader wants to know why Nojaji does not stand up against her husband. It is only when she is in a coma that the secret is revealed.

Ramncwana in his poem "*ITshawekazi elihle*" presents a beautiful ballad that engages sounds in the most unexpected ways such as when the English name Sylvia is made to rhyme with "sithandwa". This romantic poem is dominated by the most beautiful sounds whose significance is invaluable.

The use of the refrain in the poem by Ndlazulwana is a significant modern poetic device used to effectively express protest against the exploitation and abuse of women. It is highly commendable of the poet to identify a device that effectively expresses her opinion.

The biblical allusions employed by Burns-Ncamashe and Mgqweto give credibility to their messages. Burns-Ncamashe employs this technique to declare that being obedient as a woman is a heavenly sanction, as the Bible declares. Mgqweto's use of the Bible for reference is likely to have been influenced by her religious background. She was probably a member of the women's organisation in her church. The tribute to her mother seems to be informed by this background.

In as far as gender is concerned, women are portrayed as objects that bring wealth to their fathers, as Burns-Ncamashe writes. In his poem this is sanctioned by the Bible and culture. The metaphors employed capture this view quite vividly.

Jolobe satirically represents women as extraordinarily subservient and obedient to the extent of enduring the extreme acts of violence meted out to them by men. Men, on the other hand, are represented as bullies over their wives to prove their prowess to other men. They are represented as sadists, so to speak. They see women as mere appendages to them in the same way as observed by Ilesanmi (1998:36) in Yoruba culture. Jolobe also sarcastically declares this kind of behaviour to be informed by culture in the case of Nojaji's husband.

Jolobe and Ramncwana present all the desirable images of women as outlined by Chimwundu (1995). These images are highly stereotypical. The exaggeration of the qualities of women by Jolobe in particular contributes towards pacing as the reader expects a change in behaviour because of the man's actions.

Ramncwana paints a very beautiful picture of the woman, because he misses Nondwe so much. This is evidence of his imaginative writing abilities. Ramncwana in his poem paints a positive picture of women. The positive influence that Nondwe has over the poet is a demonstration of the strength that she commands over the man. That she reprimanded him against falling in love with other women and he still remembers that is a sign of her strong personality.

Both Jolobe and Ramncwana use the female name prefixed by *no-* and the suffix *-kazi* to represent women. While these morphemes are obligatory features of isiXhosa language, a poet can improvise and engage other lexical items or names that will not easily label the person as female.

Mgqweto represents her mother as everybody's mother in Ngojini. She was called "*Mhamha*" by everyone. That Mgqweto addresses national issues in this poem elevates her mother to a national figure. The use of the elegy form to pay tribute to her also attests to that status. Another significant choice is the fact that she uses *izibongo* to pay tribute to her, a genre reserved for men in isiXhosa. That Mgqweto is innovative with stylistic devices is demonstrated when she effectively uses metaphor alongside similes. This is a device often used by *imbongi*.

Ndlazulwana is the voice of protest against the non-recognition and exploitation of women. She declares that women can achieve what they are supposed to do, just like men. She attributes this non-recognition of the achievements of women to the fallacy that women are weak.

Mahlaba in her poem entitled "*Ubuntombi*" makes the point loud and clear that a woman's being is her virginity. In this poem she makes young women aware that being a virgin is a woman's power, for when in the event of divorce proceedings she can

demand her virginity from her husband and put that as a pre-condition for the divorce. Mahlaba is paying homage to women in the same way as observed by Ilesanmi (1998:31) in the case of the Yoruba, who always pay tribute to women. The dominant image of a girl is that she is a flower of the nation. Another image is of a bird as employed by Ramncwana and Mpola. The mother image dominates the poems by Mgqweto and Mpola.

These poems constantly engage with the duality of representing the female voice, both from a male and female poetic perspective, outlining the complexities of how women were perceived in a patriarchal society, while at the same time presenting the reality within which both amaXhosa men and women lived and continue to live today.

Chapter 4: Poetry about Women in Traditional Leadership Positions and in Politics

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with poetry about women in traditional leadership positions and women in politics. As traditional leadership and politics are fields dominated by men, it is no surprise to find that there is a limited amount of poetry produced about women, hence my selection of four poems for analysis. Those women who are in traditional and political leadership roles are probably victims of the stereotypical view expressed in a Yoruba proverb cited by Kolawole (1998:21) which states,

Iyalode ko ni o un fe je oba ilu

(The woman chief will never aspire to the King's throne).

When dealing with gender aspects when analysing the selected poems – particularly the one poem about a woman in a traditional leadership role – special attention will be given to this view.

The poems selected for analysis are analysed within the theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter 2 of this study. The poems are arranged and analysed in the chronological order in which they were published. The full text of the poem in isiXhosa followed by the translation into English. The analysis of each poem closes with a summary of all the salient points of the analysis and finally an evaluation of the relevant aspects of the poems is provided. The chapter closes with a conclusion in which a comparison of the poems is made.

**4.2 Mqhayi, S.E.K. 1943 *Inzuzo "Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke"* pp 43-44
Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.**

"Ndesuka ndingunina kwaSirayeli" (Gwebi 5:7).

Le ntombi kaManyhi noko ingumSuthukazi, yaqala ukulibona ilanga kweli lizwe lakowethu lakwaNgqika; yafunda apha yawela ukuya eMerika isuka phakathi kwethu apha; yade yabuya nelo xhoba liyimfundo yeza nalo ekhaya; latyiwa ngawo onke ama-Afrika – into leyo ezinqabeleyo iimfundi neemfundikazi. Ide yendiswa kwasithi, ingazendisanga, siyendisela kulo mfana kaMaxeke, kwaNdondele, emaGqunukhwebeni. Ngakho oko

1

Shukumani bafazi

Ushenxil' uMamarhixirhixi;

Ufinyis' amagruxu.

Ushenxil' okad' esakh' umzi,

Egutyul' irhanga namanxila;

Egodus' amahilihil' agoduke;

Kubuy' amadungudwan' emazweni.

Itye lesiseko seTiyopiya!

Shukumani bafazi!

2

Igqibil' intomb' asemzini;

Igqibil' intomb' aseLusuthu;

Umfazi wamaNywabe kwaGatyeeni;

Ukhe wabek' iinyawo kwelabatshwana;

Kusapho lukaKhama nolwabaRolweni;

Wabek' amabele kubaThembu, -

Kumabandla kandaba kaZondwa;

ETyhalarha kwingcwaba likaNgangezwe

Maz' emabele made yaseAfrika, -
Okwanyis' usapho lukaNtu luphela;
Azi nonyaka yaphusile nje, -
Logangwa yintokazi kabana na?
Menzelen' ilitye lokukhunjulwa,
Ze siqhayisele ngal' amavilakazi.
Az' angaz' alityalwe kowabo;
Az' angaz' alityalw' emhlabeni;
Az' angaz' alityalw' eAfrika!

Nci! Ncincilili !!!

The late Mrs Charlotte Manyhi Maxeke

"Arose a mother in Israel." (Judges 5:7)

This daughter of Manyhi even though she is MoSotho she was born in our country in the land of Ngqika; She went to school here and travelled to America from among us; She ultimately returned with that prey which is education and brought it back home; all the Africans benefitted from it – something rare from educated men and women. We then handed her over for marriage, she did not marry without consulting, to the young man of Maxeke of the Nywabe, Gatyeni, Ndongela clan of emaGqunukhwebeni. Therefore

1

Stand up women

The scraper has shifted;

The one who removes refuse.

Gone is the one who has been building a home,

Removing the idle and the drunkards;
Sending home those who like to be away from home;
And those who travel without purpose come home.
The foundation stone of Ethiopia!
Stand up women!

2

This daughter has now finished;
The daughter from Lesotho has finished;
The wife of the Nywabe, Gatyeni clan;
She once visited Botswana;
The family of Khama and of the Barolong;
And set foot in Thembuland, -
At the land of the people of Ndaba of Zondwa;
In Tyalarha at the grave of Ngangezwe
Woman of Africa with big breasts, -
To feed the entire family of Ntu;
Now that this year it no longer yields milk, -
Which woman will come to the rescue?
Erect a stone in her memory,
And then with it spite the lazy ones.
So that her people should not forget her;
So that she should not be forgotten in this world;
So that she should never be forgotten in Africa!

I stop!

Analysis

4.2 Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke

4.2.1 The informal elements

According to Qangule (1979:vii), Samuel Edward Mqhayi is regarded as the most successful of all the modern Xhosa writers. He adds that Mqhayi has been called “The Shakespeare of the Xhosa language”. In support of this view Qangule (1979:230) cites Yali-Manisi (1952) who also had a high regard for Mqhayi:

Ngumbhali weencwadi zaxak’ amadoda,

Zaxak’ izazi, zaxak’ iingqondi.

(He is the author of books that puzzled men of power,

They puzzled men of knowledge, they puzzled great minds.)

Qangule (1979) also cites Ngcwabe (1974) who has the following to say about Mqhayi:

Umbhali weencwadi, igqirha lesizwe, umxoxi weendaba,

Imbongi yesizwe jikelele!!!

(The writer of books, the healer of the nation, the news columnist,

The national bard indeed!!!)

From what Yali-Manisi and Ngcwabe say, as cited by Qangule (1979), it is clear that Mqhayi is a prolific writer and an *imbongi* (praise poet) of great repute. Mqhayi’s works touch on many different subjects because of his national interest. That he has published different literary genres is further proof of his great calibre as an author.

The poem "*Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke*" is a tribute to Mrs Maxeke who, according to Qangule (1979:127), was a founder and President of the Bantu Women's league, a branch of the African National Congress. Qangule (1979) states further that, among her other leadership positions and initiatives, she founded the Wilberforce Institute in Pretoria; opened a college at Ramokgopa in Pietersburg (the present Polokwane); opened a labour bureau for Black women at the magistrate's court in Johannesburg, where she was employed as a Black Welfare Officer; she gave evidence before a number of South African government commissions regarding Black Affairs. *In The Encyclopaedia Africana Dictionary of African Biography* Volume 3 (1995:153-154) she is described as one of South Africa's prominent African women leaders.

Mqhayi makes a call to women to stand up as if saying, "Wake up!", because Mrs Maxeke, whom she calls "*uMamarhixirhixi*" (Qangule 1979 translates as "the scraper"). She is referred to as the one who has been instrumental in building the community. She has also been involved in church matters, as suggested in "*Itye lesiseko seTiyopiya!*" (The foundation stone of Ethiopia!). She was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The poet states that Mrs Maxeke has done her part in life and refers to her as "*intomb' asemzini*" (a girl from elsewhere), thus foregrounding the fact that she was born MoSotho. She was married into the Gatyeni clan. Her husband was Reverend Marshall Maxeke of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Her service among African people is notable as the poet points out to her visits to, among other places, Thembuland. The reference to her breasts that feed the children of Ntu (Africa) is also evidence of her service to all the people of Africa. This service is true evidence of her patriotism. As a patriot the poet proposes that a memorial (monument) be built in her honour.

Even though the poem is a tribute to someone who has died, there is no overt sadness as a result of the death; instead the poet celebrates the life of the hero, Mrs Maxeke. The call to women to take after her in the good work creates a tension in the poem

because the deeds of this hero seem to be unlikely to be attained by anyone else as the biblical text (Judges 5:7) suggests – she is an exceptional mother in Africa.

The poet acknowledges Mrs Maxeke for her excellent national service and urges those who come after her to take over and press on. The extent of her service is reported by Qangule (1979:127), who cites an extract from *The South African Outlook* (1939) where it is stated, “*She sacrificed comfort and sleep for duty.*” This extract captures Mrs Maxeke’s commitment to national service. The poet therefore urges women to take after her.

4.2.2 Formal elements

4.2.2.1 The form of the poem

This two-stanza poem is a tribute to the late Mrs Maxeke. The two stanzas are made up of a different number of verses. The first stanza is made up of nine verses and the second stanza is made up of eighteen verses. The biblical text from Judges 5:7 serves to highlight the status of the subject of the poem, Mrs Maxeke – she was an exceptional woman. The biblical text in the epigraph also gives a suggestion that the poem is about death, a subject which is often dealt with within religion. Because the poem is about a heroine who has died, it is therefore appropriate to refer to this poem as an elegy, in accordance with the definition offered by Preminger et al. (1974:215).

The epigraph in prose provides biographical information of Mrs Maxeke and emphasises her educational training, which she got in America and returned to share it with all the Africans. The aspect of her character being an exceptional person comes out in this part, as the poet states that it is rare for educated Africans to share their education with everyone. The epigraph ends with the phrase “*Ngakho oko*” (therefore) which is similar to *izibongo* (praise poetry) formula, “*Hoyini!*” (Don’t you want to listen to me?), thus suggesting that the poem is a performance which is written down (or was documented after the performance). The vast difference in the number of verses between the two stanzas suggests that the poem was divided into stanzas only after it

had been reduced to writing; otherwise it was or is supposed to be in paragraphs. This observation is pursued later in the analysis.

4.2.2.2 The title

The title *“Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyi Maxeke”* is supported by both the biblical text, Judges 5:7 and the prose epigraph that provides the biography of Mrs Maxeke, the subject of the poem. The reference *“Umfikazi”* (The late) clearly gives an indication that the poem is an elegy. The title succeeds in introducing both the subject (who the poem is about) of the poem and what the poem is about.

4.2.2.3 Prosodic elements

The poem opens in a very loud voice in stanza 1, as if the poet is trying to catch the attention of the audience. In this stanza the use of words with the soft hissing sounds *“sh”* in *“shukumani”* (stand up) and *“ushenxile”* (she has moved) gives a suggestion of someone asking people to be quiet as in *“Sh-h-h!”* (Be quiet!). *“Ufinyisa”* (she removes) also provides soft sounds that complement *“sh”*. These soft sounds are contrasted by rough *“rh”* sounds in *“uMamarhixirhixi”* (The scraper), *“amagruxu”* (refuse) and *“irhanga”* (the idle). The use of another hard sound, *“g”* in *“egutyula”* (removing) *“egodusa”* (sending home) and *“agoduke”* (and they go home) supports the *“gr”* sounds.

The contrasted sounds in this stanza give a sense of both mourning (as people in bereavement speak softly) as well as eulogy. The poet therefore mourns the death of Mrs Maxeke but at the same time praises her for her heroic deeds.

In stanza 2 the poet employs hard sounds *“gq”* in *“Iqqibile”* (She has finished) which is repeated thus confirming her death. The hard sounds used in this part place emphasis on her achievements – she has done everything that she had to do. Stanza 2 ends with four verses that are dominated by the *“z”*, a continuant sound, that resonates throughout the last part. The verses are,

Ze siqhayisele ngal’ amavilakazi.

Az' angaz' alityalwe kowabo;

Az' angaz' alityalw' emhlabeni;

Az' angaz' alityalw' eAfrika!

(And then with it spite the lazy ones.

So that her people should not forget her;

So that she should not be forgotten in this world;

So that she should never be forgotten in Africa!)

This sound illustrates to the reader that Mrs Maxeke has finished her work, which was continuous. As the sounds suggests she is now disappearing. The *izibongo* (praise poetry) closing formula confirms this image.

The poet engages sounds to introduce the subject of the poem and continues to mark the achievements of the subject and finally lays the subject to rest as she disappears to eternity.

As Qangule (1979:151) observes, the examples of sounds selected [*my emphasis*] reveal Mqhayi's masterful use of sound in portraying character and in depicting patriotic action. Mrs Maxeke's character is represented more vividly through the combinations of sounds in the poem.

4.2.2.4 Pacing

The epigraph to the poem, which consists of a biblical text, Judges 5:7, is in narrative form typical of an opening in a story. As this text follows after the title announcing that Mrs Maxeke has died, it catches the eye of the reader who wants to know what happens after this. The biblical text sets the scene for the tribute, because it is traditional for people generally to use the Bible during the period of mourning after someone passes on.

The epigraph provides biographical information about Mrs Maxeke and ends with a sharp phrase “*Ngakho oko.*” (Therefore). This sharp twist raises interest in the reader to want to read further.

Stanza 1 is obviously rendered in a loud voice. This thus raises the interest and attention of the reader even more as the subject of the poem is introduced. This unusual name, *Mamarhixirhixi* (The scraper) strikes the reader’s attention and urges one to read further. The repetition of “*Igqibil(e)*” in stanza 2 verses 1 and 2 seems to mark an end to the narration, but the reader is still in suspense, because what she (Mrs Maxeke) finished doing has not as yet been disclosed. This information is deliberately delayed in order to create suspense, thus compelling the reader to read on. The places she visited are then listed – Botswana and Thembuland.

The four closing verses dominated by the “z” sound are constructed in the subjunctive mood, thus illustrating the consecutive actions or events in the narrative. The verses are,

Ze siqhayisele ngal’ amavilakazi.

Az’ angaz’ alityalwe kowabo;

Az’ angaz’ alityalw’ emhlabeni;

Az’ angaz’ alityalw’ eAfrika!

(And then with it spite the lazy ones.

So that her people should not forget her;

So that she should not be forgotten in this world;

So that she should never be forgotten in Africa!)

The subjunctive is appropriate for this part, as it marks the end of the narration. The manner in which the poem ends is quite rewarding to the reader, because the last detail is provided and the poem ends with *izibongo* formula, “*Nci! Ncilili!*” (I stop!). This closing formula lends finality to the narrative of the life of Mrs Maxeke.

To facilitate pacing, the poem is marked by three distinct beacons: the loud opening followed by the repetition of *“Iggibile”* (She has finished) in stanza 2 and closes with the verses in the subjunctive. The subjunctive in these verses is distinctly marked by the auxiliary *“ze”* (then), which is repeated throughout the four verses.

4.2.2.5 Tone

The poet celebrates with great admiration the life of Mrs Maxeke, expressing great pride in this patriotic woman. This is because she is an exceptional person as expressed in the epigraph where her sharing of her education with “all the Africans” is described as, *“- into leyo ezinqabeleyo iimfundi neemfundikazi.”* (-something rare from educated men and women.) The call for women to stand up is an assurance that women can participate fully in national service, just like Mrs Maxeke, who was mother to all the people of Africa. In recognition of this heroine a memorial must be erected so that she should never be forgotten. Mqhayi is more celebratory in this elegy. There is very little sense of mourning.

4.2.2.6 Gender issues

4.2.2.6.1 Family background and ancestry

The epigraph in prose form provides a full family background. This is provided very proudly as she is referred to as *“Le ntombi”* (This daughter). Her surname is Manyhi. Even though she is MoSotho by origin, she was born in Fort Beaufort (in the Ngqika area). She was married to Marshall Maxeke, a Gqunukhwebe. His clan names are Gatyeni, Nywabe and Ndongela. This series of names are ancestral names of her husband. In this way she is associated with her husband’s family, as she did not marry without her family’s permission as stated in the epigraph, when the poet writes *“Ide yendiswa kwasithi, ingazendisanga”* (We then handed her over for marriage, she did not marry without consulting).

4.2.2.6.2 Motherhood

In stanza 1 she is referred to as *“uMamarhixirhixi”* (The scraper), a name that suggests that she was particularly concerned about her personal appearance, as she would do all the dirty work as suggested in the verse,

“Ufinyis’ amagruxu” (The one who removes refuse).

This kind of work is what a mother does for her family, especially to her children.

That she looks well after her family is suggested in the following verses from stanza 1:

Ushenxil’ okad’ esakh’ umzi,

Egutyul’ irhanga namanxila;

Egodus’ amahilihil’ agoduke;

Kubuy’ amadungudwan’ emazweni.

(Gone is the one who has been building a home,

Removing the idle and the drunkards;

Sending home those who like to be away from home;

And those who travel without purpose come home.)

She would build the home and clean all the dirt from the area. All those who did not like home would go home. A mother is the one who is capable of this.

In stanza 2 she is referred to as *“intombi”* (daughter), a term indicating pride in her. After referring to her as *“intombi”* she then refers to her as *“umfazi”* (wife). Both terms show the respect the poet has for Mrs Maxeke as she comes from a respectable background.

4.2.2.6.3 Mother Africa

Mrs Maxeke is widely travelled, having visited various parts of Southern Africa and abroad. The expression used for the travels is *“wabek’ iinyawo”* (she put feet). The places where she set feet at are mentioned, but it is remarkable that the poet varies the phrase and instead employs *“wabek’ amabele”* (she set the breasts – (she set foot). The use of *“amabele”* indicates her motherliness. She visited Thembuland as a mother of the nation. This can be interpreted to mean that she showed her generosity as a mother to the people of Thembuland.

As the mother of Africa she is referred to as,

“Maz’ emabele made yaseAfrika”

(Woman of Africa with big breasts).

That the breasts are big is deliberate to represent her generosity and her ability to reach out to as many who need help as possible. This is captured in the following verse:

“Okwanyis’ usapho lukaNtu luphela”

(To feed the entire family of Ntu).

As a mother she has been looking after all the African people. This mainly refers to her national service.

4.2.2.6.4 A married woman

Among themselves married women refer to one another as, *“Ntomb’ asemzini”*, which directly translated is “daughter from another family”. This occurs in verse 1 of stanza 2. The meaning of this reference is that a married woman is in that specific family by marriage. It is therefore implied in this form of address that she is an outsider.

The verse,

Umfazi wamaNywabe kwaGatyeni

(The wife of the Nywabe, Gatyeni clan)

represents Mrs Maxeke as a possession, as if she is owned by the clan into which she married. This may sound belittling, but in the culture of amaXhosa the fact that she is owned by her marriage family clan is an indication of how proud the family is of her. The proposal for a memorial stone in her honour is proof that her marriage family is proud of her. The memorial stone will make her family not forget her, as the verse states,

Az' angaz' alityalwe kowabo

(So that she should never be forgotten by her family / by her home).

This verse may refer to both her maiden as well as her marriage families. The poet therefore demonstrates the esteem with which Mrs Maxeke was held by both families. She was equally the pride of her country (*kowabo*) as she was of her families.

4.2.2.7 Metaphors

4.2.2.7.1 Death

In stanza 1 verses 2 and 3 death is referred to in euphemistic terms as "*ushenxile*", which translates as "she has moved or shifted". This can be interpreted to mean that for an important person death is like moving or going to another place. In other words, such a person does not die, but instead he or she moves to render a service elsewhere (above).

In stanza 2 verse 11 the poet reports,

Azi nonyaka yaphusile nje –

(Now that this year she has dried of milk).

The use of “*yaphusile*” (dried of milk) is a euphemism for a woman who has died. Her death is therefore compared to the drying up of her breasts, while she must still feed her children. This is a gender-specific metaphor for the death of an eminent female.

4.2.2.7.2 The strong woman

That Mrs Maxeke was a strong and invaluable person is expressed in stanza 1 verse 8, where the poet writes,

Itye lesiseko seTiyopiya!

(The foundation stone of Ethiopia!)

In her church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, she was a pillar of strength as she would represent the church at national gatherings as she was, according to Qangule (1979:127), a missionary throughout the Republic of South Africa. She was therefore a precious person in her congregation.

4.2.2.8 *Izibongo* techniques

4.2.2.8.1 Opening and closing formulae

The poem follows after a prose epigraph, which closes with the conjunctive “*Ngako oko*” (Therefore) [*orthography updated*], after which the poem begins. The conjunctive serves the role of signalling a new and different genre after the prose. This sudden twist, which is followed by a sharp call to women, “*Shukumani bafazi*” (Stand up women), is a typical *izibongo* formula similar to “*Hoyina-a-a!*” (The full text is “*Anindihoyi na?*”, which translates as: Don’t you want to listen to me?)

The opening formula is rendered in a loud voice so as to draw the attention of the audience who are often in a feast celebrating and so would not listen without being invited to do so. The *imbongi* employs the opening formula to invite everyone to listen. As Mrs Maxeke was a national figure, it is as if Mqhayi is addressing a big gathering of people at a memorial service for the late Mrs Maxeke.

With regards to the function of the opening formula, Mokitimi (1998:51) states that the introductory technique helps the artist to capture the interest and response of the audience, since in oral literature performance the interaction between the artist and the audience is essential.

Mqhayi is known for the closing formula “*Nci Ncililili!*” with which he closes his performance.

As Mqhayi demonstrates in this poem his opening formula, which is different from his usual one, is evidence of individual creativity, as observed by Mokitimi (1998:57). There are also variations in the closing formula as that also demonstrates individual creativity by each artist.

4.2.2.8.2 Repetition

According to Okpewho (1992:71), repetition is no doubt one of the most fundamental characteristic features of oral literature. He states that it has both aesthetic and utilitarian value: in other words, it is a device that not only gives a touch of beauty or attractiveness to a piece of oral expression (whether song or narrative or other kind of statement), but also serves certain practical purposes in the overall organisation of the oral performance. As the poem “*Umfikazi uCharlotte Manyhi Maxeke*” shows features of an oral performance, it is therefore logical to examine repetition as it would feature in *izibongo* (an oral performance) by *imbongi* (praise poet), as Mqhayi was one.

The call to women to stand up is made in the first verse of stanza 1 and repeated in the closing verse of the same stanza. This call is made in the first stanza only. This repetition lends finality to the call, as it is made once and for all.

Speaking about the work she does, the poet makes use of initial repetition in stanza 1 where he writes,

Egutyul’ irhanga namanxila;

Egodus’ amahilihil’ agoduke

(Removing the idle and the drunkards;

Sending home those who like to be away from home).

This repetition of verbal items places emphasis on the work that she did. That she would work tirelessly is suggested by the use of the consecutive form of verbs in the verses. That she has done all she had to do is expressed through the repetition in stanza 2 in verses 1 and 2,

“Igqibil’ intomb’ asemzini;

Igqibil’ intomb’ aseLusuthu”

(This daughter has now finished;

The daughter from Lesotho has finished).

The lexical repetition in these two verses couples with syntactic repetition adds both to the fact that Mrs Maxeke has done what she had to do and has now departed as well as to the aesthetics of the poem, as the verses have a beautiful appeal both to the eye as well as to the ear. This repetition is complemented by the repetition in the verses 14 to 17 of stanza 2. This last part of the poem is part of piling, which is defined by Okpewho (1992:83) as coupling one detail or idea to another so that the whole performance builds up to a climax. The poem about Mrs Maxeke is constructed in a way that it consists of a build up to a climax. This is achieved through piling, a perfect device to narrate a life history when paying tribute to an individual. Mqhayi as *imbongi* employs this technique successfully in this poem.

4.2.3 Summary

The poet mobilises women to stand up now that Mrs Maxeke has died. This celebratory elegy to this accomplished leader draws examples from the Bible, thus giving authenticity to the message of the poem. The biography is given in the epigraph, which is in prose but blends well with the poetry as it leads into the poem as if it is an opening formula. Respect for death is demonstrated through the use of soft and

hissing sounds. However, death knows gender, as the poet selects a gender-specific metaphor “*yaphusile*” (she has gone dry of milk). Maxeke, Mother Africa, is compared to a precious stone. The poem portrays Maxeke, who is also an example of inter-tribal marriage (MoSotho married to a Gqunukhwebe) as the most illustrious leader. The poem is in true *izibongo* form as the opening and the closing formulae clearly demonstrate.

4.3 Mama, S. G. 1951, *Indyebo kaXhosa* “UNobomi KuNkosikazi Margaret Ballinger, M.P.” pp 42-44. Johannesburg: Bona Press

1

Yavel' inzwakaz' enkulu!
Inzwakazi yaseNgilani;
Ngilani sinethemba ngayo,
Sijonge lukhulu kuyo,
Nangon' ihamb' isidanisa;
Ngayo siyabuza:
Wozaliswa nini na umnqophiso,
Wokuzaliselw' ubomi?

2

Yavel' inzwakazi yaKomkhulu!
NeKomkhulu eliphezulu,
Elingafuni ntiywano.
Ithunyelwe lelo Komkhulu,
Ukukhumbuza amakowayo,
Sakuwuncama kungonakala;
Egameni loxolo mawuzaliseke.

3

Yinzwakaz' eyaz' amabali.

Yazi ngeGreece nangeRoma;

Yazi ngokutshona kwazo.

Yazi nezinye izikumkani,

Yazi ngokubhanga kwazo.

Iyazi ikrele alikwazi kulawula;

Iyazi indlala ayakhi luxolo.

Imemez' izizwe eziphetheyo:

Lawulani ngobulungisa!

4

NguNokusingatha zonk' iintsizana.

NguNokubaneka,

UNokubanek' izintw' ezizayo.

NguNokukhanyisa . . . amangomso.

NguNokufula . . .

UNokufula ngokweenyosi,

Ubekel' izizukulwana ilifa,

Ilifa loxolo elizweni.

5

Wosenz' amayilo thina zimbongi.

Bambi bathi nguNobantu;

Bambi bathi nguNothemba;

Bambi bathi nguNozizwe;

Bambi bathi nguNokunqaka;
Ke mna ndithand' ukongeza,
Uzezo nto nangaphezulu,
Ndithand' ukuthi nguNoluxolo,
Hayi ukuthi nguNobomi!
Sinnika!

6

Thina sakhula kubaliswa ngoVitoliya,
Kusithiwa wayelilungisakazi.
Yena wayenamandla esithsaba,
Wena unawenyaniso . . .
Thina sibalisa kwabethu ngawe,
Sithi sathath' ithemba kuloo ntokazi,
Sithi loo ntombi yab' ililungisakazi,
Yiyw' eyasek' uxolo kweli lizwe.
Ngoko yomelela mizuzu le!
Yomelela ma wam!
Gubungu!

Nobomi

To Mrs Margaret Ballinger, M. P.

1

There appears the great beauty!
The beauty of England;

England we have hope through her,
We expect a lot from her,
Although she sometimes lets us down;
Through her we ask:
When shall the covenant be fulfilled,
Of filling up life?

2

There appears the royal beauty!
The royalty which is high,
Which does not like hatred for one another.
She has been sent by the royal house,
To remind her country's people,
When we give up it would be chaos;
In the name of peace let it be fulfilled.

3

She is a beauty who knows stories.
She knows about Greece and Rome;
She knows about their collapse.
She knows other kings,
She knows about their collapse.
She knows that a sword does not know how to rule;
She knows that hunger does not build peace.
She calls to the nations that rule:
Rule with justice!

4

She is the one who cares for all the miserable.

She is the one who gives lightning,

She gives lightning to things that are coming.

She is the one who gives light... to the future.

She is the one who picks up fresh fruits...

She picks up fresh fruits like bees,

She stores inheritance for generations,

The inheritance of peace in the country.

5

She will make us praise-singers less articulate.

Some call her Nobantu;

Others call her Nothemba;

Some call her Nozizwe;

Others call her Nokunqaka;

I then like to add,

She is those things and more,

I would like to say she is Noluxolo,

Wowu, to call her Nobomi!

What do you hear?

6

We were told about Victoria when we grew up,

It was said she was a woman of justice.

She had the power of the crown,

You have the one of truth...

We tell ours about you,

We say we took hope from that woman,

We say that girl was a woman of justice,

She is the one who laid the foundation for peace in this country.

Then be strong every minute!

Be strong my mother!

I stop!

Analysis

4.3 UNobomi

KuNkosikazi Margaret Ballinger, M.P.

4.3.1 The informal elements

According to the *Bibliography of Xhosa Literature* (1992), the poet Goodwill Soya Mama was born in 1925 in New Brighton in Port Elizabeth. According to *Indaba*, a supplement of the *Daily Dispatch* of 16 November 1979, he worked as a librarian in Port Elizabeth. *Indaba* reports that in 1950 he was the first local man (Port Elizabeth) to have a book of Xhosa poems published. This book is entitled *Amaqunube* (Black Berries) and in 1956 it was followed by an anthology of isiXhosa poems entitled *Indyebo kaXhosa* (Xhosa Treasury of Poems). Besides these books in isiXhosa, it is reported that he wrote a number of poems for several English literary magazines such as the *South African Outlook*, *Imprint* and *New Coin*. Based on this background the product of Mama's pen is without any doubt worthy of consideration.

The website *South African History Online* reports

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/margaret-ballinger> (accessed 4.2.2013) that Mrs Margaret Ballinger was a member of the white Native Representatives' Council in the

1930s, and together with Senator Edgar Brookes helped to change the focus of the parliamentary debate from control of the black population to one concentrating on the long-term welfare of the black population. Ballinger later became member of Parliament and was one of very few people who openly criticised H.F. Verwoerd, who was head of state then in South Africa.

The poem is in honour of Mrs Ballinger for her role of fighting in Parliament for justice for all. She came from Great Britain. Her knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome made her aware of how these countries came into being as well as how they collapsed. She propagated peace, believing that war does not solve any problems. She gave hope to everybody in the country. Even though the poet knew about Queen Victoria, he believes that Mrs Ballinger is stronger as she fights with the truth. The poet encourages Mrs Ballinger to be strong all the time.

The tension in this poem is created by the opposition of peace and war: Queen Victoria used her status as opposed to the truth, which was what Ballinger used as a weapon. The poem is organised as a binary opposition. There is also tension when the poet in a subtle way criticises Great Britain for letting Africa down sometimes. This is against the spirit of praise that dominates the poem.

4.3.2 Formal elements

4.3.2.1 Form of poem

The poet, Mama, praises Mrs Ballinger for her good work as a Native Representative in Parliament. The poem is constructed as six stanzas of different lengths, ranging from seven to eleven verses. The poem is in the form of *izibongo* and it sounds like an oral performance. More attention is paid to this aspect later in this part of the chapter.

The poem can be divided into three parts, with part one consisting of the first two stanzas, where the poet introduces Nobomi; part two consists of stanzas 3 and 4, where the poet describes Nobomi; and part three consists of stanzas 5 and 6, where

the poet gives Nobomi different praise names and finally compares her with Queen Victoria.

4.3.2.2 The title

The praise name *“isikhahlelo”* (Nobomi) is used for the title of the poem. The subtitle *“KuNkosikazi Margaret Ballinger, M.P.”* provides more information as to who the subject of the poem is. This helps the reader know who Nobomi is without stating it directly.

The name Nobomi appears only once in the poem. It is mentioned in stanza 5 after a series of namings. The purpose of mentioning the name after all the names is to link it with the title, thus highlighting it, as if to say this is the only perfect way in which Mrs Ballinger can be described.

4.3.2.3 Prosodic elements

The poem opens in a slow rhythm, which depicts the dignity of the person about whom the poet writes. The movement of the verses resembles the movement of a ship sailing to anchor. This is captured mainly through the repetition of words like, *“yavela”* (she appears), *“yazi”* (she knows) and *“iyazi”* (she knows). The repetition also contributes to the build-up to the climax in the poem.

The dignified movement of this national figure, Nobomi, is captured through the repeated use of the *“z”* sound throughout the poem, especially in stanza 3 where the poet narrates her experience.

The poem is dominated by repetition of various kinds, including repetition of sounds. The effect of this repetition is invaluable, as already demonstrated with Nobomi arriving in the country as well as with her experiences. Repetition is continued later in the study under the sub-heading, *“Izibongo Techniques”* below.

4.3.2.4 Pacing

In a highly dramatic way the poet introduces Nobomi in stanza 1 using a combination of both visual and kinaesthetic images as she walks in. This catches the eye of the reader, who becomes curious to know what she is bringing as she appears. In the same stanza the reader's attention is once again distracted as the poet addresses the issue of Great Britain, which he says let Africa down at times. This deviation once again engages the reader, who wants to read further.

In stanza 2 the combination of the visual and the kinaesthetic images is repeated, thus taking the reader back to the initial stage of curiosity. The reader is prompted to read further to get more information about Nobomi.

Stanzas 2 and 3 consist of a series of namings, which are additive, thus having a snowball effect on the description of the character and personality of Nobomi. The reader continues to read this series as each name leads to the next one.

In stanza 5 the poet's mood changes to a less celebratory one and the poem becomes more of a narrative as he compares Nobomi with the other names, which he feels do not describe her as well as the name Nobomi does. This continues to stanza 6 where Nobomi is compared to Queen Victoria. This comparison is bound to raise interest in the reader as these two people might seem to be incomparable, but Nobomi still comes through as a winner in this comparison. In the closing verses the poet encourages Nobomi to fight on, thus rewarding the reader for the effort of using his/her energy to read on.

4.3.2.5 Tone

The poet praises Nobomi throughout for the good things she has done for Black people in South Africa. He acknowledges the fact that she was sent to South Africa by Great Britain. In the poem Mama makes the point that she is knowledgeable and can therefore rise to all the challenges. Throughout the poem she is portrayed as a good person.

It is typical of *imbongi* (praise poet) to incorporate criticism in his *izibongo* (praises) as he does in stanza 1 when he says,

Ngilani sinethemba ngayo,

Sijonge lukhulu kuyo,

Nangon' ihamb' isidanisa;

(England we have hope through her,

We expect a lot from her,

Although she sometimes lets us down;)

Mama, the poet, points out the disappointment sometimes experienced with Great Britain. This verse echoes S.E.K. Mqhayi in his poem “*Aa! Zweliyazuza! ITshawe laseBhritani*” in *Inzuzo* (1943:70-73) in which he subtly points out the bad things that Great Britain did to Africa during the period of colonisation.

4.3.2.6 Gender issues

The following gender issues have been identified as per the guideline provided by Chimhundu (1995).

Physical appearance

In stanza 1 verses 1 and 2 and again in stanza 2 verse 1, and in stanza 3 verse 1 Mrs Ballinger is referred to as “*inzwakazi*” (the beauty), thus painting a physical picture of her as a very beautiful woman.

National Service

Since she represents Great Britain in South Africa as stated in stanzas 1 and 2, and knows about the histories of ancient Greece and Rome as stated in stanza 3, she is put on the level of a well-informed woman who serves at national level, a role reserved for

men in patriarchal society. Her popularity as a national figure comes out through the series of names given to her, as stated in stanza 5. The poet prefers to call her “*Noluxolo*” (The one with peace), thus associating her with her peace campaigns, which are part of her national service. This is against the more militaristic spirit of national service, which is often expressed by *Horace’s Odes (III.2.13)* which states, “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*” (It is sweet and fitting to die for one’s fatherland). Nobomi is committed to national service, but knows that “*ikrele alikwazi kulawula*” (the sword does not know how to rule).

The use of the suffix –kazi to denote female

In stanza 6 the poet describes Nobomi’s personality. As an advocate for justice she is referred to as “*wayelilungisakazi*”, which directly translates as “she was a female advocate for justice”. This reference also catches the meaning “she was a great advocate for justice”. The repetition of this epithet in the verse,

Sithi loo ntombi yab’ ililungisakazi

(We say that girl was a woman of justice)

cancels the female connotation to the suffix –kazi. The use of “*ntombi*” (girl) in the same verse introduces a tautology which cancels the female meaning on “*ilungisakazi*”, but instead the meaning of a great advocate of justice emerges.

Motherhood

The series of namings in stanzas 4 and 5 present Nobomi as the mother to all. The names catch every possible meaning for a mother. According to these names, she cares for all (Nokusingatha), she brightens up the lives of people (Nokubaneka and Nokukhanyisa), she feeds people with fresh food (Nokufula), she likes people (Nobantu), she gives hope to people (Nothemba), she loves different nations (Nozizwe), she gets people together (Nokunqaka), and advocates for peace (Noluxolo).

This series of names given to Mrs Ballinger is similar to the Yoruba *oriki*, as explained by Opland (1983:129), who says they are descriptive phrases referring to the character or deeds of a person. He states that they may be invented by relatives or neighbours. The names given to Mrs Ballinger are given by the people and refer to her character.

In closing, the poet affectionately addresses Nobomi as “*ma wam*” (my mother). This demonstrates the love everyone had for her as a representative of the Blacks at the time.

4.3.2.7 Metaphors

The metaphors used in this poem are mainly in the series of namings in stanzas 4 and 5 where the character of Mrs Ballinger is captured. Within the conceptual theory as outlined by Hermanson (1995) the following can be derived:

Nokusingatha: A woman is something to sit on;

Nokubaneka: A woman is light;

Nokukhanyisa: A woman is light;

Nokufula: A woman is fresh food.

This series of metaphors ends off with a significant simile “*UNokufula ngokweenyosi*” (The one who picks up fresh fruit like bees), thus comparing her to bees, which means she is an industrious person. The series of namings in stanza 5 yields the metaphor: a woman is people. This means she embraces all the people. Nobomi indeed embraces all the people.

4.3.2.8 *Izibongo* techniques

The poem opens in a loud voice similar to the opening formula, “Hoyini!” The closing formula used is “*Gubungu!*” which indicates the end of the performance. “*Sinnika!*” is also a typical closing formula used by Mqhayi. Mama, however, uses this formula to invite the audience to listen.

Tonality as defined by Okpewho (1992:92) refers to the diverse uses of tonal changes to enhance meaning and indicate extent or variety. This technique is employed in stanza 5, verse 9,

“Hayi ukuthi nguNobomi!”

(Wowu, to call her Nobomi!)

In stanza 1 the focus is on England, hence the repetition in verses 3 and 4,

*Ngilani sinethemba **ngayo**,*

*Sijonge lukhulu **kuyo***

(England we have hope through you,

We expect a lot from her).

The repetition, which Ntuli (1984:192) calls final linking, is intended to place emphasis on what is expected from England as the superpower. This is further confirmed when “*ngayo*” is once again repeated in verse 6 when the poet suggests that England is talked about and employs a cross-line repetition (Ntuli 1984:195) and writes,

Ngayo siyabuza:

Wozaliswa nini umnqophiso,

Wokuzaliselw’ ubomi?

(Through her we ask:

When shall the covenant be fulfilled,

Of filling up life?)

It is this repetition that puts the focus on England and thus highlights the important role to be played by Mrs Ballinger in South Africa.

In identifying Mrs Ballinger Mama uses initial repetition in stanzas 3 and 4. In stanza 3 the poet repeats “*yazi*” (she knows) immediately after the copulative construction

“*yinzwakazi*” (she is a beauty). The whole stanza is thus dominated by the “y” sound. This repetition of the “y” sound reinforces the visual image of Nobomi as a beautiful person. In stanza 4 the poet repeats names with the copulative morpheme “*ngu*”. The series of names given to her describes her personality fully through this repetition. To complete the character sketch the poet repeats the conjunctive “*bambi*” (some) in stanza 5. The repetition of “*bambi*” broadens the scope of reference – a lot more people know her.

In stanza 6 the poet repeats “*sithi*” (we say), which complements the repetition of the sibilant “s” sound that dominates the stanza. This sound describes fully Mrs Ballinger’s peaceful nature. The sound also represents her stand for justice. The various types of repetition employed in this poem succeed in painting a full picture of the subject of the poem, Mrs Ballinger.

4.3.3 Summary

Mrs Ballinger is given an isiXhosa name because of the role she plays as a political representative of the Blacks in Parliament. This name is selected from a series of namings typical of *izibongo* for royal leaders who are often men.

In a subtle way the poet levels criticism at England for being disappointing at times. This echoes S.E.K Mqhayi in his poem *ITshawe laseBhritani*. Nobomi, a beautiful woman, is highly regarded among amaXhosa, hence all the positive comparisons for her. She is opposed to war, thus placing her in opposition to the popular maxim “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*” by which countries like England lived.

The poem is in true *izibongo* style, emulating S.E.K. Mqhayi. A clever manipulation of tone is a very striking feature of this poem.

**4.4 Yali-Manisi, D. L. P. (1980) *Yaphum' ingqina* “UMfikazi uNkskz uNozizwe Sigcawu
“*Siya kumzuza phi na onjengaye?*” pp 37-54**

Grahamstown: ISER, Rhodes University

I

Rholan' iqhinga, maTshiwo,

Mzindini wakwaPhalo,

Kuthiwani na xa kunje?

Kunjani na ke xa kunje?

Namhla kunyembelekile,

Namhlanje kuxakekile,

Intlal' ibhukuqekile,

Umzi kaHints' ubhentsile.

Sishiywe yinkosikazi,

Enye yeenkokelikazi;

Sishiywe liqhajikazi,

Sashiywa ligorhakazi,

Kwasal' amaxhegokazi,

Eshiywa yincekekazi;

Injingakazi yesizwe,

Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

II

Nithini na mzi kaTshiwo?

Nithini na mzi kaPhalo?

Imkile inkosikazi,

Yashiy' izililokazi.

Kulil' abahle nababi,

Becinga ngaloo madabi,

Ath' akuwalw' uNozizwe

Kuhlahlambe zonk' izizwe;

Kutshayelel' iinkedama,

Zitshanga-tshangaz' iimfama,

Zingqovele neziqhwalala,

Ahlabelel' amagwala,

Zithwal' ilund' izifombo,

Zisith' igwetyiw' inkongo,

Yinjingakazi yesizwe,

Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

III

Nako ke mzi kaTshiwo,

Mabandlandini kaPhalo,

Bikelan' onk' amahlelo, -

Lo mnyaka ngowenzilo.

Yitshon' em' onk' amasuthu,
De kuye kuma koSuthu,
Kuba kumk' inkosikazi,
Isacholo soMhlekezazi.

Mayime yonk' imiguyo,
Imidudo nemingqungqo,
Zinqumame neziyolo,
Singabi nay' imigcobo;

Kub' imkile loo nzwakazi,
Kwahamb' ikhaliphakazi,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

IV

MaGcaleka nithini na?
Ngeli nxeba nithini na?
Kuba kuhamb' umnt' omkhulu,
Inkosikaz' akomkhulu.

Ukufa kuyisubile,
Njengesela kuyibile,
Kwatsho ngelinzul' inxeba
Kusapho lomzi kaNtaba.

Ew' isizwe sothukile,
Kuba besisonwabile,
Sisabuk' ubuntu bayo,
Sisancom' izenzo zayo.

Wafika won' umhla wayo,
Washunqul' ubomi bayo,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

V

Wena kuf' ulixelegu,
Ixhwili lesirhelegu;
Uziswele kamb' iintloni,
Njengenkosi yeedemoni;

Utyhunduza nezikhulu,
Kub' unqwenel' ubukhulu;
Uyinjubaqa yenene,
Egudl' ubumene-mene.

Bon' ubuntu akunabo,
Way' udinga nezihlobo;

Usigwinta sombulali,
Esaswela nobulali.

Buyisa loo nkosikazi,
Yiza nelo thembakazi,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

VI

Zinkwenkwezi cimelani,
Boomazulu fiphalani;
Zinduli nyibilikani,
Boozintaba dilikani.

Zilelan' inkosikazi,
Nizilel' itshawekazi,
Mzilelen' uNozizwe,
Inkosikazi yesizwe.

Zilwandle vusan' umnyele,
Ukufa lo nimrhintyele,
Nise yena kwelokufa,
Kungabi sabikh' ukufa.
Yini n' ukusihluth' ongaka?

Umafungwashe wohlanga,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

VII

Sithini n' ukungalili,
Singenayo nj' imincili,
Emkile nj' umama wethu,
Intandanekazi yethu?

Singaphela n' isingqala?
Sihlale na ngokonwaba?
Xa simkelweyo ngongaka,
Umafungwashe wohlanga?

Singaphela n' isizungu,
Siphantsi kwelinj' ilifu,
Intsunguzi yobumnyama,
Ephanzisa neengonyama?

Sosulwa phi n' iinyembezi,
Imkile nje loo nkwenkwezi?
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

VIII

X' iintyatyambo zitshakaza,
Imingcunub' iwunduza,
Sibuk' ubuhle bendalo,
Budiz' ubuhle bocwangco.

Ubenjalo k' uNozizwe,
Inkosikazi yesizwe;
Eyintyatyambo yobuhle,
Eyikhuthaz' intlalontle;

Engahlobani nobubi,
Ewatshayel' amabibi;
Elutshaba lwamabhunga
Azalwa bubukrelemnqa.

Ibinjalo loo nzwakazi,
Igugu nebhongokazi,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

IX

Sizithini n' izilingo
Eziza kunye neenzingo,
Singenay' umthetheleli,
Sihluthiwe nj' umlweli

MaGcaleka phendulani,
Nani maNgqika hlahlani,
Mabandlandini kaPhalo,
Sizwendini sikaTshiwo.

Xa umhlab' uphithizela,
Izizwe ziyaluzela,
Besibek' ithemba kuye,
Sisithi sophepha ngaye;

Kub' ubeligwiba lethu,
Esingath' iingxaki zethu, -
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

X

Iyampompoz' imithombo,
Itsho kuzal' imilambo;
Ziyaqaqamb' iintyatyambo,
Zihombise zonk' iintlambo;

Achokozil' amazulu,
Ezibalul' ubukhulu,
Eqhayisa ngeenkwenkwezi,
Ezigqwesa iinkanyezi

Kodwa hayi k' uNozizwe,
Inkosikazi yesizwe,
Ingwekazi edla ngebala,
Konk' ok' ukushiy' ebala.

Imkile ke loo nzwakazi,
Intomb' elithembakazi,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XI

Simvil' esepalamente,
Esilwel' engenamkhethe;
Wathetha kwanambitheka,
linyaniso zamkeleka,

Emele yonk' iTranskayi,
Kuba kuy' ibiliqhayi;
Ezidla ngelizwe lakhe,
Esithand' isizwe sakhe.

Ubuntu kuy' ibubuntu,
Engakhethi buso bamntu;
Engoyiki koyikiswa,

Engavumi kuvunyiswa.

Sithetha ngegorhakazi,

Sithetha ngenenekazi,

Injingakazi yesizwe,

Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XII

Sesitshilo ma-Afrika,

Sizwendini semidaka,

Isishiyile loo ngqanga;

Akuhlanga lungehlanga.

Imkil' inkwenkwezi yethu,

Litshonil' ilanga lethu,

Sasala sisenyanyeni,

Sasala sisengontsini.

Sasala simi nenkovu,

Kub' ukuf' unamabhovu,

Ezidla ngobakh' ubume,

Ecing' ukub' ulinene.

Yasishiya ke loo mazi,

Sishiywa ligorhakazi,

Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XIII

Xa kulapho ke, mawaba,
Xa kulapho ke, makhaba,
Mz' omkhulu wakwaTshiwo,
Mabandlandini kaPhalo,

Senjenje simemelela,
Saye sinithuthuzela,
Sisithi kuni xolani,
Kwiinto zonke bulelani;

Kuba nguYe Onikayo,
IkwanguYe Othathayo.
KuYe ke masibulele,
KuYe ke masithembele.

Vuman' ahamb' uma wethu,
'Kuz' abengummeli wethu,-
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XIV

Hamba mazi yakowethu,
Wena waz' iinzingo zethu;
Kuthi ube uliqhayiya,
Kuthi ube ulikratshi.

Nalapho sisajongile,
Nalapho sisalindile,
Usibike kuSombawo,
Usakhele nath' indawo.

linzima zeth' uyazazi,
lintlungu zeth' uyazazi;
Kungoko sikuyaleza,
Siyaleza sileleza,

Kub' ithemba lethu nguwe,
Neqhayiya lethu nguwe, -
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XV

Hamba mfazi wamaTshawe,
Nalaph' uz' ube liqhawe;
Hamba kakuhle ngenzolo,
Nalaph' ugangwe ngoxolo

Kub' amaTshaw' avumile,
Sonk' isizwe sivumile;
'Zw' elinamandla lithethile,
Ngelo gunya liggibile.

Sitsho sinani, maTshiwo,
Mabandl' amahle kaPhalo;
Sikhuph' imazi yesizwe,
Isiya kumel' isizwe.

Isiya kuba yinjinga
Kwelo Khaya lamaDinga, -
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Noziwe.

XVI

Nzonzothekani zintaba,
Cambalala wena mhlaba;
Vulan' ahamb' uNozizwe,
Kub' eNyangwen' ubiziwe.

Khunubembani mazulu,
Kuba kudlul' umnt' omkhulu,
Esiya kweliphezulu,
'Komkhulu lamakomkhulu.

Qubudani zinkwenkwezi,
Budak' ubukhwezi-khwezi benu,
Idlule loo ngangakazi,
Inkosikaz' oMhlekezi.

Mayigangathw' indlel' ayo,
Zibe mhloph' iinyawo zayo,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XVII

Hlahlambani zingelosi,
Nitshayeke mikhosi,
Makuvakal' indumiso,
Nitsho ngentlokomiso.

Vuman' ezizukileyo,
Nikheth' ezinyuliweyo,
Nitsho ngesihomokazi,
Kuba kuz' inkosikazi.

Hlangabezan' usukile,
Khawulezan' uphumile;
Kuni siyamkhululela,
ENyangweni simnikela.

Mamkeleni ngobubele,
Nimsulele ngobungcwele, -
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

XVIII

Hlangabezan' emafini
Nimthabathel' eNyangweni,
Nimnikezel' eXhegweni,
Limamkel' ekuPhumleni.

Mvathisen' ezimhlophe,
Nimnikezele ngehlombe;
IMvana mayimkhokele,
KOphezukonk' imnikele.

Onk' amadab' uwalwile,
limfazwe zonk' uzilwile,
Eziphantsi neziphezulu,
Ehlahl' indlela yezulu.

Sithetha ngenkosikazi,
Umfaz' oliqhajikazi,
Injingakazi yesizwe,
Unkosikazi Nozizwe

The Late Chieftainess Nozizwe Sigcawu

"Where shall we get one like her?"

I

Take a plan out Tshiwo people,
You family of Phalo,
What must be done when things are like this?
What is it like when it is like this?

Today things are bad,
Today we are stuck,
Life has been overturned,
Hints's family is exposed.

A chieftainess has passed away,
One of the great female leaders;
We have lost a bold one and,
We have lost a brave one.

Old women were left behind,
Being left by the loved one;
The great one of the nation,
Nozizwe chieftainess.

II

What do you say Phalo's people?

What do you say Phalo's people?

The chieftainess has departed,

And left behind cries.

The beautiful ones and the ugly ones are crying,

Thinking about those fights,

When Nozizwe fights them

All the nations get excited;

The orphans ululate,

The blind move about,

The lame limp around,

The cowards sing,

The hunchbacks carry the hunch,

Saying the reinforcement has been sentenced,

By the great one of the nation,

Chieftainess Nozizwe.

III

There she is house of Tshiwo,

You families of Phalo,

Inform all the groups about the death,-

This is a year of mourning.

Tell all the initiation schools to stop,
Up to the one in charge of the initiates,
Because a chieftainess has departed,
The brooch of the Honourable.

All the celebrations must stop,
The traditional dances and parties,
And festivities must also subside,
They must not have parties;

Because that beauty has departed,
A brave woman has left,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

IV

Gcaleka people what do you say?
About this wound what do you say?
Because a great person has departed,
The chieftainess of the great place.

Death took her away suddenly,
Like a thief it stole her,
Thus making a deep wound
On the family of the house of Ntaba.

Yes, the nation was shocked,
Because they were still happy,
Enjoying her kindness,
Praising her for her deeds.

But her day arrived,
And cut short her life,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

V

You death you are an untidy thing,
A voracious wild animal,
You have no respect,
Like the chief of the demons;

You push even the great ones,
Because you want greatness;
You are a delinquent indeed,
Who sides with insincerity.

Humaneness you have not got,
Moreover you have no relations;

You are a murderer of a killer,
Who lacked kindness.

Bring back that chieftainess,
Come back with that great hope,
The great hope of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

VI

Stars close your eyes,
You heavens become dark;
You hills melt,
You mountains fall down.

Mourn for the chieftainess,
Mourning for the princess,
Mourn for Nozizwe,
The chieftainess of the nation.

You seas become angry,
And tie up death,
And take him to the world of death,
So that there be no more death.

But why did he usurp such a great one from us?

The first born of the nation,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

VII

Why must we not cry,
When we are not excited,
When our mother has departed,
Our beloved one?

Can the groan stop?
And we live in happiness?
When such a great one has left us,
The first born daughter of the nation?

Can homeliness come to an end,
When we are under such a cloud,
The centre of darkness,
That makes even lions to run away?

Where shall we be wiped the tears,
As that star has departed?
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

VIII

When the stars twinkle,
The willows hanging on the ground,
Watching the beauty of nature,
Revealing the beauty of orderliness.

Nozizwe has just been like that then,
The chieftainess of the nation;
She has been a flower of beauty,
She would encourage good like;

She would not befriend herself with badness,
She would sweep away bad things;
She was enemy of caucuses
That are caused by criminality.

That beauty has been like that,
The great pride,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

IX

What do temptations do to us
That come together with suffering,
With us having no one to talk on our behalf,

The one who would fight for us has been usurped from us?

Gcaleka people answer,

And you Ngqika people explain,

You people of Phalo,

You nation of Tshiwo.

When the world goes up and down,

The nations unsettled,

We would put our hope on her,

Saying we will be saved by her;

Because she was our shelter,

handling our problems,-

The great one of the nation,

Chieftainess Nozizwe.

X

The springs flow,

Thus the rivers become full;

The flowers become bright,

And decorate all the valleys;

The skies are spotted,

Mentioning their greatness,

Boasting about the stars,
That beat the fireflies.

No, but then Nozizwe,
The chieftainess of the nation,
The great tigeress who eats by her spots,
And all this she left in destitution.

That beauty has then departed,
A girl who is a great hope,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XI

We heard her when she was in parliament,
Fighting for us and not discriminating;
She spoke favourably,
And the truths became acceptable,

Representing the whole Transkei,
Because to her it has been a great pride;
She has been proud of her country,
She liked her nation.

To her kindness has been kindness,
Not favouring anyone;
She did not fear being made to fear,
She refused being made to agree.

We are talking about a brave woman,
We are talking about a lady,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XII

African people we have already said,
You black nation,
That great one has left us;
What has happened it is not the first time that it happens.

Our star has departed,
Our sun has set,
We were left destitute,
We were left in trouble.

We were left with a problem,
Because death has got whiskers,
Proud of his state,
Thinking that he is a gentleman.

That woman then left us,
Being left by a brave woman,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XIII

At that point then, family,
At that point then, followers,
The great house of Tshiwo's place,
The tribes of Phalo,

We did this making a call,
While comforting you,
Saying to you be comforted,
For everything be grateful;

Because it is Him Who gives,
It is also Him Who takes.
To Him then let us give thanks,
To Him then let us have hope.

Give consent for our mother to go,
So that she can become our representative, -
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XIV

Go mother of my country,
You know our tribulations;
To us you were our pride,
To us you were our conceit.

Even there we are still watching,
Even there we are still waiting,
Report our plight to the Almighty,
And build a place for us too.

Our difficulties you know
Our pains you know;
It is for that reason we dispatch you,
We dispatch you with salute.

Because you are our hope
And our pride is you;
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XV

Go wife of the Tshawes,
And there you become a heroine;
Go well in quiet,

And be welcomed there in peace,

Because the Tshawes consented,

The whole nation consented;

The powerful voice has spoken,

With that authority it has decided.

We say this together with you,

Beautiful people of Phalo;

We send out the mother of the nation,

To represent the nation.

To become an expert

At that Home of the Promises, -

The great one of the nation,

Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XVI

Become shorter mountains,

Stretch out earth;

Open up for Nozizwe to go,

Because she has been called to Heaven.

Skies be sad,

Because a great person is passing by,

Going to the one above,
At the great place of the great places.

Bow your heads stars,
And the brightness disappears,
So that great woman should pass,
The wife of the Great one.

Her road must be stamped down,
So that her feet should become white,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

XVII

Burst out in song you angels,
Armies ululate,
Praise must be heard,
And do that in a loud song.

Sing the glorious ones,
And choose the selected ones,
And do that in great dignity,
Because the chieftainess is coming.

Go and meet her she has started her journey,

Be quick she has gone out;
We release her to you,
To Heaven we hand her over.

Welcome her with kindness,
And infect her with Holiness, -
The great ones of the nation,
Cheiftainness Nozizwe.

XVIII

Go and meet in the clouds
And take her to Heaven,
And hand her over to the Old Man,
And he will welcome her to Rest.

Dress her in white,
And hand her over with excitement;
The lamb must lead her,
To the One Above all he must hand her over.

She has fought all the battles,
She has fought all the wars,
The ones that are low and the ones that are high,
Paving the way to Heaven.

We are talking about a chieftainess,
A woman who is brave,
The great one of the nation,
Chieftainess Nozizwe.

Analysis

4.4 Yali-Manisi, D.L.P. UMfikazi uNkskz uNozizwe Sigcawu

4.4.1 The informal elements

According to Opland (2005:3), David Phakamile Yali-Manisi was born in 1926 in Khundulu in the Cacadu district and died in 1999. Opland states that Yali-Manisi was not just a Xhosa poet but a traditional Xhosa praise poet, *imbongi*. As *imbongi* he performed at several traditional ceremonies in the Transkei, especially during the period of this region's quasi-independence from South Africa. When he worked on the oral traditions of amaXhosa with Jeff Opland, he attended and also performed at several academic conferences in South Africa and overseas. Yali-Manisi's reputation as a poet is beyond all doubt, especially as a writer and a performing poet.

The poem "*Umfikazi unkskz. uNozizwe Sigcawu*" is an elegy in honour of the Chieftainess of amaGcaleka, who died tragically in 1978 by drowning while driving across a flooded bridge in Willowvale in the Eastern Cape. According to Mrs MaMpinga Jadezweni (née Vakele) (interviewed 12 February 2013), Nozizwe (Nompucuko Matiwane) was born in Sulenkama in Qumbu. Her surname is Matiwane of the Ngwanya, Jola clan. Chief Xhanti Sigcawu, Ah! Bambilizwe! her son, confirmed these biographical details on 13 February 2013.

The poem opens by announcing the sad news of the death of Mrs Sigcawu and calls for a period of mourning for her death. This period of mourning means there will not be celebrations of male initiation in the land of amaXhosa as well as in Lesotho. This demonstrates the respect commanded by Nozizwe that even Lesotho should mourn

her death. The poet scolds death and calls it a thief, and describes it as disrespectful and a chief of demons. As Nozizwe is highly respected, nature must also respect her when she passes by as she moves to heaven. The poet pays tribute to Nozizwe, wife of amaTshawe, and cites her good deeds in the country; for instance, she represented her people in parliament in the Transkei. The poet states that she was proud of her country, hence her service in Parliament.

The poet comforts the nation and cites the liturgy from the order of worship for burials in the hymn book of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (1926:284), which reads,

Asizanga nanto ukuza emhlabeni; kusekahleni ukuba asingephumi nanto kanjako. NguYehova obenika, nguYehova ohluthileyo. Igama likaYehova malidunyiswe.

(For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.)

This is a very sad moment as it conjures up the funeral of Nozizwe. There is no doubt that the poem was written soon after she had died as the pain of the fresh news of her death can be felt throughout the elegy.

The angels are summoned to welcome Nozizwe into heaven. She deserves this honour because she did all the good things she had to do on earth. The emotion throughout the poem is sorrow and a sense of despair is registered when the poet writes,

“Siya kumzuza phi na onjengaye?”

(Where shall we get one like her?)

The poet sounds very sad over the death of Nozizwe. The tension is established between the objects on earth and those beings in heaven who must pay their respects to Nozizwe. These two worlds – the earthly and heavenly – are created in the poem in such a way that a tension is created in the poem.

4.4.2 The formal elements

4.4.2.1 Form of poem

In this elegy Yali-Manisi laments the death of Chieftainess Nozizwe Sigcawu of amaGcaleka. The poem is divided into eighteen cantos each with four stanzas of four verses each. Each canto closes with a refrain,

Injingakazi yesizwe,

Unkosikazi Nozizwe.

(The great one of the nation

Chieftainess Nozizwe.)

The refrain echoes the title and at the same time builds up all the necessary gradations leading up to the climax. A synopsis of the contents of each canto follows:

Canto 1 – The death notice

Canto 2 – The reaction to the death

Canto 3 – A period of mourning declared

Canto 4 – Calls for a reaction from amaGcaleka

Canto 5 – Scolds death

Canto 6 - Nature asked to respect Nozizwe as she passes by

Canto 7 – The nation in tears

Canto 8 – Nozizwe's personality – a tribute to

Canto 9 – A tribute to Nozizwe - Hymn

Canto 10 – A tribute to Nozizwe

Canto 11 – In Parliament in the Transkei

Canto 12 – A national figure

Canto 13 – Comforts the nation

Canto 14 – Addresses Nozizwe as an individual

Canto 15 – Addresses Nozizwe as a wife of amaTshawe

Canto 16 – Calls on nature to pay their respects to Nozizwe as she travels to heaven

Canto 17 – She travels to heaven

Canto 18 – The heavenly beings welcome her into heaven.

The movement from one canto to the next is sustained by the refrain as it (refrain) refreshes the subject of the poem. The last canto marks the end of Nozizwe as she is handed over to the heavenly Father. As this is a religious poem, it can easily end off with the closing formula for a Christian prayer “Amen” (So be it). The refrain in the last canto therefore echoes, “It is finished!” being one of the utterances on the Cross.

4.4.2.2 The title

The title reports the death of Chieftainess Nozizwe Sigcawu, with the subtitle registering despair as the Gcaleka nation wonders where they will ever find one like Nozizwe. The title is echoed by the refrain at the end of each canto, thus mentioning the name of the deceased throughout. The title is therefore part of the poem.

4.4.2.3 Prosodic elements

The poem is characterised by soft hissing sounds in, among others, *sishiywe* (she has passed on), *yashiya* (she left behind), *ukufa kuyisubile* (death stole her), *njengesela kuyibile* (like a thief it stole her) etc. These sounds capture the mournful mood quite aptly. They also express the respect with which death is treated by amaXhosa.

The poem describes death in very negative epithets, which are reinforced by hard sounds as in canto 1 stanza 2,

Intlal' ibhukuqekile,

(Life is upside down / life is overthrown).

In canto 5 the poet describes death as follows,

Wena kuf' ulixelegu

Ixhwili lesirhelegu

(You are an untidy thing

A voracious wild animal).

In the second stanza of canto 5 he refers to death as,

Uyinjubaqa yenene

(You are a real delinquent).

The hard and harsh sounds in the extracts above reveal the scorn with which death is viewed.

The poet experiments with rhyme in this poem. It is however eye-rhyme as it is mere repetition of either morphemes or full lexical items. In spite of its being near-rhyme, it nevertheless lends dignity to the poem as it complements that slow mournful rhythm that dominates the elegy. The movement of the verses is slow and dignified throughout. Stanza 3 of canto 9 sounds like a dirge. This is deduced from the rhyme, as is often observed in isiXhosa hymns.

4.4.2.4 Pacing

The subtitle "*Siya kumzuza phi na onjengaye?*" (Where shall we get one like her?) raises the interest of the reader to want to know what had happened. The first two stanzas

of canto 1 contribute to the suspense created by the subtitle as the poet announces that a disaster has occurred in the land of Phalo. The poet breaks the news of the death of Nozizwe in stanza 3 of canto 1. The announcement is done with the usual euphemism for death, "*sishiywe*" (she has left us/she passed on). This shows that this is a fresh event and also the use of euphemism indicates that the person who has died is respectable.

Canto 2 reports the pain felt as a result of the death of Nozizwe. This is the most painful part of the poem. The reader needs relief from this passage. The opening verse of the first stanza of canto 3, "*Nako ke mzi kaTshiwo*" (There you are house of Tshiwo), gives a hint of a change to something else, thus shifting attention away from death. This happens as the poet calls for a period of mourning throughout the country.

Cantos 4 and 5 curse death, thus calling for the reader's empathy as death is cursed by everybody. Canto 4 is a report about how bad death is, whereas canto 5 is a direct address to death. Death is scolded directly in canto 5. The use of the vocative in addressing death definitely interests the reader to want to know what the poet is going to say when scolding death. The refrain punctuates each phase of the poem, thus rekindling the interest of the reader who wants to know what will happen next. The rhetorical questions asked throughout the poem also urge the reader to read further. The reader tries to look for answers to the questions asked. The poem is interspersed with biblical allusions and texts from hymns. In this way the reader finds variation, which leads to the reader wanting to read further. The poet lists the events in a cumulative way, thus leading to the climax. Canto 13 is the turning point of the poem. The poet begins the first stanza with the conjunctive "*xa*" (when) in the first verse, followed by the same conjunctive in the next verse. The repetition of this conjunctive draws the interest of the reader, who expects to know what happens next and therefore reads on. The poet then urges the reader to go further by urging Nozizwe to move on as she goes to heaven. Canto 14 opens with the verb "*hamba*" (go), canto 15 also opens with "*hamba*" (go), canto 17 opens with "*hlahlambani*" and canto 18 opens with "*hlangabezani*". All these verbs are similar and therefore they are

bound to encourage the reader to continue reading the poem with interest. More energy (to read forward) is used from each one of these markers as the reader's interest is aroused more and more.

Canto 18 consistently employs final linking in each one of the verses. Final linking is a technique that links ideas together in a poem. An ending of this nature is very rewarding for the reader. The poem is constructed in such a way that the reader wants to read right up to the end. The refrain throughout adds variation to the poem. It is this variation that is likely to encourage the reader to read further. The different techniques used in this poem succeed in controlling the pacing. At the end of the poem the reader ought to be satisfied that the poem challenged him or her in finding out for him/herself what happens in the poem. To get the reader to find out for himself / herself what happens in the poem is the reason for pacing.

4.4.2.5 Tone

The poet has great admiration for chieftainess Nozizwe Sigcawu and for what she did in life. He praises her quite elaborately for everything she did. The poet condemns death in the strongest possible terms for robbing amaGcaleka of such an invaluable person. It is, however, remarkable that in spite of his loyalty to Nozizwe, the poet commits himself to one of the responsibilities of *imbongi* as pointed out by Mafeje (1967:193) to make sharp criticism of his subject. In canto 11 stanza 2 he makes a tongue-in-cheek comment about Nozizwe's involvement with the Parliament of the Transkei. The poet says Nozizwe was proud of her country and she loved it. The use of "*kuye*" (to her) and the reference to the Transkei as "*ilizwe lakhe*" and "*isizwe sakhe*" give a hint of subtle criticism by Yali-Manisi, as he does not recognise the quasi-independence of the Transkei. He is nevertheless proud of Nozizwe, but not of the Transkei at the time. For this clever manner of expressing his views about the Transkei, Yali-Manisi poem is effective.

4.4.2.6 Gender issues

Use of the suffix –kazi

Nozizwe is introduced as *“Umfikazi”* thus meaning a female has died. Throughout the poem the feminine suffix *–kazi* is used to refer to her. She is later referred to as *“yincekekazi”* (she is a favourite person) in stanza 4. The use of *–kazi* has an expansive function, thus adding the meaning “a very special person” to *“inceke”*, a word which means a special person (female). Adding the suffix *–kazi* to *“nceke”* results in tautology, which emphasises that Nozizwe is a special person to amaGcaleka and other nations of Southern Africa.

The poet takes advantage of the suffix *–kazi* in the refrain to achieve alliteration. The refrain is thus dominated by the “z” sounds.

Injingakazi yesizwe,

Unkosikazi uNozizwe.

(The great one of the nation,

Chieftainess Nozizwe.)

It is through this clever use of sounds supported by the suffix denoting female that the name Nozizwe resonates throughout the poem.

In canto 15 Nozizwe is referred to as *“imazi yesizwe”* (The mother of the nation) (directly translated: The cow of the nation). Nozizwe indeed is the mother of the nation hence the poet writes (canto 13, stanza 4),

Vuman’ ahamb’ uma wethu

(Give consent for our mother to go).

4.4.2.7 Metaphors

Death in euphemistic terms

Throughout the poem death is referred to in euphemistic terms. In isiXhosa when someone has just died, death is referred to in euphemistic terms. It is therefore obvious that Nozizwe has just died, hence the following references:

Canto I, stanza 1 – *Sishiywe yinkosikazi* (The chieftainess has passed away)

Canto II, stanza 1 - *Imkile inkosikazi* (The chieftainess has departed)

Canto III, stanza 2 – *Kuba kumk' inkosikazi* (Because the chieftainess has passed away)

Stanza 4 – *Kwahamb' ikhaliphakazi* (A brave woman departed)

Canto IV, stanza 2 – *Ukufa kuyisubile*,

Njengesela kuyibile,)

(Death stole her

Like a thief it stole her).

In canto 12, stanza 1 the poet writes,

Isishiyile loo ngqanga

(The great one has left us).

In all these examples death is described within the conceptual metaphor framework as: *Death is a race* or *Death is a journey*. This is apt as in each one of the euphemisms death is said to move or walk away with the person who has died. A conceptual metaphor as identified by Hermanson (1995:109) referring to death as night occurs in canto 12 stanza 2 where the poet writes,

Litshon' ililanga lethu,

(Our sun has set).

As life is day, so death is night. This is what this metaphor implies. It is also quite significant that isiZulu reports death as *“ushonile”*, as if it is the sun that has set.

Death is cursed

In very negative terms death is scolded. Death is referred to as a thief as it has stolen Nozizwe. In canto 5, stanzas 1, 2 and 3 the poet uses vitriolic language to scold death. The words he uses are *“ulixelegu”*, (you are untidy), *“ixhwili lesirhelegu”* (a voracious wild animal), *“inkosi yeedemoni”* (chief of demons), *“Uyinjubaqa”* (You are a delinquent) and *“usigwinta”* (you are a murderer).

Death is ugly

Death is therefore repulsive as the poet in canto 12 stanza 3 describes it as,

Kub’ ukuf’ unamabhovu

(Because death has long plaited moustache).

Death is thus referred to as a destroyer, devourer, disrespectful and as a murderer. The poet detests death because of what it has done to amaGcaleka by robbing them of uNozizwe.

The effect of death

Because death disrupts everything, in the following verses the poet writes:

Intlalo ibhukuqekile,

Umzi kaHints’ ubhentsile.

(Life is overthrown,

Hints’s house is exposed.)

The two verses evoke the conceptual metaphor: *Death is a destabiliser*. It is also remarkable that an act associated with females (*ukubhentsa* – to expose one’s private

parts) is used to describe the effect of death on King Hintsa's house. This use shows that Nozizwe is highly regarded at her marriage house, the Sigcawu family. As a result of her death all traditional ceremonies are deferred.

Nozizwe, the woman

To describe Nozizwe's physical appearance Yali-Manisi uses an overstatement and refers to her as,

Eyintyatyambo yobuhle

(She was a flower of beauty).

This comparison yields the conceptual metaphor: *A woman is a flower*. This is a comparison used for a woman in amaXhosa culture.

With regards to her bravery, in canto 9, stanza 1 the poet refers to her as "*umlweli*" (the fighter); in stanza 4 she is referred to as "*ubeligwiba lethu*" (she was our shelter). In canto 10, stanza 3 she is referred to as "*ingwekazi edla ngamabala*" (The great tigress who eats by her spots). This refers to both her royalty and her bravery. The spots refer to her achievements. She is known for her achievements. To describe her bravery the conceptual metaphor is: *A woman is a wild animal*. That she would protect and fight for her people is thus captured in this conceptual metaphor.

In canto 12, stanza 1 Nozizwe is referred to as "*ingqanga*", a term used to address men of great honour, an equivalent of "Your Majesty". Nozizwe is therefore highly regarded by amaGcaleka.

That Nozizwe is a mother and a married woman who is highly regarded by everybody comes out in the following verses.

In canto 14, stanza 1 the poet refers to Nozizwe as "*imazi*" (cow) in,

Hamba mazi yakowethu

(Go cow of my home).

As a highly respected wife of amaTshawe Nozizwe is addressed as follows,

Hamba mfazi wamaTshawe

(Go wife of amaTshawe).

In both examples Nozizwe is addressed with great respect. As a married woman her family is proud of her, hence the references to her as “*imazi*” and “*umfazi*”. While both state the obvious, the intention is to highlight the respect they (amaTshawe) have for her.

4.4.2.8 Izipongo techniques

The poem opens with a subtitle in prose as if the poet is addressing the audience, getting them to listen to his performance. The whole poem is thus an oral rendering, as the repetitions suggest. These are repetitions that include innovations with rhyme, as already pointed out earlier in this part of the study.

In this poem Nozizwe is associated with her marriage family by naming Tshiwo, Phalo, Ntaba, Hintsa and amaTshawe. She is married to the royal amaXhosa family.

The refrain used throughout the poem introduces variety into the poem. Another device used to bring in variety is the use of texts from religious hymns as well as biblical allusions including, ‘Zw’ *elinamandla lithethile* (The One above has spoken) in canto 15 stanza 2. In canto 10 stanzas 1 and 2 the poet addresses nature, thus shifting the attention from the death. These two stanzas provide emotional relief to the audience. They function in the same way as a catharsis in a drama text. In this poem the two stanzas (1 and 2) constitute a digression, a device which Okpewho (1992:96) says occurs when the oral performer departs for a moment from the main line of the subject of a story or a song either to address an object (or person) at the scene of performance or to comment on an issue which may be closely or remotely connected with the main subject. In this poem the poet addresses nature, which is not closely

related to Nozizwe's death. He describes the beauty of nature in this way to give the reader a break from that heavy emotional event, the death of Nozizwe.

Both digression and the use of texts from the Bible and the hymn book have been used effectively in this poem as they have also contributed to pacing, thus urging the reader to read the poem with renewed vigour. The length of this poem is such that a reader needs help in order to continue reading. This the poet achieves with great success.

4.4.3 Summary

This elegy is a modern poem in all respects, especially with the clearly marked stanzas and cantos. It is, however, remarkable that *izibongo* features intrude into this beautifully crafted modern poem. The subtitle serves the role of the opening formula and an equivalent of the closing formula is provided at the end of the poem. The repetition, piling and the namings in the poem are a clear indication of an orally rendered poem.

The refrain at the end of each canto helps to keep the whole poem together by reminding the reader of the subject of the poem. The refrain in the poem also contributes to the build-up to the climax. The poet experiments with rhyme and achieves success to a limited degree. The success achieved contributes to the melody of the poem, helped by the success with alliteration as well. Yali-Manisi as an *imbongi* is commended for his effort to use modern poetry techniques together with *izibongo* techniques.

The use of biblical texts and texts from the hymn book is appropriate for this poem as it is about death. Death in the poem is reported in euphemistic terms and also soft sounds are used. This shows respect for death. Later in the poem the poet changes and scolds death. The metaphors used for death for this purpose are very strongly condemnatory of death.

In this poem Nozizwe is represented in a heroic way often reserved for men because of the patriarchal nature of isiXhosa culture. She is represented as a true traditional

leader from royalty, as any male would have been portrayed. The use of *izibongo* techniques when writing about her, points out to this recognition of her as a true traditional leader.

4.5 Jadezweni, M. (Compiler and Author) 2008. *Umdiliya wesihobe*

"A! Nosimo!" pp. 8-10 by Siyabonga Ngqongqwana. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

A! Nosimo!

1

Mbombo zone zehlabathi ndiboleken' iindlebe ngambini,
Phonoshono nanganeno kweNciba ndicel' isihoyo;
Zijikil' izinto mathol' oonyongande kukudlelana,
Zijikil' izinto mathol' emaz' ezimabele made;
Mhla sazek' uNonkululeko, savum' uMasilingane,
Umfazi nendoda babotshwa ngabhanti linye,
Ewe, namhla singumgubo wengxow' enye;
Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!

2

Kungawe Ntlane, ntsengwanekaz' ukwehlisa,
Kungawe qhakraqhakr' elibebez' ububele,
Mongikazi kwabalele ngandletyana-nye,
Mthomb' ongatshiyo kwabaswel' ithemba,
Chul' ukunyathel' ichule lokuhamb' indlela;
lintlambo zeTyhume kwaTyhali ziyabulisa,
Iyakhahlela le ntaba kaNdoda kub' isazuza,

Isamfifitha kuwe bhelukaz' olumanz' andonga;

Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!

3

Siyakhahlela kuwe ngwendin' emabalabala,

Kub' ezizwen' utshila ngembol' ebomvu,

Uthwal' uqhiyankulu, ubhinq' omfutshane,

Uyokoyok' okwentambanan' udlisela;

Ukukuphuma kwelanga kuthi makheswa,

Kuba namhl' izizwe zimaz' uNtu ngawe;

Asikuko nokokub' abakwazi kuloMfundo,

Nto nje unelunda ngobuzwe bakho;

Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!

4

KwaNokholeji kukhe kwandolos' ichanti,

Kwathi kanti ngu' uzingel' induk' entle,

Kant' iyintong' okuxhob' elizweni;

Wawunduza kwalatyuz' amaz' olwandle,

Kanti ngu' uwel' amanz' olwandle;

Waphal' emafin' okwekhwezi,

Yasika kamb' inimb' emv' ekhaya,

Yakukhweb' iFohloza ngesambalo sobugqirha,

Kungawe mdak' ongeva seph' asemlungwini;

Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!

A! Nosimo!

A! Mdengeentonga!

5

NguZisiwe elamhla wabon' ilanga,
NguNosimo elesizwe libizwa naziintaka,
NguBeauty elakowabo eseyintombi
Etsho ngomkhitha ngathi ngowehashe;
Suk' ubuhle baqaqambel' abaThembu,
NgoMiniyakhe batsho bazuz' igolide;
Yathwal' izandl' entlok' iLovedale,
Savakal' esimantshiyane kwaNokholeji;
Wab' uNtlane efunzel' ePalamente,
Kulo mthombo nathi sisakhongozela;
Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!

6

Esakufik' ugangathe kwacac' indima,
Kwezenkcubeko nemfundo sabon' umtyhi;
Namhl' upheth' iphondo sibon' inkqubela,
Kant' ugush' induk' emfutshane,
Ngay' ugxoth' ikat' eziko,
Wohlway' amatshivela nabarhwaphilizi;
Batsho bathi tse nakuloo Bhisho,
Nt' ezinamanyala zihlohl' ezazo,
Namhla zigagene nengqwayingqwayikazi,
Kuphel' ubumenemene, kudul' amabholo;

Uvunywa mbombo zone kub' umel' inyaniso,

Nam ndikothulel' umnqwazi.

Maz' enetho-o-ole!

Hail Nosimo!

1

From all four corners of the world give me your ears

I ask for attention from you on this side of the Kei and from the other side,

Things have changed my fellow countrymen,

Things have changed you children of our mothers;

When we accepted freedom we accepted equality,

A woman and a man are treated the same,

Yes, nowadays we are the same;

Because you have ears you must listen!

2

It is your turn Ntlane, the cow with a lot of milk,

It is your turn you jocular one overflowing with friendliness,

Nurse to those who are sick,

Fountain who does not get dry to those who have no hope,

The one who walks carefully, an expert in taking a journey,

The Tyhume valleys at Tyhali's place greet,

The Ndoda Mountain salutes because it still gets from you

It still gets the best from the beautiful one;

Because you have ears you must listen!

3

We salute you tiger with many colours,
Because when you are with other nations you show off with ochre,
You wear a big headgear and a short skirt,
You are colourful like the South African kestrel showing off;
You are sunrise to us the isolated ones,
Because nowadays it is through you that the other nations know African
culture;
It is not as if you are not educated
But you are proud of your nationality,
Because you have ears you must listen!

4

Once upon a time at the University College of Fort Hare *ichanti* walked
majestically,
Only to find out it is you, you came to look for the best,
The one you can use to arm yourself with in the world,
You walked with dignity and the sea went wild,
Only to find out it is you crossing the sea;
You travelled in the sky like a star,
And those at home sympathised with you,
Fort Hare honoured you with a doctorate,
It is your turn dark-complexioned one;
Because you have ears you must listen!

5

Hail, Nosimo!

Hail, Mdengeentonga!

When she was born she was named Zisiwe,

Nosimo is the name used by the nation and the birds call her by that name too,

When she was not yet married she was called Beauty,

When she was as beautiful as a horse;

Then her beauty attracted abaThembu,

Through Miniyakhe they acquired gold;

And Lovedale despaired,

A painful cry was heard from the University College,

When Ntlane left for Parliament,

From that fountain we also benefit,

Because you have ears you must listen!

6

After she had arrived she worked hard,

In cultural affairs and education we saw an improvement;

Today as she heads the province we see progress,

She is hiding a short stick,

Which she uses to drive away poverty,

She punishes the lazy and corrupt ones;

Even at Bhisho they are going to tow the line,

The filthy ones who fill up their pockets,

Today the brave one is going to catch them,

And cheating is going to stop and scandals will be exposed;

She is accepted everywhere because she stands for the truth,

I also salute you.

Thank you!

Analysis

4.5 A! Nosimo!

4.5.1 The informal elements

This young poet, Siyabonga Ngqongqwana, comes from Dimbaza near King Williamstown in the Eastern Cape. Some of his poetry has been published in the LitNet site. He also performs his poetry as he did with Chief Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu and for Professor Malegapuru Magoba, principal of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

According to Noluthando Zweni (Nosimo's cousin interviewed on 14 February 2013) of Hermanus, Zisiwe Mzati (Nosimo Balindlela) of the Ntlane clan was born in Hermanus in the Western Cape. In <http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/siziwe-nosimo-balindlela> (opened on February 8, 2013) it is reported that Nosimo Balindlela trained as a teacher at the Lovedale Institute in Alice. During the years 1973-1974 she taught at a school in Middledrift, after which she taught at Lovedale Institute from 1975 until 1977. From 1982 until 1983 she taught at the University of Fort Hare, after which she taught at the Cape Teachers' College in Fort Beaufort. From 1985 until 1987 she taught at the then University of Transkei (the present Walter Sisulu University of Science and Technology). From 1988 until 1991 she taught at the Dr W.B. Rubusana College of Education in East London. After 1991 she returned to the University of Fort Hare where she taught until 1994. After the democratic elections of 1994 she was appointed Minister of Education and Culture in the Eastern Cape until 1999, after which she was appointed Minister of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture until 2004. An Honorary Doctorate was conferred on her by the University of Fort Hare in 2002.

In the poem *A! Nosimo!* the poet draws the attention of all the people from all the walks of life including those from the Ciskei and the Transkei. He reminds the people of the principle of gender equality that was adopted upon attaining democracy in South Africa. He mentions that it is now Ntlane's (Nosimo's) turn to lead. He mentions Ntaba kaNdoda and the Tyhume river, which are landmarks from where she comes and where she is (setting). That she adheres to traditional African culture by wearing traditional garb is highly commended by the poet. The poet says this is a sign of her pride at her nation.

She studied at the University of Fort Hare, travelled overseas and was later honoured with a doctorate by Fort Hare. She is married into Miniyakhe of abaThembu clan. Her family represented as Lovedale and Fort Hare lost abaThembu, thus symbolising her move to Parliament in the Eastern Cape leaving her professional work of being a teacher. Her appointment at the Department of Culture and Education is mentioned by the poet. She later became head of the province (Premier). She works hard at combating poverty and against those who are lazy and corrupt. The poet mentions that she is resolved to uproot all the bad practices in the province. She is described as a leader who stands for the truth; therefore she is bound to succeed.

Nosimo Balindlela stands for truth and she has to contend with corruption. The poem is therefore crafted around these two opposing forces in this way tension is created. On the whole, the poet lauds Nosimo for her good leadership qualities, including her academic achievements.

4.5.2 The formal elements

4.5.2.1 Form of poem

The poem is organised in six stanzas with a varying number of verses ranging from eight to twelve. As if making a call to the audience to listen to the praises of Nosimo, the first five stanzas of the poem end off with the refrain,

“Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!”

(Because you have ears you must listen!)

Stanza 6 closes with the expression “*Maz’ enethole!*” (Thank you!), which stands in the place of the usual *imbongi* formula “*Ncincilili-li-li!*” (I stop!)

The poem can be divided into four parts in terms of content. Part one consists of stanza 1, which is the exposition. The poet alludes to the constitutional provisions on gender equality as outlined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. He mentions that the people of South Africa voted for gender equality; therefore everyone is bound by it.

Part two consists of stanza 2 where Nosimo’s place of work is located through association. She is associated with Tyhume and Ntaba kaNdoda, which are places near Bhisho where she works.

That she promotes amaXhosa traditional culture is captured in stanzas 3 and 4, which thus form part three of the poem. Stanzas 5 and 6 touch on her political intervention for which she is being praised. This is part four of the poem. The four parts are held together by the refrain, which also builds up to the climax in the poem.

4.5.2.2 The title

The title of the poem “*A! Nosimo!*” is a salute (*isikhahlelo*) to Nosimo Balindlela, who is the subject of the poem. *Isikhahlelo* is given to a chief or a king by the people. The title therefore gives an indication that the poem is about a leader from royalty or from a strong leadership background. *Isikhahlelo* is a name of great honour.

4.5.2.3 Prosodic elements

The title in the form of *isikhahlelo* is rendered in a loud voice. As the poem opens with the call for the audience,

...ndiboleken’ iindlebe ngambini

(...lend me your two ears)

it continues in the loud voice throughout. Even though the poem is in written form, it is clear that the poet first performed it. The rhythm represents the dignity with which Nosimo takes on her work. She walks with gaiety, hence the dance rhythm that dominates the poem. The poet uses a lot of alliteration, which becomes a distinguishing feature. The following are examples (the underlined parts in particular) of the alliteration successfully rendered by the poet:

Zijkil' izinto mathol' emaz' ezimabele made; (stanza 1)

Kungawe qhakraqhakr' elibebz' ububele, (stanza 2)

Chul' ukunyathel' ichule lokuhamb' indlela;

lintlambo zeTyhume zakwaTyhali ziyabulisa,

Kub' ezizwen' utshila ngembol' ebomvu (stanza 3)

Wawunduza kwalatyuz' amaz' olwandle (stanza 4)

NguNosimo elesizwe libizwa naziintaka, (stanza 5)

Namhla ziqagene nengqwayinqqwayikazi (stanza 6)

The success with which Ngqongqwana produces alliterative verses in this poem is admirable, as its contribution to the aesthetics of this poem is invaluable. The poem is rendered in a highly entertaining manner.

The rhythm is slowed down in stanza 6 as the poet uses long words. The slow rhythm represents the way in which Nosimo works – she takes on her work at a slower pace so as to do it thoroughly. She has a lot of work, so she must make sure she gets to everything that she has to do. The slowed down rhythm captures this state of affairs in her work situation – there is a lot to do.

4.5.2.4 Pacing

The poem opens with a call for people all over the world to listen, thus stimulating the interest of the reader to read the poem. The repetition of “*zijkile*” (things have changed) in stanza 1 stimulates the interest even more as the reader is curious to read

what changes have happened. The refrain “*Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala*” (Because you have ears you must listen) compels the reader to read. As each of the five stanzas ends with this refrain, the reader reads on until stanza 6, where the poet employs a different ending.

The poem as a whole is sequenced in a manner that allows for a build-up, which demands more energy from the reader. It is striking that stanza 5 opens with *isikhahlelo*, A! Nosimo! and continues with the series of names, thus sustaining the interest of the reader. The opening with *isikhahlelo* introduces variation in the sequence of events in the poem. It is at this point that the reader expects something different and indeed the poet moves on to the achievements of Nosimo. In stanza 5 the reader is presented with her biography that includes her names, her clan name and her marriage family.

Stanza 6 opens with the verb “*esakufika*” (after she had arrived), which indicates that something is going to happen thereafter. The reader’s questions as to what happens thereafter are answered when the poet reports on her success in the fields of arts and culture as well as in education. Her fight against corruption answers one of the questions from the reader. The end of the poem presents Nosimo as a hero, as she is honoured all over the world for standing for the truth. The reader will be relieved when the poem ends on such a positive note for Nosimo.

4.5.2.5 Tone

The poet expresses great respect on Nosimo, the premier of the Eastern Cape Province. The people have great respect for her hence *isikhahlelo* (praise name), which she earned as the poet writes in stanza 5,

NguNosimo elesizwe libizwa naziintaka

(Nosimo is the name used by the nation and the birds call her by that name too).

From this verse Nosimo’s popularity among the people is beyond all reasonable doubt.

4.5.2.6 Gender issues

Family background and ancestry

Physical appearance

The following are extracts from the poem where Nosimo's physical appearance is described.

In stanza 2 Nosimo is described as *"bhelukaz' olumanz' andonga"* (the beautiful one). The comparison here is with the brown water in a stream after the rains. This colour is perceived to represent human beauty in isiXhosa.

In stanza 5 the poet makes use of naming as a technique to describe her physical appearance. The poet writes *"NguBeauty elakowabo eseyintombi"* (Her name before she got married is Beauty). It is through this technique that the poet describes her as beautiful. In the verse that follows her beauty is compared to that of a horse when he writes,

"Etsho ngomkhitha ngathi ngowehashe"

(When she was as beautiful as a horse).

It is an established isiXhosa expression to describe someone beautiful as *"unomkhitha wehashe"* (she has the beauty of a horse / as beautiful as a horse). That she is short in stature but strong in action is captured in stanza 5 through the naming *"Mdengeentonga"* (Tall with sticks, i.e. she hits hard when fighting with sticks). This alludes to her success as a political leader.

Family background and ancestry

She is from the Ntlane clan and married to Miniyakhe of the Thembu clan.

Personality

In stanza 2 she is referred to as “*ntsengwanekazi*” (a cow that produces a lot of milk). This means she is generous. This could also mean she gives a lot of information as she is knowledgeable. In the same stanza she is described as “*qhakraqhakr’ elibebez’ ububele*” (jocular one overflowing with friendliness). She is a friendly and jocular person. Nosimo as described in these excerpts is a generous, friendly and jocular political leader.

4.5.2.7 Metaphors

When referring to accepting democracy in South Africa the poet writes “*Mhla sazek’ uNonkululeko*” (When we married Freedom). It is striking that freedom is represented in a female name “*Nonkululeko*” indicating that men were taking women on board – women were accepted. It was the first time that women were to be treated as equal with men. As a conceptual metaphor this reads thus: *gender equality is marriage*.

That people are equal is expressed as “*singumgubo wengxow’ enye*” (we are the flour of one bag). This means we are equal. The conceptual metaphor is: *people are flour*.

The metaphor “*ntsengwanekazi*” (cow that produces a lot of milk) can be restructured into a conceptual metaphor to: *a woman is a cow*.

Nosimo is also referred to as “*mongikazi*” (nurse) as she cares for everyone who needs care. This means: *a woman is a nurse*.

The poet describes Nosimo as “*Mthomb’ ongatshiyoy*” (A spring that does not get dry), thus presenting her as a source of life. She is always there for those who need help. The metaphor derived from this is: *a woman is water*. This is an apt description as women sustain lives.

An unusual metaphor for a woman is used to describe Nosimo’s bravery at the same time associating her with royalty. This is a highly positive representation of a woman, thus acknowledging her role and contribution as a leader. She is referred to as “*ngwendin’ emabalabala*” (you tiger with many colours). The conceptual metaphor is: *a woman is a wild animal*. The many colours or spots refer to Nosimo’s experience

gathered elsewhere before going into politics in the Eastern Cape government. For her contribution towards the recognition of amaXhosa culture, Nosimo is referred to as

Ukukuphuma kwelanga kuthi makheswa

(You are sunrise to us isolated ones).

This metaphor can be rephrased as: *A woman is light*. This portrays Nosimo in a very positive light as she is the light to the people of the Eastern Cape.

That she is beautiful and also fearsome is captured by referring to her as *“ichanti”*, described by Kropf (1915: 56) as a fabulous snake of many colours, supposed sometimes to leave the water and fascinate a person, who afterwards becomes a doctor. This snake is also associated with witchcraft. This metaphor therefore does not only represent Nosimo in a positive light, but also carries with it a negative stereotype about women. Machaba (2011:14) cites Masuku (2005) who states that a woman in Zulu folktales is portrayed as a witch. In the case of Nosimo this association could be intended to demonstrate how Nosimo achieved what was previously impossible to do. Her power is therefore supernatural, hence all her success. The metaphor that can be derived within the conceptual theory according to Hermanson (1995) is: *a woman is a witch*.

In stanza 5 the poet refers to Nosimo as *“igolide”*, which means she is a precious person. She is an invaluable person. The metaphor derived from this is: *a woman is a precious stone*.

The metaphors used to refer to Nosimo and her work are positive. Nosimo is represented as a capable political leader who can even do the impossible.

4.5.2.8 Izibongo techniques

The formulae

The poem opens with a verse that calls for the attention of the audience. This opening verse is similar to the *izibongo* formula *“Hoyini!”* whereby *imbongi* draws the attention

of the listeners. The poem closes with an established isiXhosa expression “*Maz’ enethole!*” which easily stands in the place of the closing formula used by *iimbongi*, “*Ncincilili!*” Both the opening and closing formulae used in the place of the usual *imbongi* formulae play a successful role in the poem as they open and close the poem very effectively.

S.E.K. Mqhayi’s influence

Mqhayi’s influence over Ngqongqwana as a poet is evident in the underlined phrases from stanza 1 where he writes,

Zijikil’ izinto mathol’ oonyonqande kukudlelana,

Zijikil’ izinto mathol’ emaz’ ezimabele made

(Things have changed my fellow country men,

Things have changed you children of our mothers).

These are trademark phrases for Mqhayi when referring to his countrymen. These phrases express great patriotism.

Namings

In stanza 5 she is saluted as “*Nosimo*” and “*Mdengeentonga*”, which are names given by the people to her as their leader. These are names of honour which are used by *imbongi* when praising an individual. These names are usually given to men in royal leadership positions. It is commendable for Ngqongqwana to give Nosimo the recognition for her contribution in the political world.

Tonality

Okpewho (1992:88) remarks that the human voice greatly benefits the text of oral literature because of its flexibility, which is not easily represented on the printed page.

The following verse from stanza 2 of the poem can yield two meanings depending upon the manipulation of the voice by the poet,

Iyakhahlela le Ntaba kaNdoda kub' isazuza

(Ntaba kaNdoda salutes because it still gets from you).

The second translation is (Ntaba kaNdoda salutes because she is in labour.)

This means the mountain is waiting to see what Nosimo is going to achieve. The change in the tone of voice yields these different meanings. This is a very useful technique in the poetry of tone languages, for it is by exploiting this device that a poet can take advantage of the expansive meaning of words.

Piling

The details in the poem are coupled to one another through piling and association, as observed by Okpewho (1992:83). The poem as a whole is organized in a cumulative way to represent how Nosimo works in the Eastern Cape government. Repetition in the different stanzas forms part of this cumulative nature of the poem. The refrain "*Unendlebe nje unetya-a-ala!*" (Because you have ears you must listen) contributes towards the build-up to the climax where it is stated that Nosimo stands for the truth.

Linking

That there is no gender discrimination in the country is confirmed through final linking in stanza 1 in the following verses:

Umfazi nendoda babotshwa ngabhanti linye,

Ewe, namhla singumgubo wengxow' enye

(A woman and a man are treated the same,

Yes, nowadays we are the same).

It is now Nosimo's turn to enjoy gender equality. In the following verses the poet engages initial linking to emphasise that it is now time for Nosimo for the first time to enjoy gender equality:

Kunqawe Ntlane, ntsengwanekaz' ukwehlisa,

Kunqawe qhakraqhakr' elibebez' ububele

(It is your turn Ntlane, the cow with a lot of milk,

It is your turn you jocular one overflowing with friendliness).

Through linking the poet has not only advanced the action in the poem, but also contributed to the rhythm of the poem, which resembles Nosimo's walk, which is vividly painted in the verse,

Uyokoyok' okwentambanan' udlisela

(You are colourful like the South African kestrel showing off).

On the whole the poem sounds orally performed. As noted, the big bulk of the techniques employed are drawn from *izibongo*, with S.E.K. Mqhayi being the biggest influence.

4.5.3 Summary

The poem opens with the poet calling for attention from all the people who assume the role of audience. This verse serves as the opening formula, as it would in *izibongo*. The poem closes with an established isiXhosa expression of thanks. This expression stands in the place of a closing formula in *izibongo*. The poet makes use of the refrain and succeeds because of its significance. The last verse of the last stanza, even though it is not textually the same as the refrain, sounds like and blends with the refrain.

Nosimo is a pioneering woman in politics in the Eastern Cape. She is an example of gender equality in the province. The metaphors used in the poem point to this as she is

praised with metaphors that were reserved for men. Naming as a technique is also used. The young poet imitates SEK Mqhayi in his poetry.

The poet succeeds in representing Nosimo's movements through the use of word-pictures like the use of the ideophone "*iqhakraqhakra*" (a jocular one), and the use of the simile in

"Uyokoyok' okwentambanan' udlisela"

(You are colourful like the South African kestrel showing off).

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter four poems by four different poets have been analysed for their use of modern poetry and *izibongo* devices to portray women in political and traditional leadership positions. Charlotte Maxeke, Nobomi (Mrs Ballinger) and Nosimo are political leaders. Nozizwe Sigcawu is the traditional leader. When analysing the poems, it has also been the interest of the researcher to establish the extent to which the poets use stereotypical views about women to portray their subjects.

The four poets whose poems have been analysed represent four different eras in the years of publication. SEK Mqhayi is the oldest of the four and he is the most illustrious as he is *Imbongi Yesizwe Jikelele* ; David Yali-Manisi follows after Mqhayi as *imbongi*; GS Mama is a fairly new poet, with S Ngqongqwana representing the contemporary new poets. It is remarkable, however, to observe that each one of the three poets is heavily influenced by Mqhayi in their poetry. This is expected as *Mqhayi* is *Imbongi Yesizwe Jikelele*. He is therefore everyone's role model when it comes to isiXhosa poetry.

In as far as modern poetry conventions are concerned, Yali-Manisi explores rhyme extensively in the poem entitled "*Umfikazi uNkskz uNozizwe Sigcawu*" and also succeeds with alliteration. As rhyme and alliteration apply to European languages, because they have stress and pitch in their syllables, Yali-Manisi's innovative use of these devices is very successful. The refrain is another device that Yali-Manisi uses with

great success in the poem about Mrs Sigcawu. This device is used effectively in a poem which is demarcated by cantos, an unusual unit in isiXhosa poetry. It is even more commendable to observe the success with which the refrain holds each canto together. The refrain is used with great success by Ngqongqwana too.

The poems by Mqhayi and Yali-Manisi are elegies. The emotion in both is sorrow over the loss of a leader. Mqhayi's poem differs from Yali-Manisi's in that Mqhayi uses the opportunity to celebrate the life of Mrs Maxeke as well as to mobilise women to action as leaders. Yali-Manisi mourns the death of Nozizwe throughout the poem. There is sadness in the poem throughout. The epithets that Yali-Manisi uses for death are strongly critical of death because of the freshness of the event.

Mama and Ngqongqwana praise political leaders who are still alive. Both poets depict the physical movements of their subjects. It is noteworthy that Mrs Ballinger's background is England and Nosimo was born in an urban area in the Western Cape but travelled overseas to study. Both have overseas influences in their leadership activities. Mrs Maxeke also studied in America and she is the first Black woman to hold a Bachelor's degree. That the three women excel in politics can be attributed to their international exposure as well.

Mqhayi, Mama and Yali-Manisi use subtitles to their poems. Mqhayi uses a biblical text with the prose text in the subtitle. The subtitle adds a second voice to each poem, because in each one of the three instances they are in prose form preceding the verse. The biblical text even adds authenticity to the message as it is the Word of God. It is through this effective use of the subtitle that the poems cease to be monolithic. It is also through these prose epigraphs that the reader is able to feel that the poem was an oral rendering. The opening and closing formulae attest to this view. Ngqongqwana only uses the opening and closing formulae, thus confirming *izibongo* features of his poem. Repetition is a dominant feature of *izibongo*, which all four poets use to portray their subjects. The series of names given to each one of the subjects is presented through repetition. Initial linking as another form of repetition has been used

extensively by the four poets. Digression as used by Yali-Manisi is another significant technique used in the elegy to Nozizwe Sigcawu.

Subtle criticism by Mama on Mrs Ballinger and by Yali-Manisi on Nozizwe is evidence of the calibre of these two poets. They are both aware of the role of *imbongi* – to laud the subject for what is laudable and criticise where criticism is warranted. It is rather strange that Ngqongqwana refers to Nosimo as “*ichanti*” (a water-snake associated with evil/witchcraft). The intention with this metaphor could be to give Nosimo as a woman unique powers that are above those of humans. This is confirmed by Ilesanmi (1998:31), who states that in Yoruba culture women use their witchcraft to play a protective role for political heads, warriors, family heads, professionals, priests and priestesses. This they do through their knowledge about life, especially at the cultic and mysterious levels. Nosimo, as represented in the poem, has powers that place her above all the people in the province where she rules as a political head. That her achievements are lauded by the poet repudiates the stereotypical association of women with witchcraft, as Machaba (2011:14) avers. Ngqongqwana is commended for associating Nosimo with a supernatural creature, *ichanti*.

Maxeke, Nozizwe and Nosimo are described as very patriotic people. Maxeke and Nosimo are even represented in more patriotic terms than Nozizwe. Defining patriotism, Qangule (1979: 171) writes,

For Mqhayi patriotism has always meant service not only to those living in this present world but also to those living in the next world. Patriotism is ultimate service to God.

This is true of Maxeke and Nozizwe. They are now going to be serving God in more patriotic ways. The reader understands the reason for Yali-Manisi not focusing a lot on patriotism – his poem is like a death notice. He is mainly concerned about a death that has just occurred. Nobomi (Mrs Ballinger) is praised for her fight for justice, even going beyond the role Queen Victoria played in this regard. She is praised for advocating for peace as opposed to war. Mama is highly commended for this representation of

Nobomi, because it was unusual for any British citizen to advocate for peace during the period when this poem was written.

In the case of Maxeke the poet sees death as marking a beginning of a new era, as if saying she has completed her term of office. The repetition of *“igqibile”* (she has finished) suggests this. Mqhayi is more celebratory of the life of Maxeke in this poem. In the elegy to Nozizwe Yali-Manisi mourns her death. Initially he speaks about death in very hushed terms, thus showing respect to Nozizwe as well as to death, as is the practice in amaXhosa culture. This is done effectively through the use of soft and hissing sounds selected appropriately to capture this mood. He later curses death using extremely negative epithets.

Nobomi and Nosimo are described as beautiful women. Nosimo is even associated with water as she is referred to as *“Mthombo”* (fountain). Nozizwe is associated with a flower to describe her. Referring to a woman as a flower is a typical isiXhosa metaphor for a woman. It is, however, disquieting when Yali-Manisi refers to Nozizwe as the decoration (*isacholo*) of the king. This is a stereotypical description of a woman as being the property of a man.

In very lofty language the four poets portray these women in images that refer to them as mothers, even Mother Africa, as well as heroic figures that deserve praise in the same way as men are praised. Each one of the four women is unique in her own right but Maxeke and Nozizwe stand out over the two as heroic figures in this selection. This is in spite of the poet not making reference to Nozizwe’s father being chief, as stated in the biography supplied by Xhanti Sigcawu (13 February 2013). Ngqongqwana is correct in citing gender equality as the reason for Nosimo being appointed head of state in the Eastern Cape Province. The poetry used about the four women in the selected poems supports this view.

Chapter 5: Poetry about Women in Religion, Education and Health

5.1 Introduction

Because of the limited amount of poetry about women in religion, education and health, in particular, three of the four poems selected for this chapter are written by S.E.K. Mqhayi, whose stature as poet is beyond all reasonable doubt, as already explained in his biographical sketch in Chapter 4. There is no clear categorisation of the poems as some poems cover two themes, depending upon the subject of the poem.

The biographical sketches provided under the sub-heading *The informal elements* are intended to give background to the reason for the production of the poetry. In some poems the background information also provides information about the setting, which is part of the informal elements of the poem.

The analysis of the poems is informed by the theory as provided in Chapter 2. Because three of the four poems selected for this chapter are by SEK Mqhayi, who is an *imbongi*, more emphasis is placed on how women are praised in isiXhosa poetry. As already observed in Chapter 4, Mama GS is inclined towards *izibongo* as influenced by Mqhayi. The poem by Mama is also analysed paying special attention to *izibongo* techniques used.

5.2 Mqhayi, S.E.K. (1943) *Inzuzo*. UMaya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka) pp. 54-56

Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Le yintombi yoMnumzana uGovan Khoboka umMpandla, igqirha; unina yinkosazana, intombi kaNqorho, kaDunjwayo, umMbalu. Le mizi yomibini ingabaseki besinala yaseLovedale – yaziwa kulo lonke elo. UAnti Maya (njengoko nabadala kunaye babesithi Anti besusela kuAnti Nomanga, unina) uzalelwe, wakhulela, wafundela, wasebenza wade waswelekela eLovedale. Nakuye ndibeka ilitye elimhlophe ndisithi:

1

Ndiyenz' eDikeni ! –
Ndiyeza MamMpandla!
Ntomb' akwaMbona
KwaTshayingwe.
Cwizi ngantwananye
Ukungandihlebeli;
Wakuzuz' isimemo,
Sekomkhul' eliphezulu.
Ubuyintyatyambo,
Andiqhuli kanene,
Yomzi weLovedale.
Ubungumthombo,
Womzi wakovwenu
Neembacu zamaMpandla.
Ungumthi womngxam,

2

Kumzi kaKhoboka;
Asindawo yethu le,
Ewe, Anti Maya!
Yindawo kaLusifa;
Umphathi-hlabathi;
Woba yinyibiba, -
Kweziphezulu iindawo!

Usaya kuba mhle, -

Kwiparades' entsha!

Maya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka)

This is the daughter of Mister Govan Khoboka of the Mpandla clan, a diviner; her mother is a princess, daughter of Nqorho, of Dunjwayo, a Mbalu. These two homes who are founders of Lovedale Institute – are known all over that place. Aunty Maya (as even those older than her called her Aunty as they would call Aunty Nomanga, her mother) was born and she grew up, and went to school, and worked in Lovedale until she died. To her I also pay tribute saying:

1

I am coming to Alice! –

I am coming MamMpandla!

Daughter of the Mbona people

Of the Tshayingwe clan.

Except for one little thing

For not hinting me;

When you received an invitation;

From the Great place above.

You were the flower,

I am not joking whatsoever,

Of the Lovedale Institute.

You were the spring of your people,

And the destitute ones of the Mpandla clan,

You were the tree of life.

2

To the Khoboka family;

This is not our place,

Yes, Aunty Maya!

This is Lucifer's place;

The ruler of the world;

You will be a lily, -

In places that are above!

You will still be beautiful, -

In the new paradise!

Analysis

5.2.2 UMaya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka)

5.2.2.1 The informal elements

Maya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka) is the daughter of Mr Govan Khoboka. Her mother came from the Nqorho family of Dunjwayo of the Mbalu clan. Both the Khoboka and Nqorho families were founders of Lovedale Institute in Alice. The poet laments the death of Aunty Maya, as she was called by everybody in the area. She took after her mother, who was called Aunty Nomanga by everyone in the area.

The poet promises to visit Alice in order to offer her condolences to the Msimka for their loss of Aunty Maya. The poet sounds surprised and states that he had not heard about her death.

The poet describes her as a beautiful, resourceful and strong person. She also looked well after people from both her family as well as all the African people. The following verse from stanza one captures this view,

“Ungumthi womngxam”

(You were the tree of life).

The poet consoles the Khoboka family, telling them that the earth belongs to Lucifer and therefore Aunty Maya is in higher service, where she will remain pretty and safe in the new land.

The poet pays tribute to Mrs Msimka and celebrates her life. He ends off by presenting two opposing worlds – the world ruled by Lucifer and the world where there is no suffering. Mrs Msimka is in a better world where she is safe. Tension is established through these two worlds presented in the poem. Mrs Msimka moves between these two and manages to get to the better world, where she will forever remain beautiful.

5.2.2 The formal elements

5.2.2.1 Form of poem

This is a ballad written after the death of Maya Khoboka. It is through this ballad that the poet pays tribute to her. The ballad is divided into two stanzas, with stanza 1 addressing Maya Khoboka directly as if she is alive. The poet assures Maya that he is coming to pay his last respects to her at her home in Lovedale. In stanza 2 the poet comforts the Khoboka family over their loss of Maya Khoboka. In this stanza the poet addresses the family directly by saying *“Kumzi kaKhoboka”* (To the Khoboka family). To comfort the family he employs piling as he first states that *“Asindawo yethu le”* (This is not our place), meaning that the earth is not a good place for good people to live in. The poet states that the earth is the place for the devil (Lucifer). These two opposing views are linked indirectly in the stanza as the poet states *“Yindawo kaLucifa”* (It is the place of Lucifer). Between these two verses is the name *“Umphathi-hlabathi”* (The owner of the world).

5.2.2.2 The title

The poet puts the name of the subject of the poem as the title of the poem. The epigraph in prose provides the biographical information of the subject which complements the poem. This prose epigraph flows into the verse as if it is an opening

formula in *izibongo*. It is through the epigraph that the reader is made aware of this poem being one of a number of poems by which the poet “*Nakuye ndibeka ilitye elimhlophe*” (To her I also pay tribute). This is a very clever technique of introducing additional information into a poem as if it is a stage direction in a drama text.

5.2.2.3 Pacing

The poem opens with a statement that indicates movement as the poet states “*Ndiyenza*” (I am coming), thus urging and enticing the reader to read along. This call is followed by the mentioning of the place name, Dikeni (Alice), thus taking the reader to a setting. The series of clan names is interrupted by a sudden twist as the poet uses “*cwizi*” (except), a conjunctive that introduces suspense. The euphemism for death when the poet mentions the invitation to a higher Great place intensifies the suspense. The line-break brought about by digression in verse 10 “*Andiqhuli kanene*” (I am not joking whatsoever). This digression serves to highlight how special Maya Khoboka was in Lovedale. The digression stimulates the reader to want to know more about the course of events in the poem.

The last stanza has a strong element of biblical language, which gives the calmness and dignity of the whole verse. The poet definitely succeeds in comforting the family through the dignified rhythm he chooses for this stanza. The reader finds this last stanza rewarding as it ends in a pleasurable way. The reader is bound to enjoy great relief after this, as the poet ends with hope of a better place after death. The two stanzas can be broken into the following beacons for pacing: *Ndiyenza*; *Cwizi*; *Ubungumthombo*; *Kumzi kaKhoboka*; and *Usaya kuba mhle*. At each one of these markers the reader is bound to pick up momentum and use more energy to read further.

5.2.2.4 Tone

The poet really admires Maya Khoboka. The people of Lovedale and the Khoboka family are very proud of Maya, who is described as a beautiful woman. The poem

praises Maya for her patriotism. Death as anathema is cursed by the poet. The poet says death belongs to the Devil.

5.2.2.5 Gender issues

Motherhood

The epigraph states that Maya Khoboka is called “antiy” by everyone young and old, just like they did to her mother. This is an indication that she was mother to all as the poet states in stanza 1 verses 13, 14 and 15, where he writes,

Ubungumthombo

Womzi wakovwenu

Neembacu zamaMpandla.

(You were the spring

Of your people,

And the destitute ones of the Mpandla clan,)

These verses state that she looked after all her people and also looked after her family. She was a true mother.

Ancestry and genealogy

Maya Khoboka’s family background is given in the prose epigraph. That her father was a diviner conveys an image of someone who has extraordinary powers, as her father brought her up with African traditional medicine. This medicine is believed to give one extraordinary powers. That her mother is of royal blood “*inkosazana*” (princess) gives her respect and dignity. Her clan names are given as Mmpandla, Mbona and Tshayingwe, thus giving her an ancestry. This is a typical amaXhosa way to identify one with one’s ancestry.

The married woman

In stanza 1 verse 2 Maya Khoboka is addressed as MamMpandla and in same stanza 1 she is also referred to as “*Ntomb’ akwaMbona*” (Daughter of the Mbona people), which indicates that indeed she is a married woman. This observation is further supported by the fact that in stanza 1 verses 13, 14 and 15, it is stated that she looks after everyone including her own family. To look after everyone in the family is what is expected of a married woman in amaXhosa culture.

5.2.2.6 Metaphors

Death

The poet refers to death as “*isimemo saphezulu*” (the invitation from up there), which means to die is to move to a higher position. The place one goes to is even referred to as “*ikomkhulu eliphezulu*” (The Great place which is above). The conceptual metaphors that are yielded from these two comparisons are:

Death is an invitation

Death is a promotion to a higher position

Death is thus represented as a movement. A person moves from one place to another. The place from where a person moves is the earth and goes to heaven, which is on a higher level. The lower-level place belongs to “*Lusifa*” (Lucifer) and the higher level place belongs to God; the poet refers to this place as “*iparadesi entsha*” (new paradise) or “*kweziphezulu iindawo*” (at higher places). The juxtapositioning of the two worlds, the earth against heaven, is quite remarkable because it illustrates how diametrically opposed to each other they are. The poet chose a very powerful technique to comfort the Khoboka family. They should be pleased to know that Maya has ascended to a much better place and she will continue to be beautiful and continue with her service of patriotism.

The beautiful and strong woman

Maya Khoboka is described as follows:

In stanza 1

Ubuyintyatyambo (You were a flower)

Ubungumthombo (You were the spring)

Ungumthi womngxam (You were the tree of life)

In stanza 2

Woba yinyibiba (You will be a lily)

The conceptual metaphors derived are the following:

A woman is a flower

A woman is water

A woman is a tree

The metaphors identified in this part point to the following: the beauty of a woman; a woman sustains life; and a woman is a strong support.

According to Qangule (1979:138) the tree or wood symbol shows her patriotism, as she was the physical, moral and spiritual supporter of her fellowmen. Qangule adds that the tree and water symbols are used for intensification of meaning – the patriot was the very source from which the people draw their lives.

5.2.2.7 *Izibongo* techniques

Stanza 1 up to verse 8 is mainly concerned with death. The poet announces that he is coming because Maya has died. This stage is when death is talked about in euphemistic terms. The sound that dominates the phase of the poem is the “z” sound. This sound resonates throughout the segment of the poem. In this way the poet succeeds in using sound to express meaning, which Okpewho (1992:92) refers to as

“idea-in-sound”. This is a stylistic technique called an idiophone because it relies on sound.

The whole poem is characterised by repetition. In stanza 1 the first two verses are connected by initial linking as “*ndiyeza*” is repeated in the first position of the verses directly after the other.

Verses 3 and 4 are cross-linked through the use of “*kwa-*”, a morpheme that connects the series of clan names. Another instance of cross-linking occurs between verses 9 and 12. This cross-linking is significant in that it links metaphors that are related, as they both refer to the character of the woman about whom the poem is written. This technique is used once again in stanza 2 linking verses 2 and 3 through the repetition of “*-ndawo*”. This cross-linking is significant in that it illustrates the opposite positions of earth and heaven. The earth belongs to Lucifer, but heaven is where God lives and it is the new paradise. The poem closes with the verse, *Kwiparadesi entsha!* (In the new paradise!)

This verse is similar to the closing formula of *izibongo*. The prose line in the epigraph which states *Nakuye ndibeka ilitye elimhlophe ndisithi:...* (To her I also pay tribute saying:...) represents the opening formula of *izibongo*.

Mqhayi is commended for the use of *Izibongo* techniques in paying tribute to Maya Khoboka (Mrs Msimka). Even though it is a written poem, the oral rendering of the poem is made evident through the use of these techniques.

5.3 Mqhayi, S.E.K. (1943) *Inzuzo*. “Umka John Knox Bhokhwe” pp 64-68

Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

“Lingaphezulu nakwiKorale ixabiso lakhe” (Miz. 31:10).

Kwiminyaka emashumi mathathu anesihlanu eyadlulayo, unyana kaCholwephi, kaBhokhwe, kaNgxogu, kaMataka, eMaBambeni, kwaKrila, oziko lisemaMbalwini kwaLanga, onguNokisi igama lakhe, uwele apha esinga kwelamaSkhotshi Phesheya,

esiya kuthungelanisa nokutywinela ubuhlobo phakathi kwethu neso sizwe. Wabuya okunene,

1

Ethunge inqu,

Watsho ngolwalwa, -

Watsho ngoqilimba, -

Lobuhlobo bukabuhlobo.

Intsapho yakhe seyide yawelawela, yafunda, yonwaba, yadlambadlambeka, yalibala. Namhla kuwela umkakhe, intokazi kaSopothela iNgwanekazi, ukuya kumela ama-Afrikakazi kwisidimbilili sabafazi bezizwe ngezizwe, beentlanga ngeentlanga abazukisa umkhosi woManyano lwabafazi beLizwi ogqiba namhla umnyaka wekhulu usekiwe usebenza ezinyameni. Ngako oko

2

Awu-u-u !!!

Yakhuza neMbongi yeSizwe !

Ibon' amaphanya-phany' emibane;

Ibon' izivuthe-vuthe zemililo;

Ibon' iminyele neminyama,

Ibon' ukuwa kweenkwenkwezi,

Ibon' iinyikima zelizwe;

Ibon' imisi namadangatye;

Ibon' iimfazwe namarh' eemfazwe;

Ibon' ukutsha komFrate !

Kuba kulungisw' indlela, -

Yookumkani baseMpumalanga.

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

‘Ixabiso lakhe !”

3

Sithumel’ um-Afrikakazi !

Sithumel’ intomb’ akwaNgwane;

Sithumel’ imfecanekazi !

Yophath’ umkhontwan’ omfuphi;

Ihlab’ udiza nempakatha!

Iqengq’ izigede phesheya.

Sithumel’ umfazi wendoda, -

Igorha lendod’ amadoda, -

Ingqanga yomBamba kwaKрила;

Indwaluth’ asemaMbalwini, -

KuloSuthukazi kaNkumpu,

KooSonto, Langa, noDunjwayo.

Ngoko ke Malitshe kaNqeno, -

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

Ixabiso lakhe !”

4

Azol’ amaz’ aselwandle,

Adlaladlala nenqanawe yakhe;

Elinye laxelel’ elinye, -

Elinye kwelinye, nelinye,-

Lithi: “Nik’ imbekokaz’ enkulu,

Kulal' iziphunzi nameva,
'Kube licamag' elihle,
Sinomnt' omhle phakathi kwethu.'
Uth' ewelela ngaphesheya, -
Yab' ivel' eny' inzwana, -
UBhishop Smithi ngegama, -
Kwakhle konke konke !
Ngoko Malitshe kaNqeno, -
"Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

Ixabiso lakhe !"

5

Izizwe zibus' iinzwakazi !
Zathumel' amahombakazi;
Zisuse nezityebikazi, -
Zathumel' amacikokazi;
Zisuse izilumkokazi!
Zathumela neemfundikazi;
Zisuse namagqirhakazi !
Zathumel' iingcaphephekazi;
Zithumele izazikazi!
Nditsh' izinunza-nunzakazi;
Thina sisus' iNgcwelekazi !
Omny' ewakeni labafazi !
Sathi, "Hamba m-Afrikakazi !"

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

Ixabiso lakhe !”

6

Uzungathethi nelimdaka;

Ungasimeli ngabuciko;

Nangantoni nangantoni!

Zusimele ngesidima, Mdunakazi;

Ngesithozela sakho Mdunakazi;

Ngesimilo sakhw’ esihle Mdunakazi;

Ulixhatha lethu neqhayiya lethu;

Uyintsika yethu nodondolo Mdunakazi.

Usihombo nomxhaga wendlovu!

Uvele wangunina kwelakwaPhalo !

Uyingcwelekazi Mdunakazi.

Uyingcwelekazi ngokwenene.

Ngoko Malitshe kaNqeno, -

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

Ixabiso lakhe !”

7

Siyambongoz’ uQamat’ Omhle !

Sikuthandazela nzwakaz’ enkulu.

Sithandazela namaSkhotshi;

Kunye nentsapho yawo yonke,

Ngamana wanomlilo namandla;

Umoyise nakwelo zwe uSathana;

Uvelis' umdla wom-Afrikakazi.

Ngamana wabuya kwakakuhle

Ufik' usapho lwakho luphila;

Usiza neziny' iintsikelelo;

Kongezwe phezu kokongezwa!

Lutsho lonk' usapho lukaPhalo;

“Umam' uza neziny' iingobozi!”

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale

Ixabiso lakhe !”

John Knox Bhokhwe's wife pp 64-68

“For her worth is above rubies.” (Proverbs 31:10)

Thirty years ago the son of Cholwephi, of Bhokhwe, of Ngxogu, of Mataka, of the Bamba, Krila clan, whose centre is in Mbalwini in Langa, by the name Knox, travelled overseas to Scotland to establish and seal relations between us and that nation. Indeed he returned

1

He had it tightly sealed

He a very strong one, -

He had a very strong one, -

A true relationship indeed.

His family has from time to time travelled overseas, studied, had a good time, enjoyed themselves, and has forgotten about it. Today his wife, daughter of Sophothela of the

Ngwane clan is going overseas to represent African women at a massive centenary celebration of the Christian Women's Union. Therefore

2

Awu-u-u !

Exclaimed the National Bard too!

Seeing the flashing of lightning;

Seeing vicious fires;

Seeing the edges of the sky and rainbows,

Seeing the falling of stars,

Seeing the earthquakes of the world;

Seeing the smokes and flames;

Seeing the wars and signs of wars;

Seeing the burning of incense (umFrate)!

Because the road is being prepared, -

For the kings of the East.

"For her worth is above rubies!"

3

We have sent an African woman!

We have sent a daughter of the Ngwane family;

We have sent brave woman!

She will carry a short spear;

And stab everything!

Leave casualties behind overseas.

We have sent a wife of an heroic man, -

A brave man of men, -
The great one of the Bamba of the Krila clan;
The honourable one of the Mbalu clan, -
Of Suthukazi of Nkumpu,
Of Sonto, Langa and Dunjwayo.
Then Malitshe of Nqeno, -
“For her worth is above rubies!”

4

The sea waves became calm,
And played around with her ship;
One told the other, -
One told the other, and another the other, -
And said: “Pay great respect,
Tree trunks and thorns must fold up and sleep,
Let peace rule,
There is a beautiful one among us.”
By the time she went across, -
There appeared one handsome one, -
By the name of Bishop Smith, -
And then everything was good!
Then Malitshe of Nqeno, -
“For her worth is above rubies!”

5

The nations removed the beauties!

Instead sent the neat ones;
They also removed the rich, -
Instead sent the eloquent ones!
They removed the wise ones!
And sent the educated ones;
They removed the traditional healers!
And sent experts;
They sent the wise ones!
I mean the respected ones;
We sent the Holiest!
One in a thousand women!
And we said, "Go African woman!"
"For her worth is above rubies!"

6

And please say nothing;
Do not represent us with eloquence;
And with nothing else!
Represent us with dignity, You-Strong-One;
With your dignity You-Strong-One;
With your good behaviour You-Strong-One;
You are our supporter and our pride;
You are our pillar and staff You-Strong-One.
You are the brooch and the elephant armband!
You have become a mother to Phalo's people!

You are the holiest You-Strong-One.

You are indeed the holiest.

Then Malitshe of Nqeno, -

“For her worth is above rubies!”

7

We plead with Almighty God!

We pray for you great beauty.

We pray for the Scottish people also;

Together with their families as a whole,

May you have the fire and power;

And defeat Satan even in that country;

And demonstrate the interest of an African woman.

May you return safely as well

And find your family well;

Bringing other blessings;

And be added on top of what had been added!

The whole family of Phalo says so;

“Mama is going to bring with her other baskets!”

“For her worth is above rubies!”

Analysis

5.3 Umka John Knox Bhokhwe

5.3.1 The informal elements

The first person from the Bhokhwe family to travel overseas to Scotland was John Knox. The poet congratulates Mrs Bhokhwe for her trip to Scotland to attend the Centenary of the Women's Foreign Mission of the Church of Scotland in Scotland in 1937 – 1938 (Qangule 1979:132). Mrs Bhokhwe's visit is a result of the strong relations between South Africa and Scotland established by John Knox during his visit.

The poet sounds a bit surprised by the visit and is not sure of her safety abroad, as there were already signs of the imminent outbreak of the Second World War. The poet is, however, convinced that Mrs Bhokhwe will be successful in her travels as she is a brave woman. Besides, she is a wife of a brave man too! As she travelled by sea the water became calm as if showing respect to her. Upon her arrival in Scotland she was welcomed by Bishop Smith, a sign of being respected.

The poet speculates on the integrity of other countries' delegates and says they were probably sent because they are neat, articulate, educated and wise, whereas in the case of Mrs Bhokhwe she was sent as a delegate because she is the holiest (*Ingcwelekazi*). As the mother and support of all Africans she should then demonstrate her dignity, respect and her holiness.

The poet intercedes on behalf of Mrs Bhokhwe for Qamata to give her wisdom and strength, protect the Scottish and all their families and prays for travel mercies for her. Even though the poet expresses confidence in Mrs Bhokhwe on her own, he does see the complementary role her husband plays with her. That she is not defined on her own but also as the wife of John Knox Bhokhwe causes tension in the poem. That the wife lives in the shadow of her husband is a cause for concern. This divided view on Mrs Bhokhwe also appears in the call made for her to represent her country differently from the way other women do. In spite of the split opinion on Mrs Bhokhwe, she is described in the poem as a model of a woman. She is a holy woman.

5.3.2 Formal elements

5.3.2.1 The title

The title *“Umka John Knox Bhokhwe”* gives a clear indication of the subject of the poem as it seems to honour John Knox Bhokhwe at the same time as he honours his wife. The epigraph provides a background to John Knox Bhokhwe. The second epigraph gives background information on the trip that Mrs Bhokhwe is going to undertake. The subtitle, a text from the Bible, gives the reader an idea of the calibre of person the poem describes. She is definitely a person of high status.

5.3.2.2 Pacing

The biblical text from Proverbs 31:10 signals to the reader that the subject of the poem is a very important person. This prompts the reader to want to know about the subject. The prose texts provide biographical information and finish off with phrases that serve to catch the reader’s attention. The first prose text ends off with *“Wabuya okunene”* (Indeed he returned). The second prose text ends with *“Ngako oko”* (Therefore). In both instances the reader is invited to continue reading.

The poem is punctuated by a short stanza that recounts the results of the visit by John Knox Bhokhwe. This stanza is intended to stimulate the interest of the reader to read further. The refrain in the form of the biblical text contributes towards the build-up to the climax. That the poem is about a very important person is echoed throughout by the refrain. Each stanza represents a phase in the development of the poem. The first verse of each stanza is a marker for pacing, as each verse indicates a new part of the poem. Each time the stanza begins, the reader’s curiosity is stimulated and the suspense intensifies. The poem ends with the poet wishing Mrs Bhokhwe a safe journey to Scotland and the wish that she should have a safe journey back too. This is a very rewarding ending for the reader as it gives hope of a good trip.

5.3.2.3 Tone

The poet is very proud of Mrs Bhokhwe as a national representative at the centenary celebrations in Scotland. In addition to the Biblical text *“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale ixabiso lakhe”* (For her worth is above rubies!) the poet refers to her as *“ingcwelekazi”*

(the holy one), a virtue she must draw on when representing the African women at the celebrations. In stanza 5 she is even referred to as,

Omny' ewakeni labafazi!

(One in a thousand women!)

This means she is a very special woman. The poet holds her in very high esteem. The poet trusts that she will bring more victory to her country as he writes,

"Umam' uza neziny' iingobozi!"

(Mama is going to bring with her other baskets!)

5.3.2.4 Gender issues

When dealing with the gender issues below the outline of key images as provided by Chimwundu (1995:155) is used as a basis for the discussion.

Married woman

As the title of the poem indicates, the poem is about someone's wife – John Knox Bhokhwe's wife. The poet does not provide her name as her husband's name is known. She therefore benefits from her husband's fame. In stanza 3 verse 7 the poet writes,

Sithumel' umfazi wendoda

(We have sent a wife of a heroic man).

This verse serves to support the view that Mrs Bhokhwe benefits from the fame of her husband.

Motherhood

The following are references used in the poem to refer to Mrs Bhokhwe to describe her as a woman and a mother of her country.

In stanza 3 she is referred to as,

“um-Afrikakazi” (an African woman)

“intomb’ akwaNgwane” (the daughter of the Ngwane family).

In stanza 5 she is referred to as *“iNgcwelekazi”* (the holiest woman).

In stanza 6 she is called,

“Mdunakazi”

(You-Strong-One).

Uvele wangunina kwelakwaPhalo

(You have become a mother to Phalo’s people).

In stanza 7 the poet reports,

“Umam’ uza neziny’ iingobozi!”

(Mama is going to bring with her other baskets!)

These references represent Mrs Bhokhwe as a strong woman who is mother to all the people. She looks after everyone well.

Family background and ancestry

She is married to the Krila family. This information is presented in the epigraph in prose, but in stanza 3 the poet introduces her heroic husband as

Ingqanga yomBamba kwaKrila

(The great one of the Bamba of the Krila clan).

It is only in the prose epigraph that the reader learns about her family. She is daughter of Sophothela of the Ngwane clan. Her clan name is mentioned later in stanza 3 when the poet writes,

Sithumel' intomb' akwaNgwane

(We have sent a daughter of the Ngwane family).

Had a set of clan names of Mrs Bhokhwe been given, her ancestry would be known because *iziduko*, as Opland (1983:44) confirms, are a series of names of the ancestors. It is rather disquieting that the poem presents a series of John Knox's *iziduko* and gives only one for Mrs Bhokhwe and yet the poem is about her. This confirms the view that Mrs Bhokhwe earns her fame from her husband.

5.3.2.5 Metaphors

In stanza 3 Mrs Bhokhwe is referred to as "*imfecanekazi*" (a brave woman). This metaphor is derived from the Nguni wars that were waged by Shaka against other tribes. Mrs Bhokhwe is therefore associated with war, thus describing her as a brave woman. The conceptual metaphor that is derived from this comparison is: *A woman is war*. As she travels overseas she is known for her bravery. A series of metaphors occurs in stanza 6, where she is referred to as,

Ulixhatha lethu neqhayiya lethu;

Uyintsika yethu nodondolo Mdunakazi.

Usihombo nomxhaga wendlovu!

Uvele wangunina kwelakwaPhalo !

(You are our supporter and our pride;

You are our pillar and staff You-Strong-One.

You are the brooch and the elephant armband!

You have become a mother to Phalo's people!)

This series of metaphors highlights her strength and her special place among her people. She is a precious person as well. The series ends by confirming her being mother of amaXhosa.

The metaphors selected by the poet to describe Mrs Bhokhwe are appropriate as they give a vivid picture of a brave soldier, who must fight on gallantly, as stated in stanza 3 when the poet writes,

Sithumel' intomb' akwaNgwane;

Sithumel' imfecanekazi !

Yophath' umkhontwan' omfuphi;

Ihlab' udiza nempakatha!

Iqengq' izigede phesheya.

(We have sent brave woman!

She will carry a short spear;

And stab everything!

Leave casualties behind overseas.)

This is a heroic representation of a woman, which is unusual and unexpected, thus making it significant in the poem.

5.3.2.6 *Izibongo* techniques

Opening and closing formulae

The poem opens with an exclamation “*Awu-u-u!!!*”, which functions in the same way as the usual “*Hoyina!!!*” to draw the attention of the audience. The poem closes with the refrain,

“Lingaphezulu nakwikorale Ixabiso lakhe!”

(For her worth is above rubies!)

The refrain is used in the place of the closing formula for *izibongo*. In *izibongo* the praise poet (*imbongi*) tells the audience that he is stopping, whereas the refrain does not get to that point. As Mqhayi is an acclaimed poet, the use of the refrain as a closing formula achieves measurable success in this poem.

Repetition

In stanza 2 "*ibon*" is repeated in the first position in eight verses. This initial linking is a device used by *imbongi* to connect related ideas in *izibongo*. The eight verses connected by linking consist of fearful images that symbolise the experiences that Mrs Bhokhwe is likely to come across in Scotland, when she represents the women of South Africa at the centenary celebrations. The symbols are: the fires, the rainbows, the stars, the earthquakes, the smoke and flames, the wars and the burning of incense. All these elements are scary. These are predictions by *imbongi* before the departure of Mrs Bhokhwe. The repetition continues in stanza 3 where piling is also used. Piling in this stanza culminates with the series of *iziduko* of John Knox Bhokhwe, the husband, as if saying you are the hero you are because of your husband,

"Sithumel' umfazi wendoda"

(We have sent the wife of a heroic man).

In stanza 5 initial and final linking are used throughout the stanza. The initial linking occurs through the use of the "z" sound, which resonates through the stanza. The final linking is through the use of the suffix *-kazi*, thus affirming Mrs Bhokhwe as a female hero.

Repetition of sounds

With Mrs Bhokhwe travelling by sea, the waves are said to have calmed down as there was a special person on the water (*Sinomnt' omhle phakathi kwethu*). This calmness of the sea is represented by the repetition of the liquid "l" sound that dominates the stanza.

Stanza 5 also makes use of the “z” sound to represent the movement as Mrs Bhokhwe travels by sea. The idiophone is a typical *izibongo* technique as *imbongi*, among others, entertains with sound at the same time to present information in the most effective way. It is through sound that in stanzas 4 and 5 the poet is able to describe effectively the situation at sea and also to describe the hero in stanza 5. In stanza 7 *imbongi* intercedes for Mrs Bhokhwe. This is a role of *imbongi*, as he is a link between the people and God. This poem is dominated by repetition which is used significantly.

5.4 Mqhayi, S.E.K. (1943) *Inzuzo*. “Unkosazana Minah Thembeke (Intokazi kaRhulumente Philip Soga)” pp 68-70. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

“Wathi uDyafta Yini na le, ntombi yam!” (Gwebi 11:35)

1

Wawel’ uNomagaxagaxa!

Yawel’ inkosazana,

Intomb’ akwaDlomo komkhulu;

Umafungwa ngabaThembu, -

KwaZondwa kwaMadiba.

KwaHala nakwaNdaba;

KwaCedume nakwaBhomoyi.

Waxelelen’ amaz’ olwandle,

Namhl’ ev’ isifuba senkosazana,

Qobokazana lingalalanga mzini,

Lingalal’ emzini lilahlekile!!!

2

Hamba Thembeke ntombam!

Ujonge eMpuma bejonge eNtshona;

Wajonga kwicala lezazi!
Hamb' uzubuye kakuhle,
Nokungabuyi kusalungile,
Kwabuy' abaneempondwana!
Usale wen' usikhonzela,
Ukhonzela thin' ezizweni.
Wawel' uNomagaxagaxa!
Intomb' eengubo zimgxashe,
Zixak' iinkokeli neenkosi.

3

Lalani zinduli zolwandle!
Phantsi konyawo lomNgqikakazi, -
Umty' omhle owasukw' eMgwali, -
EQwanti naseNgquleni.
Wev' umfutho wooSongcangcashe, -
Yee bhoo amabele kweleMbokothwe;
Yeza ngobulawu kwelakowayo, -
KooBonkolo noomaXonxa;
KooziNdwana noomaCacadu;
Njengelekaz' akwaThixo !!!

4

Zuzixelel' izizwe neentlanga, -
Thina kwaNtu besihlala noThixo,
Sicity' esandleni sakh' esihle,

Sisalusa sithombisa
Sizeka sisendisa;
Ehambahamba phakathi kwethu
Simnyusel' amadini nemibongo
Esezel' amanqath' eenkomo zethu;
Imimang' izele izivivane,
limvula zazisin' imivumbi.
Sikholwa kuvuko lwabafileyo!!!

Ncincilili !

Miss Minah Thembeke (**Daughter of Rhulumente Philip Soga**)

"Jepthah said, Alas, my daughter!"

1

Nomagaxagaxa travels overseas!
The princess travels overseas,
The daughter of the Dlomo clan of the royal house;
The one by whom the Thembu people swear, -
The Zondwa of Madiba.
Of Hala and Ndaba;
Of Cedume and Bhomoyi.
Tell the waves of the sea
That today they feel the chest of a maiden,
The maiden who never sleeps at another person's house,
Should she do that she got lost!!!

2

Go Thembeka my daughter!

You look to the East while they look to the West;

You are looking on the direction of the wise!

Go and come back safely,

Even not returning is all right too,

The ones with small horns returned!

Stay behind and serve for us,

You are serving for us in foreign countries

Nomagaxagaxa travelled overseas!

A girl with colourful robes,

Making leaders and chiefs confused.

3

Go down you hills of the sea!

Under the foot of the Ngqika woman, -

A beautiful lace that was tanned in St Mathews, -

In Qwanti and in Ngquleni.

She responded to the influence of the Songcangcashe's, -

She visited the land of Mbokothwe;

She came to her own country to her family relations, -

To Bonkolo and to Xonxa;

To Ndwana and to Cacadu;

Great General of God's place!!!

You should tell the nations and races, -
 We Africans lived with God,
 Eating from His hand which is beautiful,
 Doing male and female initiation rituals;
 Giving *lobola* and handing girls over in marriage;
 He moved among us,
 Giving sacrifices to Him, propitiating Him
 And He in turn inhaling the smell of fat from our cattle;
 The valleys had many heaps of stones for worship,
 The rains were heavy and nonstop.
 We believed in the resurrection of the dead!!!
 I disappear!

Analysis

5.4 Unkosazana Minah Thembeka (Intokazi kaRhulumente Philip Soga)

5.4.1 The informal elements

According to Qangule (1979:133), Minah Thembeka Soga was born in Lady Frere, in the Eastern Cape. She qualified as a teacher at Mgwali Girls' Institute (St Matthews in Keiskamahoeck). She taught at public schools in Kimberley for 15 years. She was the only African woman delegate to the Tambaran Conference in Madras. As a result of the impression she made at the Madras Conference she was invited to join the United States post-Madras team and for several months she remained in that country. On her return to South Africa from Madras she addressed meetings in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Adams College, Inanda, Dundee, Kimberley and Cape Town.

With regards to her outstanding achievement at church, Qangule (1979:133) quotes *The South African Outlook* (1940), which reported,

One particularly notable occasion was on Sunday, December 17 when Miss Soga spoke in St. George's Presbyterian Church, Johannesburg. It had been reported that this was the first time that any woman, White or Black, had occupied this pulpit. It was an experiment calling for courage and faith on the part of Dr Bruce Gordimer but such confidence proved to be fully justified when Miss Soga faced that large and deservedly critical audience with her thoughtful, intelligent and inspiring address.

With such an illustrious character reference Miss Minah Thembeka earns the name *Nomagaxagaxa*, as she seems to be carrying on her shoulders all the honours. All the people are excited over the fact that she is going overseas to Madras. The poet dispatches her with the message to tell the other nations that Africans have always lived with God. That Thembeka is the first woman representative at the conference in Madras is implied in the following verses from stanza one:

Waxelelen' amaz' olwandle,

Namhl' ev' isifuba senkosazana

(Tell the waves of the sea

That today they feel the chest of a maiden).

This also implies that it is the first time that a woman travels by sea.

In stanza 2 the poem commands her to travel overseas and come back home afterwards. However, if she does not come back home, she should serve her country abroad. This message causes tension in the poem, as the reader is bound to pick up the allusion to the biblical text from Judges 11:35, where it is stated, "*Jephthah said, Alas, my daughter!*" as his daughter had disgraced him. It is as if the poet warns Thembeka not to disgrace her country, like Jephthah's daughter did to her father. The

opening biblical text is opposed to the celebratory spirit of the poem as a whole, hence the tension.

5.4.2 The formal elements

5.4.2.1 The title

The title gives a clear indication that the poem is in honour of Miss Minah Thembeke. The explanation within brackets gives the name of her father, Rhulumente Philip Soga. The biblical text from Judges 11:35 serves as a subtitle. In the subtitle it sounds as if Minah Thembeke is being compared to Jephthah's daughter, who disgraced her father.

5.4.2.2 Pacing

This four-stanza poem consists of four episodes that occur with the four stanzas. Stanza 1 reports that Thembeke is going overseas; stanza 2 describes the poet sending her off; in stanza 3 the poet reports on her travel by sea; in stanza 4 the poet gives her the instruction to inform the other nations at the conference that Africans always knew God. Each one of these stanzas opens with a verb that gets the reader to read further in order to get more information about the subject. The first stanza opens with a verb in the indicative mood and the three subsequent stanzas open with verbs in the imperative mood, which is a form used to give ordinary commands, as Mncube (1957:90) explains. The sequence in which these verbs are arranged compels the reader to read further. Stanza 4 gives the reader great relief as the poet touches on the subject of African religion and culture. Everything in this stanza is attractive.

5.4.2.3 Tone

Mqhayi praises Minah Thembeke as she travels to Madras to represent her country at the Tambaran conference. The poet expresses confidence in her as a good ambassador for her country. The poet also dispatches Thembeke with a charge to tell the delegates at the conference that in Africa we have always known God. This is social commentary, as the poet corrects the misconceptions of the colonialists who thought Africans did not know God. Social commentary is one of the roles of *imbongi*, who has the

responsibility to correct the wrongs of society, because he is the eyes and the ears of the people. The poem speaks in dual terms as, on the one hand, Thembeke is praised as a trusted delegate to Madras, whereas on the other hand, the biblical text refers to Jephthah's daughter, who disgraced her father. This is the reason of the tension in the poem.

5.4.2.4 Gender issues

Minah Thembeke is of royal blood as she comes from the Madiba clan. In stanza 1 she is referred to as "*inkosazana*" (princess) and "*Umafungwa ngabaThembu*" (The one by whom abaThembu swear), which is in line with her being a first-born daughter of abaThembu. The recognition of Thembeke in this way is attributed to the cultural context as amaXhosa respect royalty as well as a first-born daughter.

That Minah Thembeke is special as a maiden is expressed when the poet instructs that the waves be informed that,

Namhl' ev' isifuba senkosazana

(That today they feel the chest of a maiden).

The trust in her is expressed through the usual expression to encourage women to succeed when the poet writes,

Qobokazana lingalalanga mzini

Lingalal' emzini lilahlekile!!!

(The maiden who never sleeps at another person's house

Should she do that she got lost!!!)

This is what is said to young girls in order to get them to carry out a chore they have been asked to do. Minah Thembeke is being encouraged to go on the trip and be

brave. In stanza 2 the poet refers to Thembeke as “*ntombam*” (my daughter) and “*Intomb’ engubo zimngxashe*, (A girl with colourful robes).

The reference to her as “*intombi*” shows pride in her. It gives a sense of her being a national figure, a woman of the nation. That Thembeke is a special woman is further illustrated by the call made in stanza 3 for the waves to calm down under the foot of the Ngqika woman (*umNgqikakazi*). That a woman will tame the sea is a sign that Thembeke is a woman with supernatural powers, thus confirming the assertion made by Machaba (2011:14) that women have special powers, hence their association with witchcraft.

In stanza 3 verse 6 the poet reports that Thembeke had visited the land of Mbokothwe. For the verb visited (*hambela*) he writes, “*Yee bhuu amabele*” (directly translated: She spread her breasts). Besides the literal meaning, which can be pejorative, meaning she was a loose woman, this metaphor stands in the place of the generic expression, “*Ukhe wabeka unyawo*” (She set foot...). The metaphor selected by the poet is gender specific. The reader is curious to know which metaphor the poet would have used had it been a man. In stanza 3, verse 10 the poet refers to Thembeke as,

Njengelekaz’ akwaThixo!!!

(Great general of God’s place!!!)

As general is a title that was reserved for men in the military, Thembeke’s status is enhanced because she is given the same title as anyone in the army. She is the equal of everybody in the army. This title also refers to her prowess in the work of God. She is a brave woman.

As a woman Thembeke is described in very heroic terms befitting a delegate to such an auspicious event like the conference in Madras.

5.4.2.5 *Izibongo* techniques

In stanza 1 the poet gives Thembeke the name, Nomagaxagaxa, which is an equivalent of *isikhahlelo*, a praise name. This name alludes to Thembeke's responsibility of carrying with her all the troubles of the people of her country.

The poet uses *iziduko* (clan names) to identify Thembeke with her ancestry and her family, the Sogas of the Dlomo clan. The clan names given are: *Dlomo, Zondwa, Madiba, Hala, Ndaba, Cedume and Bhomoyi*. Repetition with both initial and final linking is employed throughout the poem. Stanza 1 uses initial linking in verses 1 and 2; as well as in verses 5, 6 and 7. Initial linking is used again in stanza 4 in verses 3, 4 and 5. Through this device the poet succeeds in keeping together the units that are linked. The announcement that Thembeke is going overseas is repeated in the initial position in the two verses. The series of *iziduko* given in verses 5, 6 and 7 is held together by initial linking, thus illustrating her genealogy.

In stanza 2 the poet uses counterpoint, a technique defined by *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1990:264) as a contrasting argument, plot, idea, or literary theme, etc., used to set off the main element. The poet writes,

Hamba Thembeke ntombam!

Ujonge eMpuma bejonge eNtshona;

Wajonga kwicala lezazi!

Hamb' uzubuye kakuhle,

Nokungabuyi kusalungile

(Go Thembeke my daughter!

You look to the East while they look to the West;

You are looking on the direction of the wise!

Go and come back safely,

Even not returning is all right too).

It is through the use of this contrast that Thembeke stands out as an exceptional woman. She is even associated with the biblical wise men from the East. This association also alludes to her religious standing. She is a highly religious person.

There is extensive use of the “z” sound in stanza 4. The sibilant sound “s” is also used quite extensively in the stanza. These two sounds complement each other as continuants that depict a religious and holy situation. The mood of the stanza is prayerful, so the two sounds capture that atmosphere. Mqhayi, as can be expected, has extensive knowledge of the genealogies of people. This he demonstrates when he lists Thembeke’s clan names. He is also knowledgeable about places as he associates Thembeke with them. As *imbongi* Mqhayi knows African traditional religious systems. He commands Thembeke to tell the nations of the world that from time immemorial amaXhosa knew God and the resurrection of the dead. This extensive knowledge is expected of Mqhayi as he is *imbongi yesizwe jikelele*. The closing formula “Ncincilili!” is typical of Mqhayi. It is therefore not inappropriate to read this poem as an orally performed one. Its representation in writing came after the performance.

5.5 Mama, G. S. (1951) Indyebo KaXhosa. “AA! Nobantu! (Umongikazi Dora Ngqinza)

Ezi zibongo zenziwe ngexesha leSinodi yamaMethodi ebiseBhayi ngenyanga yeThupha 1951” pp 60-63. Johannesburg: Bona Press

1

Hoyini mabandl' akowethu!

Hoyini bant' abathengwa ngobulunga!

Hoyini ndikhululeni ndiyabizw' eBhayi!

Hoyini lusapho luka-Elefu ndinikeleni njengethole!

Bendichophe phezu kweNtab' ozuko,

Ndada ndazuz' amaphik' okuphapha ndiwel' iNxuba,

Ndisinga kumzi kaTshume noGaret bebandla likaDyan

EBhayi-ndlovu apho kufukam' ithole lesilo,

UNobantu imaz' egwangqa yomzi kaPhalo,
Imaz' emhlantla ngathi liCacadu lingen' elwandle.
Andibanga nakusel' eNxuba naxa ndandinxaniwe,
Ndifike lo mlamb' ungenamanzi,
Zonk' iimbokothwe zawo zigoqoz' ukusing' elwandle,
Koko ndiphaphe njengekonjane,
Ndibelek' eqolo uZingithwa noMlomzale,
Amabhaku oMqwashu nosapho lokuchithakala.

2

Wisan' inkom' emdaka maXhosa,
Nibhinqis' imazi yasemaTshaweni isikhaka,
Ndiboleken' inqawa bafazi bakwaPhalo,
Sinike le mazi impaku-mpakuze,
Id' itsawul' amathe ngaloo mhlantla wayo,
Iwatyhal' ixel' ukutsheka kwenkwenkwezi,
Iwaphos' elwandl' umlamb' ongahlalwa kungcola.
Yimaz' ebingafanelwa yiwatsha nencebetha,
Ikhokel' iimazi zikaKhawuta ibeth' ingqongqo;
Kuba wen' ungekalubek' unyawo eBhayi,
Uya kuhlala uphoswa zizinto,
Oko ungekayiboni le mazi ingongoz' isifuba,
Isidubula nangenqindi icudis' intlung' engaphakathi,
Ngenxa yomzi ewubon' uphalala.
Simbonile nangobusuku betheko likaTshume,

Kuloo nkundlandini yeBhotwe lokonwaba,
Wathetha koma amathunga,
UNobantu intombi yasemaGqwashini,
Zada zaphuma neentlanzi ukuza kuphula-phula.

3

Yimaz' efanelwe ukubongwa yimbongi yomnqamlezo,
Kuba yona ayiphathi zikhali njengoManisi,
Ayinayo nengubo yeenyamakazi ebelek' iziduko,
UNobantu ngumfazi wohlanga,
UMaMgqwashu ngumfazi wezizwe ngezizwe.
Bhayindini wen' unethamsanqa!
Namalung' eSinodi abonakal' exakekile,
Ngeentsuk' ezilandelayo x' umgcini-sihlalo asesihlalweni,
X' isifungis' iSinodi isith' iyavuma,
Ndaweni yokuba sithi siyavuma,
Sisuke sakhahlela, A! Nobantu!
Kub' usishiye simanxeba-nxeba.

4

Yiyo le nt' iBhayi lingafaniyo nezinye izixeko,
Esazulwini salo kukh' uNobantu,
Ubamba zime, inqwel' ingaphaphatheki,
Imke nesiko lasemzini phantsi kwengubo yempucuko,
Yiyo le nt' amadoda ahlala neentsapho zawo,
Kuba ahlonel' uNobantu umfazi wesiko lesiNtu,

Yiyo le nt' iimela zagotyw' ubukhali, kungekh' unokuphalaz' igazi lomnye,
Kub' uNobantu soloko ephakamis' ingalo yoxolo,
Neenyoka zaselugcinweni azinabuhlungu,
UNobantu uzibetha ngesithunzi zidangale.

5

Ufanele ukuba lizibuko likaMavikala,
Iggirh' elathwasa ngesilo sezulu,
Lathwasa ngoGabhaliyeli umthunywa wezulu.
Walumkeleni la maxhwel' akuloNozikhakana,
Won' aqamele ngemikhosi yamazulu.

6

Lo mlamb' uliTyhume masiwusikelele,
Lo mlamb' uthamsanqelekile kuthi baseBhayi,
Kuba kulaph' uNobantu abelola khon' iinyawo zakhe,
Kulaph' ebezibuka khona axel' uthekwane,
Esithi: "Ndimhle ngapha, ndimbi ngapha."
Uphehlelelwe kwezo ziziba zeTyhume,
Wanikw' igama elikhulu kwathiwa nguMongamelikazi.
Wayintak' elilisela yodwa iminyaka ngeminyaka,
Wee rhibilili wee ngcu eNew Brighton,
Wafukam' amaqanda njengesikhukukazi,
Namhla oku eNew Brighton phaya,
Uqandule ungaphezu kwamashumi amabini,
Abongikazi ababoph' imbedlengi zaseBhayi,

Nakubo akwaba umvundl' ungazek' indlela.

7

Ulwandle lwakwaGompo lona ndiluqumbele,
Ngokusiginyel' uNolwandle ngazo ezi ntsuku,
UMaGambu imaz' entsundu kajili,
Nank' elele kuloo mathafa aseXesi,
NoTshume mabakufukame ngomoya wezulu,
Kuba uza kutshila wedwa kule nkundla kaNtu,
Xa sel' ushiywe nguNolwandle ugxa wakho.

8

Besinibuka zintombi zikaSomgxada,
Xa benithwel' imiphand' entloko,
Nivuka kwangekhwezi njengamaqobokazana,
Niphuma kwelo chibi leDike,
Nithwel' amanz' obom' okondl' iAfrika.

9

Ndivumeleni okwanamhla ndikhe nditshaye,
Uthethile yena uNobantu lib' ikhwele,
Wawufunz' umzi kaPhalo ungaphelelwa themba'
Zonk' ezi zinto ziya kuguga njengengubo,
Ziza kudlula njengomsi,
Isale yona intliziyo isimangalela,
Ityala lingasayi kuthethwa kwiinkundla zeli lizwe,
Yinkundla yaphezulu ezisongayo zonk' iinkundla.

Zonk' eyosithethela yintliziyo ebonwe nguNobantu,

Ndiyaphinda ndithi, A! Nobantu!

Ncincilili

Hail! Nobantu!

(These praises were performed during the Methodist Church's synod in Port Elizabeth in August 1951.)

(Nurse Dora Nginza)

1

Aren't you listening to me, my fellow people!

Aren't you listening to me! You people who were acquired by neckband!

Aren't you listening to me! Release me I am being called in Port Elizabeth!

Aren't you listening to me! Family of Ayliff, sacrifice me like the lamb!

I was perched on Mount Holy,

Until I got the wings to fly and cross the Fish river,

Going to the Methodist Congregation under Tshume and Gareth

In Port Elizabeth-elephant where the monster's calf is hatching,

Nobantu the fair complexioned woman of Phalo,

The woman with a gap between the front teeth that looks like the Cacadu River entering the sea.

I could not drink from the Fish River even though I was thirsty,

I found the river without water,

Its round stones rolling down to the sea,

Instead I flew away like a swallow,

Carrying on my back Zingithwa and Mlomzale,
The great ones of the Mfengus and the family of dispersal.

2

MaXhosa slaughter a dun coloured ox,
And give the Tshawe woman its skin for a skirt,
So that we can give this woman a pipe of Phalo,
So that we can give this woman to smoke (puff-puff),
Until she spits through that gap between her front teeth,
She pushes them like a twinkling star,
And throw them into the sea a river where dirt does not stay.
She is a woman who would be smart in a traditional bangle and apron,
And lead the women of Khawuta beating the drum;
Because you who had not set foot in Port Elizabeth,
You will always miss out on things,
As long as you have not seen this woman beating her chest,
Hitting it with a fist also squeezing out the pain inside,
Because of the nation that is going astray,
We saw her on the night of Tshume's party,
At that great court of the Palace of recreation,
She talked extensively,
Nobantu the daughter of the Gqwashu clan,
The fish also came out to listen.

3

She is a woman who deserves to be praised by the praise singer of the cross,

Because she does not carry weapons like Manisi,
She also does not have an animal skin blanket with totems,
Nobantu is the wife of the nation,
MamGqwashu is the wife of various nations.
You Port Elizabeth you are fortunate!
And the members of Synod appear to be busy,
On the following days when the chairperson is on the chair,
When Synod made us take the vow saying they agree,
Instead of saying we agree
We simply saluted, A! Nobantu!
Because she left us behind in severe pain.

4

That is why Port Elizabeth does not look like other cities,
In its centre there is Nobantu,
She holds them tight, the vehicle does not run out of control,
And run away with foreign culture under the guise of civilization,
That is why men live with their families,
Because they respect Nobantu, a woman of African tradition,
That is why knives were put back into their sheaths,
With no one to spill the blood of the other,
Because Nobantu always lifts the arm of peace,
And the snakes in cages are not poisonous,
Nobantu makes them tame with her shadow.

5

She ought to be the drift of Mavikala,
A diviner who qualified by the monster of heaven,
Who qualified by Gabriel the messenger of heaven.
Beware of these herbalists of missionaries,
They rely upon the armies of heaven.

6

We must bless the Tyhume River,
This river is a blessing to us of Port Elizabeth,
Because that is where Nobantu would wash her feet,
That is where she looked at herself like the hammerhead bird,
Saying, "I am beautiful this side, I am ugly this side."
She was baptised in those deep waters of Tyhume,
And was given a great name and called President.
She became a bird that chirps alone for many years,
She stealthily perched in New Brighton,
She hatched eggs like a hen,
Even today in New Brighton there,
She trained over twenty,
Nurses who bandage the destitute of Port Elizabeth,
About them too it is wished they will take after her.

7

I am cross with the sea of East London,
For swallowing up Nolwandle on these days,
MaGambu the black woman of Jili,

There she is buried in the plains in Middledrift,
Tshume and others must also embrace you in heavenly spirit,
Because you are going to dance alone in this forecourt of Ntu,
When Nolwandle, your colleague has left you.

8

We used to appreciate looking at you girls of Somgxada,
When carrying the drums on your heads,
Waking up very early like young girls,
Having come from that lake of Alice,
Carrying the water of life to feed Africa.

9

Allow me for today to stop talking,
Nobantu has talked jealousy is bad,
She fed Phalo's children not to lose hope,
All these things will age like a blanket,
They are going to pass like smoke,
And the heart will remain behind charging us,
A case which will not be heard in the courts of this country,
It is the court above that overpowers all the courts.
All that will be to our favour is the heart that has been seen by Nobantu,
Once again I repeat and say, Hail Nobantu!

I disappear.

Analysis

5.5 AA! Nobantu! / Hail Nobantu!

5.5.1 The Informal elements

According to Baines (1994:252), Dora Nginza (neé Jacobs) was born in Cradock in 1891. She trained as a nurse at Victoria Hospital, Lovedale from May 1915 until July 1919. She was appointed as first nurse at New Brighton in Port Elizabeth on 1 November 1919. She was subsequently appointed Sister-in-Charge of New Brighton Clinic and District Nurse. She married Chief Henry Mnyaka Nginza in February 1923. Her husband Chief Nginza, whose *isikhahlelo* (praise name) was Mthunzi (interview with Mr Mntukanti Nginza of Duncan Village, East London, on 4 February 2013) was installed as representative of Paramount Chief Velile Sandile of AmaRharhabe in the Port Elizabeth urban area. When her husband died in 1943, Sister Dora Nginza served as acting representative of amaRharhabe. In a ceremony in October 1945 she was installed as Paramount Chief Archie Velile Sandile's permanent representative. In 1948 she led a deputation to the House of Parliament to interview the then Minister of Native Affairs for an improvement of the position and status of the paramount Chief of amaRharhabe and the allotment of land for the tribe.

She was a member of the Edward Memorial Congregational Church. She was President of the Midlands District of the Congregational African Women's Association. The New York Council of African Affairs gave her an award for public service. The residents of New Brighton gave her *isikhahlelo* (praise name) Aa! Nobantu! (Mother of people). She retired on pension from the position of Sister-in-Charge of the New Brighton Clinic on December 31, 1954. She retired as representative of amaRharhabe in 1963. She died on 21 June 1966.

Mama the poet was, according to *Indaba*, a Supplement to the *Daily Dispatch* (11 November 1979), a librarian and author who lived in New Brighton in Port Elizabeth. In 1950 he published a book of Xhosa poetry entitled *Amaqunube* (Blackberries) and later compiled an anthology of Xhosa poems entitled *Indyebo kaXhosa* (Xhosa Treasury of Poems). *Indaba* (16 November 1979) states further that he wrote a number of poems

for several English literary magazines such as the *South African Outlook*, *Imprint* and *New Coin*. Based on this biographical information Mama is definitely an established poet worthy of note.

The poem was composed for the Methodist Church of Southern Africa synod in Port Elizabeth. The synod was held at the church where Reverends Tshume and Garet were ministers. As if performing the poem, Mama opens by drawing the attention of the delegates at synod. He invites them to listen to him as he praises Nurse Dora Nginza.

The poet calls Nurse Nginza by her praise name, Nobantu. To illustrate her passion for work in stanza 2, verses 12, 13 and 14 the poet writes,

Oko ungekayiboni le mazi ingongoz' isifuba,

Isidubula nangenqindi icudis' intlung' engaphakathi,

Ngenxa yomzi ewubon' uphalala.

(As long as you have not seen this woman beating her chest,

Hitting it as if it has no life,

Hitting it with a fist also squeezing out the pain inside,

Because of the nation that is going astray.)

This illustrates her commitment to her profession as well as to community service. That Nurse Dora Nginza is a good speaker comes out clearly when the poet recounts how well she spoke at Reverend Tshume's function in Port Elizabeth.

The poet describes her as a fair-complexioned woman with a gap between her front teeth. That she is a highly dignified person is borne out by the proposal made by the poet for her to be praised by "*Imbongi yoMnqamlezo*" (Praise Poet of the Cross), Reverend St. Page Yako of the Methodist Church. The poet proclaims that Port Elizabeth is fortunate to have Nurse Nginza living there, because she holds onto African culture. Because of her influence everyone upholds African values. She is also an advocate of peace. While working as a nurse in Port Elizabeth, she trained many

nurses. The poet reports the death of Nolwandle, a nurse with whom she was trained in Alice. They also worked together. Mrs Nginza is now going to be alone in the profession.

She is described as a firm believer in God. She taught the people that everything is solved by God.

The poet praises Nurse Nginza for both her work as a nurse as well as her community involvement. These two aspects of Nginza's life come out clearly when, on the one hand, she is associated with people like Nolwandle who died and, on the other hand, she is praised for her community work, thus pointing to her traditional leadership role. That she holds two portfolios as represented in the poem causes tension, which helps the poet to provide arguments for both sides. The poem is a celebration of the good work done by Nurse Nginza both as a nurse as well as a community worker.

5.5.2 The formal elements

5.5.2.1 The title

The title is in the form of *isikhahlelo* (praise name) followed by an epigraph in prose establishing the setting of the poem. The poem was written in Port Elizabeth during the Synod of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. The poet salutes Nobantu; therefore the reader gets a signal that the poem is about an important person. In closing the poet once again salutes Nobantu, thus rounding off the poem with the title.

5.5.2.2 Pacing

The opening formula "*Hoyini mabandl' akowethu!*" draws the reader's attention to what is to follow after the call – in the same way as it would to an audience. Stanza 2 begins with a call for amaXhosa to slaughter a dun-coloured ox. As this is unusual, the reader is likely to wonder how the poet is going to explain this act. A dun-coloured ox is presented for *lobola* when there is blood relationship between the parties who want to marry. The dun-coloured ox is believed to end the blood relationship so that they can marry.

The statement in stanza 2, "*Uya kuhlala uphoswa zizinto*" (You will always miss out on important matters) creates suspense as to what is it one would have missed out on. As the poet recounts the event where Dora Nginza gave a talk, the reader is enticed to read on. The induction ceremony during the synod comes as a surprise to the reader, but the spontaneous response of the audience by saluting, "A! Nobantu!" is likely to further encourage the reader to read on. The salute is one of the variations in pacing in this poem.

In stanza 4 the poet reports on the influence of Dora Nginza in Port Elizabeth. The events in this regard are narrated in a cumulative order. The poet thanks the Tyhume river area, because Dora Nginza received her training as a nurse in Victoria hospital. As this part gives background to Dora Nginza, the reader's curiosity is rewarded as this information has been withheld until stanza 6. Stanza 7 marks a sudden twist in the narration. The poet reports the death of Dora Nginza's colleague Nolwandle. The reader suddenly becomes curious, wanting to know the cause of her death and what happens thereafter. The poet expresses his sadness at the death of Nolwandle, because she formed a good team with Dora Nginza and the others who trained at Victoria hospital in Alice.

The poem ends with the confirmation of what Dora Nginza has done and what she said when encouraging the Africans. The markers as identified help to control the pacing of information in the poem. The reader is encouraged to read further each time a marker give a signal. The end of this poem is encouraging, because Nobantu is acknowledged for the good work she has done.

5.5.2.3 Tone

The poem is in honour of Nurse Dora Nginza for her community work as well as for her work as a nurse. Mama praises Dora Nginza for all her contributions. He, however, curses death for taking one of Dora Nginza's colleagues, Nolwandle, MaGambu of Middledrift. The poet grieves over the fact that Dora Nginza is now going to be alone in the profession as one of her classmates has died.

5.5.2.4 Gender issues

Dora Nginza is saluted as Nobantu, a name she was given because of her role as a traditional leader when she took the position of her husband who was representative of Chief Velile Sandile in Port Elizabeth. That she is given a praise name is admirable because *isikhahlelo* (praise name) would normally be given to men. Traditional leaders who are female, however, are given *isikhahlelo*. Dora Nginza is a fearsome person in terms of her achievements. An unusual metaphor for a woman is used to describe her fearsomeness. In stanza 1 the poet writes,

EBhayi-ndlovu apho kufukam' ithole lesilo

(In Port Elizabeth where the monster's calf is hatching).

The poet refers to her as a calf of a monster. This metaphor yields a conceptual metaphor: *A woman is a fearsome animal*.

She is further described as "*imaz' egwangqa*" (a fair-complexioned woman). Referring to her as "*imazi*" affirms her being a strong woman. This epithet is used a couple of times in the poem. This serves to highlight her strength as a female leader. When she is referred to as "*imazi yasemaTshaweni*" it means she is married to the Tshawe clan. She is a highly respected wife of amaTshawe.

The reference "*imazi*" is also used for Nolwandle, Nobantu's colleague who died. This reference is used for her because she is a married woman of the Jili clan in Middledrift. This is also confirmed by her being called by her clan name, "*MaGambu*". To get Nobantu into full traditional mode, the poet asks "*abafazi bakwaPhalo*" (women of Phalo) to lend him "*inqawa*" (a pipe), which he can give to Nobantu so that she can puff on it and spit like any traditional woman. It is significant that Mama asks women to lend him the pipe. This can be interpreted to mean that Nobantu needs to learn from other women the ways of traditional women. Not only is the pipe used to associate Nobantu with tradition, but "*iwatsha*", "*incebetha*" and "*ingqongqo*" (a traditional bangle, the apron and the drum made of an ox hide) are used as well. These

items are used by traditional women; therefore once again Nobantu must look at other women for traditional practices. The need to get Nobantu in line with tradition is demanded in the following verses from stanza 3:

UNobantu ngumfazi wohlanga,

UMaMgqwashu ngumfazi wezizwe ngezizwe.

(Nobantu is the wife of the nation,

MaMgqwashu is the wife of various nations.)

According to these verses Nobantu has oversight over diverse people of her nation. She therefore needs to identify with them by practising tradition with them. If she identifies herself with them they will respect her as the poet states in stanza 4,

Kuba ahlonel' uNobantu umfazi wesiko lesiNtu

(Because they respect Nobantu, a woman of African tradition).

The reason for Nobantu being so highly respected is expressed in stanza 4 when the poet writes,

Yiyo le nt' iimela zagotyw' ubukhali,

kungekh' unokuphalaz' igazi lomnye,

Kub' uNobantu soloko ephakamis' ingalo yoxolo,

Neenyoka zaselugcinweni azinabuhlungu,

UNobantu uzibetha ngesithunzi zidangale.

(That is why knives were put back in to their sheaths,

With no one to spill the blood of the other,

Because Nobantu always lifts the arm of peace,

And the snakes in cages are not poisonous,

Nobantu makes them tame with her shadow.)

As Nobantu preaches peace, no one will dare kill. Nobantu is associated with magic, as snakes become tame as soon as her shadow falls over them. Machaba (2011:14) cites Masuku (2005), who observes that women in Zulu folktales are associated with witchcraft. Ilesanmi (1998:35), however, makes the point that in ancient Yoruba culture witchcraft is not seen as a negative system; instead it plays a positive role as political leaders, warriors, family heads, professionals, priests and priestesses sought help from witches. Nobantu is therefore associated with witchcraft to demonstrate her power over everybody as a woman. This makes her an accomplished leader.

In stanza 6 Nobantu is described as,

Wayinyak' elilisela yodwa iminyaka ngeminyaka,

(She became a bird that chirps alone for many years).

Nobantu is compared to a bird, thus evoking a conceptual metaphor: *Women are birds*.

This is a rather demeaning comparison, as it reduces the status of a woman to that of a bird.

With regards to nurses whom she mentored, the poet states "*Uqandule...*" (She has hatched...). This associates Nobantu with a hen, as it is a hen that hatches. A mother in isiXhosa is referred to as "*isikhukukazi*" (a hen), thus referring to her protective role over her children. That Nobantu has mentored more than twenty nurses is admirable. She is a mother to these nurses whom she mentored. About parenthood Opuku-Agyemang (1998:99) states that the emphasis is largely on a female's role, with the defining criterion being the biological reproduction of offspring. Nobantu has thus produced those nurses as her offsprings. What Nobantu has achieved in mentoring other nurses is not viewed negatively; instead the poet admires her for what she has achieved.

In stanza 8 the poet expresses great pride over the nurses who qualified in Alice at Victoria hospital. The whole stanza addresses these nurses with great pride. The poet addresses them as “*zintombi zikaSomgxada*” (daughters of Somgxada / Alice); with regards to their uniforms, he refers to them as “*imiphand’ entloko*” (the nurse caps directly translated as “drums on your heads”). Mama uses an expression that is used in isiXhosa to encourage young girls into action. This is used when someone sends a girl to do some work and wants her to do it quickly. In stanza 8 Mama writes,

Nivuka kwangekhwezi njengamaqobokazana

(Waking up very early like young girls).

This is drawn from “*Amaqobokazana angalala endleleni yazini alahlekile*” (Young girls do not sleep on the road; should they do that they get lost.). Young girls therefore do what they have been asked to do. Should they not do it, they get lost – something terrible will happen. Mama borrowed this expression from Mqhayi’s (1943:68) poem, *Unkosazana Minah Thembeke (Intokazi kaRhulumente Philip Soga)*. This is an apt description of Dora Nginza and her colleagues. This is the time when they were still young nurses wearing their nurse caps and working very diligently, as implied in the stanza. The poet succeeds in portraying Dora Nginza as a successful nurse as well as respected traditional leader.

5.5.2.5 Izibongo techniques

In the epigraph to the poem the poet states that “*Ezi zibongo zenziwe ...*” (These praises were performed...), thus making it clear that this poem was first performed before it was written down. The poet uses the opening and closing formulae “*Hoyini!*” and “*Ncincilili!*” respectively, thus giving a clear indication that the poem is a performance as *imbongi* will use these in his *izibongo*.

Repetition with initial linking is used in stanza 1 to draw the attention of the audience at the synod. In typical oral art tradition the poet states that he got wings to fly over the Fish River. He says he flew like a swallow. This is one of the magical events found in

izibongo and *iintsomi*, where humans assume different forms like becoming a bird, stone, a tree etc.

The imagery from the mythical world is used. About Port Elizabeth he writes,

EBhayi-ndlovu apho kufukam' ithole lesilo

(In Port Elizabeth-elephant where the calf of a monster is hatching).

The calf of the monster hatching is a mythical being that evokes fear. Nobantu is associated with this monster, hence her fearsome nature. *Imbongi* uses the image “*ithole lesilo*” to refer to the king.

Another fearsome image is the one in stanza 4 associated with Mavikala about whom the poet says,

Igqirha elathwasa ngesilo sezulu

(A diviner who qualified by the monster of heaven).

This image used on Mavikala is fearsome. The poem about Nobantu is made more fearsome by images like this one as well. It is highly commendable for Mama to use the same images for Nobantu as he would have used for a king. The use of these images shows that Mama recognises her position as a representative of Chief Velile Sandile.

Piling is used extensively in the poem. In stanza one the poet has a series of events in the following verses thus using piling,

Andibanga nakusel' eNxuba naxa ndandinxaniwe,

Ndifike lo mlamb' ungenamanzi,

Zonk' iimbokothwe zawo zigoqoz' ukusing' elwandle,

Koko ndiphaphe njengenkonzane,

Ndibelek' eqolo uZingithwa noMlomzale,

Amabhaku oMqwashu nosapho lokuchithakala.

(I could not drink from the Fish River even though I was thirsty,

I found the river without water,

Its round stones rolling down to the sea,

Instead I flew away like a swallow,

Carrying on my back Zingithwa and Mlomzale,

The great ones of the Mfengus and the family of dispersal.)

The events in these verses add up and lead to the climax where the poet carries Zingithwa and Mlomzale on his back. The manner in which the events are ordered attracts the interest of the audience to listen to the performance, but in the case of the written version it encourages reading further.

Nobantu is associated with religious leaders, because she advocates peace among the people. Because of her pacifist position, the poet recommends that she deserves to be praised,

...yimbongi yomnqamlezo,

Kuba yona ayiphathi zikhali njengoManisi

(...by the praise poet of the cross

Because he does not carry weapons like Manisi).

Imbongi yomnqamlezo is Reverend St Page Yako of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. He wrote poetry about church matters. Yali-Manisi is *imbongi* from Lady Frere. As part of the attire of *imbongi* Yali-Manisi would carry a stick and or a spear. These are weapons of war, which Nobantu does not support. This is what is implied in the call for Nobantu to be praised by St Page Yako. Hyperbole is another technique used extensively in this poem to represent certain aspects of Nobantu's features and

character. In stanza 2 the poet describes the gap between Nobantu's front teeth. He writes,

*Id' itsawul' amathe ngaloo mhlantla wayo,
Iwatyhal' ixel' ukutsheka kwenkwenkwezi,
Iwaphos' elwandl' umlamb' ongahlalwa kungcola.*

(Until she spits through that gap between her front teeth,
She pushes them like a twinkling star,
And throw them into the sea a river where dirt does not stay.)

The extent of the spit is such that it would even get into the sea. This symbolises the dirt Nobantu would spit away into the sea for it to be washed away. When describing how she felt about the situation of the people the poet writes,

*Oko ungekayiboni le mazi ingongoz' isifuba,
Isidubula nangenqindi icudis' intlung' engaphakathi*

(As long as you have not seen this woman beating her chest,
Hitting it with a fist also squeezing out the pain inside).

This explains the pain she would feel about her people. She would hit her chest as if she wanted to get the pain out of it. When she gave a talk at the function in honour of Tshume, the poet writes in a humorous manner in stanza 2,

*Wathetha koma amathunga
UNobantu intombi yasemaGqwashini,
Zada zaphuma neentlanzi ukuza kuphula-phula.*

(She talked extensively,
Nobantu the daughter of the Gqwashu clan,

The fish also came out to listen.)

The exaggeration in these verses is intended to highlight how well Nobantu could talk. For the fish to come out of the water and listen is an indication that this is an excellent speaker.

Hyperbole is a device used in this poem to advance the reputation of Nobantu. The poet succeeds in doing this as the exaggeration used in these verses draws more attention on Nobantu.

The poet uses idiophones in the poem to describe how Nobantu moved to Port Elizabeth. In stanza 6 the way she came to New Brighton is described as follows:

Wee rhibilili wee ngcu eNew Brighton

(She stealthily perched in New Brighton).

The idiophones “*rhibilili*” and “*ngcu*” paint a vivid image of Nobantu landing in New Brighton like a bird would land and perch. In stanza 7 the poet uses the liquid [l] sound to capture the mood of mourning as the poet mourns the death of Nolwandle of Middledrift. The [l] sound dominates the stanza as it serves to calm the emotions of the people as well.

Stanza 7 constitutes a digression also. The poem is about Nobantu, but suddenly the poet draws in the death of Nolwandle. As the praises of Nobantu are in celebration of her achievements, death seems to be an intruder, hence the digression in *izibongo*. This happens when *imbongi* notices that he is losing the attention of the audience and therefore decides on an episode away from the subject that he is dealing with. In this way he draws the attention of the audience and once they are back, he continues with his subject.

Stanza 8 uses the [z] sound quite extensively. The main image in this stanza is of heaven “*izulu*”, hence the dominant sound [z] as it resonates throughout the poem

and creates a peaceful mood in the poem. The poet is highly commended for his excellent manipulation of sounds in this poem.

5.6 Conclusion

The three poems selected from *Inzuzo* by SEK Mqhayi are characterised by each one of the titles being followed by an epigraph in prose. The poems, *Umka John Knox Bhokhwe* and *Unkosazana Minah Thembeka* feature biblical texts relevant to the poem in their epigraphs. The poem *Umka John Knox Bhokhwe* has an epigraph providing information about John Knox Bhokhwe, the husband. The stanza that follows is about John Knox Bhokhwe, after which there is prose text, which is an epigraph to the poem about Mrs Bhokhwe. The poem by GS Mama entitled *A! Nobantu!* also has a subtitle in prose. This subtitle provides the setting to the poem. Mqhayi in the prose epigraphs provides biographical information and background to the subject of the poem.

The biblical text in the poem "*Umka John Knox Bhokhwe*" is used as a refrain throughout the poem. As the text is repeated, the importance of Mrs Bhokhwe is given prominence. Her role in the church is echoed through this refrain drawn from the Bible.

The four poems are praises to the women subjects. Maya Khoboka is praised for her role in education at Lovedale Institute; Mrs Bhokhwe is praised for her role as a leader in the Presbyterian Church; Miss Minah Thembeka is praised for her role in church as a delegate to a conference in Madras; and Sister Dora Nginza is praised both as a nurse as well as a traditional leader in the urban area of Port Elizabeth.

The four poems selected for this chapter are *izibongo*, even though they are written down. Mqhayi uses the prose texts to introduce his poems. At the end of the prose epigraph Mqhayi uses the phrases "*Ngakho oko,*" (Therefore) and "*Nakuye ndibeka ilitye elimhlophe ndisithi...*" (To her I also pay tribute saying...). The poem by Mama about Sister Dora Nginza is also preceded by a prose text that indicates that the poem was performed. These expressions together with the usual *izibongo* opening and closing formulae give a clear indication of the type of poem these are.

The poets praise their subjects for patriotism. The images they use are similar to those used for male heroes. These are such images as *“ingqanga”* (the great one), *“ithole lesilo”* (the calf of a monster), and *“umthi womngxam”* (the tree of life). The namings (*izikhahlelo*) given to the women are similar to the ones that would be given to male heroes. There are, however, images that the poets select which are designed for women. Some of the images are *“imfecanekazi”* (a great woman leader), *“yee bhuu amabele...”* (She set foot / Direct translation: she spread her breasts). The association of the women with witchcraft is designed to portray them as evil, but both Mqhayi and Mama succeed in using this image to illustrate the highly unimaginable role the woman plays. This refers to the roles they perform which are normally impossible for humans. They are therefore represented as being superhuman.

Mqhayi represents death as bad, but also represents it as a journey as well as a promotion in secular terms. The earth is owned by the Devil and therefore a bad place to be at. Death takes one to a better place. Mqhayi’s poetry is heavily influenced by the Bible, hence his views about death.

Pacing is well controlled by the two poets in the selected poems. Each poem has definite markers that contribute to pacing. Of great significance is the use of digression by both Mqhayi and Mama. It is through digression that the poets succeed in drawing the reader’s attention to the events in the poem. Another device both poets use successfully is sound. Different sounds are used by both Mqhayi and Mama to mark a certain phase in the progression of events in the poem. The sounds that have been used to capture a certain mood are [l], [s] and [z]. The mood that has been represented by these sounds is when there is sadness as well as when there is a calm movement.

Women are associated with water, flowers and birds. There are metaphors that associate women with fearsome animals as well. These are derived from the conceptual metaphors identified in the poems. As can be expected of *imbongi*, Mqhayi uses social commentary when giving Minah Thembeke the charge to go and tell the nations of the world that Africans have always known God. He is addressing the myth

that Africans were nonbelievers until the colonialists came to Africa. It is a great acknowledgement of the integrity of Minah Thembeke for her to have to carry this message to the conference on behalf of all Africans. She is an ambassador of Africa.

Maya Khoboka is address as "*anti*" by everybody and Mrs Bhokhwe is referred as "*mama*" in the poem. Both women characters are portrayed as mothers to amaXhosa. This is one of the distinguishing features of women in Shona culture, as identified by Chimwundu (1995:155). Mrs Bhokhwe is represented as John Knox Bhokhwe's wife, as the poet writes "*umfazi wendoda*" (The wife of a man). Throughout the poem she does not come out strongly as an individual. She is described in relation to her husband, who is an accomplished leader. Mama succeeds fully to represent Sister Dora Nginza as a both a nurse and a traditional leader. He represents her as both a community leader as well as a leader who advocates peace. She is a highly respected woman.

The poems selected for this chapter use both modern and *izibongo* techniques in representing women. All the techniques identified are used significantly in the poems. Save for the concerns raised, women are represented in these poems without any bias on the whole.

Chapter 6: General Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This study set out to examine how women are represented in isiXhosa poetry and it explores the modern poetry techniques as well as praise poetry techniques employed in this form of poetry in isiXhosa. In the study 'praise' has been regarded as referring to all the statements and remarks that are made about women in written poetry, in accordance with *izibongo* practice.

6.2 Summary comments on poetry about women

Chapter 2 of the thesis presented an overview of some theories of modern and praise poetry. An overview of selected African literature on gender is also provided in this chapter. The theoretical background provided in this chapter provides a sound basis for the analysis of the selected poems. The poets whose works have been analysed are Mqgweto (1922), Mqhayi (1943), Mama (1951), Jolobe (1959), Burns-Ncamashe (1961), Yali-Manisi (1980), Ndlazulwana (1986), Ramncwana (1995), Mahlaba (2002), Mpola (2008) and Ngqongqwana (2008). The selection, as already declared in Chapter 1, was informed by both the quality of the poem as well as the standing of the poet in terms of being an established poet. The selected poets represent a whole range of eras in the publication of isiXhosa poetry, ranging from the time of the South African Land Act of 1913 to the post-apartheid period. The authors were selected because they had written about women. There is a very limited amount of poetry about women. Of much greater concern is the observation that there are very few women poets.

From the selected poems Jolobe stands above everyone in the use of modern poetry conventions. His satirical poem, "*UNojaji*", both in its form and content, is an excellent piece of imaginative writing by an author who is conscious of the design of poetry. The greatest strength of this poem lies not only in its humorous nature, but in the fact that it is a satire against both men and women. This is a sign that Jolobe can be used as a model of fairness when it comes to gender equality. His poetry can be used as a model when writing about women. In terms of pacing, Jolobe uses the narrative technique

similar to a folktale's, thus enticing the reader to want to read the poem further. What stimulates the reader most is the suspense that is built around the story.

Pacing is a technique that is used by the selected poets very successfully. The devices they use include the opening formula that draws the reader into the poem. This device is in prose form in the poems by Mqhayi. In the body of the poem certain definite markers that stimulate the reader to read on are placed at definite points in order to engage the reader's energy to read on.

The refrain is used extensively to facilitate pacing. The use of a biblical text for the refrain is very significant, especially in an elegy. Yali-Manisi uses a refrain in an unusual but innovative way as he engages it at the end of each canto in his elegy. The division of his elegy into cantos is itself amazing for isiXhosa poetry, which is at its developmental stage. Yali-Manisi also experiments with rhyme and alliteration – poetic devices that do not correspond with those of a tone language like isiXhosa. Yali-Manisi also imitates S.E.K. Mqhayi in his poetry. This is a great strength of his poetry. The tribute to Chieftainess Nozizwe Sigcawu resembles Mqhayi's elegies especially with regards to use of the preface, imagery and biblical allusions.

In as far as new forms of poetry in isiXhosa are concerned, S.E.K. Mqhayi and S. Ramncwana have produced a ballad. Mqhayi's ballad is dedicated to Maya Khoboka of Lovedale and Ramncwana dedicates his ballad to Sylvia, his love whom he met in Alice. Even though the periods during which these poems were written are vastly different (1943 and 1995), it is significant that both ballads are dedicated to females in Alice.

The poems by Mgqweto, Mqhayi, Yali-Manisi, Mama and Ngqongqwana are clearly in *izibongo* tradition. With the exception of Mgqweto, Yali-Manisi, Mama and Ngqongqwana imitate Mqhayi. Ngqongqwana is, however, more influenced by modern poetry conventions. In his poem entitled "*Le nt' intombi*" Ncamashe adopts the formal modern poetic style but embraces oral art techniques like piling. Piling unfolds nicely in this poem as he uses the framework of a folktale entitled *Ixhegokazi nepeni egoso* (The old woman and a penny that was bent). This framework used with the biblical text

from Timothy 1: 3 gives dignity and authenticity to the whole poem. As the folktale used as a basis is popular among young children, this poem is likely to have an appeal among young readers.

On the whole most of the poets who are inclined towards *izibongo* use the Bible as a basis, thus pointing to the time when they wrote. They wrote at the time when publishers were missionaries and therefore they had to please them by assisting them in converting the unconverted. The greater number of poets in this selection give full acknowledgement to women in their poems. Mqhayi, Yali-Manisi, Mama and Ngqongqwana are the poets who praise the women heroes using very lofty images that they would also use for male heroes. The poetry portrays women as mothers, as beautiful and as heroes. Mqhayi, however, describes Mrs Bhokhwe as living under the shadow of her successful husband, John Knox Bhokhwe. Burns-Ncamashe views women as men's property as they can generate income for them in the form of *lobola* cattle.

Women in traditional leadership positions, such as Nozizwe Sigcawu and Dora Nginza, are represented as great heroes who have taken after their heroic husbands. To illustrate this association the poet links them with their marriage families. Nozizwe Sigcawu is associated with the Tshawe clan; the same applies to Dora Nginza, and she is also associated with her marriage family who are also amaTshawe. This is done through naming, a technique which Gunner and Gwala (1994:2) say gives significance and substance to the person being named. The conceptual metaphors that unfold from these poems are the following: women are animals; women are flowers; women are water; and women are witches. Each one of these metaphors describes women in a positive way. The metaphor about witchcraft, for instance, alludes to the fact that a woman is capable of doing what is impossible for other people to do.

Culture is a strong influence in gender relations. Mpola (2008) cites what her mother told them about being a good mother. She told them that because she came from a polygamous family she knows how to welcome and look after many people in her

household. This is a case where culture is manipulated to get conformity, as Kolawole (1998:11) observes. Kolawole (1998:27) thus makes a proposal which states,

For culture to be meaningful, it needs to be interrogated, sieved and explored to make an otherwise alien concept indigenous and meaningful to the ordinary African woman.

Of the selected poets Ndlazulwana is the lone voice of protest against nonrecognition and bias against women. She maintains that women should be acknowledged for what they have achieved and what they can do. Mahlaba, on the other hand, confirms the control a woman has over her destiny. The fact that she recommends that a woman should demand her virginity back before she divorces her man is a demonstration of the power a woman has through her virginity. This view is shared by Ilesanmi (1998:31), who states that women are highly regarded in Yoruba culture because of their special power. That is why in Yoruba culture the people pay homage to women.

Mgqweto excels in her poem in honour of her mother. She uses both modern and *Izibongo* techniques in portraying her mother as a mother “*mhamha*” to all in Ngojini in the Hewu district. She pays tribute to her mother in true Mothers’ Union tradition. This is a poem that makes effective use of all the poetic devices selected for the poem.

Mama succeeds in the poems about Mrs Ballinger and Sister Dora Nginza. Both women are advocates of peace. Mrs Ballinger is even more interesting because of the expression of patriotism, “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*” (It is sweet and fitting to die for one’s fatherland) by which English people used to live. The social commentary that Mama makes about England letting Africa down at times reveals his *imbongi* status. This is what Mqhayi also does in the poem “*Unkosazana Minah Thembeke*” when she goes overseas. He commands her to tell the nations of the world that Africans have always known God. It is encouraging for poets to engage women in national service as these two poets are suggesting through social commentary. Sister Nginza is represented successfully both as a nurse and a traditional leader. She is also associated with her colleagues from the nursing profession.

It is encouraging to observe that international exposure and living in an urban area is likely to have positive influence on a leader, as evidenced in the competence of Mrs Charlotte Maxeke, Mrs Ballinger, Nosimo and Sister Nginza. These women have had overseas and urban area exposure in one way or another. Their success is likely to be influenced by that exposure, especially in politics.

6.3 Conclusion

With the exception of some negative comments against women, on the whole the poems selected for this study show full recognition of women as achievers. In writing about women, the poets selected use the most appropriate and effective images. This study, in spite of its limitations in terms of data for analysis, may respond to the concern raised by Vilakazi (1945:46), when he alludes to the nonrecognition of women in Nguni literature because they are believed to play no active role in society. The observations made above concerning poetry about women counter the view that women are seen as playing no active role in society. What is patently clear from this study is that there is a need to develop and produce more isiXhosa poetry about women. As observed in this study, both men and women can write about women. In this way more research can be undertaken on poetry about women. Anyone writing about women has both modern and *izibongo* techniques to draw from.

State initiatives like the Eastern Cape's Department of Sport Arts and Culture "*Nawe Unakho*", among others, can be revived. With more training in creative writing, more poetry about women will be produced. In this way woman's achievements will be acknowledged. A recommendation made by Neethling (1991:86) for more feminist studies in African languages will contribute towards more well-written poetry about women in these languages. The results of these investigations will not only help to further emancipate women, but will also contribute immensely towards the development of literature in African languages.

REFERENCES

Literary texts

Bennie, W.G. (ed.) 1957. **The Stewart Xhosa Readers: Standard 1**. Alice: The Lovedale Press.

Burns-Ncamashe, S.M.1961. **Masibaliselane**. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Jadezweni, M. (Compiler and author) .2008. **Umdiliya Wesihobe**. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

Jolobe, J.J.R. (1959). **Ilitha**. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Mama, G. S. 1951. **Indyebo KaXhosa**. Johannesburg: Bona Press

Moropa, K. (ed.) 1995. **Nambitha Isihobe**. Pretoria: Kagiso Publishers

Mqhayi S.E.K. 1943. **Inzuzo**. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press

Mtuzo, P.T. and Satyo, S.C. 1986. **Uyavuth' umlilo**. Pretoria: Acacia

Nawe Unakho / Le Wena O Ka Kgona/ You Too Can / U Kan Ook. 2002. Bhishe: Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture

Ndlazulwana, T.N.1986. **lingxangxasi**. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman

Opland, J. (Editor and Translator) 2007. **The Nation's Bounty – The Xhosa Poetry of Nontsizi Mgqwetho**. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Interviews

Mrs MaMpinga (Vakele) Jadezweni on February 12, 2013.

Chief Xhanti Sigcawu on February 13, 2013.

Ms Noluthando Zweni February 14, 2013.

Mr Mntukanti Nginza February 4 , 2013

Theoretical Works

- Abrams, M.H. 1999. **A glossary of Literary Terms** (Seventh Edition). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Allen, R.E., Fowler, H.W. and Fowler, F.G. (eds) 1990. **The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English**. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Baker, P. 1996. **Onward: Contemporary poetry and poetics**. London: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Beckson, K. and Ganz, A. 1960. **Literary Terms: A Dictionary** (Third Edition). New York: Noonday Press.
- Bergvall, V.L. et al. (eds.). 1996. **Rethinking Language and Gender Research: Theory and Practice**. London: Longman.
- Bloom, H. 1997. **The anxiety of influence - a theory of poetry**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Boulton, M. (1953). **The Anatomy of Poetry**. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Brooks, C. and Warren, R.P. 1960. **Understanding Poetry**. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Brown, D. 1998. **Voicing the text: South African Oral Poetry and Performance**. Cape Town: Oxford University Press
- Butler, J. 1993. **Bodies that Matter - on the discursive limits of sex**. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. 1990. **Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity**. New York: Routledge.

Chimhundu, H. 1995. Sexuality and Socialisation in Shona Praises and Lyrics. Furniss, G. and Gunner, L. (eds). 1995. **Power, Marginality and African Oral Literature**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 147-161.

Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary. 1990. London: Collins.

Coombes, H. 1953. **Literature and Criticism**. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin.

Cope, T. 1968. **Izibongo: Zulu praise poems**. London: Clarendon Press.

Cox, C.B. and Dyson, A.T. 1965. **The Practical Criticism of Poetry: a textbook**. London: Arnold.

Cuddon, J.A. (ed) 1998. **A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory** (Fourth Edition) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Deutsch, B. 1974. **Poetry Handbook: A Dictionary of Terms**. (Fourth Edition). New York: Funk & Wagnalls.

Dobyns, S. 1996. **Best words, best order**. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Ferry, A. 1996. **The Title to the Poem**. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Foley, J.M. 1988. **The Theory of Oral Composition - history and methodology**. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Fry, P.H. 1995. **A defence of poetry - reflections on the occasion of writing**. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Furniss, G. and Gunner, L. (Eds). 1995. **Power, Marginality and African Oral Literature**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gibbons, T. 1979. **Literature and Awareness – An Introduction to the Close Reading of Prose and Verse**. London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) LTD.

Groenewald, P.S. 2001. *Tradition and Reconstruction: The Culture play in Zulu*. **South African Journal of African Languages**, Volume 21. Number 1. pp.33-44.

Gunner, Liz, 1995. Clashes of Interest: gender, status and power in Zulu praise poetry.
Furniss, G. and Gunner, L. (Eds). 1995. **Power, Marginality and African Oral Literature**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 185-196

Gunner, Liz and Gwala, M. (Translators and Editors) 1991. **Musho – Zulu Popular Praises**. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Heese, M. and Lawton, R. 1968. **The owl Critic: An Introduction to Literary Criticism**. Cape Town: Nasou.

1988. **The New Owl Critic: An introduction to Literary criticism**. Cape Town: Nasou.

Hermanson, E. 1995. **Metaphor in Zulu: Problems in the Translation of Biblical Metaphor in the Book of Amos**. Unpublished DLitt Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.

Hollander, J. 1997. **The work of poetry**. Columbia: Columbia University Press.

Holy Bible, New King James Version.1982. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers

Hoza, M.C. 2009. **The Woman's Voice in Selected IsiXhosa Literary Works**. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Fort Hare, Alice.

Ilesanmi, T.M. 1998. *The Significance of the Myths of Women in Socio-Political Role Sharing Among Yoruba People*. In: Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed) **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers pp 29 - 43.

Incwadi yeZibhalo eziNgcwele – IzezeTestamente endala nezeTestamente entsha 9th Edition .1975.

Incwadi yoMbhesho kunye neminye imiBhedesho naMaculo emiselwe iBandla lamaWesile aseSouth Africa. 1926. Cape Town: Methodist Depot and Publishing House.

Indaba, Supplement to the **Daily Dispatch**; November 16, 1979.

Jadezweni, M.W. 2000. *The inauguration of President Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994: The dawn of a new era in Xhosa praise poetry*. **Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies** .2000.**Volume 11, no 2**. pp 55-66.

Johnson-Laird, P.N. and Oatley, K. 1992. Basic Emotions, Rationality, and Folk Theory. **Cognition and Emotion**. Volume 6. ¾, pp. 201-223.

Jordan, A.C. 1957. **Towards an African Literature: The emergence of Literary Form in Xhosa**. Berkeley: University of California.

Junod, H.P. and Jaques, A.A. 1957. **Vuthlari Bya Vatsonga (Machangana) /The Wisdom of the Tsonga – Shangan People**. Cleveland: The Central Mission Press

Kaschula, R.H. 1991. The Role of the Xhosa Praise Poet in Contemporary South African Society. **South African Journal of African Languages**, Volume 11, Issue 2, pp. 47-54.

(Ed) 2001. **African Oral Literature** - functions in contemporary contents. Cape Town: New Africa Books (Pty) Ltd

2002. **The Bones of the Ancestors are Shaking** – Xhosa Oral Poetry in Context. Cape Town: Juta & Co. Ltd.

Kaschula, R.H. and Diop, S. 2000. Political Processes and the Role of the Imbongi and Griot in Africa. **South African Journal of African Languages**, Volume 20, Number 1, pp13-28.

Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed) 1998. **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers.

Kövecses, Z. 2010. **Metaphor: a practical introduction**. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kropf, A. 1915. **Kafir=English Dictionary**

South Africa: Lovedale Mission Press

Kuse, W.F. 1978. **The Form and Themes of Mqhayi's Poetry and Prose**. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Kwatsha, L.L. 2009. *Some Aspects of Gender Inequality in Selected African Literary Texts*. **Literator**. Volume 30 Number 2, pp 127-156.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. 1980. **Metaphors we live by**. Chicago Ill: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. 1998. **Philosophy in the flesh**. New York: Basic Books.

Lakoff, G. and Turner M. 1989. **More than cool reason: a field guide to poetic metaphor**. Chicago Ill: University of Chicago Press.

Lennard, J. 2005. **The Poetry handbook: A Guide to Reading Poetry for Pleasure and Practical Criticism**. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lesoro, E.A.S.L. 1989. **End-Rhyme as a device in Southern Sotho Poetry: a comparative enquiry**. Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Orange Free State, Bloemfontein.

Lipman, M. and Sharp, A.M. 1980. **Writing: How and Why**. New Jersey: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children.

Lockett Cecily.1993. **Stranger in Your Midst – A Study of Women's Poetry in English**. Durban: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Natal.

Lord, A.B. 1960.**The Singer of Tales**. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Maake, N.P. 1994. **Trends in the Formalist Criticism of "Western" Poetry and "African" Oral Poetry: A Comparative Analysis of selected Case Studies**. Unpublished D.Litt et Phil Dissertation, UNISA, Pretoria.

- Machaba, R.L. 2011. **The Portrayal of Women in XiTsonga Literature with Special Reference to Novels, Poems and Proverbs.** Unpublished PhD thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Mafeje, A. 1967. *The Role of the Bard in a Contemporary Community.* **Journal of African Languages.** Volume 6, Part 3. pp 193-223.
- Matterson, S. and Jones, D. 2000. **Studying Poetry.** London: Arnold
- Milestone, K. and Meyer, A. 2012. **Gender and Popular Culture.** Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Mncube, F.S.M. 1957. **Xhosa Manual.** Cape Town: Juta & Company LTD.
- Mokitimi, M.I. 1998. **Lifela tsa litsamaea-naha poetry: a literary analysis.** Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mona, G.V. 1994. **Ideology, Hegemony and Xhosa Written Poetry, 1948-1990.** Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Mtuze, P.T. 1990. **A Feminist Critique of the Image of Woman in the Prose Works of Selected Xhosa Writers (1990-1980).** Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cape Town.
- Neethling, S.J. 1991. *Eating Forbidden Fruit in a Xhosa Narrative.* **South African Journal of African Languages,** Volume 11, Number 3, pp 83-87.
2001. Praising the Graduates: The Repeated Phrase in Xhosa Oral Poetry. **South African Journal of African Languages,** Volume 21, Number 4, pp203-210.
- Ntuli, D.B.Z. 1984. **The Poetry of B.W. Vilakazi.** Pretoria: JL Van Schaik.
- Okpewho, I. 1992. **African Oral Literature - Backgrounds, Character and Continuity.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Oliver, M. 1994. **A Poetry Handbook**. London: Harvest Books.
- Opefeyitimi, A. 1998. Myths and Women of Power in Yoruba Orature. Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed) 1998. **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers. Pp. 45-61.
- Opland, J. 1983. **Xhosa oral poetry: aspects of a black S.A. tradition**. Johannesburg: Ravan.
1998. **Xhosa poets and poetry**. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.
2005. **The Dassie and the Hunter – A South African Meeting**. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Opuku-Agyemang, N.J. 1998. *Gender-Role Perception in the Akan Folktale*. In: Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed) **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers pp 83- 120.
- Pilkington, A. 2000. **Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective**. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin's Publishing Company.
- Preminger, A. (ed.) 1974. **Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics**. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Preminger, A. and Brogan, T.V.F.(eds) 1993. **The New Princeton Encyclopedia of poetry and Poetics**. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Qangule, Z.S. 1979. **A Study of Theme and Technique in the Creative Works of S.E.K.L.N. Mqhayi**. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.
- Reaske, C.R. **How to Analyze Poetry**. London: Monarch
- Riccio, O.M. 1980. **The Intimate Art of Writing Poetry**. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

- Richards, I.A. 1929. **Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement.** London: Routledge.
- Ruse, C. and Hopton, M. 1992. **The Cassell Dictionary of Literary and Language Terms.** London: Cassell.
- Rycroft, D.K. and Ngcobo, A.B. (Eds.). 1988. **The praises of Dingana: Izibongo zikaDingana.** Durban: University of Natal Press.
- Saty, N.P. 2001. **Women in Xhosa Drama: Dramatic and Cultural Perspectives.** Unpublished DLitt. Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.
- Schapera, I. 1965. **Praise Poems of Tswana Chiefs.** Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shipley, J.T. 1970. **Dictionary of World Literary Terms.** Boston: The Writer, Inc. Publishers.
- Sirayi, G.T. 1985. **A Study of Some Aspects of J.J.R. Jolobe's Poetry.** Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Fort Hare, Alice.
- Sirayi, G.T and Peters, M.A. 1992. **IBhibliyografi yoLwimi olusisiXhosa ukuya kutsho kunyaka we-1990 / Bibliography of the Xhosa Language.** Pretoria: State library
- Strauss, P. 1993. **Talking Poetry.** Cape Town: David Philip.
- Stuart, J. 1949. **Zulu Proverbs and Popular Sayings: with translations.** Durban: Griggs.
- The Chambers' Dictionary.** 1998. London: Chambers.
- The Concise Oxford Dictionary.** 1959. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- The Encyclopedia Africana. Dictionary of African Biography.** 1995. Volume 3: South Africa – Botswana. Lesotho-Swaziland.
- The World Book Encyclopedia.** 1994. London: World Book Inc.

- Turner, N. 1999. *Representations of Masculinity in the Contemporary Oral Praise Poetry of Zulu men*. **South African Journal of African Languages**, Volume 19, Number 3, pp 196-203.
- Van Zyl, W. 1992. "Titel in die Gedig" In: Cloete, T.T. (ed). *Literere Terme en Teoriee* pp 535-536
Pretoria: HAUM-Literer.
- Vilakazi, B.W. 1946. **The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni**. Unpublished D.Litt dissertation,
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
- Ward, A.C. 1981. **Longman Companion of Twentieth Century Literature** (Third Edition). London: Longman.
- Wainwright, A.T. 1987. **The Relationship between Praise Poetry and Poetry in Zulu and Xhosa**. Unpublished DLitt et Phil Dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Wynchank, Anny. 1998. "The Sons Who Sell Their Mothers" and "The Devouring Calabash": Two Recurring Gender Myths in Western and Southern African Tales. Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed) 1998. **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers. Pp. 121-130.
- Yusuf, Y.K. 1998. Gender Bias and Images of Women in English and Yoruba Proverbs: A Cross-Cultural Approach. Kolawole, M.E.M. (ed.) 1998. **Gender perceptions and Development in Africa – A Socio-Cultural Approach**. Lagos: Arrabon Academic Publishers. Pp. 63-81.

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/margaret-ballinger> (opened on 4.2.2013)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dulce_et_decorum_est_pro_patria (opened on February 4, 2013)

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/siziwe-nosimo-balindlela> (opened on February 8, 2013)