

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. DEVELOPMENT OF SWATI POETRY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This work will investigate the development of Swati poetry in the Republic of South Africa and Swaziland. In the study of African Literature, many thinkers consider Swati poetry as an art that is considerably new and young. They consider it as a work of art that emerged in the early sixties when Swati was introduced in all schools in Swaziland, while others associate it with the advent of the former KaNgwane Homeland which came into being in 1977.

Although one would partially agree with the above ideas, it must not be forgotten that Traditional Swati Poetry was there long before Swati could be written.

To cite a living example, the following extract from the poem “Sobhuza 1 (Somhlolo)”, extracted from “Tibongo TemaKhosi aKaNgwane” by Matsebula is given below.

**Sobhuza kuletindze tintsaba,  
Ungumasibekela ngobe imitana  
Nemiti angayisibekela  
Mahlasela ngesandvo kaSibhunyanane  
Lesikhandze Mahlanya  
Asikamkhandzi simphiciketile,  
Sihlangu cwatimula ngetulu kweliDlomodlomo  
Lapho wakhandza bafati bebeSutfu  
Babili, batsatfu  
Lomunye abendlebe tikhanya lilanga  
Lomunye abendlebe tishaya entsanyeni  
Lomunye andlebe limphece.  
Base bayakubuta batsi:  
“Uyaphi yeSobhuza?”  
watsi: “Ngiya lapho bantfu bangafi,  
Babulawa kuguga nekuluphala!”**

(Sobhuza is taller than high mountains,

He is a protector, because small  
 And big kraals he can protect,  
 Invader with a hammer at Sibhunyané  
 Who found Mahlanya  
 He did not find and kill him  
 He did not beat but folded him,  
 Assegai, shine above Dlomodlomo  
 Where you found two or three Sotho women,  
 One was white  
 One had ears tapering to the neck  
 One had flat ears.  
 They asked him:  
 “Sobhuza, where are you off to?”  
 He said: “I am going where people do not die,  
 But they are killed by old age.”)

(Matsebula, 1990:3)

The above extracts depict a certain epoch in the history of the development of poetry in Swati, namely the period long before it was prepared to be learned in schools.

## **1.2 HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SWATI AS A WRITTEN LANGUAGE**

According to Taljaard (1991:1) the standardisation of the orthography of Swati has a relatively short history, even though the first written Swati was published as far back as 1846 when the Reverend James Allison at Shiselweni produced a booklet of 118 printed pages with the title *Tenkatekise mi ta la Bawesley Metodisti*. Thereafter, nothing was done to develop the language until in 1968 when it was introduced for the first time in all schools in Swaziland. In the Republic of South Africa, including the former KaNgwane Homeland, Zulu was the medium of instruction for Swati pupils albeit Swati was spoken at home.

When the former KaNgwane Homeland came into being in 1977, conditions became feasible for Swati to be written in the Republic of South Africa. In 1978 it was introduced in the lower classes. Zulu had to be phased out gradually.

For the first time a few Swati books appeared in KaNgwane, amongst them poetry books. Many of them were devoid of poetic language. **Liqoqo Letinkondlo** – written by J.S.M. Matsebula – emerged. Shuter and Shooter published it in 1978.

This anthology contains 58 translated poems from Zulu. There was, however, retardation in the development of this language from 1981-1984 when the then South African Government wanted to unite the former KaNgwane Homeland with Swaziland. Swati people in the Republic of South Africa became reluctant to write in Swati as they associated the Swati language with incorporation. Therefore, the development of Swati literature had to be delayed as well. The Swati literature was revived rapidly after the issue of incorporation was resolved in 1984.

The Swati Language Board encouraged authors to write books in Swati. Such books were screened and proofread by this Board. The Board for prescription recommended literature that satisfied the required standards.

### **1.3 WHERE THE LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN**

Swati is spoken in the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa.

Van Wyk (1966:37) distinguishes four variant forms of Swati namely:

#### **Central Swati**

This is spoken in the Central and Western parts of Swaziland.

#### **Eastern Swati**

This is spoken in the Eastern parts of Swaziland.

#### **Northern Swati**

This is spoken in the districts of Nelspruit, Barberton, White River, Lydenburg and Dullstroom.

Van Wyk (1966:36) states that Tsonga and Sotho influence this variant form.

### Southern Swati

It is spoken in the southern parts of Swaziland and is influenced by Zulu.

It is, however, very essential that such variant forms be mentioned in the introduction because the development of Swati poetry cannot be divorced from them. The different Swati poets emanate from the areas mentioned above and thus a non-standard language (Swati) is a characteristic of their artistic work. To exemplify this defect, the following extract is examined:

**Lapho umuntfu eselusizini,  
Ekhuluma ngenhlitiyo,  
 Kanye nemphefumulo  
Evetele umhlaba lusizi lwakhe,  
 Ngoluphawu lolutinyembeti  
 Letigobho ta kwemifula lengaweledi ...**

When a person is in sorrow,  
 Speaking with the heart and soul,  
 Revealing his grief to the world  
 By means of a symbol of tears  
 Flowing like rivers that are difficult to cross.

(Zwane, 1984:6)

The underlined morphemes in the above extract are an indication that Zwane's poetic language is influenced by Zulu because the underlined e's would be replaced by a's in Swati. One also notices the way in which the poet uses vowel replacement in **ngoluphawu** above.

The sound o is normally replaced by e in Swati. This poem – as a whole – has a Zulu flavour. This is an important fact because it forms a preview on the stages of development of Swati poetry.

#### 1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Firstly, Swati poetry emerged slowly in 1977. At the moment there are only a few published Swati poetry books. The result is due to efforts of the Swati poets in the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa. This research will investigate poetry available from 1977 to 1992.

Secondly, it should be stated explicitly that anthologies, which contain collections of poems by various poets, would not be examined in this study. There are quite a number of these publications in the market, namely the following:

- **LIGWALAGWALA** (Lory) edited by S.S. Mahlalela in 1986, Via Afrika;
  - **EMAHLUNGU ETINHLUNGU** (Pastures of Pains) by S.J. Ncongwane *et al.* 1989, Juta & Co.;
  - **EMAGALELO** (Heavy Blows) by M.S. Mbuyane *et al.* 1990. Shuter & Shooter;
  - **LUHLEKO LWEMAHLOKOHLOKO** (Laughter of Black-headed Weavers) by J.P. Shongwe *et al.* 1989, Shuter & Shooter;
  - **IMPALAMPALA 3** (The Traditional Signal Horn) by O.A. Bhiya. 1990, De Jager;
- and many more which cannot be mentioned here. However, reference may be made from time to time regarding the above anthologies.

For the purpose of this study, only poetry volumes consisting poems by a single poet will be investigated. This includes *inter alia* the following volumes of poetry:

- **LUSINGA LWANGWANE** (The inspiration of the Swati people) by T. Hlongwane. 1990;
- **SIHLENGE SETINKONDLO** (An island of poems) by J.P. Shongwe. 1985;
- **INKONDLO YEMASWATI** (A poem of the Swati people) by E.B. Tembe. 1990;
- **LIKHWETI** (Morning Star) by L.N. Vilane. 1988;
- **IMINJUNJU YEMPHEFUMULO** (sharp pains of the soul) by R.J. Zwane. 1984;

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To collect data and other relevant information for the study, the researcher followed the strategies as indicated below:

### **1.5.1 Written material**

The researcher made use of library materials to get relevant information. Books and articles written in English and Zulu were consulted in the libraries of the University of South Africa, Kanyamazane and Nelspruit. Such information was very valuable.

A few Swati examples were obtained from Swaziland and some from the late Mr J. Khumalo, a lecturer for Swati at the University of South Africa.

A collection of relevant books of poetry was collected from schools and some from the concerned authors.

### **1.5.2 Fieldwork**

Teachers were visited. The purpose was to find out from them whether the present Swati poetry is of a high or low standard, compared to earlier Swati poetry.

### **1.5.3 Why bold?**

The researcher's main text is in English, therefore he will make sure that all his subtexts in Swati are bold.

## **1.6 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

The main problem that was encountered was the unavailability of Swati material relevant to the topic under observation. It must be stated that no study of this kind has been explored before. It is therefore self-evident that lack of material has been an obstacle in the drawing up of this study. The researcher had to rely on previous work from Zulu, English and Afrikaans poets.

Distance was another inhibitive factor, as it was not always feasible for the researcher to travel or simply contact the poets and/or knowledgeable people who could render assistance. In some cases the researcher had to cling closely to any piece of information related to the topic being researched.

The researcher was acquainted with volumes of poetry that were at some stage prescribed to be used in schools. Poetry books that were not prescribed before – but written between 1977 and 1992 – were a problem. The researcher requested the various publishers to furnish him with old and new catalogues. Some of the publishers were reluctant to help and it took long before they responded.

## **1.7 AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study tries to explore the development of Swati poetry from 1977 (when it was introduced as a full school subject) up to 1992. It is a study that tries to fathom the literariness of the present volumes of Swati poetry found in schools and at the markets in the Republic of South Africa and Swaziland.

Many critics evaluate Swati poetry as not as well written as poetry found in the other African Languages, Zulu in particular.

The criticisms levelled against Swati poetry being that it does not make any difference between prose and poetry. Many Swati poems are written in a language that is prosaic. This study is therefore aimed at verifying and testifying these criticisms.

There is an outcry that Swati sonnets do not meet the requirements of being true sonnets. The criticism goes on to say that a poem of fourteen lines is not necessarily a sonnet, as it appears to be in Swati poetry. A true sonnet is characterised by certain applicable qualities, which the

Swati sonnet lacks. This study will examine this and certain recommendations – in respect of sonnets – will be suggested.

The study also tries to identify difficulties, if there are any, which are encountered by budding poets in composing acceptable and meaningful standards of poetry and to seek ways in which such problems may be curbed in future. It is therefore hoped that if budding poets – even more advanced ones – could have the enthusiasm to peruse through this work and implement the recommendations thereof, their poetic skills will improve immensely.

The members of the Swati Language Committee will benefit from the study. It is this committee's task to prescribe, screen and evaluate books before any of them can be prescribed for schools. If a true assessment is to be made, the assessors have to have knowledge of the genre in question – in this case poetry. This treatise will have to be made available to the members of the Swati Language Committee to enable them to assess poetry correctly. This ability will give rise to the correct judgement of good or poor poetry. Poetry prescribed for schools would have to be of a better quality than simply prescribing for the sake of fulfilling a requirement. Good poetry is beneficial to the community at large and the learners in the school environment.

## **1.8 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

In Chapter One, the reader of this dissertation will be oriented to the nature of this research work. The problem, which motivated the researcher to write this study, is spelled out. Concepts to be used throughout the study are thoroughly defined in this chapter. The boundaries of the study (delimitations) are fixed in this chapter. Chapter One is also necessary because it outlines the methodology to be used throughout the study.



Chapter Two will investigate the different types of Swati poetry. Furthermore, the chapter will assess and explore the extent to which the Swati poets have attempted to compose a variety of poems in their anthologies, such as ballads, elegies, lyrics, etc. An investigation will also determine whether these poems have the correct poetic flavour.

Chapter Three will explore the development of different themes in Swati poetry. It will concentrate on the content of different poems written by different poets. In addition to that, poets will be compared and assessed in terms of the degree of success in which they handle themes in their poems.

Chapter Four will deal with imagery in Swati poetry.

It is generally accepted that the main difference between poetry and prose is that poetry depends much on associative language. Poetry uses more of the metaphorical and symbolic language than prose.

(Ntuli, 1978:11-12)

It is the task of this chapter to explore and discuss a number of figures of speech, which give rise to a high poetic taste. It will also be investigated here whether words used in Swati poetry are correctly selected.

Chapter Five will concentrate on the development of external structure. Work on external form will be discussed and thereafter it will be assessed what Swati poets had done in this regard. The discussion in this chapter will include *inter alia* the following techniques of poetry: rhyme, linking, alliteration, etc.

Chapter Six will be a concluding chapter that will deal with the merits and the demerits of Swati poetry. Some general recommendations, which might render assistance to poets, will be discussed briefly.

## 1.9 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Concepts, which are used in the title of this work, will be defined in this section. The purpose of the aforementioned is to bring simplicity and clarity to any reader of the dissertation.

### 1.9.1 Development

Garmonsway *et al.* (1965:207) define development as:

... an act, process or result of developing, state of being developed; growth; expansion, evolution, circumstance just arisen or come to light.

John Sinclair *et al.* give another definition of development (1987:386) as follows:

... gradual growth or formation of something especially a process in which a person or thing matures, changes, or advances to another stage.

William Little *et al.* (1933:534) define the concept development as shown below:

A gradual unfolding; a fuller working out of details of anything; growth from within.

Phillip Babcock Grove *et al.* (1986:618) also define development as follows:

... gradual advance of growth through progressive changes.

In all the definitions cited above, special emphasis is placed on growth. It is, however, this growth that this study will explore. The growth develops gradually towards maturity.

### 1.9.2 Swati

John J. Grotpter (1975:150) defines Swati as follows:

The language of the Swati Nation in many ways is close to isiZulu and other languages of the Nguni people. It is at minimum a distinct dialect, if not a distinct language.

It is necessary to highlight that the language of the Swati people is **siSwati**, but for the sake of this work, it has been decided to use the stem **Swati** and to omit the prefix **si-**. The ‘Zunda’ form of Swati, which is **Swazi**, will not be used in this study.

Ziervogel *and Mabuza* (1976:) also defined Swati as follows:

The Swati who are better known as the Swazi, i.e. the zunda form, are a people of Bantu stock speaking a Bantu language.

It is evident from the above definition that **Swati** also refers to the people whose language is **Swati**.

### 1.9.3 Researcher

The term researcher as used in this dissertation will refer to the person (I) who has explored and investigated the relevant literature in order to ascertain the validity of the assumption as stated in the hypothesis.

## 1.10 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The background of this study is based on the fact that no study of this nature has been explored before. In view of this, this must be seen as basic research in Swati.

## 1.11 BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### 1.11.1 Hlongwane, T.

Hlongwane, T. was born in Swaziland and received his education there. Qualified as a teacher, he taught in many schools in Swaziland and Natal. He believed that African poetry has a unique character and should not be written in a clumsy fashion.

Its various themes show that African poetry should not be confined to praises and lullabies alone.

### PUBLICATIONS

- The light of Dark 1978
- Poems for performance 1978
- Injabulo Yebusuku Bunye 1981
- Lusinga LwaNgwane 1990

Themba Hlongwane died in a car accident in Durban in 1991.

### 1.11.2 Luphoko, J.B.C.

Jabulani Calvin B. Luphoko was born in the then Eastern Transvaal (Mpumalanga) at a place called Mbuzini on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1953.

- Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education

He received his primary education at Mbuzini Primary School from 1959 – 1966. He matriculated at Inkomazi High School in 1972.

He proceeded to the University of Zululand where he successfully passed his Secondary Teacher's Diploma (STD) in 1974.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Mjokwane High School	1975 – 1977
Mdzabu High School	1978 – 1981

Mgwenya College of Education	1981 – 1984
Insikazi High School	1985 – 1989
Litjelebube High School	1990 – 1991
Bantfwabetfu High School	1991
S.A.B.C. (Radio Swazi) announcer	1984

## PUBLICATIONS

Asikhutulisane  
 Ligwalagwala (co-author)  
 Atsekeletene (co-author)  
 Impalampala (co-author)  
 Emasisweni (co-author)  
 Ufunani? (co-author)

Jabulani Luphoko is the composer of the following choral songs:

Lala ngekuthula  
 Batali  
 Insika High School  
 Umholi  
 Radio Swazi 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
 Emhlabeni kunje

### 1.11.3 Magagula, M.A.

Mbambiso Arthur Magagula was born at Schulzendal Village near Nhlengesha River on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1953. His mother, LaShongwe, is a daughter from the Shongwe royal family.

During his youth, M.A. Magagula could witness talented bards praising the chief of the Shongwe tribe, when he (the chief) was approaching the congregated Shongwe tribe.

- Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education

He received his primary education from the following schools: Schulzendal Primary School, Driekoppies Primary School, Oorschot Primary School, Emjindini Secondary School and Inkomazi High School. He received his Primary Teacher Training at Mgwenya College of

Education and passed at the end of 1977. He returned to Mgwenya College for the Primary Teacher's Diploma, which he completed at the end of 1987.

M.A. Magagula is currently a principal of Phakamani Primary School at Khulangwane Circuit, which is situated in the Nkomazi region.

## PUBLICATIONS

Impalampala YemaNgwane

### 1.11.4 Shongwe, J.P.

John Pempela Shongwe was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1951.

- Primary and Secondary Education

He had his primary education at New Consort Mine outside Barberton and at Schoemansdal Community School.

He did his secondary education at Emjindini Secondary School – where he completed the Junior Certificate, receiving first class – in 1970. He completed the Senior Certificate at Botshabelo Training Institution, at Middelburg (Transvaal) in 1972.

- University Education

1973 – 1975: University of Zululand: Bachelor of Arts Degree, majoring in Geography, Pedagogics and African Languages.

1977: University of Zululand: University Education Diploma.

1978: B.A. Honours (Geography and Environmental Studies).

1988: University of Durbanville – Westville: M.A. Degree. Dissertation: “A socio-economic evaluation of traditional and nucleated settlements in Inkanyezi Region.”

1999: D.Phil. Degree in Geography and Environmental Studies – University of Pretoria.

- Work Experience

1976: Assistant Teacher at Shongwe Secondary School.

1977 – 1980: Senior Laboratory Assistant, University of Zululand.

1989 – Jan 1989: Lecturer: Geography – University of Zululand.

1989: Rector: Mgwenya College of Education.

1997: Campus Director: Pretoria Technikon – Nelspruit.

- Hobbies

Swimming, fishing and singing.

- Family

John is married to Ethel (née Nyalunga). The couple has two children: Buyilesiwe and Mlindzisi.

### 1.11.5 Tembe, E.B.

Edmund Bonginkosi Tembe was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1946 in Hlathikulu, a small town in the Shiselweni district in Swaziland. He grew up there and experienced cold and hunger in the poverty-stricken village town.

The beauty of the countryside with its mountains gave him some consolation. From his youth, he was closer to nature and appreciated the simple ferns of nature. In later life these memories brought jovial reflections of the past to him.

**Lapho kuvungut' umoya loholile,  
Kudlal' emagala emitsini,  
Imitsi yetidleke temahlokohloko,  
Asambe – ke Mlondoloz, asambe!**

(Where a cool breeze is blowing

Branches are playing on the trees.  
 Trees having canaries' nests  
 Where different fruits grow,  
 Let us go, Mlondoloz, let us go!)

- Academic achievements

Tembe attended his primary education at Hlatikulu Central and was later transferred to Franson Christian High School for secondary education at Matsapha Swazi National High. He was then admitted at William Pitcher Teacher Training College for a senior Teacher's Certificate (Diploma). Apart from being a teacher, Tembe holds a B.A. degree in Public Administration.

In 1971 he started teaching at Entfonjeni High School. In 1980 he completed a B.A. degree at the University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland.

The art of composing poetry was Tembe's hobby from youth. By the time he had reached Std 8, he had already established an anthology. Most of his early poems rebuked the social injustice of the days where one colour exploited another colour in Southern Africa.

Macmillan Swaziland awarded him a Certificate of Excellence in Poetry and Drama (Swati) after winning National contests in 1988. This was after the publications of Inkondlo YemaSwati.

#### **1.11.6 Zwane, R.T.**

Richard Tsanyela Zwane was born in 1951 at Ngodwana. He is the sixth member in a family of twelve: six brothers and six sisters.

He did his Junior Secondary education at Khumbula High School under the strict principalship of the ex-chief Minister of the former KaNgwane Homeland, the late Dr E.J. Mabuza, between 1969 and 1972. In 1974 he taught privately at Lundanda Lower Primary School. The following year he returned to Kumbula to complete his Senior Secondary Education.



In 1977 he left for Lihawu Secondary School to teach privately again. In June 1979 he went to the Government offices of the former KaNgwane Government Services to work as a personal secretary to the Minister of Education and Culture, the late Mr E.C. Mango. In 1981 he went to Mgwenya College of Education to qualify as a teacher. In 1983 he joined the teaching staff of Bhekiswayo Senior Secondary School. He died in 2000.

He acquired his writing inspiration in 1972 while he was being taught Zulu (Izikhali Zembongi – Thomas Mzwanduka Masuku) by the late teacher Baba Hendrick Ntuli. He wrote more while he was working during 1974. His works include the following: Iminjunju Yemphefumulo, Indvonsa, Usinga (Zulu) and Umlozi.

It is absolutely essential to indicate these biographical sketches to show that these people pioneered in Swati poetry. It was, however, not easy to get such notes from V.J. Nkwanyana, Makaula and L.N. Vilane. Although this is the case, their materials will nevertheless be used throughout this study.

## **1.12 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it must be pointed out that the outline of this study is shown in Chapter One. By perusing Chapter One, the reader will understand the content of the whole study in a nutshell.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. POETRY TYPES

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look into the development of the types of poetry in Swati as well as Swati praise poetry. Praise poetry, which will be investigated here will *inter alia* include modern praise poetry and traditional praise poetry. All the other types of poetry will be exclusively modern poetry.

This work will be tackled against the background of European poetry – English poetry in particular. Definitions from the English poetry shall be studied in comparison with Swati poetry. From the content of the definitions, this research study will make certain inferences regarding how Swati has developed in the composition of different types of poetry.

Differences, which occur between the various types of poems, will also be clearly seen and it is felt that this chapter is interwoven with the rest of the work to be studied in this research work.

Most of the poems are based on certain themes such as love, education, politics, religion, riots, encouragement and inspiration. These factors, and others not mentioned here, will be used as a norm for classifying all the poems to be scrutinised in this study.

The majority of the poems will be judged according to their themes. This first category will therefore, *inter alia* include ballads, elegies, praise poems and lyrics. The understanding of these poetry types enhances the classification.

The second criterion to be employed will be to classify poetry types by means of their form. By form is meant the visible aspects or the manner in which parts are arranged. Poems, which will be classified here, will include sonnets and epics.

Each poetry type will be defined by quoting various scholars who made extensive studies in literary works. Poems cited as examples will be illustrated by means of a single stanza or two.

This will be done to keep the discussion flowing. Long poems given as examples might, however, disturb the flow of the discussion.

After the definition of each type has been given, and examples cited, each poem will be assessed whether it satisfies the requirements of the category under which it is classified.

## **2.2 BALLAD**

Abrams (1957:13) defines a ballad as shown below:

Of the popular ballad (also known as the folk ballad or traditional ballad) a convenient short definition is that it is a song, transmitted orally, which tells a story.

The above definition tells that although a ballad is a poem, it must be composed in such a manner that it can be sung, and the whole poem must transmit a meaningful message to the people given by word of mouth.

According to Shaw (1905:43) a ballad is:

A narrative poem composed in short stanzas and designed for singing or oral recitation. A ballad usually deals with an exciting or dramatic episode. Somewhat loosely, song hits, folk music and folktales set to music are called ballads.

This definition concurs with the definition given by Abrams in that a ballad is a traditional poem to be sung and it must have a connected account of events, hence it must tell a story.

Garmonsway (1965:51) sees a ballad as:

A traditional poem of simple direct narrative told in short stanzas sometimes with a refrain; sentimental song.

Scott (1929:28) has this to say about the definition of a ballad:

Old French ballad, from Provençal ballad, from Low Latin ballare, to dance. Originally a song accompanied by a dance. Later the name was applied to a narrative poem. This was anonymous, of folk origin, sung to their own accompaniment by the minstrels. Ballads, passed down by word of mouth, were direct and simple, with romantic, historical, or supernatural setting.

It is, however, noted that all definitions quoted above display a common denominator concerning the meaning of the concept ballad. All authors agree that it is a song, transmitted orally, which tells a story. This research will look into these characteristics of a ballad to see how Swati poetry was developed in this regard. Finally, it should be noted that it is the feeling of the researcher that every definition cited above is appropriate for this work.

Having examined the definitions scrupulously, the researcher feels that Ndlala made a tremendous contribution in the development of ballads in his anthology 'Bungibitile.' Two ballads from the work of this poet will be quoted below. Let us consider 'Emphakatsi':

**Emdzimba, enhla KaLobamba  
Laph' imisimeto ibuyeketwa khona,  
Laph' ingoma ish' imini nebusuku  
Ngulapho telive tilele khona.  
Entasi eLusutfu neLubombo,  
Laph' ingabisa isekela lutsango,**

**Nalaph' emajaha akha lusekwane  
Ngulapho kulele tibiyo nemagugu akaNgwane.**

(At Mdzimba, higher at KaLobamba,  
Where the customs are revised  
Where the song is burning day and night,  
It is where matters of the land are sleeping.

Down at Lusutfu and Lubombo,  
Where a teenage girl is supporting a society of married women

And where the young men pluck a shrub-like plant  
It is where the culture and the treasure of KaNgwane are embedded)

(Ndlala, 1992:40)

It is also felt that the poem ‘Luyasha’ is another example of a Swati traditional ballad. Ndlala (1992:44) the author of the poem writes:

**Ibubulil’ impalampala eMdzimba;  
Kwatamatama sikhonkhwane nalindzimphi,  
Nanso ingabisa iganukisela emajaha  
“Uyezwa na? Uyezwa na?”**

**Embhuleni nakaLobamba luyasha  
Lushiswa kufika kwesikhatsi  
OSikhatsi sekuboshwa kwenyandza  
Inyandza yencwabakati, yeluhlata  
Bulele buhle nemagugu eluhla“Uyezwa na? Uyezwa na?”**

(The signal horns have groaned at Mdzimba;  
A peg and a war guard are vibrating  
There is a teenager girl showing her buttocks to the young men.  
“Do you hear? Do you hear?”

At Mbhuleni and KaLobamba it is burning,  
It is burnt by the coming of time,  
It is time for binding a bundle,  
A bundle from a big heap of green grass,  
The beauty and the treasury of the people are embedded  
“Do you hear? Do you hear?”)

### **2.2.1 Commentary on Swati ballads**

Each of the definitions above explains that a ballad is a traditional song or folk music that is told in stanzas, sometimes with a refrain. Taking this into account, some of the poems written by Ndlala have been studied closely and have been identified as ballads. Such an example is ‘Uyezwa na? Uyezwa na?’ from ‘Luyasha’, where the poet clearly explicates that when the

poem is recited, music is performed and when 'Uyezwa na?' is sung, a certain dance is performed: there is a pleasurable traditional Swati rhythm when both feet stamp the ground.

### 2.3 ELEGY

Various authors give numerous definitions of the term elegy.

Garmonsway (1965:250) defines the term elegy as follows:

Poem or song of lamentation; a dirge; sorrowful poem.

The researcher notes that in his definition, Garmonsway does not go further to differentiate between the concepts elegy, dirge and lament. Garmonsway considers the concepts as synonyms whereas in essence these are different terms expressing different connotations in different contexts. In the subsequent definition of this term by Msimang, the difference will be made more clearly.

Fowler (1973:71) defines the term as:

From the English Renaissance, 'elegie' referred to a poem mourning the death of a particular individual, overlapping with a number of similarly inexplicit terms (complaint, dirge, lament, monody, threnody).

Fowler does not give an explicit distinction between the terms. It is true that the terms monody and threnody are not clearly stated as to their relationship to an elegy. The researcher is reluctant to agree that a complaint is an elegy.

According to Shaw (1905:132) an elegy is:

A mournful, melancholy poem, especially a funeral song or lament for the dead.

According to the above author the terms elegy, dirge, lament, monody and threnody are used interchangeably: both referring to a funeral and a sorrowful song. It is still felt that these terms have different meanings.

Abrams (1957:44) views the term elegy as follows:

In present critical usage, however, an elegy is a formal and sustained poem of lament of the death of a particular person.

In his work, Abrams (1957:41) makes the differences between an elegy and dirge as follows:

The dirge also expresses grief on the occasion of death, but rather differs from the elegy in that it is short, less formal, and is usually represented as text to be sung.

Msimang (1990:81) sees an elegy as:

A poem about death. A dirge and a lament are also poems for the death of a particular person. (Translated by the researcher.)

Msimang (1990:81) writes to say that although an elegy is about death, on the contrary, it praises or admires something concerning death. It can praise the death of Christians who see death as a gate to the Promised Land (Heaven). On the other hand the history of those who died can be praised. The dirge and the lament on the other hand generally talk about death without giving any deeper details about the concept death.

A few examples of what qualify as elegies in Swati will now be cited. In his 'Asikhutulisane,' Lumphoko composed the following: 'Ningakhali' and 'Sife Lwembita.'

Nkhwanyana's 'Umtfombo' has the following elegies: 'Babe Wami,' 'Siyakukhumbula' and 'Silahlekelwe'. Vilane in her 'Likhweti' wrote 'Chawe Letfu'. Another development of elegies is in the poetry of Zwane's 'Iminjunju'. Two distinct elegies are observed namely: 'Lalani Ngekuthula' and 'Lobahle Masondvo'. In Makaula's 'Lishoni, Tintfombi te-Africa' it

is seen and understood by the researcher as an elegy. In 'Impalampala', Magagula emerges with 'Ngongoni Yetinyembeti' and 'Imifula'. In his volume 'Bungibitile' Ndlala wrote 'Lutfunti'. 'Phumula Manene' and 'Tinyembeti Tamuva' appear in Shongwe's poetry 'Sihlenge'.

The detailed analysis regarding the above paragraph will be given below. Lumphoko (1986:21) in 'Ningakhali' writes:

**Njengobe senifikil' ekhaya lami lekugcina,  
Ngibekeni kahle ngekutfula,  
Kulelikhaya lami lelihle lekugcina,  
Kute ngiphumule kahle ngekutfula.**

(Because you have arrived at my everlasting home,  
Bury me peacefully,  
In this lovely everlasting home of mine,  
So that I can rest in peace.)

Another elegy by Lumphoko (1986:34) is entitled 'Sife Lwembita' where he writes as follows:

**Lapho sewukhona  
Akube yinhlalo yekuphumula,  
Phumula kahle Mlangeni lomuhle,  
Ubacolele bonkhe labakwente nje.**

(Where you are  
Let it be a beautiful stay for rest  
Rest in peace beautiful Mlangeni  
Pardon those who made you to be like this.)

This study also reveals that Nkwanyana, in his anthology 'Umtfombo WemaLangeni' has an expression of death in his composition. Nkwanyana (1991:16) in his poem 'Siyakukhumbula' writes:

**Ngalamakhul' emagonso,  
Ngalomncan' umzuzu  
Bakutsatsa butfungo,  
Sasala sibambe wangaphansi,  
Siyakukhumbula**



(With a huge jump  
 Within the blinking of an eye  
 Deep sleep took you,  
 We remained astonished,  
 We remember you)

In his poem 'Silahlekelwe', Nkwanyana (1991:17) still expresses grief for the death of someone he loved so dearly:

**Kugobhota libhudlo letinyembeti,  
 Tihushukela etimbanjeni temhlaba,  
 Buya sekwenele!  
 Kukhalwa lesingapheli sililo,  
 Silahlekelwe.**

(A waterfall of tears is flowing  
 They are flowing deeply into the soil.  
 It is enough. Come back!  
 There is an everlasting mourn  
 We have lost.)

Another development of an elegy is seen in the work of Vilane (1988:4) in her poem with the title 'Chawe Letfu':

**Lala Lokhasaba, lala mnganami  
 Umdzabu wadzabuka mhl' uhamba.**

(Sleep Lokhasaba, sleep my friend  
 Umdzabu grieved when you left.)

Zwane in his 'Iminjunju Yemphefumulo', shows a milestone in the development of Swati elegies. Two of his elegies in the above mentioned anthology will be shown below.

Zwane (1984:1) in his poem 'Lalani Ngekuthula' writes:

**Babe wami, nsika yami,  
 Bewuyimvu emkhatsini wetimphisi  
 Kodvwa simanga ngobe sikhali  
 Lesinebutsi sebacuphi nemaphisi  
 Lesingageji, atange sikuphose;  
 Walala ngekuthula,  
 Waphumula ngelucolo.**

(My father, my pillar,  
 You were a sheep amongst hyenas,  
 But it is unbelievable because  
 A poisonous spear of trappers and hunters  
 A spear that does not miss, did not miss you, it stabbed you  
 You slept quietly  
 You rested peacefully.)

Another elegy from the composition of Zwane (1984:13) is the one with the title 'Lobahle Masondvo'. This goes on as quoted below:

**Wo, kini nine tilo tasendle lenilambile,  
 Lenikhamise imilomokati yenu lenengekako,  
 Nafohlofhlota ngetingovolokati tenu leticalekisiwe,  
 Inhlokwana nematsanjana esitsanjwana sami,  
 Ngitsi: Lulaka lwaSomandla aluwele kini!**

(Oh! To you hungry predators  
 With opened big and ugly mouths  
 With your cursed big teeth you smashed  
 The little head and bones of my little lover,  
 I say: God's anger must fall upon you!)

In the following excerpt from Makaula's poem 'Mhlaba awunamahloni' (1985:27), another development of Swati elegies is shown:

**Tikuphi tintfombi te-Afrika?  
 Aphi emajaha latalwa nguleto tintfombi?  
 Ubafihle phansi kwakho.  
 Mhlaba, awunamahloni.**

(Where are the ladies of Africa?  
 Where are the young men born from those ladies?  
 You have hidden them underneath your soil,  
 You are shameless.)

The following extract is taken from Magagula's poem 'Ngongoni Yetinyembeti'. The poem reads:

**Gogo wasiphemba sililo walila  
 Sacacamukela nakuletinye tihlobo  
 Lebetimbungele waShongwe njengesikhonyane,  
 Balembesa ngeluhlaka ligugu lami  
 Bashona lapho kutjalwa khona lesebaphangalele.**

(Grandmother wailed and cried  
 Other relatives echoed the wailing  
 Who gathered thickly like the locust upon Shongwe  
 They covered my treasure with a splint.  
 They went to the place where the dead are buried.)

(Magagula, 1992:11)

Below is a striking piece of work from Magagula (1992:11) in his poem 'Imifula':

**Mhla sishonelwa lilanga laMahlokohla  
 Licwila ngalena kwetintsaba letindze  
 Kweta ematfunti ambonya live  
 Anyonyoba njengelisela lintjontj' umncwayiba.  
 Ngawabona atungeleta emaLangen' onkhana  
 Njengemajabhane abhacel' umuntfu amsontsa.**

(The day that the sun of Mahlokohla went down  
 It sunk beyond the highest mountains  
 Shadows came and covered the earth  
 They stalked like a thief stealing biltong  
 I saw all the Swatis walking around  
 Like murderers hiding in ambush to kill a person.)

Shongwe's poem 'Tinyembeti tamuva' is a striking example of an elegy. The passage quoted below illustrates this very clearly:

**Ithulile iMbube yemhlaba  
 Netilwandle atibikelwe nato tilile  
 Hhayi maSwati nemhlaba uyalila.  
 Mhla walelo langa tinkhanyeti tavuta tinyembeti,  
 Tehla tatsi dzili kitsi KaNgwane.  
 Ithulile iMbube, Sobhuza weSibili abethulile.**

(The lion of the world is quiet  
 And it must be reported to the oceans  
 And they must also mourn  
 No! Swatis, the world is also mourning.  
 That day the stars oozed tears,  
 They fell down to our country Swaziland.  
 The lion is quiet, Sobhuza II was quiet.)

(Shongwe, 1985:35)

If we read Shongwe's 'Phumula Manene' (1985:38), we are again struck by another example of his elegies. The extract exemplifies the poem:

**Phumula Manene  
Sesiyawusale sisho ngenkhumbulo  
Lapho sibuka sibalisa ngemisebenti yakho,  
Kwalapha sekwengcile, sekungumlandvo.  
Phumula Manene.**

(Rest, Manene

In remembrance we shall say

When we admire and think about your work,  
Life of this world has passed, it is history.  
Rest, Manene.)

In Ndlala's anthology (1992:50) the poem 'Litfunti' is another example of an elegy. The poem begins:

**Lisela ngiyakwetfuna!  
Wangitsatsel' injabulo nelutsandvo  
Wangitsatsel' imphilo ngasala ngcunu.  
Ngakhala ngenhlitiyo kungapheli  
Ngilila kumil' emavundvo  
Ngamkhulu lowasitsel' angakavalisi  
Nababe lowameb' angakamphungi nakumphunga.**

(Thief, I bury you!

You deprived me of happiness and love  
You deprived me of life and I remained naked  
With my heart I wept ceaselessly  
I mourn and bear grudges  
From my grandfather who disappeared without bidding farewell,  
And my father whom you stole at an early age.)

Hlongwane has a number of elegies in his anthology, which also enhances development in Swati poetry. In his 'Niki Umnaketfu', Hlongwane (1990:41) writes:

**Atsi ayayitfumba wayilwela,  
Amgwaza waphuma ngemuv' umukhwa**

**Wafa agcwele emahlwil' engati.**

(When they tried to abduct her, he avenged.  
They stabbed him and the knife cut through his back.  
He died in a pool of blood.)

The following stanza is an extract from Hlongwane's 'Ndlelanhle' (1990:44). It is another glaring example of an elegy from his anthology:

**Sitsi ndlelanhle, wena lotsandzekako**

**La sikushiya khona**

**Esiphephelweni setihlahla lesitetaye**

**Sesiyihlabelele ingoma yetfu,**

**Seva nekulila kwabomake**

**Phans' aleto tihlahla**

**Lapho umoya lopholile uvunguta khona.**

(We say goodbye to you, our lover  
We leave you here  
In the shelter of common trees,  
We have already sung our song,  
The mourning of mothers has been heard  
Under those trees.  
Where a cool breeze is blowing.)

### 2.3.1 Commentary on Swati elegies

In Luphoko's 'Ningakhali', 'Ekhaya Lami Lekugcina' does not necessarily mean an ordinary home. Here 'Likhaya' is figuratively referring to the grave where the deceased is buried. It is evident that this poem is definitely about death. In 'Sife Lwembita', Luphoko writes about the death of a chief in the Lomahasha District of Mbuzini. In the stanza quoted, the word 'Phumula' has a meaning that is more than the rest we know. The poet is here drawing a picture in our minds that this person is resting because he is no more. Nkwanyana uses 'butfongo' (drowsiness) – in his poem 'Siyakukhumbula' (We Remember You) – to symbolise the death of his father. 'Bakutsatsa butfongo' means his father was taken by death. On the other hand, Nkwanyana – in his work 'Silahlekelwe' (We Have Lost) – speaks about

‘Kugobhota libhudlo letinyembeti’(Heavy tears are falling). This means that Nkwanyana has taken us to an area where people are mourning bitterly for someone who is dead.

In her work, Vilane uses key words such as ‘lala’(dead), ‘dzabuka’(grieved), iNyetane yalila’(The people of Nyetane mourned) to express the sorrow that was felt when her friend, Lokhasaba, passed away. ‘Lala’, in the context in which it is used, is a **‘Hlonipha’** as well as a figurative expression for death. ‘Dzabuka’ and ‘lila’ infer that the people were heartbroken and the poet goes on to personify ‘iNyetane’, a place name to refer to the people who mourned the death of Lokhashaba,

Zwane, in his poem ‘Lalani Ngekutfula’, also uses ‘lala’ and ‘phumula’ to describe the death of his parents. He wishes them to rest in peace. In ‘Lobahle Masondvo’ he explains clearly how wild animals killed this beautiful lover of his: ‘Nafohlofhlota inhlokwana nematsanjana.’(You devoured her little head and her tinny little bones) The latter is an indication that she was definitely devoured.

‘Ngongoni Yetinyembeti’(December month of tears) by Magagula, is an elegy whereby the poet mourns the death of his mother. ‘Bashona lapho kutjalwa khona lasebaphangalele’ tells the sad story that his mother was buried. Magagula also writes about the death of King Sobhuza as he says “Mhla Sishonelwa Lilanga, LaMahlokohla, kushona kwelilanga”, which in this context, symbolises death – more specifically the death of King Sobhuza II. Shongwe also mourns the death of King Sobhuza in his work ‘Tinyembeti tamuva.’ He says ‘Ithulile iMbube’(The King is nomore), using a metaphor for the King whilst ‘ithulile’ here means the King is no more. Shongwe’s ‘Phumula Manene’(Rest In Peace Manene) is also regarded as an elegy as the poet uses the words ‘siso ngenkhumbulo’ – the deceased will always be remembered.

Ndlala also comes out with ‘Litfunti’ mourning the death of his grandfather, Niki. ‘Umnaketfu’ and ‘Ndlelanhle’, both written by Themba Hlongwane, are about death. According to the poem ‘Niki wafa agcwele emahlwil’ engati,’ the grandfather was stabbed to death, whilst ‘Ndlelanhle’ is also about someone who is dead.

To summarise, it is, however felt that all poems used as examples, conform to the requirements of what elegies should have as indicated in the aforementioned definitions. Each

of them is about death and every poet in the excerpts above, mourns the death of a special person closest to him/her. It has therefore been established that Swati elegies are developing along the correct standard of poetry.

## 2.4 EPIC

Various authors give many definitions of the concept epic. This study will concentrate on the following authors:

According to Garmonsway (1965:259) an epic is:

A long poem in elevated style narrating the adventure of a hero.

Harvey (1932:273) defines an epic as:

A poem that celebrates in the form of a continuous narrative the achievements of one or more heroic personages of history or tradition.

Grambs (1985:144) says:

An epic is a long heroic poem recounting impressive historical events, something on a heroic scale or deserving of full or grandiloquent treatment.

Peck *et al.* (1984:31) define an epic as follows:

The most ambitious kind of poem. An epic presents the great deed of an heroic figure or group of figures.

Fowler and Fowler (1911:393) understand an epic as follows:

A long poem narrating the adventures or deeds of one or more heroic or legendary figures. An imaginative work of any form, embodying a nation's conception of its past history.

Shaw (1905:137) gives this definition of an epic:

A lengthy narrative poem in which action, characters and language are on a heroic level and style is exalted and even majestic.

Msimang (1990:82) defines an epic as follows:

An epic is an ancient poem that has the following three characteristics: Firstly it is long; secondly it is historical; thirdly it is heroic. (Translated by the researcher.)

The researcher will compare the following poems with the definitions of an epic: 'Bhuza' by Tembe; 'Umklezi wemahlwili' by Magagula; and 'Lembe unguShaka' by Shongwe.

The following stanza is an extract from Tembe's (1990:36) 'Bhuza II':

**Kwavela Bhuza kwacetuka tikhiya,  
Tikhiya tebugcili bakamdzesi  
Kwavela Bhuza kwehla imvula  
Kwahluma luhlata lonkhe live  
Waluma Bhuza kwavela lifutfo  
Wasayinda kwatfonsa luj.**

(When Bhuza appeared, the chains broke  
The chains of slavery of a white man  
When Bhuza appeared, the rain fell  
Green grass grew all over the place  
When Bhuza bit, green mealies appeared  
He signed, the honey dripped)

This quotation is an indication of some of the heroic deeds associated with King Sobhuza II. He freed his people from bondage. During drought he brought rain and food in abundance.

Magagula (1992:10) writes the following in his poem 'Umklezi wemahlwili':

**Yavimbetela bafati bayiphunga ngetitsebe  
Yavimbetela emadvodz' ayiphunga ngemahawu  
Mswati esigodlweni sakaHhohho wakhiph' emabutfo,  
Emehl' akh' alotita tinhlase temlilo  
Yasundvutwa yalabafokati pho batibalekela**



**Babakluvela ngetintsi tetikhal' ingati intjaza**

(It besieged women; they chased it with eating mats  
 It besieged men; they chased it with shields  
 Mswati, at the palace of Hhohho sent a regiment.  
 His eyes shone sparks of fire  
 The enemies were conquered – they fled  
 They stabbed them with assegais, blood was coming out forcefully)

The hero in the above extract is King Mswati when he fought with the Pedis at a battle held at Mhuluhulu. This is a heroic deed according to the history of the Swatis.

In the poem 'Lembe unguShaka', Shongwe (1985:12) writes as follows:

**Bewungatenti wena wasenhla,  
 Bewutfunywe nguLunyawolunye  
 Kubumba wakhe sive  
 Lelamuhla sibalwa netive temhlaba,  
 Bewugcwalisa leso simiso.**

(It was not your will, your majesty,  
 God sent you  
 To mould and to build a nation,  
 A nation, which is well known over the world today.  
 You were fulfilling that obligation.)

In a nutshell, this poem is about the well-known King Shaka – the founder of the Zulu nation.

#### **2.4.1 Commentary on Swati epics**

A close examination of an epic discloses that it ought to have a character or characters that performed heroic deeds in the history of the Swati nation. This history must have taken place in the development of a particular nation. So, to be an epic in its true sense, the character must have been a historical hero.

This study revealed that the following poems are a commentary on historical heroes:

- 'Bhuza' by Tembe: The hero here is King Sobhuza II who, when compared with other Swati Kings, is related as the best ruler of the Swati people;

- ‘Umklezi wemahlawili’ by Magagula: The hero being King Mswati I, who fought at Mhuluhulu; and
- ‘Lembe unguShaka’ by Shongwe: The historical hero is King Shaka, the founder of the Zulu nation.

Although the above historical information is true concerning epics, the study has revealed that Swati epics are not long enough to comply with the expected length given in the aforementioned definitions. The three poems above satisfy about two thirds of the criteria defining an epic. To conclude, the researcher discovered that there are no true epics in Swati poetry.

## 2.5 LYRIC

According to Peck *et al.* (1984:41) a lyric is:

A poem in which the poet writes his thoughts and feelings.  
The basic type is the song, but we use the term to cover all poems  
that present the poet’s immediate response to life, including  
sonnets, odes and elegies.

Burns *et al.* (1981:119) gives another striking definition of a lyric, defining the concept as follows:

A lyric is literally a poem to be sung to the music of a lyre. But in practice it means more than this. Short poems, usually divided into stanzas and directly expressing the poet’s own thoughts and sentiments, are referred to as lyric poems.

Shaw (1905:227) sees a lyric as:

A poem having the form and musical quality of a song; a short subjective poem with a songlike outburst of the author’s innermost thoughts and feelings.

Scott (1929:170) defines the term lyric as follows:

Originally a song intended to be sung and accompanied on the lyre. The meaning has been enlarged to include any short poem directly expressing the poet's own thoughts and emotions.

Msimang (1990:81) has this to say about the concept lyric:

Concerning lyrics, knowledgeable people say that in ancient times, a lyric was a short poem – based on love – accompanied by a lyre. (Translated by the researcher.)

All the above definitions agree that a lyric expresses sentiments and is usually short in form. The different anthologies consulted in this work, show progress in the development of Swati lyrics. These lyrics are, however, not love poems in particular, they cover other themes as well. Msimang (1990:81) concludes this by saying:

Nowadays lyrics cover a broad spectrum of themes. (Translated by the researcher.)

Noted Swati lyrics in this study are:

‘Mfanekiso’ by Zwane; ‘Ngeke Behle Cha’ and ‘Ncamashi’ by Tembe; ‘Asambe Nsiki’ by Shongwe; ‘Elikhiweni leMancina’ and ‘Mbali Lebunako’ by Ndlala; and ‘Emahlungu’ by Magagula.

In his poem ‘Mfanekiso’, Zwane (1984:40) writes:

**Ngitayitfumela kuwe ngetinyoni leticulako,  
Ngiyitfumele nangetimbali letimamatsekako.  
Kantsi lusizi lwemphefumulo wami lona,  
Sililo sebafe lokati netintsandzane.**

(I shall send it – joy – to you through the singing of birds,  
I shall send it through the smiling of flowers.  
Whereas the grief of my soul,  
Is the grief of widows and orphans.)

Tembe (1990:5) in his poem 'Ngeke Behle Cha' also gives an example of a lyric as he writes:

**Ngobe ngihleti nje ngiyasindvwa,  
Ngisindvwa yiminjunju yetinhlupheko  
Yiminjunju yetikhalo tebantfu,  
Nakunje abehli cha!**

(As I am merely sitting, I am burdened  
Inflicted pains burden me  
These are sharp pains of my cry  
These are sharp pains of the grievances of the people  
If it is like this: I cannot sleep!)

The poet, in his stanza, expresses his feelings and emotions about the social injustices exerted on his people.

In his poem 'Ncamashi' Tembe (1991:39) also writes about the sufferings of his people concerning social inequality. The poem reads thus:

**Leti tandla letimphisholo  
Tigcwele lutfuli lwemhlaba,  
Lutfuli lwekweswel' insipho,  
Tivuleka tivaleke ngekufana  
Naleto tandla letimhloshana  
Letisekhatsi kwemhlana nembeleko.**

(These black hands that are full of dust  
Dust that is caused by lack of soap,  
Open and close in the same way as whitish hands  
Which have everything.)

Shongwe (1985:20) composed 'Asambe Nsiki' which also has characteristics of a lyric. It reads:

**Nsiki asiwel' imifula  
Wota siy' emafini,  
Siphakame siphaph' unomphela,  
Asihambe Nsiki.**

(Nsiki let us cross the rivers,  
Come, let us go to the clouds,  
Let us rise up and fly forever,

Let us go, Nsiki.)

In 'Elikhiweni LeMncina' Ndlala (1992:35), in his lyrical composition, says:

**Ngikhala tingomi ngawe mbali yelive,  
Kute lokusitsa ngesitfund' eveni,  
Ngigijima ngengcondvo, bungefiki,  
Ngibalisa ngawe likhiwa leMncina,  
Inhlitiyo yami itsatsekile ngawe,  
Kunyamalala kwakho kusilondza  
Lesingalaphek' ekhats' enhlitiyweni yami.**

(I cry tears that do not dry up for you, flower of the world,  
There is nothing that shades you with a shade in this world  
I think deeply and cannot sleep  
Thinking deeply about you, fig of the Mncina clan.  
My heart is fascinated with you,  
Your disappearance is a wound  
That can never be healed in my heart.)

This research work also discloses that Magagula (1992:27), in his poem 'Emahlungu' expresses deep emotions and personal feelings when he writes:

**Wota ngiyakumema asiye esihlanjeni,  
Wota mbali asiye esihlanjeni,  
Lapho kushaya khon' umoya lopholile  
Lapho kumpompota khona litfombonkhala,  
Lidale kuphola kwemoya lopholile,  
Ngiphe sandla, ngiphe nelutsandvo.**

(Come, I invite you: let us go to the river,  
Come, flower, let us go to the river,  
Where a cool breeze is blowing  
Where the rust-coloured water is flowing  
Creating cool air.  
Give me your hand, give me love.)

### 2.5.1 Commentary on Swati lyrics

Taking each definition given above as a point of departure, namely that a lyric expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet, the researcher will now assess this type of poems.

In his poem 'Mfanekiso', Zwane expresses his deep feeling of love for Mfanekiso, whom he, as a poet, loves so dearly. On the other hand, in his poem 'Ngeke Behle Cha', Tembe expresses his feelings and emotion of grief about the social injustices extorted on black people. These sufferings laid on his people – concerning social inequalities – were a source of inspiration to him. Tembe uses 'Ngiyasindvwa, Ngisindvwa, Tinhlupheko Tebantfu (Ngeke behle cha)' and 'leti tandla tigcwele lutfuli lwemhlaba (Ncamashi)' to express his emotions.

Shongwe, in his poem 'Asihambe Nsiki', expresses his feelings of love towards Nsiki. He feels deeply touched as he says 'Wota Siye Emafini'. Ndlala, in his poem 'Elikhiweni LeMncina', writes to express his love for someone he loves very much. The word 'Mbali' (Flower) speaks for itself: the poet's lover is very pretty – that is why he (the poet) is so fascinated by her.

Concerning the expression of thoughts and feelings, this study has revealed that Swati lyrics have developed quite well except that all poems studied, lack rhythm. The cardinal number of syllables in each line of poetry does not always correspond with that of the following line. This makes Swati lyrics – unlike the definitions expect them to be – impossible to sing.

In conclusion, it is stated that the development of Swati lyrics has to be improved by attending to the syllabic structure and other structural techniques in each line, so that the poems could easily be chanted to the music of the lyre.

## 2.6 ODES

Various authors were investigated concerning how they view and define the concept ode. Their definitions will be given below:

The ode is a poem intended to be sung; an elaborate lyric generally addressed to some person or thing.

(Macdonald *et al.*, 1982:496)

Gwinn *et al.* (1989:872) define the ode as:

A ceremonious poem on an occasion of public or private dignity in which personal emotions and general medication are united.

Peck *et al.* (1984:55) see the ode as:

An elaborate and elevated lyric extending over quite a few stanzas and address to a person or thing or to an abstraction.

Fowler (1973:166) defines the ode as follows:

The most elevated and complicated species of lyric, the ode, was often written to celebrate notable public occasions or lofty universal themes.

Shaw (1905:262) has this to say about the ode:

Originally, an ode was a poem meant to be sung, but its meaning has been altered to apply to a lyric poem with a dignified theme that is phrased in a formal elevated style.

Abrams (1957:116) defines the ode as:

Pindar's ode was 'encomiastic' or written to praise and glorify someone, in this instance, the winners in the Olympic games. The earlier English odes, and many later ones, were also written to eulogise something, either a person or the arts of music or poetry.

All the above definitions have a common intersection, namely that odes are directed to people who deserve to be eulogised in terms of a victorious deed. The definitions also point out that even public occasions and ceremonies are extolled. The researcher examined the following poems:

- 'Lugedla LweMantimandzeni' by Magagula;
- 'Kusagogomkhulu' by Ndlala; and
- 'Vuma Ngigiye, Enkhundleni, Umkhosi Wanga-1968' by Shongwe.

In his 'Lugedla LweMantimandzeni', Magagula (1992:1) writes:

**Ngitibone tigiya leto tigulane  
Tigiya ngetijolojolo temakhambi ekuphila  
Sewutenyule emangweni lebabako  
Ngitibone tiyibamba lejubako  
Tihlabelela tingoma temgubho temuka.**

(I saw those patients leaping  
Leaping a concoction of medical herbs of life  
You had taken them out of gall that is bitter,  
I saw them going away,  
Chanting ceremonious songs leaving)

Another poem that qualifies as an ode is seen in the work of Ndlala (1992:7) in his poem 'Kusagogomkhulu':

**Ungikhumbuta kusagogomkhulu;  
Naw' uphuph' ubhula timphiko utiphindzaphindza,  
Ucilog' esihlahlen' etulu emafini ungesabi  
Uhamb' udvwanute ungesingetfwe muntfu.**

(You remind me of ancestral times  
If you fly, and flap the wings thoroughly  
Looking in the tree high in the sky fearlessly  
You walked freely and supported by no one.)

Shongwe (1985:14) in the poem 'Umkhosi Wanga-1968' writes:

**Ngwane libuyile  
Lalandvwa nguSobhuza Wesibili  
Lohlobe ngeligwalagwala nengwe.  
Ulilandzile ngesheya kwetilwandle!**

(Ngwane, it – the land – has returned.  
Sobhuza II fetched it  
Who wears a lourie and a leopard.  
He has fetched it – the land – from abroad!)



Another poem about public occasions, especially when the young men dance for the King at Somhlolo Stadium, reads as follows:

**Vuma ngingene nami  
Ngigidze, nginyundzele, ngisikit' umoya,  
Ngihomb' imphumalanga nenyakatfo,  
Ngicephuke sengisho inshonalanga neningizimu,  
Bakhweshe bavula kakhulu ngigidze.**

(Allow me also to enter  
So that I can dance, defame move as though to strike the air  
Point to the east and north  
Jump and point to the west and south  
They move aside and open widely so that I can dance.)

### **2.6.1 Commentary on Swati odes**

In the poems studied above, it is seen that the ode is a poem addressed to some person or thing. Such poems are usually delivered during ceremonious occasions. These two characteristics shall be taken as yardstick in order to assess the acceptability of various odes in the development of Swati poetry.

A close examination reveals that the following poems may be regarded as Swati odes on the grounds of what the definitions define them to be: 'Lugedla LweMantimandzeni' by Magagula. Here Magagula eulogises a Swati ceremony when traditional healers (Traditional-healers) graduate after an acquisition of ritual skills. 'Tigulane' in the above passage refers to the newly qualified traditional healers who are now ready to take their places in society. 'Tijolojolo temakhambi' refers to the herbs used for healing. This is one of the biggest and most respected ceremonies of the Swatis. This is why the poet was so touched when he wrote this poem.

Ndlala, in the poem 'Kusagogomkhulu' is addressing the times of long ago when riots and thuggery were not the order of the day. He guarantees the safety of the day. He feels strongly that such a period in the history of the Swati people should be extolled.

Shongwe extols both King Sobhuza II and the day when Swaziland celebrated independence: this took place in 1968. It is therefore felt that 'Umkhosi wanga-1968' must be an ode whereby the Independence Day is praised. The above therefore appears to be ceremonious poems for the Swati people.

Finally, the theories studied about odes, and the examples of poems cited, make the researcher conclude that although Swati has only a few examples of odes, it can be asserted that Swati poetry has a positive development in odes.

## 2.7 PRAISE POETRY

Cope (1968:33) writes:

The Zulu praise poems have been likened to eulogies, odes and epics. The most apt description is eulogy, for the purpose of the poem is to praise its subject as favourably as possible. The Zulu eulogy is not a catalogue of conventional attributes, however, it aims to give an assessment of the subject that is consistent with reality.

According to Matsebula (1990), praises may be seen as follows:

Praises are the history of the one being praised. Praise poems of kings/chiefs contain the history of the kings and their entire country. According to the Swati culture, a king is named after another king. There is something interwoven between a name and a praise-name of a king.(Translated by the researcher.)

Matsebula (1990) compiled a collection of Swati poems. These poems are arranged into a volume called 'Tibongo Temakhosi AkaNgwane', containing 17 (seventeen) praise poems.

In one of these poems – 'Ngwane Wesi II' – Matsebula (1990:1) writes:

**Ngwane ufana nendlela  
Lendlela lesuka elwandle  
Iyewungena esitibeni sengwenya.**

(Ngwane is like a road  
A road which starts from the sea  
As far as to the pool of the crocodile.)

Nkwanyane (1991:44) in his 'Tibongo TaSikhulile Malaza' writes:

**Wena longesheya kweNkomazi,  
Lotibek' endzaweni lepholile,  
Man' ulalele weLuhlanga.**

(You are on the other side of the Nkomazi River  
Who enthroned himself at a cool place  
Just listen, you person of noble ancestry.)

Nkwanyana (1991:48) in his poem called 'Tibongo nge –K.D.C.' further writes:

**Embili K.D.C.  
Umhlaba wonkhe waKaNgwane uyakwati,  
Ngwane lonetimbali letingabuni,  
Letingantjintji nobe kuhhusha umoya  
Usutfufukise sive lesimphisholo**

(Forward K.D.C.  
All the people of KaNgwane know you  
Ngwane whose flowers never wilt,  
Flowers that do not change even if the wind is blowing  
You have developed the black people)

Zwane's work also shows a remarkable development of praise poetry. In his poem 'Tibongo ta-Apollo', Zwane (1984:27) writes:

**Inkonjane leluhlata,  
Leyachamuka ezulwini  
Ngobe ikhumuke timphiko  
Indiza ilibangise eKhumbula.**

(A green swallow  
Which came from heaven  
Because the wings had come off  
While flying towards Khumbula.)

Another qualifying poem in Swati praise poetry is seen in the work of Luphoko (1984:61) in his composition 'Tibongo ta-E.J. Mabuza', the late Chief Minister of the former KaNgwane Homeland:

**Ye Mshengu!  
Sivelamuva njengancibijane  
Ngekulandzel' emuv' etitsendzeni tendvodza,  
Wamlandzela Madletjan' eKhumbula,  
Wena wayihlahl' indlela.**

(Hey Mshengu!  
You who appeared afterwards like New Year  
You followed a man closely on his heels,  
You succeeded Madletjane at Khumbula  
And you paved the way forward.)

In a praise poem directed to Chief Sigwili, Lumphoko (1984:22) further writes:

**Litulu lelidvum' ekuseni KaMlambo  
Kwate kwachuchutel' ematfumbu' emadvodza,  
Aye ayawushayana ngetinhlok' eNkhanini.**

(The rain that thundered in the early morning at Mlambo's Kraal  
Until the men's intestines made a hard rapping noise  
They collided with their heads at Nkhanini.)

Another poem, which qualifies as a praise poem, is Ndlala's (1992:25) 'Enkhosini Mswati III':

**Mswati lomnyama kubakalutfuli!  
Mswati lonjengetintsaba teMdzimba!  
Mswati lonjengemalangab' emlilo!  
Mswati lojulile kwelulwandle!  
Embili zinyane laSomhlolo**

(Mswati who is black amongst the black  
Mswati who is like mountains of Mdzimba!  
Mswati who is like flames of fire!  
Mswati who is deep like an ocean!  
Forward you lamb of Somhlolo.)

In the poem 'Nkunzi Yaketfu' Ndlala (1992:30) further writes:

**Nkunzi lekhonye kwatamatama iPitoli,  
Ibhodle kuMananga kwasiphuka tidzinzi,  
Yabhavumula eMdzabu kwash' imisinga.**

(The bull, which bellowed, and Pretoria trembled,  
It bellowed at Mananga and turves were uprooted  
It bellowed at Mdzabu and whirlpools dried up.)

This study also reveals another development of Swati praise poetry in the work of Magagula. In the poem ‘Gobela Wematfwasane’ Magagula (1992:5) praises a cow when he writes:

**Nsengwakati yakitsi emaNgwaneni,  
Leyehlise yatingcabisha tonkhe  
Tinsengwakati takho Vekati  
Lelisentansi nawe Afrika ...**

(You heavy-milking cow of ours  
Which yielded abundant milk  
More than any other cows  
In Southern Afrika ...)

### **2.7.1 Commentary on Swati praise poetry**

This study reveals that Swati praise poetry is divided into two categories, namely traditional and modern praise poetry. The investigation has revealed that the distinction between the two types of poetry is not clear. Both types praise a hero or tell us about the history of a hero. Both narrate about the success and difficulties experienced by the one being praised. It was also seen that the praise poems in these anthologies do not praise human beings only, but inanimate objects are also given praise, as Msimang indicates in his definition of a praise poem.

Although the researcher cannot see the difference between traditional poetry and modern poetry, this has, however, pointed out that Mathebula – in his volume ‘Tibongo TemaKhosi akaNgwane’ – has a collection of purely traditional poetry, whilst the other poems are being regarded as modern praise poems. Matsebula praises Swati Kings who lived long ago, while the other poets praise modern people and things. Zwane for instance, praises Apollo, which was a school bus that took school children to Khumbula Secondary School during the late sixties and the early seventies.

Nkwanyane, in his volume, simply praises Chief Malaza and the K.D.C. (KaNgwane Development Corporation). These two poets have made tremendous contributions to the poetry of the Swati people. Luphoko praises E.J. Mabuza, who was a Chief Minister of

KaNgwane, for the good work and brave deeds he contributed. Lumphoko also praises chief Sigwili of the Mlambo tribe in the district of Mbuzini. The latter chief was also a hero in the history of the Swati people.

Ndlala praises King Mswati III, the present King of the Swati people. Ndlala goes further to praise his own brother who qualified at Medunsa as a dentist. Magagula in his poem 'Gobela Wematfwasane' praises Mgwenya College of Education where he qualified as a teacher.

It is therefore concluded that praise poetry has thus developed well.

## 2.8 SATIRE

Grambs (1984:323) defines satire as:

The use of humour with ridicule to expose vice, folly, pretension  
or the like, pointed literary mockery, irony or wit.

Fowler and Fowler (1911:1072) formulate the satire in another way:

The use of ridicule, irony, sarcasm etc. to expose folly or vice or to lampoon an  
Individual.

This study will delve into the development of Swati poetry in order to find out to what degree it has developed regarding the composition of satiric poetry. Although the following examples do not have elements of ridicule, mock, irony or sarcasm but condemn directly, they however denounce faults of mankind which need to be rectified by society.

Tembe (1991:12) in 'Vila Voco' was trying to compose a satire. His effort is spoilt because it is prosaic:

**Vila voco wetsembeni?  
Nankha ematfunti antsambama  
Soloku uhlalele mankanjana,**

**Soloku ubheke bekubanjelwa  
 Ubanjelwa nje takho tiguu na?  
 Hamba! Hamba! Uyosebenta**

(You lazy person, what do you rely on?  
 Here are the shadows of the evening  
 You are busy drinking mainstay  
 You want to be given beer for free  
 Do you want beer for nothing, is your hand amputated?  
 Go! Go! And work.)

A poem of this type is also seen in the anthology of Lophoko (1984:17) in his poem 'Nifike Kahle':

**Hambani nabo bangasabuyi  
 Ete sakhona kuhlala netinswelaboya,  
 Nifike kahle bosathane ndzini,  
 Late lanishonela lamuhla,  
 Bosathane laba.**

(Go with them for good:  
 we cannot stay with cannibals,  
 you arrived well, you silly devils,  
 it is your day today,  
 you devils.)

The other example is seen in the poem 'Isahara'. In this poem, Shongwe (1985:5) uses irony and sarcasm in addressing the evils of the desert as he says:

**Sahara ngiphendvule:  
 Ufunani kuleli, uyohlala kube nini?  
 Wevelaphi Sahara? Bayetsaba  
 Labashiywe nguwe mcindzeteli.**

(Answer me, Sahara:  
 What do you want from this country?  
 For how long are you going to stay here?  
 Where did you come from, Sahara?  
 They are happy those you left, you oppressor.)

In his poem 'Inftombi Yalamuhla', Hlongwane (1990:21) writes a satiric poem as follows:

**Wo, ye Lawo malanga sekacwila  
Sikhatsi sabulala layitolo  
Satala lalamuhla, hha! Laphila  
Lafuna kwalo kabha kutsi nja!**

(Oh, hey! Those days are gone  
Time changed all things of yesterday,  
And gave birth to this modern day,  
Oh! It succeeded. It wanted its own things to thrive at daytime.)

To those people who are selfish, Ndlala (1992:20) writes the following in his poem ‘Yeneliswa’:

**Kutsant’ umbonile Lomfundvo wamfisa,  
Itol’ umbonile Njingile walangatela  
Lamuhl’ umbonile amuhle watsatseka  
Ukutfolile loko, nanyal’ usengakasutsi?  
Nalamuhl’ usalok’ ubang’ emabili?  
Umbonile Mbango wawushis’ umbango  
Phumula! Phumula! Nyalo.**

(The day before yesterday you saw an educated person – you envied him  
Yesterday you saw a rich man and you became ambitious,  
Today you saw him being handsome and got taken  
You got it, are you not satisfied now?  
Even today you are still persisting?  
Rest! Rest! Now!)

### **2.8.1 Commentary on Swati satires**

All authors, in their definitions, agree that a satire is an act of attacking any wickedness, folly or abuse by mockery. What I liked about these definitions is the opinion given by Peck, namely that the aim of a satire is not to destroy but to correct man’s behaviour in society. Tembe, in his poem ‘Vila Voco’ attacks a lazy person who loiters around the streets all day long – drinking beer or sleeping! He encourages this lazy person to go to work as he says ‘Hamba! Hamb’ uyosebenta.’ Anyone who reads this poem feels motivated although the motivation appears in the form of mockery.



Luphoko mocks the criminals and shoplifters in his poem 'Nifike kahle'. He is glad that these silly people are arrested. He believes that these people will be rehabilitated so that they can become responsible members of society.

Shongwe, in his poem 'Sahara' attacks the social injustice brought in this country by apartheid. His view is that if apartheid – which he calls 'Sahara' – could be dismantled, there would be peace and prosperity in the country. He sees this 'Sahara' as an oppressor. The metaphoric nature of the 'Sahara Desert' to Apartheid, amongst others, is the dryness of the desert, the feeling of uncertainty, lifelessness as well as hunger. His dream came true when apartheid was buried on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1994.

Hlongwane writes a satire about the present teenage girls comparing these teenagers with the girls who used to respect the values and norms of the Swati community. The modern girls show a decline in values and norms. In his 'Intfombi Sibili valamuhle' he mocks this bad behaviour in the form of a satire.

There are lots of people in the society who are very selfish! These people feel that everything should be theirs. It is this selfish desire that makes Ndlala, in his poem 'Yeneliswa', ridicule this foolish act. He encourages people to be satisfied with what they have at their disposal at a given juncture.

Finally, all examples of satires quoted, aim at improving different attitudes in society. This study found that the aim of each poet, through his/her satire, is to correct that which is undesirable in the society. Seeing it from this viewpoint, Swati poets have succeeded to write satirical poems.

## 2.9 SONNETS

Fowler (1973:228) defines the sonnet as follows:

Technically the sonnet is easy to identify: Fourteen lines divided (usually) by rhyme and argument into units of eight lines (octave) and six lines (sestet). Petrarch's rhyme-scheme (abba, abba, cde, cde) was significantly different from Shakespeare's (abab, cdcd, efef, gg) which

has more ironic possibilities.

Scott (1929:272) also defines the sonnet as follows:

A poem of fourteen lines in pentameter verse form. The Italian sonnet is divided by a pause into an octave and a sestet. The octave, consisting of two quatrains, rhymes abba, abba. This sestet, consisting of two tercets, rhymes cdc, dcd. In the English or Shakespearean sonnet, the lines are grouped into three quatrains and a concluding couplet, rhyming: abab, cdcd, efef, gg.

It is noted that both the above definitions have a common element, namely that the sonnet is a short poem of fourteen pentameter lines with certain fixed rhyme schemes.

This study shall explore the development of Swati against the background of what has been learnt from the above definitions.

In the anthologies, the researcher has investigated thoroughly all fifteen poems having fourteen lines. He discovered that none of them had any features of the sonnet.

The following poem, written by Ndlala (1992:19), with the title ‘Shongololo Lemisokosoko’ (train of the mountains) is one example of what he discovered to be the status quo of Swati sonnets:

**Bamit’ ubacedzel’ ematfunjini,  
Uchekete tintsaba uwel’ imifula,  
Unwebek’ ufinyel’ ubangembili  
Uvule tintsab’ uyij’ emaweni.**

(Swallow them and put them in the intestines,  
Open the mountains and cross the rivers,  
Expand, contract and go forward  
Open the mountains and turn through the cliff.)

The above quotation from Ndlala has a rhyme scheme of abbb, which is not a feature of the sonnet in either Italian or English. Every poet uses his/her rhyme scheme differently, depending on where the sonnets originated.

The researcher concluded that regarding the writing of Swati sonnets; no real attempt has been made so far.

### **2.9.1 Commentary on Swati sonnets**

The first determining factor employed by the study was to examine the validity of Swati sonnets by investigating these sonnets according to their rhyme schemes. It is naked truth that sonnets originated in Europe. These sonnets had peculiar rhyme schemes, namely abba, abba, cde, cde according to the Petrarchian classification, whilst the Shakespearean sonnets have a rhyme scheme of abba, cdcd, effe, gg. Going thoroughly through all fifteen poems, this study concluded that none of them followed the Shakespearean or the Petrarchian rhyme schemes. The above extract is an example of what these fifteen poems – regarded as sonnets – look like.

The octave and the sestet (Italian sonnet), the three quatrains and the concluding couplet (English sonnet) are not visible in any of the fifteen poems studied.

Had the Swati poets forced matters to follow the rhyme schemes emanated in England and Italy, their compositions would have been artificial and mechanical. This, however, does not debar Swati poets from trying to write sonnets employing the formulae that were used as per the definitions cited earlier.

### **2.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter made an effort to classify and to define the various types of poetry found in Swati. Each poem was examined scrupulously in order to test its validity and acceptability. Certain suggestions and appreciation, regarding the efforts made, were made throughout the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. THEMES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is the careful study of a theme given in various sources, particularly by European writers who give various definitions of the concept theme. An attempt will be made to classify the poems into categories according to their themes. Then it will be explored how Swati poetry has developed regarding the handling of themes in their work.

It must, however, be asserted that it is not easy to classify poetry according to themes because some of the poems overlap, causing uncertainty concerning the correct classification. Ntuli (1978:58) also confirms this classificatory problem.

Despite the variety of themes in literature, this work shall consider the following themes: Nature, love, education, death, religion, politics and inspirational poetry.

Each poem will therefore be assessed against the theoretical background of themes given to scholars in their definitions as stated above.

#### **3.2 DEFINITION OF THEME**

According to Shaw (1905:378) theme is:

The central and dominating idea in a literary work.

A close examination of theme reveals that the above definition sees theme as the core of the story or poem, which contains the clue of what the story is all about.

For Scott (1929:291) theme is:

The subject on which one speaks; the term is more often used to indicate its central idea.

Scott, therefore, agrees with Shaw and Pretorius in the way they see what theme is. All three authors agree that it is a central idea in any literary work.

Another definition of theme is seen in the work of Cuddon (1976:695) who defines it as shown below:

Properly speaking, the theme of a work is not its subject but rather its central idea which may be stated directly or indirectly.

According to Cuddon it is always easy to capture a theme of any literary work in the sense that one has to delve deeply in order to bring to the surface what the work has in store for the reader. This is what is called ‘indirect’ to Cuddon’s definition cited above. Furthermore, we note that Cuddon agrees with other authors that theme is the central idea of a story.

### **3.3 HISTORICAL FIGURES**

#### **3.3.1 Introduction**

By historical in this work, the researcher shall be referring to facts of history which are true and authentic. Figures in this context shall mean important persons known in the history of the Swati and Zulu people.

This work shall discuss the following historical figures: Sobhuza WesiBili, E.J. Mabuza, Shaka and Mswati III.

##### **3.3.1.1 Sobhuza WesiBili**

In the poem ‘Sobhuza Wesibili’ (Bhuza the Second) Tembe (1991:36) praises King Sobhuza, the monarch who ruled the Kingdom of Swaziland longer than any other Swati Kings that ever lived before. Tembe further says it is King Sobhuza who brought independence to Swaziland.

**Yebo nobe sewulele,  
Emavi akho sisawalalela  
“Tsatsani lokuhle nishiye lokubi kulabo**

**Labandlebe tikhanya lilanga”**

(Yes, even when you are dead  
we still respect your advice  
“Take what is good and leave what is bad  
from those white people”)

(Tembe, 1991:36)

In this poem Tembe’s intention is to convey a message of respect for the late king. The word ‘sewulele’ is used here euphemistically to respect that the king is not alive anymore. The above passage also conveys a message that the king was a peace loving person who wanted his people to adhere to their culture and also to select what is good from the western culture.

### **3.3.1.2 E.J. Mabuza**

In the poem ‘Tibongo ta-E.J. Mabuza’ (Praises of E.J. Mabuza), Lumphoko writes an appreciation directed to Mabuza who was the Chief Minister of the former KaNgwane Homeland. The poet does not appreciate him simply because he was a leader but because his victorious deeds warranted him to be appreciated.

The following lines tell how Mabuza rescued the South African born Swatis:

**Ngob’ ubabel’ ePitoli,  
Basavungatela nalamuhla  
Akabang’ asawuval’ umlomo Piti.**

(Because you are going to Pretoria,  
they are still murmuring even today  
Piet was stunned.)

(Lumphoko, 1986:64)

The above stanza tells a sad story that occurred between 1982 and 1984 when the then South African Government announced a decree that the Swatis in the Republic of South Africa were to be incorporated into the Kingdom of Swaziland. Piet Koornhof was an official representing the apartheid Government. Mabuza objected to this decision. After a long protest, which took

three years, the Supreme Court dismissed the decision in Pretoria. Mabuza won the case in 1984.

The word 'basavungatela' in the above lines depicts that even today the world is still astonished by how Mabuza defeated the South African Government.

### 3.3.1.3 Shaka

In the poem 'Lembe unguShaka' (Shaka, you are a Hero) Shongwe (1985:12) writes about the heroic deeds of King Shaka who is well known today for his deeds of building a nation, the well-known Zulu nation. The whole poem praises this great son of Africa. To portray what this brave son of the soil did, Shongwe writes the following lines:

**Bewutfunywe nguLunyawolunye  
Kubumba wakhe sive  
Lelamuhla sibalwa netive temhlaba**

(God sent you  
To unite a nation  
Which is today counted with other nations of the world)

(Shongwe, 1985:12)

It is true that the Zulu nation is one of the strongest and largest nations in South Africa. It is this wisdom that makes the history of this brave man known all over the world.

In the second stanza of this poem, Shongwe tells his readers how brave King Shaka was. The poet says when there was a war, Shaka did not stay at his palace; he became a participant in the battle. – a warrior.

In stanza 6 of this poem, the poet further tells us about the historical development of the Nguni language, isiZulu in particular, which is spoken nearly throughout Southern Africa today.

### 3.3.1.4 Mswati III

Ndlala's poem on Mswati, entitled 'Enkhosini Mswati III' (To King Mswati III), is a praise directed to the present monarch of Swaziland, King Mswati III who succeeded his late father, King Sobhuza II.

With King Sobhuza as the ruler and king of the Kingdom of Swaziland, the poet gives the history of this young king – who was enthroned at the age of 18 – in the following lines:

**Kujutjwa tayitolo kuphela  
Kantsi kujutjwa tayitolo nalamuhla.**

(They pluck sticks of yesterday only  
Whereas the sticks of yesterday and today are plucked.)

(Ndlala, 1992:28)

'Lamuhla' in the above two lines symbolises the king who was very young when he was inaugurated. People could not believe that the young king would be able to carry out his late father's heavy load.

In the first stanza the poet describes the king as seen in the following lines:

**Mswati lonjengetintsaba teMdzimba,  
Mswati lonjengemalangab' emlilo  
Mswati lojulile kwelulwandle'**

(Mswati is like the mountains of Mdzimba,  
Mswati is like flames of fire,  
Mswati is deep like an ocean.)

(Ndlala, 1992:28)

The poet sees King Mswati III as a mountain. A mountain is a large heap of stones and rocks, very high, always present in its current place, during day and night, during good and bad weather. It is unshakeable, very strong and not easy to destroy. Its top sees all corners of the environment. So is the king according to the description given to him by the poet. He is always watchful – he is a real mountain.



King Mswati III, who was crowned Ngwenyama of Swaziland on April 25, 1986, is seen by the poet as a mountain, which means that he is a very strong and watchful person. He watches his flock (emaSwati), the nation he inherited from his father, King Sobhuza. He watches the land of his ancestors. It is this strength as well as the vigilance that will give him power to rule over the entire nation. Apart from being strong and watchful, the poet also likens the king to flames of fire. Fire is a symbol of destruction and also of life. This king is able to conquer the enemies so that his people can enjoy a perfect life.

‘Lwandle Lolujulile’ (deep ocean) brings the impression that the king is profound and unfathomable. The sea is deep and clever in the sense that it knows its boundaries and it can remove any objects not belonging to it (the sea).

Matsebula (1990:35) also gives an exposition of the history of King Mswati III. In the second stanza of his poem ‘Mswati we-III’ Matsebula explains why the name of the young king had to be ‘Makhosetive’. The meaning is brought forward as follows:

**Watsi naba boMshweshwe, umSutfu,  
Naba boZwelithini, UmZulu,  
Lawa ngemakhosi etive  
NguMakhosetive lotawusikela emaLangeni**

(He said: Here is Moshoeshe, a Sotho  
Here is Zwelithini, a Zulu,  
These are kings of nations  
Makhosetive will rule the emalangen)

(Matsebula, 1990:35)

King Sobhuza II made preparations for the Independence celebrations that were held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1968, only a few months after the prince was born.

Because the King expected kings and heads of states from many other countries, amongst his dignitaries were King Zwelithini of KwaZulu and King Mshweshwe of Lesotho. “Because of this occurrence, King Sobhuza called his young son Makhosetive, which means King of all nations” (Ginindza, 1986:6). The two poems are dominated by a mood of praise and trust.

In his work, Matsebula (1990) writes a line on each of the Swazi Kings. The following schematic presentation from Ginindza (1986) forms a basic interpretation of Matsebula's work:

### THE KING OF SWAZILAND

The new King of Swaziland is  
 the son of Sobhuza II  
 the son of Mahlokohla,  
 the son of Mbandzeni  
 the son of Mswati  
 the son of Somhlolo  
 the son of Ndvungunye,  
 the son of Ngwane  
 the son of Dlamini  
 all kings of Swaziland.

#### DLAMINI I



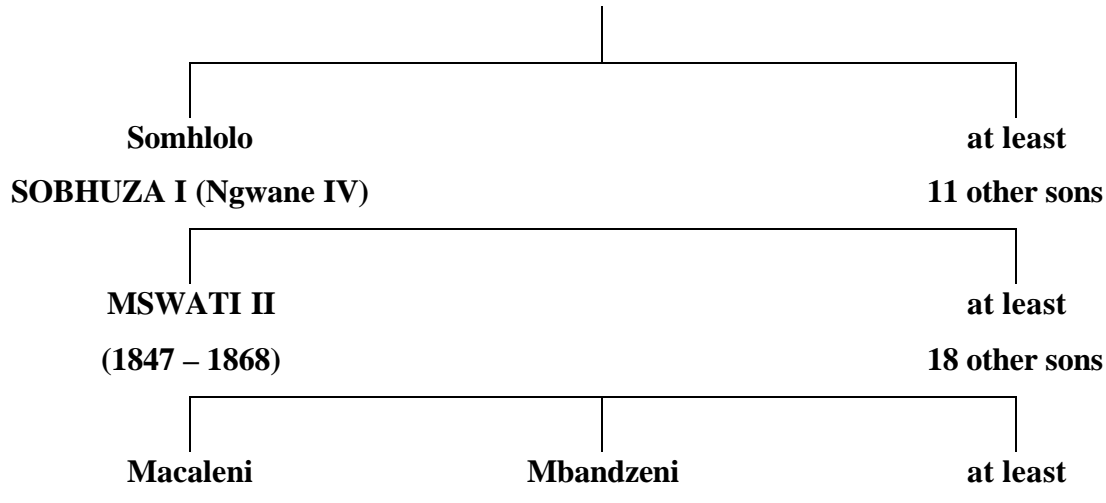
#### DLAMINI III

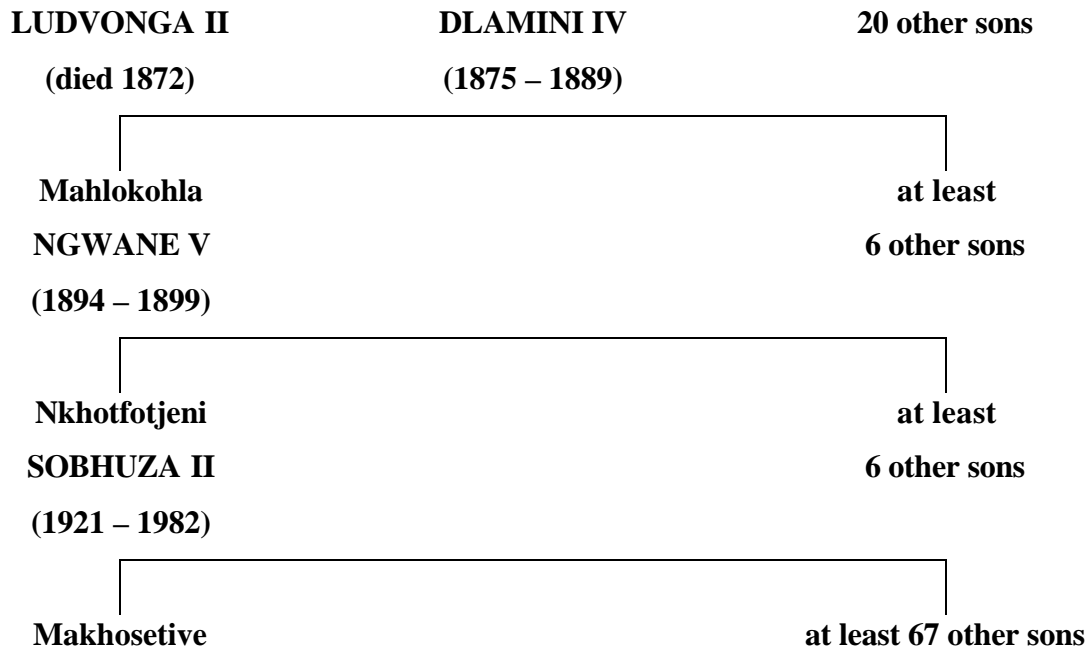


#### NGWANE III (DIED 1815)



#### NDVUNGUNYE ( 1780 – 1815)





(Ginindza, 1986:5)

### 3.4 HISTORICAL EVENTS

#### 3.4.1 Introduction

By ‘historical events’ in this work, the researcher shall be referring to very important events that took place in the history of the Swati people of South Africa and in other parts of the continent. Events that will be discussed are the following:

- Umkhosi Wanga-1968 (The Swaziland Independence of 1968);
- Limfemfe Lemkhatsi (The spacecraft of 1969);
- The war between the Swati and the Sotho people; and
- Sikhatsa Semlilo (The draught of 1982).

### 3.4.1.1 Independence

Shongwe (1985:14) writes ‘Umkhosi Wanga – 1968’ to remind his readers about the independence celebration of 1968. This has become an annual event which is celebrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September every year. In this poem, Shongwe writes as follows:

**Libuyile maSwati libuyile  
Lebeseligwinywe badzeshi beNgilandi  
Sebalihlephule laba ticintsi  
Bekayawutsini Mswati selinje?**

(The land of the Swati people has been restored  
Whites of England swallowed it  
They have divided it into plots  
What would Mswati have said in this regard?)

(Shongwe, 1985:14)

This ceremonious event was started by King Sobhuza II as a thanksgiving ceremony for having reclaimed Swaziland from the English people. This celebration was held at the then newly opened Somhlolo Stadium at Lobamba as well as in the Ezulwini Valley. Today the 6<sup>th</sup> of September is still a public holiday for the entire Kingdom of Swaziland. The poem is about the return of Swaziland (which was governed by Great Britain at that time) to its legitimate owners – the Swati people.

### 3.4.1.2 Space

Magagula appears with another historical event in his poem entitled ‘Limfemfe Lemkhatsi’ (The spacecraft).

In this poem the poet gives an account of the dramatic event which took place in America when American astronauts landed on the moon in 1969.

Concerning this event, Magagula has this to say:

**Neil Armstrong na-Edwin Aldrin behlela enyangeni  
Ngelikhonyane lelincanyana Eagle phela,  
Michael Collins wasa' ashaya situnguletane kuColombia,  
Neil Armstrong wangcimula kunyatsela enyangeni.**

(Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin descended to the moon  
With a little calf called Eagle,  
Michael Collins remained inside Colombia moving round the moon,  
Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon.)

(Magagula, 1992:3)

This event caused astonishment in the entire world because nobody ever thought that man could land on a planet such as the moon.

The mood in this poem is full of praise and congratulations.

### **3.4.1.3 War**

In the poem 'Umklezi Wemahlwili' (The drinker of blood) Magagula reminds his readers about a battle which was fought between the Swazis and the Sothos (Pedis):

**KaMhuluhulu yantjaza yakhaphis' ingati,  
Kwabhobok' imifula yengati netiyalu tetinyembeti,  
Nemphi yemaNgwane nebaPedi yaphotfulwa lapho.**

(At Mhuluhulu the blood gushed out  
Rivers of blood and a bubbling spring of tears squirted.  
The battle between the emaNgwane and the Pedis was fought and completed there.)

(Magagula, 1992:9)

The word 'kleza' literally means to milk into the mouth from a cow's udder and 'emahlwili' refers to the clotting of blood. 'Kleza', therefore, symbolically gives a picture of the intensity of this war where – instead of drinking any liquid – the warriors had no other option but to drink the blood of their enemies.

This was a fierce battle which took place on a mountain called Mhuluhulu, situated in the Limpopo Province. The word 'yantjaza' in the above lines explains clearly that many lives were lost. In stanza one, Magagula tells the reader that King Mswati I, at his palace Hhohho in Swaziland, was the one who sent an army to go and attack the Pedi Tribe. Towards the end of the last stanza Magagula gives an indication that the arbitrator, who settled the dispute, came from England.

#### 3.4.1.4 Fire

'Sikhatsa Semlilo' (large glowing fire) is also one of Magagula's works. In this poem, as shown below, Magagula explains how deeply he was touched when the 1981-1982 severe drought devastated the entire Southern Africa. Magagula sees this drought as a large flame of fire coming to destroy everything that had been alive.

In the following lines, which the researcher sees as prosaic, Magagula (1992:19) has this to say concerning this event:

**Lonkhe leliseNingizimu ne-Africa,  
Lakhala siyoyo layoyota,  
Likhaliswa yindlala yekudla nemanti  
Ngeminyaka yabo 1981 na-1982.**

(The entire of Southern Africa,  
cried bitterly because of  
hunger and thirst  
during the years 1981 and 1982.)

The words 'lakhala' and 'siyoyo' tell how destructive the drought was. It caused distress to all animate beings as hunger and poverty could not be avoided.

This horrific event will remain a historical event to everyone who witnessed it during the years in which it attacked its victims.

### 3.5 HISTORICAL PLACES

This work has revealed that there are only a few poems in Swati whose theme is about historical places. It must be noted that by a historical place this research work will mean places that bear the true history experienced in the lives of the Swati people.

### 3.5.1 Ekwaluseni

In the poem ‘Likhweti Lekwaluseni’ (The morning star of Ekwaluseni) Magagula praises Ekwaluseni for the education it offers to the Swati nation. Ekwaluseni, which is praised here, is a well-known Swati University in Swaziland. Many Swatis have graduated and qualified at this University and that is why Magagula feels it needs to be praised for its magnificent work.

**Kwaluseni ulubhaca nenkhanyeti  
Uhol’ umhlaba uwukhombela inyathelo.**

(Kwaluseni, you are a lamp and a star  
You lead the world and show it the way.)

(Magagula, 1992:15)

‘Lubhaca’ refers to a stalk of ‘tambootie’ grass used as a torch for lighting in the hut. Magagula uses these words, the lamp and the star to symbolise education and civilisation which the Swati nation acquire from this University. ‘Inyathelo’ is a Nguni ‘nhlonipho’ term for ‘indlela’ and the word ‘indlela’ is a symbol for wisdom that leads the nation to success.

### 3.5.2 Barberton

It is well-known history that gold was discovered in the Barberton District, which is situated in the land of the Swati people in the Mpumalanga Province. Magagula writes about the discovery of goldfields in the region, in his poem ‘Emdzibini yeMjindini’ (The goldfields of Barberton). He appreciates the great deal of work done by the mineworkers in bringing gold from deep within the earth to the surface.

**Ngangingulomunye wenu tambane,  
Sishona emajukujukwini emhlaba  
Emdzibini yegoli eMjindini.**

(I was one of you, miners  
Descending into the depth of the earth  
Of the goldfield of Barberton.)

(Magagula, 1992:25)

‘Tambane’ (moles) are small animals living underground. They dig a hole in order to live there. The poet says the miners are moles (‘tambane’) in the sense that they (the miners) are also digging within the earth in search of minerals. According to the poet, miners and moles perform the same function, namely the function of digging in the ground.

### 3.5.3 Mgwenya College of Education

Another historical place highly admired by the Swati people, was the then Mgwenya College of Education. This was the first college witnessed by Swatis of the Republic of South Africa. Teachers started to be trained there and it is clear that Magagula received his highest qualifications from this educational institution.

Magagula designated this college ‘Gobela wematfwasane’ (a qualified traditional healer who trains unqualified traditional healers during apprenticeship). His tribute reads as follows:

**Nsengwakati yakitsi emaNgwaneni  
Leyehlise yatingcabisha tonkhe  
Tinsengwakati takho vekati  
Lelisentansi nawe Afrika.**

(You heavy-milking cow of ours  
which gives much milk,  
more than any  
other cows in South.Africa)

(Magagula, 1992:5)

‘Nsengwakati’ is vocatively used here as a metaphor referring to the college which gives education and training to the entire country.

Elijah C. Mango, the then Minister of the former KaNgwane Education, spoke indelibly concerning the historical nature of the college when Mgwenya celebrated her tenth anniversary in 1985. He said: “The celebration of the tenth anniversary of Mgwenya College of Education gives us an unique and historic occasion to reaffirm our confidence in its product.”

(Mgwenya College of Education, 1985:4)



### 3.6 NATURE

This research work has disclosed that during the development of Swati poetry, most poems are about nature. For the purpose of convenience the following classification will be employed: rivers, plants, animals, mountains, seasons, drought and heavenly bodies.

#### 3.6.1 Rivers

##### 3.6.1.1 Nkomazi River

In the poem ‘Umfula iNkomazi’ (The Komati River) Shongwe gives his appreciation with regard to this river. He praises the importance of the river for it always renders admirable service to all animate beings. Shongwe admires the power of creation which one cannot divorce from nature. This river, according to the poet, originates in the Transvaal Highveld, flows through Swaziland and finally pours its water into the Indian Ocean. Shongwe continues towards the end to say that the iNkomazi River does not discriminate when he says:

**Gijima njalo Nkomazi  
Uphakele ungenalo lubandlululo**

(Run always Nkomazi  
Dish without discrimination)

(Magagula, 1985:11)

The tone and feeling is that of being thankful to this river for what it does. The name of this river ‘iNkomati’ gives it qualities of a woman. It is with appreciation that Shongwe sees ‘this woman’ performing heavy burdens that men cannot do. He says:

**Hamba nkhosikati lemabelebele**

(Go woman with multi breasts)  
(Shongwe, 1985:10)

### 3.6.1.2 Nkomazi River

In the poem ‘Sigodzi seNkomazi’ (The Valley of Nkomazi River) Tembe expresses appreciation towards this river. Apart from telling us about the movement of the water, he agrees with Shongwe that it is a source of life for many people. He sees many people who are fed by this river gathered around Mbabane.

He puts his views as shown below:

**Kantsi ujikeleta ubhek’ eMbabane  
Lapho kuhlala khona labaningi.**

(Whereas you turn about flowing towards Mbabane  
where many people live.)

(Tembe, 1991:35)

The extract also illustrates that this river does not discriminate in terms of colour. The word ‘labaningi’ is completely inclusive telling us that both black and white benefit from the iNkomazi River.

### 3.6.1.3 Mlumati River

In the poem ‘Mlumati’ (The Mlumati River), Vilane is giving an outline of the Mlumati River. She sees this river as a natural habitat for many aquatic animals – harmless as well as dangerous. She also sees this river as the backbone of many people. She writes as follows:

**Tingwenya takho tiyaluma Mlumati  
Timvubu takho atishiyi lutf’ emasimini**

(Your crocodiles kill, Mlumati  
your hippos destroy plants in the field)

(Vilane, 1988:15)

The impression given by the poet here is that it is dangerous to come close to the river. The tone and feeling contained is that of being frightened.

### 3.6.2 Plants

#### 3.6.2.1 Flowers

In the poem 'Mbali' (flower) Tembe gives a sweet admiration for a flower growing in the veld. The poet is moved when he looks at this beautiful creation for it brings him pleasure. In the second stanza the poet says he was inspired by this flower to write poetry:

**Ngakubona mbali ngakutsandza  
Uchakatile etigangeni takitsi**

(I saw you flower and loved you,  
you were blooming in the veld)

(Tembe, 1991:37)

It is therefore evident that the beauty of the flower attracts the poet and sets a tone that is both pleasurable and admirable.

#### 3.6.2.2 Wilting flowers

In the poem 'Mbali lebunako' (A wilting flower) Ndlala writes to express displeasure concerning a flower that does not bloom like that one of Tembe. The poet starts off nicely, giving an appreciation of this flower as he says:

**Wawuchakat' uhlobis' imvelo**

(You were blooming beautifying nature)

(Ndlala, 1992:15)

In the thirteenth line the sweet memories of the poet drop tremendously, resulting in a change of mood to show displeasure and discomfort. The poet expresses this as follows:

**Kodvwa LAMUHLA SEWUYABUNA**

(Today you are wilting)

(Ndlala, 1992:15)

The capitalised words in the above quotation are contrary to the former quotation in the sense that they portray the poet as a very discouraged person. That is why one would regard the tone as one of discouragement

### **3.6.3 Animals**

#### **3.6.3.1 Birds**

In the poem ‘Nyoni lencane’ (Little bird) Zwane hears a little bird singing a very sad song. He worries about the fact that this little bird should sing differently from all other birds because they do not sing melancholy tunes. The poet tries – but in vain – to find out why this bird is so sorrowful. It is hard to get a solution, as birds cannot speak any language which man can understand. The poet knows that it is only God who can give this little bird protection.

**Umculo wakaNyoni uletsa injabulo  
Kodvwa wakho ngiwuva uletsa indvumalo**

(The singing of birds brings pleasure  
but yours is heard to be bringing disappointment)

(Zwane, 1984:44)

The tone that this poem contains is that of being sympathetic and longing for more knowledge about the sadness of this little bird.

#### **3.6.3.2 Egrets**

In his poem ‘Malanda tinyoni letimhlophe’ (egrets, white birds) Tembe gives an admiring picture concerning egrets. He sees the birds flying up in the sky and wishes that he could fly across the oceans with them, to where he could find the happiness and satisfaction of this world. In verse five, the poet is in a begging mood where he artistically requests the egrets to consider his plea in a favourable manner. We see this happens as follows:

**Malanda, tinyoni letimhlophe,  
Ekuncengeni kwami ngiveleni,  
Tifiso tami tiboneni**

(Egrets, white birds  
hear me when I beg  
consider my wishes)

(Tembe, 1991:32)

The poet is in a complete begging mood. He wishes to fly away with these birds in order to set himself free from the frustrations of this world.

### **3.6.3.3    Ants**

In ‘Incangosi’ (An ant) Makaula is looking at an ant and becomes totally fascinated. This ant, which is being watched, works daily without any instruction given to him. He wishes he could resemble this ant by also working independently. This is a diligent creature that works hard for the survival of its children, which is exactly the reason why the poet yearns to look at it forever. He says:

**Ngibone incangosi  
Iyasebenta  
Icabangela bantfwabayoy.**

(I saw an ant  
It was working  
It is thinking for its children.)

(Makaula, 1985:4)

The tone here is that of motivating people to work hard and think about the future just as good as this little ant is doing.

### 3.6.4 Mountains

#### 3.6.4.1 Table Mountain

The poem 'Esicongweni seTable Mountain' (At the top of Table Mountain) is about Shongwe's effort to give the mountain a natural description. He is at the summit of this mountain and is admiring the secrecy of creation. He is stunned and starts talking to this wonderful mountain. He asks rhetorical questions such as 'Nguwe lo Table Mountain? Ngitawukhuluma ngitsini kuwe?' – anxious to know how the mountain came into existence. He requests it to give him more information so that he could write down how the whites came here for the first time. The poet will never get rest without hearing the answers from this mountain. He says:

**Anginako kuphumula ngingakeva  
Liphimbo lakho nkunzi yakitsi**

(I shall not get rest  
without hearing your voice)

(Shongwe, 1985:1)

The poet is highly inspired and is ready to acquire any piece of information the mountain may give him.

#### 3.6.4.2 Lubombo Mountains

In the poem 'Lubombo' (The Lubombo Mountains) Vilane pays these mountains absolute respect and allegiance, for a lot of the history of the Swatis is based on these mountains, namely 'wacedza Lubombo ngekuhlehetela' (You wandered the whole of the Lubombo Mountains). The poet looks at the mountains and is reminded of the Tembe tribe who – after passing over the Lubombo Mountains – arrived in Swaziland and thus became the Nkhosi Dlamini. The poet urges the Swati people to pay the Lubombo Mountains respect. She says:

**Dloti lemadloti.**

**Khokho wesive semaSwati  
Siyakuhlonipha, unemusa**

(Ancestral spirit.  
Ancestor of the Swati people  
We salute you, you are kind)

(Vilane, 1986:16)

The poet says the Lubombo Mountain is kind ('inemusa') because when the history of the Swatis started, the Lubombo gave them refuge. The South African Government made this a boundary between South Africa and Mozambique – with no compensation. That is why the poet sees the Lubombo as kind. The mountains are – according to the poet – given a respectable status and the last line wishes them an everlasting life.

### **3.6.5 Seasons**

#### **3.6.5.1 Spring**

A season is a natural phenomenon. In the poem 'Kutivisa ngentfwasahlobo' (To enjoy Springtime) Hlongwane gives his personal experience concerning springtime. He reminds us that during this season life is very enjoyable and is pleasing to one's eye. The poet is fascinated with the beauty of nature in spring and feels he should share this experience with his fellow people.

**Tigcoka emacembe lasetawalahla,  
Lapho luhlata lwent' umhlaba ube musha, kantsi futsi  
Lapho tinyoni tihlabel' ingoma ledvudvut' umphefumulo wami**

(They wear leaves which they are about to shed  
Where greenness renews nature, and  
Where birds sing a song that comforts my soul)

(Hlongwane, 1990:26)

Apart from admiring the beauty of nature, the poet here feels emotionally relieved by the sweet music sung by the birds. From this, one gets the impression that Hlongwane does not get as much emotional satisfaction during the other three seasons of the year, as he does in spring.

### 3.6.6 Drought

#### 3.6.6.1 Sahara Desert

In the poem 'iSahara' (The Sahara Desert) Shongwe writes about his sad experience concerning the Sahara Desert. He says this desert is encroaching the country to cause damage. The poet is afraid that this desert will at last conquer the entire country if there is no one brave enough to defeat it.

**Ngubani longalwa nawe Sahara?  
Seloku wefika ugcishatela ngenkhani,  
Seloku wavela webe yonkhe imphilo**

(Who can fight with you, Sahara?  
Since you came, you move around obstinately  
Since you appeared you have stolen all the life)

(Shongwe, 1985:5 )

Shongwe sees nobody is brave enough to chase the desert away. He feels if the desert is combated, life will flourish again.

### 3.6.7 Heavenly bodies

#### 3.6.7.1 Sun

Vilane shows her amazement about the strangeness of the sun in her poem 'Lilanga' (The sun), where she invites the sun to rise so that life on earth can go on. She goes on to tell the sun that it is the king of all other planets and that it cannot be substituted. To the poet, therefore, the sun has been created to protect people during the day – unlike during the night – when they (people) are slaughtered and everyone fears for their lives. To the poet, the sun is a symbol of peace. She says:

**Phuma langa, khanya nkhosi yemkhatsi.  
Bakhanyisele bantfu beNkhosi yemakhosi  
Cosha busuku nebumnyama babo**



(Come out, sun, and shine king of the space.  
Give light to the people of the King of kings  
Expel the night and its darkness)

(Vilane, 1988:1)

We see the poet praising the sun in a high metaphorical language calling it the king of space. This is the way she shows respect to this heavenly body. Towards the end of the poem, the poet kneels down requesting the sun to unfold all the secrets of this world to us in order to live peacefully, to help understand this world much better.

### **3.6.7.2 Sunset**

In the poem 'Phumula Langa' (Rest sun) Shongwe gives a description of the sun. He sees it as the father of the stars. The poet is of the opinion that, after sunset, evil comes perpetuated by evildoers. The central idea of this poem is that it is safer during the day than it is during the night. The poet writes as follows:

**Seliyombul' ingubo lilanga**  
**Yingako sekudlala tinkhanyeti**

(The sun is going to set  
That is why the stars are playing)

(Shongwe, 1985:30)

When we read this poem, we see that the poet is highly fascinated with the beauty of the sun that is about to set beyond the mountains. He is touched and moved and thus sees the sun as the father of all heavenly bodies. He associates it with tranquillity, which gradually diminishes as the sun completely disappears. To the poet, this disappearance enhances discouragement as darkness brings evil and frustration.

### **3.6.7.3 Stars**

In the poem 'Tinkhanyeti' (Stars) Shongwe gives an admirable description of the stars. He looks at the stars and this reminds him of the Biblical story where the star led the Wise Men

from the East to the stable where Jesus was born. Although the poet admires the stars, this does not give him perfect satisfaction because he cannot communicate directly with them and thus anxiety is created. The poet needs comfort and therefore puts his message as follows:

**Tinkhanyeti teliZulu  
Ngitjeleni nami ngati  
Leyondzaba leniyisho kimi**

(Stars of heaven,  
Tell me so that I can know  
That story which you say to me)

(Shongwe, 1985:39)

This is an indication that the poet yearns for liberation of the ignorance in his mind. The stars must talk so that the message may be an asset to him. The poet, through his poem, seems to create in the reader's mind that, although he is ignorant, he is prepared to accept any message the stars may tell him.

### **3.7 EDUCATION**

#### **3.7.1 Value of education**

In the poem 'Kini Matfwasa' (To you, students) Ndlala is also telling the readers about the value of education to mankind. He is encouraging the youth to learn very hard in order to be educated. He writes as follows:

**Vulan' emaphiko niphaph' etulu  
Niyitfwal' imichele ilakanyane  
Enu emahiy' agcwel' ingubo**

(Open the wings and fly high  
Wear the academic regalia one by one,  
Your academic attire is full of pride)

(Ndlala, 1992:12)

Ndlala is didactic in this poem. He encourages the youth to continue with education until they figuratively wear 'imichele' and 'emahiya', referring to their academic attire after such hard

work. The poet successfully uses the third line in the above extract to motivate students to study hard so that in the end they could be proud of their achievements.

### 3.7.2 Fountain of knowledge

Nkwanyane also asserts that education is for all. He metaphorically calls education ‘Umtfombo’ (A fountain). A community derives life from water which comes from a fountain. To the poet education and a fountain are equally important. In the poem ‘Umtfombo WemaLangeni’ (The fountain of the emaLangeni) Nkwanyana writes the following:

**Sitiva sisetulu ngawe mtfombo  
Lonatfwa nobe kunesitfwatfwa  
Wenel’ emaLangeni ngelilanga**

(We feel proud of you, fountain  
Which is drunk even when there is snow  
You satisfy the emaLangeni in one day)

(Nkwanyana, 1991:2)

The poet uses the third line above to tell the reader that Swatis are also educated and thus education makes them feel proud too. The second line emphasises that education, which is sometimes acquired under very difficult conditions, is an infinite heritage to all human beings.

## 3.8 DEATH

Swati poets like to write poems concerning themes about death. Most of the poems studied in this research reveal the experiences of the poets about the death of their intimates, parents, chiefs and kings.

### 3.8.1 Magagula’s mother

In his poem ‘Ngongoni Yetinyembeti’ (December, month of tears) Magagula uses the word ‘Ngongoni’ to tell the reader that his mother died in the month of December, thus his reference to December as ‘a month of tears’.

**Kutsite lapho sekuhwalele, kwahwalalisisa,  
Nemhlaba sewe mbetse' ingubo yebumnyama,  
Ngeva livi lamake longitalako**

(When it became dusk, it was dusky,  
The earth wore a blanket of darkness  
I heard the voice of my mother)

(Magagula, 1992:14)

The poet uses 'sekuhwalele' and 'ingubo yebumnyama' to intensify the feeling of death, making it more sorrowful and frustrating in the sense that when his mother died, the poet felt he lost the shelter that hid and protected him from the ups and downs of this world.

### **3.8.2 King Sobhuza**

In the poem 'Imifula' (Rivers) Magagula mourns the unexpected death of His Majesty, King Sobhuza, who passed away in 1982. He was very touched and moved by this incident, which inspired him to write the following:

**Mhla sishonelwa lilanga laMahlokohla,  
Licwila ngalena kwetintsaba letindze  
Kweta ematfunti ambonya live**

(When the sun of Mahlokohla disappeared  
Beyond the high mountains  
Shadows covered the earth)

(Magagula, 1992:38)

The poet calls the late King Sobhuza 'Lilanga laMahlokohla' (The sun of Mahlokohla) because of his wisdom. He further symbolically uses the words 'licwila' and 'ematfunti ambonya live' to create a picture in the reader's mind that the whole world mourned the death of the king. 'Kucwila' explains the gradual diminishing of the life and soul of the king as his body became weaker.

### 3.8.3 Nkwanyana's father

In his poem 'Babe Wami' (My father) Nkwanyana tells his reader the sad story concerning the death of his father. He mourns as follows:

**Lala ngekuthula lapho kuleyo ndzawo  
Ungikhumbule ngisahamba kulomhlaba**

(Rest in peace in that place  
Remember me whilst I am still in this world)

(Nkwanyana, 1991:12)

Unlike Magagula, Nkwanyana uses an everyday language to tell his reader the message about his father's death. He feels he would be pleased if his father could rest in peace. He uses the word 'lala' to tell us that his father is dead.

### 3.8.4 Zwane's parents

In the poem 'Lalani Ngekuthula' (Rest in peace) Zwane mourns the death of his parents. According to the poet, his parents died abruptly – without any warning – and he still needs them in his life. He mourns as follows:

**Babe wami, nsika yami  
Bewuyimvu emkhatsini wetimphisi**

**Make wami kuphila kwami  
Bewufana nemtfombo wentfokoto**

(My father, my pillar  
You were a sheep amongst wolves)

(My mother, my life  
You were like a fountain of joy)

(Zwane, 1984:1)

Apart from being his biological parents, the poet gives another reason for mourning so bitterly. His father was a pillar ('insika'). Jesus said that a house without a pillar can easily be blown away and Zwane sees his father, the breadwinner of the entire family, as the pillar that was now blown away. Zwane uses the word 'umtfombo' (a fountain) to tell the readers how dear his mother was to him. A fountain is important to all animate beings, and such was his mother to him. Zwane regards the death of his parents as a great loss.

### **3.8.5 Swati Chief**

Luphoko, in his poem 'Sife Lwembita' (We have lost a great deal) mourns the death of a Swati chief from the Mlambo tribe in the district of Mbuzini:

**Sikhulu sililo ngaphandle  
Sihambisana nesihanguhangu semlilo  
Umlilo lobhubhise sive saMlambo**

(There is great grief outside,  
It is accompanied by intensive fire  
Which destroys the Mlabo tribe)

(Luphoko, 1984:34)

Luphoko uses words such as 'sihanguhangu' (intense heat) and 'umlilo' (fire) to explain that the deceased could not escape his untimely death. Fire is therefore a symbol of destruction in this poem. The first line in the extract tells the reader that the entire nation grieved because they could not believe the death occurred so unexpectedly.

### **3.8.6 William Lokhasaba Nkomo**

In the poem 'Chawe Letfu' (Our hero) Vilane mourns the death of her schoolmate and colleague, William Lokhasaba Nkom

**Kufa kona kuyatiwa kutsi  
Akunajaha, akunantfombi  
Kepha wena ngeke sakufanisa nako**

(It is commonly known that death  
Kills both man and woman  
But we cannot associate you with it)

(Vilane, 1988:4)

In the first and second lines above, the poet makes an assertion that life ends in death. She reminds the reader about the golden rule in the Bible that whoever is made from dust will return to dust in death. The poet, in the third stanza, seems to hesitate because she cannot believe that death was able to terminate the life of her friend, Lokhasaba Nkomo.

### 3.9 LOVE

Fowler (1973:703) defines love as:

... an intense feeling of deep affection or fondness for a person or  
great lining.

The following discussion will be based on Fowler's definition of love.

#### 3.9.1 Wasp of my heart

The poem 'Manyovu Wenhliitiyo' (Wasp of my heart) is about Magagula's love for his girlfriend. The poet appreciates the physique of this lady and decides to get engaged to her. He dates her for a honeymoon down at the river where the cool breeze is blowing:

**Nangikutsi laphalati ngemehlo  
Wena manyovu wenhliitiyo yami,  
Emehlo angikhumbuta manyovu lovevetelako**

(When I glance at you,  
Wasp of my heart,  
My eyes remind me of a trembling wasp)

(Magagula, 1992:47)

Magagula loves this lady and metaphorically calls her a wasp. He tells his readers that the lady has a beautiful figure like the figure of a wasp. One would wonder why the poet calls a beautiful lady a wasp – an insect with a powerful sting in the tail – that is feared by man. The researcher concludes that he uses this selected word to refer to the fascinating figure displayed by a wasp to portray the bodily structure of his girlfriend who even makes him dream during daytime.

### **3.9.2 Fig of the Mancina**

In his poem 'Elikhiweni LeMancina' (At the fig of the Mancina) Ndlala gives an account of his deep love for his girlfriend from the Mancina family. He calls this lady 'likhiwa' (Fig) which refers to a fruit of the wild fig tree loved and eaten by people and animals. He forgets that the fruit might have worms which means that the lady in question has a bad behaviour. The first line of the first stanza explains clearly how committed the poet is to this lady concerning his love for her. The poem reads:

**Ngikhala tingomi ngawe mbali yelive.**

(I weep everlasting tears for you, flower of the earth.)

(Ndlala, 1992:40)

Unbalanced and overemotional by his love for this girl, the poet hyperbolically says he weeps tears for her. This is an unusual love, so much so, that it tends to drive him crazy. He further expresses his love towards her as follows:

**Ngigijima ngengcondvo, bungefiki**

**Ngibalisa ngawe likhiwa leMancina**

**Inhlitiyo yami itsatsekile ngawe**

(Thinking about you so deeply, I suffer from insomnia

When thinking about you, fig tree of the Mancina

My heart becomes fascinated)

(Ndlala, 1992:40)



To convince this lady that she is definitely loved, the poet uses imagery such as ‘ngigijima nengcondvo butfongo bungefiki, likhiwa, inhliyiyo itsatsekile’. Hearing such soothing words, any lady would become fascinated. By using these words, the poet persuades the reader to accept that the lady in question had no option but to accede to the request of the wooer.

### 3.10 CONCLUSION

Traditional African cultures do not allow the equality of men and women, a fact which is shown in that men are given higher status than women. Contrary to the stereotype, some of the poems the researcher has studied in this work, have proved without doubt that some women can do better than men.

Matsebula likes to employ the above when addressing the Swati queens. In his poem ‘Sisile’ (LaMgangeni) Matsebula (1990:15) attributes extraordinary qualities to Queen Sisile when he says:

**Ndlondlomane lowahlabela bafati nebantfwana  
Emadvodza asindza ngemagonso kutibalekela.**

(Ndlondlomane who slaughtered for women and children  
Whilst men were running away.)

(Matsebula, 1990:15)

The above lines explain Matsebula’s sentiments very clearly by making a comparison between certain men – who were running away for some reason – and the queen – who was performing a brave deed. The reader would expect the men to fight and kill the animal in question, but according to Matsebula, it was the queen – a woman – who was placed above the position of a man.

In one of his poems Zwane does not see the father in the family as holding the balance of power. Although – according to the Swatis’ culture, patriarchy is commonly practised – Zwane (1984:10) in his poem ‘Lalani ngekuthula’ puts his mother on a par with his father when he says:

**Tandla takho betifana newaso  
Sikhukhukati emaphiko lavikele  
Etivunguvungwini aso emantjwele.**

(Your hands were like the wings  
of a hen which protect its  
chickens from strong winds.)

(Zwane, 1984:1)

Albeit our perception that the father rules the family, the above quoted lines bring the mother to the fore. We expect to hear that Zwane's father rendered valuable protection to the entire family, but the poet explicates that his mother provided him with protection.

This work also revealed that poetry and the social system of a people cannot be divorced. Poetry, indeed, is not just simply a work of art but also a social phenomenon, which includes the history of the people, in this case the Swati people. The Swati poets made a significant contribution in this regard. This study has witnessed a number of historical poems, which reveal different periods in the development of Swati poetry since its inception.

Finally, the researcher noted with concern that poetic devices, in the works studied, need attention as some of the poems researched lack richness and thus become prosaic. Even if the theme is captured, the everyday language employed by the author of the poem in question somehow spoils it. This makes it very hard to make a distinction between prose and poetry. This weakness will receive more attention in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. IMAGERY OR FIGURES OF SPEECH

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

##### 4.1.1 Scope and approach

This chapter will firstly investigate different types of imagery in Swati poetry. It will also explore the ability of the Swati poets in handling imagery in their work. The question of whether Swati poetry deserves to be called ‘poetry’ in the true sense of the word will be unfolded in this chapter. A poem has a pure poetic language that separates it from prose. This language must be different from the daily used language people use in their daily discourse. It is therefore necessary to investigate whether Swati poetry is imagery-oriented or whether a direct and prosaic language predominates the whole Swati poetry.

Secondly, this chapter will also explore the effectiveness and development of figures of speech and platitude in the development of Swati poetry.

It is important to mention that not all poems having the above poetic tools will be quoted here. Only some of the poems, which will be relevant to the researcher to support an argument, will be under discussion.

Various terms such as imagery and figures of speech will be defined. Swati poetry will then be investigated whether it conforms or does not to these definitions. A brief conclusion concerning the validity of Swati poetry will be drawn up.

## 4.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

### 4.2.1 Figurative Language

Abrams (1957:60) defines figurative language as follows:

... deviates from what we apprehend as the standard significance or sequence of words, in order to achieve special meaning or effect.

Shawn (1905:159) agrees with Abrams when he defines figurative language as follows:

Deliberative and intentional departure from normal word meanings or word order so as to gain freshness or word order of expression.

Maxwell-Mahon (1984:54) sees figurative language as language that depends on shifts in literal meaning or extensions of matter-of-fact descriptions that enable us to see things in new and more striking ways.

Scott (1929:107) says:

This term is equivalent to metaphorical and opposed to literal. A great part of the language is figurative as it is based on images or pictures of things seen and actions experienced.

All definitions given by these authors hold similar opinions regarding the concept of a figurative language. All agree that a figurative language is not literal. Literal in this work will be used to mean the following:

Meaning exactly what is said, not metaphorical or exaggerated, precise.

It is therefore my understanding that a good poem is characterised by a metaphorical language to give it a poetic flavour; this is the norm for poetry. The study shall use this norm as an instrument to measure the standard of Swati poetry.

#### **4.2.2 Figures of speech**

Scott (1929:108) sees figures of speech as:

... any of the devices of figurative language, ranging from expression of the imagination to deviation from ordinary usage for the sake of ornament.

Shaw (1905:160) holds the following idea:

Expressive uses of language in which words are used in other than their literal senses so as to suggest and produce pictures or images in a reader's (hearer's) mind.

Hornby (1972:323) concurs with the above two authors in his viewpoint of figures of speech. He says:

... expression using words differently from literal meaning especially metaphor.

The above definitions are guidelines to the writers of poems. A close examination shows that figures of speech form the soul of poetry, in that they form a very high poetic language, always make a distinction between prose and poetry.

#### **4.2.3 Imagery**

Cuddon (1976:322) defines imagery as follows:

The term image and imagery have many connotations and meanings. Imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, state of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience.

Shaw (1905:195) holds the following idea:

The forming of mental images, figures, or likenesses of things, the use of language to represent actions, persons, objects and ideas descriptively.

Abrams (1957:76) defines imagery as shown below:

Its applications range all the way from the mental pictures' which, it is claimed, are experienced by the reader of a poem to the totality of the elements which make up a poem.

From these definitions one concludes that all the authors – whose definitions are quoted here – agree that imagery is a mental activity, which is experienced by a reader of a poem, where language is used to represent pictures in the reader's mind.

One can also conclude that this is a method of comparison by using visible and invisible objects, which we can taste, hear, feel and smell. I agree with the authors that imagery is an integral part of any poem. A poem devoid of imagery can hardly be classified under poetry.

### **4.3 FUNCTIONS OF IMAGERY OR FIGURES OF SPEECH**

Abrams (1957) suggests the following functions of imagery in poetry or other works of literature:

- Imagery is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or any other work of literature, whether by literal description, by illusion or in the analogues (vehicles) used in its similes and metaphors.
- Imagery is used more narrowly to signify on descriptions of visible objects and scene, especially if the description is vivid and particularised.
- Most commonly, imagery is used to signify figurative language, especially the vehicles of metaphors and similes.

Brooks and Warren (1960:268-270) consider the fact that images provide setting as in descriptive and narrative poetry, thus stimulating imagination. In comparison, metaphors are

important devices for interpretation. Thus they affect meaning in poetry, even though they may not illustrate truth, but may assist in discovering truth. Imagery may be found to be part – and the only means – of poetic statement, hence it is structural and therefore a means to insight.

The study shall therefore investigate the following figures of speech:

- Simile
- Personification
- Apostrophe
- Euphemism
- Hyperbole
- Metaphor
- Ellipsis

#### **4.4.1 Simile**

Shaw (1905:344) advocates that a simile is a figure of speech in which two things – especially different but thought to be alike in one or more respects – are compared.

Scott (1929:268) defines it as follows:

A simile makes an imaginative comparison for purposes of explanation, allusion, or ornament introduced by a word such as like, as or such.

In his definitions Fowler (1973:222) says:

... simile is a comparison, discursive, tentative, the 'like' or 'as ... as' suggests from the viewpoint of reason, separateness of the compared items.

Ntuli (1984:15) advocates that in a simile the comparison is explicitly announced by the word 'as' or 'like', in which in Zulu is the prefix 'njenga-' or similar formative.

In all definitions cited, an element of comparison is mentioned. Shaw's definition makes it more vivid as it further states that objects, which are compared, are different or thought to be alike. In Swati a simile is also announced by 'shengatsi', 'njenge-', 'ngange-' or 'kwe'.

This work shall explore how Swati poets have succeeded or failed to demonstrate their ability to put their originality behind such figures of speech.

In 'Esicongweni seTable Mountain' (At the peak of Table Mountain) Shongwe uses a simile as follows:

**Wendlaleka ntsabakati  
Wendleleka kwelicansi ...**

(You spread out big mountain  
You spread out like a mat ...)

(Shongwe, 1985:1)

In Swati we say it is flat like a table. Shongwe makes a breakthrough in this poem as he compares flatness with a mat and not with a table. He introduces something new in the development of Swati poetry. He shifts away from the old saying that says that anything flat is a table. A mat, when spread out, is flat. It is therefore on the basis of this flatness of a mat that Shongwe is allowed to compare this mountain with a mat.

We find another simile in Shongwe's work 'Isahara' (The Sahara). He uses it as follows:

**Unyonyobisa kweligoya ...**

(You are stalking like a wild cat ...)

(Shongwe, 1985:4)

In this poem Shongwe's originality in using a simile is noticeable. Just like the previous example, he brings a new element in the well-known Swati simile, which says 'nyonyobisa kwelisela' (Stalk like a thief). Instead of this, he chooses to use 'ligoya' (a wild cat) to convince his readers that the stalking of a wild cat is like an approach of an enemy concealing his real intentions from the public. According to Shongwe, the encroachment of the Sahara



and the stalking of a wild cat cannot be divorced: they are both thieves. Shongwe's use of this simile has brought advancement in Swati poetry.

In 'Ngime Elugwini' (I stand at the shore) the following simile is used:

**Libhodla njengengwenyam' ehlanzeni**

(It roars like a lion in the Lowveld)

(Shongwe, 1985:3)

A close examination in the use of this simile reveals that Shongwe falls in the great temptation by stating that it is only a lion that roars. This simile has been used in various Nguni literature in the past. Thunder can also roar. Although Shongwe's handling of this simile is acceptable in Nguni, it, however, does not bring any development in literature because it is platitudinous.

Nkwanyana uses a simile in 'Emtfonjeni wemaLangeni' (The spring of the emaLangeni) as shown in the following quotation:

**Ngwan' uwubonile lomtfombo**

.....

**Locwebise kwemant' enkhanga.**

(Ngwane, you have seen this spring  
which is clear like water of the highland)

(Nkwanyana, 1991:4)

Nkwanyana's handling of the simile 'kucwebe njengemanti' (as clear as water) is a commonplace remark that shows no development in Swati poetry. It would pay Nkwanyana more dividends if another relevant word other than 'cweba' was chosen to elevate his originality behind such a figure of speech.

In the poem 'Tibongo taNdunankhulu wakaNgwane' (Praises of the Chief Minister of KaNgwane) Lumphoko uses the following simile:

**Sivelamuva njengancibijane.**

(He who appeared later like New Year)

(Luphoko, 1986:61)

Luphoko's handling of a simile in this line is original. He announces something new, namely to coin that something appearing later is associated with New Year. This enhances originality and thus handling of this figure of speech contributes to the development of our language. No one has used this simile before. Luphoko's claim that New Year appears after Christmas is according to my understanding acceptable.

Another simile appears in 'Kungavukwa Kwami Lusinga' (I do not get inspired) where Hlongwane emerges with a simile as follows:

**Ngabats' emadlotini ngiyacela,  
Wawalwa ngci njengewelibululu.**

(I asked from the ancestors  
It (the mouth) closed tightly like the puff-adder's)

(Hlongwane, 1978:4)

It is not clear why Hlongwane decided to use this simile. He confuses concepts because any puff adder, as a reptile that bites, opens its mouth in order to bite its enemy. One feels reluctant to agree with the above simile, as it is not clear why Hlongwane chooses to use 'njengewelibululu' (like that of a puff adder) of all things in the universe that cannot talk. This brings doubt to the effectiveness of this simile.

In 'Limfemfe Lemkhatsi' (spacecraft), Magagula uses a simile as follows:

**Umuhle mfemfe nyoni yemkhatsi,  
Undize njengalohheyane ...**

(You are beautiful spacecraft, bird of the space,  
you flew like a hawk ...)

(Magagula, 1992:4)

People like to associate the verb ‘-ndiza’ (fly) with a bird, for example, ‘Limfemfe Landiza njengenyoni’ (The spacecraft flew like a bird). If one examines Magagula’s simile, one discovers that he has made a slight deviation from the usage of “... like a bird.” Instead of this simile, he prefers to say “... like a hawk”. Magagula has skilfully chosen amongst birds, a hawk. From the family of birds, a hawk is one of the fastest when attacking its prey. Magagula, therefore, likens the speed of the spacecraft to the speed of the hungry hawk. Both hawk and spacecraft have an element of intersection, namely, they fly. One gets convinced that the use of the above simile is not platitudinous.

In ‘Emidzibini YeMjindini’ (In the goldfields of Emjindini) Magagula uses a simile as shown below:

**Ingati yageleta njengemangeleti**

(Blood flowed like water)

(Magagula, 1992:34)

Both the former and the latter examples reveal that Magagula handles similes in a peculiar way in his poetry.

In the latter quotation, Magagula uses a ‘hlonipha’ term for water (emanti) which is ‘emangeleti’.

Although still meaning the same thing, he tries to depart from the daily comparison of ‘kugeleta njengemanti’ (It flows like water). Because he does choose suitable words in his poetry, this style of writing enhances the standard of his poetry.

In ‘Mbali’ (Flower) Tembe uses the following simile:

**Kwagcina kubonakal’ imitsambo  
Lemihle njengeMphumalanga**

(Finally beautiful veins  
Like the East were visible)

(Tembe, 1990:37)

People like to associate a beautiful thing with ‘imbali’ (flower) or ‘incozi’ (black berry of the water). In the above quotation, Tembe makes a breakthrough by comparing beauty with the east. The researcher thinks the ‘east’ here is used to represent the rays of the sun in the early hours of the day. It is true that we say to a beautiful person ‘Ufana nemisebe yelilanga’ (She is like the rays of the sun). This association of the east and the rays of the sun – to create an image of beauty in the reader’s mind – is appreciable. This does not make a poem flat but it puts it to a stage of growth.

In the poem ‘Bhuza weSibili’ (Sobhuza II) we find the following simile:

**Buve benu bugcame  
Ngabo nitigabise njengengabisa**

(Let your nationhood be clearly visible  
with it you must be as proud as a young virgin)

(Tembe, 1990:36)

We say ‘as proud as a peacock’. This is what people say about a proud person. ‘Utigabisa (-gcabha) njengeliphigogo’ (He is proud like a peacock). In the above quotation, Tembe favours to use ‘ingabisa’ (a young virgin) in his comparison. In Swati culture, this young girl feels proud of being a virgin. She demonstrates her pride of being a virgin by walking naked during ‘ummeno’ (working party summoned by the king or chief) in front of a crowd. Tembe’s decision that it is not only a peacock that is proud, but also a virgin, is recommended because it indicates that our poetry is growing. By using ‘njengengabisa’ (like a young virgin), Tembe is able to convince his readers that they should be proud of their culture, and this is purely convincing.

In the poem ‘Enkosi Mswati III’ (King Mswati III) the following similes in successive lines are noticeable:

**Mswati lonjengetintsaba!  
Mswati lonjengemalangab’ emlilo.**

(Mswati who is like mountains!  
Mswati who is like flames of fire!)

(Ndlala, 1992:28)

Ndlala is using ‘lonjengetintsaba’ (who is like mountains) which means that King Mswati is great in his kingdom and no one can shake him. The simile can also mean that the king is permanently settled in his kingdom. In the second simile ‘jengemalangabi emlilo’ (like flames of fire) in the second line, Ndlala is telling his readers that the king is fiercely tempered. One would, however, say that Ndlala’s originality in the handling of the above two similes is impeded by the fact that these similes have been in use over the centuries and do not bring new ideas to literature. Such commonplace figures of speech result in the poem not making development of any kind.

In ‘Elikhiweni LeMancina’ (In the fig of the Mancina tribe) we find the following simile:

**... sitfunti sakho sanyamalala kwematolo.**

(... your dignity disappeared like dew)

(Ndlala, 1992:40)

In this quotation, Ndlala prefers to use ‘kwematolo’ as compared to what people say ‘kwelituba laNowa’. It is commonly known that we say ‘Wanyamalala kwelituba laNowa’ (He disappeared like Noah’s dove). Unlike our previous examples by Ndlala, in this one he has made a deviation from the norm. He has created something new but relevant, that is dew – when exposed to heat – evaporates and disappears into the air. It is this disappearance of the dew that makes Ndlala to associate ‘-nyamalala’ (disappear) with dew. This is not platitude. We can therefore say that Ndlala’s handling of the above simile enhances development in Swati poetry.

In ‘Tibongo ta-Apollo’ (Praises of Apollo), the following simile is used:

**Uyindoni leluhlata yemanti,  
Leluhlata kuhle kwesibhakabhaka.**

(You are a blue berry of the water,  
blue as the sky)

(Zwane, 1984:28)

Zwane's handling of this simile is supported by two words in the quotation, namely 'indoni yemanti' and 'sibhakabhaka'. Zwane is using these words to support the idea that Apollo was blue. A fully ripen black berry of the water is blue but not green. The colour of the sky in Nguni is not green but blue. So Zwane's handling of green – to mean blue – is justifiable in Swati because there is no relevant colour for blue in Swati. According to the Swati language, green is used instead of blue. By using the two words mentioned earlier, Zwane has handled this simile well enough to convince his readers that this Apollo – who is praised in the poem – was definitely blue. His skills of portraying this colour enhance development in poetry.

There is another simile in 'Akusenjalo' (It is no longer like that). It is used as follows:

**Inchako yakho yematinyo lemhlope njengelubisi.**

(Your set of teeth is as white as milk.)

(Zwane, 1984:7)

Zwane favours to say 'as white as milk' as compared to 'as white as snow'. The latter indicates a stereotyped fashion of indicating that anything that is white is snow white. By introducing that, it is not only snow that is white, Zwane is making a shift in our mentality of thinking: programming us to think that the only thing one can associate white with, is snow. One concludes that Zwane has handled the above simile with success.

In 'Tsandzile' (LaZidze) there is a simile which is used as follows:

**Tinyawo tibovu njengeteligwalagwala**

(The feet are red like those of a lourié)

(Matsebula, 1990:9)

A close examination of this simile reveals that Matsebula makes a deviation from the norm that says 'it is as red as blood'. Matsebula is of the opinion that something red can also be compared with the feet of a lourié, which, according to the understanding of the researcher, is quite relevant since a lourié's feet are red. It is evident that Matsebula avoids the monotonous use of 'blood'. This new element enhances development in Swati poetry.

In ‘Bamosa Aphila’ (They roasted him alive), the following simile is used:

**Beta emuva kwakhe shangatsi  
Batinja yena uyinyamatane.**

(They came behind him as if  
They were dogs, and he was a buck)

(Hlongwane, 1990:34)

Hlongwane’s simile gives no problem to the people who are used to dogs chasing a buck. A dog, as a matter of fact, is always after a buck, which means being chased. Here Hlongwane wants to compare the manner his brother was chased. Although this is common sense, he succeeds to portray the manner his brother was chased. This simile, however, is not commonplace in literature. Such a simile is carefully chosen to bring a desired effect in his poem. This simile gives an interesting picture to the reader and is also very innovative as far as the development of Swati poetry is concerned.

#### **4.3.2 Personification**

Shaw (1905:283) defines personification as:

A figure of speech in which abstractions, animals, ideas and inanimate objects are endowed with human form, character, traits or sensibilities

Scott (1929:217) on the other hand, views personification as:

The representation of inanimate objects or abstract ideas as persons, or endowed with personal attributes.

Msimang (1990:84) views personification as follows:

**Kulesi siqhathanisa into engenampilo noma eyisilwane yenziwa umuntu. Kusetshenziswa ikakhulukazi izitho zomuntu kanye nemizwelo yakhe.**

(In this comparison, an inanimate object or an animal, is made a person. Human features and emotions are mostly used.)

The three authors quoted above agree that in personification animals and inanimate beings are endowed with human attributes. Msimang goes further to emphasise that personification is also characterised by the use of certain human features and emotions. In addition to these human features and emotions, this study shall also explore other characteristics of personification such as human actions and apostrophe.

#### **4.3.2.1 Human features**

In some poems studied, the poets give animals and inanimate beings physical characteristics that are found in human beings. This personifies non-human beings.

The poem ‘Umfula Inkomazi’ (The Inkomzai River) has this characteristic as shown in the excerpt that follows:

**Hamba nkhosikati lemabelekati**

(Go, queen with big udders)

(Shongwe, 1985:10)

The word ‘emabele’ has different meanings in Swati. It means sorghum millet or udder (teat) through which a human baby sucks milk. Human beings have ‘emabele’ whilst animals have ‘imibele’. There is, however, no distinction between the two words in English. Of the former meanings, Shongwe chooses to use ‘emabele’ for a woman to personify the Inkomzai River. It is known that a river has no teats. He is telling his reader that this river is a woman. The success of this personification is that Shongwe is able to make a river a caring woman who is able to stand for the maintenance of her children, which the Inkomazi River does by providing water to plants, animals and people.

In ‘Lijaha’ (The young man), personification is used as follows:

**Ngentinyawo takh’ uyabahambela**



(With your feet go on their behalf)

(Luphoko, 1984:29)

In Swati the word ‘tinyawo’ – which is a plurality of ‘lunyawo’ – is pregnant with meanings. It means feet or footprints. In the poem Luphoko prefers to use ‘tinyawo’ denoting feet, now, seeing that the poem is about a bus, Luphoko attributes human qualities to it because only humans have feet. Luphoko humanises the bus because it can move from place to place by means of wheels but not feet. The element of personification in the poem is seen when Luphoko attaches feet to an inanimate object – the bus – in this case.

Although the wheels and feet do not resemble each other, Luphoko succeeds to convey his message. Just as the wheels of a bus carry its body to move, so do the feet of a human being.

In ‘Sidlamafa’ (Sidlamafa) personification, in the form of human features, is noted:

**Uvule tindlebe uvale kuphikisana.**

(Open the ears and stop arguing.)

(Makaula, 1985:2)

Makaula is commanding Sidlamafa, which is a school, to open its ears: only human beings have ears. There is a difference between ‘tindlebe’ and ‘emadlebe’. Animals have the latter. Makaula says the school, which is an inanimate object, has ears that must be opened. The researcher’s understanding of Makaula’s personification is that by Sidlamafa he refers to the school community, which includes pupils and teachers. If this is the case, Makaula is handling his personification in a commendable way.

In ‘Sikhatsa Semlilo’ (a ball of fire) the following personification is used:

**Live laseliyimphandla, licotfuke tinwele**

(The land was bald headed, and the hair peeled off)

(Magagula, 1992:26)

To have 'imphandla' (to be bald) is a feature of being human. To express the severity of the drought on land, Magagula humanises the land and makes it a person with a baldpate. It is true that during a severe drought the land becomes bare like a bald headed person. As we read the poem, the picture of drought on land sticks in our minds.

We find another personification in 'Umhlelo Wemadvwala' (suet layer of rocks), which is as follows:

**Litfole lelisaphuhla timphumamlotsa**

(A heifer that is still budding teats)

(Magagula, 1992:30)

Timphumamlotsa (budding teats) is a feature of being human. Young girls about twelve years old are characterised by having budding teats. Now Magagula gives a rock – which has gold – human attributes by saying it has budding teats. In African culture, especially Nguni, a young girl with budding teats is regarded as a person who is to bring treasure to the family by means of lobola. In the same breath a rock having gold has treasure as well. This personification fits here because of the element of wealth we associate budding teats and gold with.

#### **4.3.2.2 Human actions**

This study has discovered that in the development of Swati poetry some of the poems studied have elements of human actions, where Swati poets address inanimate beings as if they were human beings by giving them human actions.

In the poem 'Mbali' (Flower) Tembe personifies a flower by giving it human actions:

**Ngakubona mbali umomotseka**

(I saw you flower smiling)

(Tembe, 1990:37)

The ability to smile is a human characteristic. Both plants and inanimate objects do not have the ability to smile. This is an action performed by human beings only. Tembe uses this personification to make this flower a person. This personification expresses welcome, peace and prosperity. In this way the flower does not only listen, but it also smiles – something normally done by human beings.

Magagula also uses personification in the following line from ‘Chawe Lemicansa’ (Hero of the steep ascent):

**Nhlatfu yemgwaco, bamite  
Ubatitimise tonkhe tinsuku**

(Python of the road, swallow them  
lift them up every day)

(Magagula, 1992:17)

Human action is here indicated by ‘-titimisa’. This word involves a touch sensation that is brought about by hands. Now, this word pictures the poet’s orders that something must be done – by hands. Magagula personifies the bus by giving it hands. It is these hands that should lift up the commuters onto the bus. The poet handles this personification well because only persons (people) have hands.

In ‘Sikhatsa Semlilo’ (The ball of fire) Magagula uses the following personification:

**Imifula igiya ngemabhudlo ingihleka  
Emanti acobodzisa asitsela emhlangeni.**

(Rivers danced with waterfalls laughing at me  
water blushed and disappeared in the reed.)

(Magagula, 1992:26)

In Swati the verb ‘-giya’ refers to an action performed by men during cultural ceremonies. ‘-[G]iya’ is always associated with a man’s solo dance. ‘Imifula’ (Rivers) cannot perform this. ‘Hleka’ is a human action as well. The author uses ‘-giya’ and ‘-hleka’ to give the rivers human attributes, as the rivers can neither dance, nor laugh. ‘-cobodzisa’ (blush) means to become red in the face from shame or confusion ‘-cobodzisa’ is an action associated with a

bride before the in-laws. The second line above says 'Emanti acobodzisa' (Water blushed) as if water is human.

Magagula depicts a catastrophic era when the land was attacked by a severe draught. He says water had no option but to evaporate.

In 'Mhlaba Awunamahloni' (Earth you are not shy) Makaula uses the following personification:

**Mhlaba awunamahloni**  
**Ngekuhleba bantfu.**

(Earth, you are not ashamed  
By gossiping about people.)

(Makaula, 1985:27)

Makaula personifies the earth by saying it talks about the affairs of other people. Obviously, the earth cannot perform this action of gossiping; only human beings can do so. This causes development because nowadays there is confusion out there of gossip among people.

In 'Sidlamafa' the following human action is found:

**Sidlamafa utsite cwaka entsabeni.**

.....  
**Cabanga!**

(Sidlamafa you are on the mountain

.....  
Think!)

(Makaula, 1986:3)

In this poem the poet addresses 'Sidlamafa' – a school building – as if it was a human being by introducing an action 'cabanga' (think) which is performed by people. An ability to think is a characteristic of being human. Inanimate beings such as a school cannot do so. The poet brings this school closer to man by giving it human action.

In 'Umfula Inkomazi' (The Komati River) the following personification is visible:

**Ufundzise bantfwabakho**

(You have to educate your children)

(Shongwe, 1985:11)

Education is a human phenomenon. No one – except human beings – can teach (educate). To the poet the river has responsibilities, which are typical of man, namely, it can teach children. By using the verb ‘-fundzisa’, the poet brings the river close to human beings.

**4.3.2.3 Human emotions**

In ‘Lelijaha’ (The young man) the following personification is used:

**Siyawubonga umusa wakho  
Siyalubonga lutsandvo lwakho.**

(We thank you for your kindness  
We thank you for your love.)

(Luphoko, 1984:29)

Luphoko personifies a bus by giving it human emotions, kindness and love. In this case an inanimate being – the bus – is personified as a very kind and loving person. Only human beings can be kind and loving.

In ‘Lilanga’ (sun) the following personification is noted:

**Unesibindzi ...  
Unemona**

(You are brave ...  
You are jealous)

(Vilane, 1988:1)

To be brave and jealous respectively is characterising people. The poet uses these human emotions to bring the sun close to man. The sun is seen as a person with bravery and jealousy.

In 'Lukhwekhwe Khweshu!' (Go away scurvy), the following human emotion is used:

**Lunya lwakho luyabhubhisa**

(Your unkindness is destructive)

(Ndlala, 1992:33)

'Lukhwekhwe' (scurvy) as a disease cannot be unkind as the poet says in the quoted lines. The poet gives details about the personality of scurvy, namely that it is unkind. To be unkind is a feature of being human. The poet uses this human emotion to bring the disease close to man. This personification causes development because scurvy can kill a person as human beings can also kill. The unkindness of the disease is seen in its killing capacity.

#### **4.3.3 Apostrophe**

According to Ntuli (1984:171) apostrophe means addressing objects as if they were human beings. Inanimate objects are made to be capable of hearing and speaking what is being said. In a number of poems explored in this study, the element of apostrophe was noted.

In 'Sahara' the following personification is used:

**Sahara, ngiphendvule:**  
**Ufunani kuleli?**

(Sahara answer me:  
What do you want here?)

(Shongwe, 1985:5)

We see Shongwe giving instructions to the Sahara Desert. One expects a response in action from these series of quotations. However, the Sahara does not reply. This is because the Sahara is not a person with the ability to talk.

Another example of apostrophe in 'Mlumati' is used as follows:

**Ngabe lokuphelela kuwe kushonaphi Mlumati?**

(Where is everything that disappears in you Mlumati?)

(Vilane, 1988:15)

Umlumati is a river and Vilane asks this river a question as if it were a human being who could answer him.

In 'Incangosi' (ant) the following apostrophe is used:

**Ncangosi uphetseni?**

(Ant, what are you holding?)

(Makaula, 1986:4)

By using apostrophe, the author asks a direct question from the ant. One feels the author expects a direct answer from the ant as if it were a person capable of responding by means of a direct answer. An ant – as an insect – cannot do so.

#### **4.3.4 Euphemism**

Shaw (1905:145) defines euphemism as the use of an indirect, mild or value word, or expression from one thought to be coarse, offensive or blunt.

Msimang (1990:88) defines euphemism as follows:

Lapha sibhekene negama elikhombisa inhlonipho nentobeko  
elisetshenziswa esikhundleni salelo elejwayelekile, kodwa esiliziliswa  
wukuthi ligagula izinto ezihlonishwayo, bese lilumela kwabalalele.

(Here we are concerned with a word that shows respect and humility used in the place of a common one, but which we avoid because it calls respected things as they are and thus causing discomfort to the listeners.)

Scott (1929:100) defines euphemism as follows:

The substitution of a less distasteful word or phrase for a more truthful but more offensive one.

The researcher agrees with the above definitions that euphemism aims to use words of good repute both in our discourse and in literature. This enables authors and poets to use language acceptable in their society.

This dissertation will investigate the use of euphemism in the development of Swati poetry.

In 'Ngongoni Yetinyembeti' (December, month of tears) the following euphemism is used:

**Bashona entsabeni  
Lapha kutjalwa khona lesebaphangalele**

(They went to the mountains  
Where the dead are buried)

(Magagula, 1992:15)

The verb 'tjala' is pregnant with meanings in Swati. It means to plant, sow, transplant or bury. In the poem '-tjala' means to bury. This is a Nguni 'hlonipha' term for '-ngcwaba' (bury). 'Ngcwaba' causes discomfort to a Nguni listener because its meaning is seen to be offensive and impolite.

In 'Bhuza WeSibili' Sobhuza II) the following euphemism is used:

**Yebo, nobe sewulele  
Emavi akho sisawalalela.**

(Yes, even if you are asleep  
We still respect your words.)

(Tembe, 1990:36)

The verb '-lala' is pregnant with meanings. In Swati it means to sleep, to be foolish or dead. Here the poet uses it to mean dead. This is a Swati 'hlonipha' term particularly when it is used to refer to a noble person such as a king. The author uses this word to tell his readers that King Sobhuza II is dead, but he puts it through language acceptable to any Nguni person.



#### 4.3.5 Hyperbole

Fowler (1973:167) defines hyperbole as:

The use of exaggerated terms for the sake not of deception, but of emphasis.

Shaw (1905:189) says:

... obviously and deliberate exaggeration, and extravagant statement, exaggeration for the sake of emphasis.

Scott (1929:134) has this to say:

Exaggeration for the sake of emphasis.

All three authors agree that hyperbole is nothing else but exaggeration. This work will explore the development of Swati poetry with reference to the use of hyperbole.

In the poem 'Libhubesi' (The Lion) the following hyperbole is used:

**Ubhodla kunyakate tintsaba**  
**Kusephuke tinwele kubafokati.**

(You roar that mountains shake  
The hair of strangers is uprooted.)

(Shongwe, 1985:22)

The poet exaggerates the use of the following words in the excerpts 'kunyakate tintsaba' and 'kusephuke tinwele' respectively. Mountains cannot shake and the hair of strangers cannot be uprooted when a lion is roaring. The poet overshoots here because he wants his readers to be convinced that a lion is a fearful creature that can shake mountains and uproot people's hair. This is done to emphasise the greatness and the fearfulness of this creature.

In 'Enkhosini Mswati III' (King Mswati III) we see the following hyperbole:

**Yanatsa kwasha teNgilandi**

(He drank that the pools of England dried up)

(Ndlala, 1992:28)

The exaggerated word in this quotation is 'kwasha teNgilandi'. It is obvious here that it is the pools of England that dried up. The implication is that King Mswati III drank and finished all the water in the pools, which is impractical. The volume of the King's stomach cannot even contain six glasses of water, let alone the water in the pools. The effective use of this hyperbole lies in its emphasis that the King worked so hard to get his education. The researcher could remark that – though he (the King) worked hard – he could not finish education, as this is a lifelong process.

In 'Tibongo Ta-Apollo' (Praises of Apollo) the following hyperbole is noticeable:

**Indiza ilibangise eKhumbula.**

(It flew towards Khumbula.)

(Zwane, 1984:27)

By Apollo, the poet is referring to a bus, which according to the content of the poem, was used to ferry learners to Khumbula High School. He exaggerates the use of '-ndiza' to emphasise how swift and reckless the bus was driven. To convince more, he says the bus is a swallow, which flies swiftly in the air. It is obvious that his bus cannot fly, but because of its high velocity, the poet's choice of '-indiza' draws a clear picture of how the bus was used to speed up. This exaggerated '-ndiza' because of the fastness of a swallow – performed by the bus – causes development: a swallow is a very fast bird when it is airborne.

#### **4.3.6 Metaphor**

Abrams (1957:61) sees a metaphor as:

a word which in standard (or literal) usage denotes one kind of thing, quality or action, is applied to another, in the form of a statement of identity instead of comparison.

Scott (1929:178) defines a metaphor as follows:

The application of a name or a descriptive term to an object to which it is not literally applicable. An implied comparison.

Shaw (1905:253) views a metaphor in the following way:

A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to a person, idea, or object to which it is not literally applicable. An implied comparison,

The above definitions tell us that a metaphor compares two non-identical objects, but at the same time, have common and general characteristics – like a simile. The only difference between a metaphor and a simile is that in a metaphor morphemes like ‘njenga-shangatsi’ are not used as in a simile.

In ‘Tibongo TaNdvunankhulu WakaNgwane’ (Praises of the Chief Minister of KaNgwane) one notices the following metaphor:

**Litulu lidvume kanye KaNgwane**

(Lightning that has thundered once in KaNgwane)

(Luphoko, 1984:63)

The word that is metaphorically used here is ‘litulu’. In Swati this word is a homonym with the following different meanings: weather, rain and lightning. The poet’s choice is ‘lightning’. There is an English comparison that says ‘as quick as lightning’. The researcher is of the opinion that the author calls Mabuza ‘litulu’ here because Mabuza acted quickly to stop the South African Government to cede the former KaNgwane Homeland into the Kingdom of Swaziland. The South African Government was scared of Mabuza in as much as everyone is afraid of lightning. This is a good analogy.

In 'Nkhosi Yebumnyama' (King of Darkness) the poet uses this metaphor:

**Bayethe! Bayethe! Mbube ledla letinye**

(Hail! Hail! Mbube that eats others)

(Ndlala, 1992:9)

The word 'imbube' is pregnant with meaning in Swati, namely, lion, king and dung. The theme of the poem is death. The poet calls death a 'lion'. From the three meanings given, he feels that death is like a lion, which is feared by all people. Death kills in as much as a lion that kills and destroys wherever it goes. Both death and lion rule over all animate and inanimate beings. This analogy elevates the standard of the poem.

In 'Sigodzi seNkomazi' (The Nkomazi valley) we see another metaphor in the following extract:

**Wahamba tiyela unyelela**

(Go up tar and glide away)

(Tembe, 1990:35)

This is a good description of the movement of the Inkomazi River as it flows down into the sea. Two features are common here, namely the zigzag movement as well as the stretch of a tarred road and the river, as well as the colour of the water and the tar. A mirage brings an optical illusion by making sheets of water, which seem to appear on the hot tar road. This is a well-handled comparison.

#### **4.3.7 Ellipses**

Shaw (1905:133) defines ellipsis as follows:

The omission of a word or words that a reader must supply for full understanding.

Scott (1929:88) has this to say about ellipsis:

The omission in a sentence of one or more words which could be needed to express the sense completely.

In ‘Mbalane Yesihlengeni’ (Bird of an Island) we find the following line:

**Ngatilila tadzilika kamuva**

(I became sorry and they fell afterwards)

(Ndlala, 1992:4)

There is an omission in the above quotation. To give the missing word, one would think of a noun in class 10 according to the classification of Meinhoff. Because there are so many nouns in this class, it is the background of Nguni languages – in this case Swati and Zulu – that assists us to know that the missing word, which preceded tadzilika, is undoubtedly ‘tinyembeti’ (tears). This remark ‘tinyembeti tadzilika’ (tears fell) is non-platitudinous and something new has been used.

In the poem ‘Nkhungu Lenemandla’ (fog), Nkwanyana uses ellipsis as indicated in the following line:

**Nobe libalele nobe lisibekele**

(Whether it is sunny or overcast)

(Nkwanyana, 1991:10)

Here, the poet has omitted a noun in class 5, which is ‘lilanga’ (sun). An argument here is that this is an old way of talking in Swati, which does not bring any contribution in developing Nguni poetry – Swati in particular.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

Some of the studied poems have been discovered to be rich in imagery whilst others lack poetic elements. The latter category is to be improved to make it poetry.

Some of the poems are prosaic. They lack poetic beauty and are unimaginative, plain and ordinary. The inference here is that some of the poets – whose works have been investigated – are not conversant with poetic language. Fundamental changes in their work need to be initiated.

In some poems studied, platitudinous elements have been noticed. This brings no development in poetry - the language does not develop as well.

On the other hand, however, it is noted that the development of Swati poetry also shows a remarkable progress.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. FORM OR STRUCTURE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION: SCOPE AND APPROACH

The aim of this chapter is to examine types of forms or structures found in Swati poetry, particularly those written between 1977 and 1992. It should be stated, however, that not all types of poetic forms will be explored, but special attention will be focused on the following:

- rhyme
- linking
- enjambement
- alliteration
- assonance and consonance
- caesura

This chapter will also investigate the effectiveness of Swati poets in their handling of form – to give each composed poem a poetic flavour through the construction of these poems – so that a clear distinction between poetry and prose can be tested and distinguished.

Not all poems in the different anthologies will be investigated; only a representative sample of them will be quoted in order to exemplify some points that are discussed.

Before any work is investigated, literal concepts/terms – defined by various authors – both African and European will be visited. The researcher shall thereafter compare and explore how far Swati poets have succeeded in their employment of form in their construction, as compared to what the authors' definitions say concerning what form is all about.

Lastly, at the end of this chapter, I shall give concluding remarks that will shortly deal with the findings of how form is employed in the poems that shall have been studied.

## 5.2 RHYME

Shaw (1905:323) defines rhyme as follows:

Similarity or identity of sound in word. Two words rhyme when their accented vowels and all succeeding sounds are identical.

Scott (1929:246) concurs with Shaw's definition. He sees rhyme as follows:

Rhyme is identity of sound between two words extending from the last fully accented vowel to the end of the word.

Abrams (1957:150) has the following to say:

In English versification the standard rhyme consists in the identity, in rhyming words, of the last stressed vowel and of all the speech sounds following that vowel.

Msimang (1986:7) has the following to say concerning rhyme:

**Yona itholakala uma imigqa ehambisanayo enkondlweni igcina  
ngamalunga noma izinhlamvu ezinemisindo  
efanayo(imvumelwanosigcino)... Ngalokho sisho ukuvumelana  
kwezinhlamvu zokuqala zemigqa ehambisanayo.  
(imvumelwanosiqalo).**

(This is found when successive lines in a poem end in syllables or formatives with the same sound ... By this we mean the rhyming of the first successive syllables in a poem.)

The above authors agree with one another because they view rhyme as a poetic tool with the same ending sound in words. The researcher agrees with them "... because in rhyming, the Nguni syllable one has to take into account the penultimate syllable which not only has prominence to the ear because the succeeding syllable is generally devocalised" (Msimang, 1986:9).



If a poet writes poetry, he/she is expected to make it poetry and not prose. Poetry as a form of art and science employs the use of rhyme to conform to what poetry ought to be.

This chapter will explore how Swati poets have successfully complied with the requirements of using rhyme convincingly in their works.

In his definition of rhyme, Scott (1929:246-2) mentions the following concepts that the researcher also feels are very important to this study:

- One-syllable rhymes are called male or masculine or single.
- Two-syllable rhymes are called female or feminine or double.
- Three-syllable rhymes are called triple.
- Four syllable rhymes are called quadruple.

This section will explore the following types of rhymes:

- Initial rhyme.
- Middle rhyme.
- End/final rhyme.

### 5.2.1 Initial rhyme

This is rhyme that occurs at the beginning of verses (lines) of poetry. This duplication of similar sounds at the beginning of poetic lines is normally expected in Swati poetry.

In 'Limfemfe Lemkhatsi' (The spaceship) in which a spaceship is praised, Magagula (1993:4) uses the following extract:

**Umuhle mfemfe, nyoni yemkhatsi,  
Undize njengalohheyane wabonwa ngumhlaba.  
Ulicili mfemfe utele emacili.**

(You are beautiful, bird of the space,  
 You flew like a hawk, the world saw you.  
 You are a trickster, you bore tricksters.)

One would say that these sounds provide pleasing sense impressions to the ear, but the poet uses them to give other descriptions of the sound, namely apart from being beautiful, it is a trickster and is very swift.

In his 'Mbalane Yesihlengeni' (Bird of an Island), Ndlala (1992:3) gives his vivid description about how he was deceived by the arrival of Whites in South Africa. He uses consecutive actions in this quotation:

**Ngabon' iKhanan' ut' uyitfwele**  
**Ngakhangeta wanicambitela,**  
**Ngabona lizulu nemhlaba kufana**  
**Ngakusal' emuva.**

(I saw you carrying Canaan  
 I held out my hands, you gave me little,  
 I saw that heaven and earth were alike  
 I followed you.)

Although these repeated sounds bring enjoyment to the readers' ears, they also perform a function of carrying the narration forward by introducing the consecutive actions performed by the poet.

When Shongwe (1985:11) praises 'Umfula Inkomazi' (The Inkomazi river), he displays the following:

**Lutsandvo lwakho**  
**Lungumfutfo wemandla akho**

(Your love  
 Is power of your strength)

Shongwe uses this male rhyme to decorate his poem. He also uses it to introduce a full description of the river. One would also say these sounds are an aid in memorising, thus making it easier to know the quoted stanza by heart within a short space of time.

In 'Nguwe Lo?' (Is this you?) Luphoko (1984:60) makes the following statements:

Ana kunguwe lona;  
Awungibiti ngani?  
Asihlali ngani phasi sobalili na?  
Asikhulumi ngani siyihlute na?  
Awungitjeli ngani?

(If this is you;  
 Why do you not call me?  
 Why do we not sit together?  
 Why do we not talk and analyse it?  
 Why do you not tell me?)

It seems that Luphoko wants the above prosaic statements to be poetic, thus focusing the sounds 'A' as a form of rhyme. It seems his handling of rhyme above is ineffective because of the monotony it gives to the readers' ears. It, nevertheless, acts as an aid in memorising.

There are other examples of initial rhymes having the same characteristics as those quoted in the above examples. For this reason the researcher feels the above examples will satisfy the requirements of his investigation.

### 5.2.2 Internal rhyme

Shaw (1905:205) defines internal rhyme as follows:

Correspondences in sound created by two or more words in the same line of a verse, rhyme falling in the middle as well as at the end of the same metrical line.

Abrams (1957:50) on the other hand, says this about internal rhyme:

Internal rhymes occur within a verse-line

Scott (1929:247) is of the idea that internal rhyme is:

Rhyme coming in the middle as well as at the end of the same line of verse is called middle, medial or internal rhyme.

A close inspection of these definitions reveals that both authors agree that internal rhyme occurs within a verse-line. Shaw and Scott make their definitions more vivid by stating that internal rhymes fall in the middle as well as at the end of the same metrical line.

There is a gross misconception about internal rhymes amongst poets, educators, learners and students of literature. The above definitions are an eye-opener to the beneficiaries of this study.

In ‘Umfula Inkomazi’ (The Inkomazi River) Shongwe (1985:10) gives this example:

**Hamba nkhosikati lemabalekati**

(Go queen with big teats)

Shongwe uses the sound ‘-kati’ to create a pleasurable feeling to his reader by means of the middle rhyme in the above line.

In his ‘Tibongo Ta-Apollo’ (The praises of Apollo) Zwane (1984:28) has the following:

**Usati lesatiwako bakitsi  
Satiwa eMjindini neMashishini**

(You are an expert which is known  
It is known at Mjindini and Mashishini)

Zwane uses the locative formative ‘-ini’ in the second line to bring about a nice poetic device called rhythm because of the number of syllables each word has: each has eight syllables. It is unfortunate that Shongwe could not handle this skill in his poem quoted above. Nkhosikati has four syllables while lemabelekati has six syllables.

Internal rhymes are observed in the poems quoted below:

**Ngalolulwimi lamumetse ngalo lawo manti  
Laphuma ekujuleni kwetindlebe temaLangeni**

(With this tongue which contains that water  
Which comes from the depth of the ears of the emaLangeni)

(Nkwanyana, 1991:4)

In the above excerpt, internal rhyme appears in the second line. Each word, namely ‘ekujuleni’ and ‘temaLangeni’ respectively has five syllables which gives rise to rhythm.

Other examples investigated are:

In ‘Sengibitiwe’ (I am called) Ndlala (1992:6) writes:

**Ngendvumiso kutsintseke sibhakabhaka,  
Sachekeka, savuleka, savaleka.**

(With praise, the sky was touched,  
It burst opened, and opened and closed.)

In the following lines from ‘Nyoni Letile Ngelibovu Nentimakati’ (Bird which wears red ochre and blackness) Ndlala (1992:7) comes up with another middle rhyme; he says:

**Ndlunkhulu yaMswati ngihlebele, ungitjele;  
Yini loyitsembise bantfwabemaSwati?**

In this example, middle rhyme occurs in the first line. It is, however, noted that Ndlala arranges equal number of syllables in both the former and the latter quotations in order to make his poem poetical. In the former example, each word (‘savuleka’ and ‘savaleka’) respectively has four syllables. If we compare this with ‘ngihlebele’ and ‘ungitjele’, we note that these two words also have four syllables each. This style enhances rhythm in Ndlala’s poetry.

### 5.2.3 Final rhyme

Scott (1929:91) sees final or end rhyme as follows:

One which comes to the end of a line or verse. He goes on to say that ...  
this type of rhyme is found in conventionally rhyme verse.

Shaw (1905:136) views end rhyme as follows:

Rhyme that occurs at the end of verses (lines of poetry).

The above authors agree that end rhyme occurs at the end of lines of poetry. In his work Khumalo (1991:110) goes further and describes end rhyme as follows:

**“Akucikelelwe kutsi sifana-sigcino sentiwa ngumsindvo hhayi lubhalo magama. Emalunga angabhalwa ngendlela lefanako kodvwa abitwe ngekwehlukana, abe nemsindvo lowehlukene. EsiSwatini livi libaluleke kakhulu ngobe imisindvo lenelivi lelehlukene ingeke ibe nemvumelwano-sigcino lephelele lite libhalwe ngalokufanako.”**

(It must be noted that end rhyme is formed by sound, but not the orthography form end rhyme. Syllables can be written similarly, but pronounced dissimilarly having different sounds. In Swati, voice is very important because sound with different voice cannot have end rhyme even if it is written the same.)

This study shall explore the use of end rhymes by Swati poets in the development of Swati poetry.

In ‘Ngubani Lowatiko?’ (Who knows?) the following end rhyme is used:

**Umtali nemntfwana bayevana  
Inja nelikati kuyahlalelana**

(A parent and a child have good relations  
A dog and a cat stay together)

(Ndlala, 1992:21)

This rhyme is used to express mutual relation in terms of the theme of the poem, which is love. This does not, however, happen in real life. The extension ‘-ana’, seen above, is indeed symbolic of love. Where there is love, there is mutuality as love brings animate beings together, hence the successful use of this end rhyme.

In 'Leso Sitimela' (That train) Tembe (1990:14) uses end rhyme as shown in the following two lines:

**Sakhonya kwakhala bantfwana**  
**Tichwichwichi tabamb' imigodlana**

(It reared and children cried  
 The well-to-do persons took the little luggage)

The rhyming formatives are '-ana' and '-ana' respectively. This formative is used in grammar to indicate a diminutive. It seems its usage here has a purpose. Its effectiveness here is that young children who have not seen or heard a train roar before, get scared whilst well-to-do persons are able to pick up little luggage and rush for the train.

In 'Emhlabeni' (In the World) Zwane (1984:6) uses rhyme in the following lines:

**Ngeluphawu lolutinyembeti**  
**Letigobhota kwemifula lengawe<sup>le</sup>ki**  
**Letikhuluma tindzaba letingate<sup>ke</sup>ki**

(With the symbol of tears  
 Which are flowing like rivers that cannot be crossed  
 Which tell tales that cannot be narrated)

The beauty of this rhyme lies in the fact that Zwane uses it to emphasise his personal experience by means of exaggeration in the sense that there are neither rivers that cannot be crossed nor tales that cannot be narrated. There is development in that these exaggerated words indicate intensely upon the actions experienced by the poet.

There is another example of end rhyme in the poem called 'Enkhundleni' (At the playground):

**Ngivumele ngingen' enkhundleni**  
**Ngisho ngemabhong' etinyaweni**

(Allow me to enter the playground  
 With rings around the feet)

(Shongwe, 1985:9)

The rhyming sound is formed by the locative formative ‘-eni.’ Its significance is that it carries the action further towards what the performer is skilled to do.

Nkwanyana (1991:39) makes use of the perfect ‘-ile’ in his poem ‘Lifa Letilima’ (Estate of the idiot):

**Imikhuba yalomhlaba ingikhubile**  
**Imibono yalomhlaba ingibonile**

(Practices of this world have disturbed me  
 Ideas of this world have seen me)

In the poem ‘Lelijaha’ (The young man) Lumphoko (1984:28) uses final rhyme as an aid to help his readers memorise the poem more easily:

**Labasele nabo abasasebentanga**  
**Bantfwana bayawulala bangadlanga**  
**Ngobe sikhatsi sakho bangasigcinanga**

(Those left behind have not worked  
 Children will sleep without food  
 Because they have not kept your time)

Lumphoko uses the ‘-anga’, which is a negative morpheme to portray the negative effect caused by the disaster of a bus involved in an accident. The usage of this rhyme is made more relevant in the sense that memorisation of the quoted stanza is enhanced.

In ‘Mbali’ (Flower) Tembe (1990:38) emerges with the following end rhyme:

**Wakuphephetsa umoya nadlalisana**  
**Wabhinyilika mbali wephotsana**

(The wind blew you and you played with each other  
 You flower shook and twisted)

It seems that the ‘mbali’ in the poem symbolises a very special person loved by the poet. Tembe uses rhyme in the quoted lines to reveal that when the poet made love to this lady, she responded positively by means of twisting gestures. This is an action that signifies acceptance.



All in all it appears that as far as end rhyme is concerned ,Swati poets have not mastered its use.We do not seem to find interesting patterns like abbc;abab etc. throughout the poem.What we find are sporadic couplets ending in –a patterns.May be this confirms the general viewpoint that Nguni languages are not amenable to rhyme since they do not have stressed and unstressed sounds.

### 5.3 LINKING

Msimang (1986:14) defines linking as follows:

**Leli yisu lokuxhumanisa imigqa emibili noma engaphezulu kwemibili ngokuphinda igama elithile noma ingxenye yalo.**

(This is a device that is employed to join two or more lines by repeating a certain word or parts of the word.)

Scott (1929:165) sees linking as ‘linked rhyme’. He defines this as shown in the next quotation:

A device found in early Welsh verse. Such rhyme is formed by linking a final syllable in one line to the first sound of the next.

Both authors agree with each other in their definitions in that both see linking as a poetic scheme uniting lines in poetry. This study shall investigate which poets employ this poetic device with great success and which ones are to be encouraged to improve the handling of this concept. This study shall explore the following three types of linking in poetry:

- Vertical linking
- Oblique linking
- Enjambement

#### 5.3.1 Vertical linking

Ntuli (1984:192) has this to say about vertical linking:

We propose to use this expression to describe the type of linking where a word in the first line corresponds almost vertically with the one in the second line. This usually happens when similar words (or stems, or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or at the end (final linking).

Only a sample of poems will be quoted in order to exemplify certain issues related to the three different types of linking given by Ntuli.

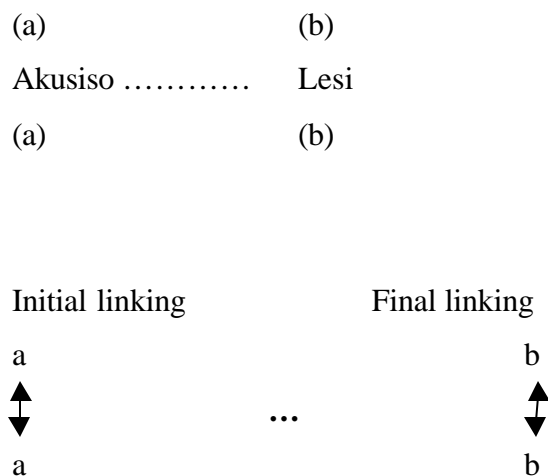
### 5.3.2 Initial vertical linking

In ‘Sesifikile Sikhatsi’ (Time has come) Tembe (1990:1) uses the following initial linking:

Akusiso sikhatsi semusa lesi  
Akusiso sikhatsi sekulala lesi

(This is not time for mercy  
 This is not time for sleeping)

Tembe uses similar words, namely ‘akusiso’ in forming an initial linking in the two quoted lines above. Both lines contain another linking caused by ‘lesi’. This is called a final vertical linking. This can also be presented by means of the following diagram:



In ‘Isahara’ (The Sahara) Shongwe (1985:4) uses both initial and final linking as follows:

Deda Sahara uyonats’ elwandle

**Deda uyodl' elwandle.**

(Get out of the way Sahara, go and drink in the sea  
Get out of the way and go and eat in the sea.)

(a)	(b)
Deda .....	elwandle
(a)	(b)
Deda .....	elwandle

In 'Emidzibini yeMjindini' (In the underground holes of Barberton) Magagula (1992:33) handles an initial linking in the following manner:

**Kwatsi khwishi! Kwatsi mbo!**  
**Kwatsi gudvu! Kwatsi nya!**

(It became dark! It closed completely!  
It became quiet! There was complete silence!)

Magagula uses this linking to explain how people working underground in mines are buried alive by falling rocks.

### 5.3.3

#### Final vertical linking

In 'Babe Wami' (My father) Nkwanyana (1991:131) has the following final linking:

**Ungikhumbule ngisahamba kulomhlaba**  
**Unginike emandla ngisakhula kulomhlaba**

(You remembered me while still alive in this world  
You gave me strength while still growing in this world)

The last work presented is that of Luphoko (1984:29) in the poem 'Lelijaha' (The young man). He uses final linking as follows:

**Siyalubonga lutsandvo lwakho**

**Ete silukhohlwe luncedvo lwakho**

(We thank you for your love  
We cannot forget you for your help)

Finally, it has been noticed that all Swati poets – whose works were investigated – do employ both the initial and the final vertical linking, however, they use one type of method, namely the employment of similar words. In our definition of linking above, it was stated that linking could also be revealed by means of stems and roots – which could not be found in this work – which is being explored in the above quoted poems.

### **5.3.4 Oblique linking**

Ntuli (1984:195) defines oblique linking as follows:

One word in the first line occurs in a different position in the second line.  
The corresponding words need not belong to the same morphological category. The link may be forged by merely using the same root.

Ntuli prefers to call this linking oblique because it can be represented with lines having a slant from one side to the other (Ntuli, 1984:195).

Msimang (1986:15) says the following about oblique linking:

**Kokunye ukuxhumanisa kuba yinxemu (oblique linking). Ngaloko sisho ukuthi uma igama eliphindwayo lingasesandleni sokudla emgqeni wokuqala kuyothi kowesibili libe ngasesandleni sokunxele. Uma likwesokunxele emgqeni wokuqala kowesibili lizoba ngakwesokudla.**

(There are certain instances where lining becomes oblique. By this we mean that if the same word is on the right-hand side of the first line, it will be on the left-hand side of the second line. If it is on the left in the first line, it will be on the right in the second line.)

In ‘Nifike kahle’ (you have arrived well), Lumphoko (1984:16) uses oblique linking as follows:

**Kadze kwasa kukhalwa,  
Kukhalwa lesingapheli sililo.**

(It is long time that people have been crying  
Crying an everlasting mourning.)

Tembe (1990:36) in Bhuza Wesibili (Bhuza II) uses oblique linking in the poem as quoted in the following examples:

**Kwavela Bhuza kwacetuka tikhiya  
Tikhiya tebugcili bakamdzeshi**

(Bhuza emerged and there broke they keys  
They keys of slavery of the white man)

Shongwe (1985:4) in 'Isahara' also handles oblique linking as shown below:

**Unyonyobisa kweligoya  
Nesitfunti sakho siyasindza  
Sisindza indlu leNtima yaketfu.**

(You are crawling like a wildcat  
Your dignity is heavy  
It is too heavy for our Black people.)

Oblique linking is formed by each of the underlined words of each poetic line shown in the above extract. This study has, however, discovered that most poems studied in various anthologies, follow the trend whereby the same word on the right-hand side of the line is always on the left-hand side of the successive line. Diagrammatically this trend can be presented as follows:

- i) (a)  
**Kadze kwasa kukhalwa**  
(a)  
**Kukhalwa lesingapheli sililo**



- ii) (a)

**Kwavela Bhuza kwacetuka tikhiya**

(a)

**Tikhiya tebugcili bakamdzeshi**

(a) ← (a)

iii)

(a)

**Nesitfunti sakho siyasindza**

(a)

**Sisindza indlu leNtima yaketfu**

(a) ← (a)

Tembe (1990:21) in ‘Balumbi’ Magicians) uses another form of oblique linking, different from the examples discussed above. He says:

**Eliveni lebutimba netinyamatane  
Inyama iphekwa ngemhluti walenye  
Nalongenankhomo bekayidl’ inyama**

(In the world of hunting and animals  
Meat is cooked with soup of another  
Even the one who did not have a cow, ate meat)

In ‘Kubo bonkhe labacotfo’ (To all who are honest) Tembe (1990:28) also displays the same method of using oblique linking which is unique to his composition. He writes and says:

**Sipho mntfwanababe,  
Ngikubuka ngikhumbule leso sipho  
Leseta sindiza ngemaphiko.**

(Sipho, my father’s child  
I look at you and remember that gift  
Which came flying by means of wings)

This can also be presented diagrammatically as follows:

- i) (a)  
**Inyama iphekwa ngemhluti walenye**  
 (a)  
**Nalongenankhomo bekayidl' inyama**
- (a) —————→ (a)
- ii) (a)  
**Sipho mntfwanababe**  
 (a)  
**Ngikubuka ngikhumbule leso sipho**
- (a) —————→ (a)

This study discovered that this type of presentation is unique to Tembe's style of handling oblique linking. This is the trend whereby the same word on the left-hand side of the line is on the right side of the successive line. This is a rare presentation in the development of Swati poetry from 1977 to 1992.

### 5.3.5 Enjambement

Shaw (1905:136) has the following definition of enjambement:

The running of thought from one line, couplet (pair of lines) or stanza to the next. Enjambement, a French term equivalent to 'striding over' occurs with the use of run-on line.

Scott (1929:127) on the other hand sees enjambement as follows:

The continuation of the sentence beyond the second line of one couplet into the first line of the next.

Fowler (1973:389) is of the opinion that:

Enjambement is the continuation of a sentence without a pause beyond the end of a line, couplet or stanza.

A close study of the definition of enjambement cited by the above-mentioned authors, discloses that all authors agree that enjambement is the continuation of a sentence beyond the end of a verse-line.

It is the task of this study to investigate the ability of how Swati poets handle the use of enjambement in their works. Only a few authors will be quoted to exemplify issues discussed.

There is enjambement in Shongwe's poem 'ISahara' (The Sahara Desert) where he says:

**Hlehla Sahara baphume**  
**Bagidze badlale bantfwana be-Afrika.**  
 (Get out of the way Sahara, the children of  
 Africa free, dance and play.)

(Shongwe, 1985:4)

Tembe (1990:37) uses the following enjambement in 'Mbali' (Flower):

**Ngakubamba wena sabambana**  
**Kwesuka kwavuleka bumbongi.**

(I caught you and we caught each other  
 Then inspiration for poetry began.)

In 'Emidzibini YeMjindini' (The Gold fields of Barberton) Magagula (1992:34) sees using enjambement as quoted below:

**Ngalunguta ngaphandle ngakhandza Langa,**  
**Ahhuhuma njengemalangabi agayinga**



**Labo bahlobo lebebadzabukil' etinhlitiyweni.**

(I peeped outside, I saw Langa [the sun],  
Raving like flames scorching  
Those relatives who were heart broken.)

Matsebula (1990:36) says in Mswati Wesi III:

**Sukuma ukhulume uyalibona  
Live laboyihlomkhulu liyavungama.**

(Stand up and speak you see  
That your forefathers' land is shaking.)

In his poem 'Buhle Bekuba Ntima' (Black is beautiful), Hlongwane (1990:19) uses enjambement as follows:

**Ngako-ke buhle bakh' ungabulima  
Ngekushisa buso ngetitapolo.**

(Therefore you can plough your beauty  
By burning your face by means of facial creams.)

## **5.4 ALLITERATION**

Scott (1929:6) has the following explanation concerning alliteration:

A device commonly used in poetry and occasionally in prose, the repetition of an initial sound in two or more words of a phrase, line of poetry or sentence.

According to Fowler (1973:30) alliteration is:

The occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

Khumalo (1991:112) defines alliteration as follows:

**Ngaloku sisho kuphindvwa kwemisindvo lefananako emgceni:  
Nakuphindvwa bongwaca sitsi sifananangwaca. Nakuphindvwa  
bonkhamisa sitsi sifananankhamisa.**

(By this we mean the repetition of the same sounds in a verse-line, If the same consonants are repeated, we call this consonance, if vowels are repeated we call this assonance.)

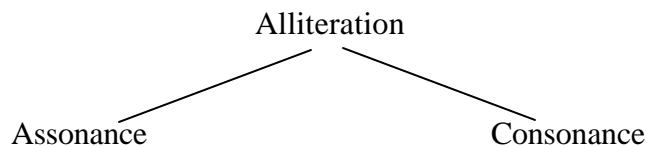
Bradford (1987:22) defines alliteration as follows:

... repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

The observation that the researcher arrived at here is that all English authors who define alliteration say that alliteration occurs at the beginning of adjacent words or closely connected words. In this definition Khumalo does not mention that, but says it is the repetition of the same sounds in a verse-line. Khumalo's definition of alliteration is what is occurring in African poetry; otherwise if the European approaches were to be employed slavishly in African poetry, the latter would ultimately lose its African flavour thus becoming more Eurocentric in nature.

However, this study will explore both approaches, namely Khumalo's and the European's view points.

In Swati, alliteration is taken as an umbrella concept consisting of assonance and consonance as shown in the following sketch:



The researcher shall now investigate how each of these concepts is successfully or unsuccessfully used in Swati poetry. The researcher shall briefly define each concept and then investigate how each is used.

#### **5.4.1 Assonance**

Shaw (1905:35) defines assonance as follows:

A resemblance of sound in words, or syllables. Assonance applies especially to close recurring vowel sounds and stressed syllables.

In his definition, Scott (1929:24) concurs with Shaw's definition. He views assonance as shown below:

Correspondence in sound between two words as regards the stressed vowels but different consonants.

Abrams (1957:7) gives the following definition:

Assonance is the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds especially in stressed syllables in a sequence of nearby words.

It is now clear that assonance refers to the repetition of the same vowel sounds of nearby words. In poetry assonance is a common method of producing a musical effect.

This study shall now delve into some of the poems to investigate how each Swati poet uses assonance in his/her poetry.

In 'Chawe Lemicansa' (Hero of the ascent) Magagula (1992:17) has the following usage of assonance:

**Ubamita ubamitelela ubahlanta**

(You swallow them, you swallow them more, and you vomit them)

The underlined vowels u and a are the same vowel sounds repeated in the above line of poetry.

In 'Enkhundleni' (At the playground) Shongwe (1985:9) handles assonance as follows:

**Vumani ngingene nami  
Ngigidze nginyundzele, ngisikit' umoya.**

(Allow me to enter  
So that I may dance, defame, feint at the air.)

The repeated vowel sound is the underlined.

Luphoko (1984:28) in 'Lelijaha' (This gentleman) handles assonance as shown below:

**Hham ... u! Hham ... u hham ... u!!**  
**Yimbabala lendvuna.**

In 'Sesifikile sikhatsi' (Time has come) Tembe (1990:1) has the following assonance:

**Sitibumbe sitibeke, sitibumbe sitibuke.**  
**Kulunge kungalungi, kungalungi kulunge.**

(We make them, we put them, we make them, we look at them.  
It becomes good and bad.)

This study has found that most of the poems studied, showed the above type of assonance which indicates a positive direction of the development of Swati poetry.

#### 5.4.2 Consonance

Shaw (1905:93) defines consonance as follows:

Consonance is used to refer to the correspondence of consonants, especially those at the end of a word.

Abrams (1957:7) has the following definition:

Consonance is the repetition of a sequence of consonants.

Scott (1929:62) views consonance as follows:

Agreement or unison of sounds, recurrence of same or similar sounds in words. It is the pairing of words in which the vowels differ but the consonants agree.

From these definitions, it is concluded that consonance refers to an agreement as well as harmony caused by similar consonants in a verse-line. It shall now be explored how this poetic device is employed in Swati poetry. Only a few authors will be quoted as examples so as to make vivid illustrations of consonance.

In 'Ngeke Behle Cha' (I cannot sleep), Tembe (1990) uses the following consonance quoted below:

**Ngicobhota ngivuke ngicobhote futsi  
Kepha ngeke behle cha!**

(I doze, wake up and doze again  
But I cannot fall asleep!)

Consonance in the above verse-line is formed by the c and the bh.

In 'Libhubesi' (Lion) Shongwe (1985:23) uses the following consonance:

**Bhodla ubhadlise mbo dlane yelihlanze**

(Roar and roar king of the bushveld)

The repeated sounds bh and dl respectively form consonance which is pleasing to one's ears.

Luphoko (1984:28) in 'Lelijaha' (This young man) also handles consonance as follows:

**Hham ... u! Hham hham ...!!**

The unison of the sounds hh and m forms consonance in the above quoted verse-line.

In 'Manyovu Wenhliyiyo' (Wasp of the heart) Magagula (1992:47) handles consonance as follows:

**Wota manyovu wenhliyiyo yami  
Asihambe siye esihlanjeni lesiluhlata.**

(Come wasp of my heart  
Let us go to a nice green place.)

Consonance in the second line is influenced by the sound of the underlined s.

The researcher's observation of the use of consonance as a poetic device in Swati poetry leaves much to be desired. Although some poets whose names have been mentioned above handle consonance effectively, there is still enough room for them to improve their skills in the handling of consonance in their poetry. It is also noted that some of the poets could hardly employ consonance in their works at all due to unknown reasons.

## 5.5 CAESURA

Scott (1929:41) defines caesura as follows:

Latin: caudere, caesum: to cut off. The brake or pause between words within a metrical foot; a pause in a line of verse.

Abrams (1957:97) says the following about a caesura:

When a strong phrasal pause falls within a line, it is called a caesura.

Shaw (1905:62) views a caesura as follows:

A pause, or break, in a line of verse that results from the meanings of words.

Hornby (1974:119) defines a caesura as follows:

Point at which a pause naturally occurs in a line of verse.

The researcher's observation is that both authors define a caesura as a pause in a line of a verse in poetry. Shaw and Abrams even go further by suggesting that a caesura is marked by a double line such as this one (/). This study will, however, investigate the use of a caesura in Swati poetry. Only a few poems will be investigated.

In 'Esimunye' (At simunye) Shongwe (1985:18) appears with the following usage of a caesura:

**Khula Simunye, ukhul' ugcwalise  
Lawo magama aLomdzala**

(Grow Simunye, grow and fulfil  
Those words of the Old man)

The function of the comma is to indicate where the pause is located in the first verse-line.

This can be shown as indicated below:

**Khula Simunye // ukhul' ugcwalise**

.....

Vilane (1988:1) in 'Lilanga' (Sun) says:

**Unesibindzi, ubuka konkhe ...  
Ungakhuti, ungakhali, ungasho lutfo.**

(You are brave, you see everything ...  
You do not reprove, you do not cry, you say nothing.)

Unesibindzi // ubuka konkhe ...  
Ungakhuti // ungakhali // ungasho lutfo

In 'Sidlamafa' Makaula (1986:2) also handles a caesura as shown below:

**Vul' emehlo, uval' umlomo  
Uvule tindlebe, uvale kuphikisa.**

(Open eyes and close the mouth  
Open ears and stop arguing)

**Vul' emehlo // uval' umlomo  
Vule tindlebe // uvale kuphikisa.**

The researcher's observation shows that poetry, quoted from the three authors above, use caesura successfully and effectively to create rhythm and variety, as well as to provide rhetorical emphasis in the long verse-lines. It has also been observed that some poets confuse caesura and punctuation especially the use of a comma (,) in a general discourse.

Hlongwane's (1990:20) handling of a caesura is an example of the confusion mentioned earlier. In 'Sengiyakhola' (I believe) he says:

**Sonkhe sikhatsi, sengesaba kufa.**

It is, however suggested that the use of a pause in the above line is undesirable. It is not only Hlongwane who has this weakness but many more Swati poets show a feeble handling of a caesura in poetry.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, my observation is that between 1977 and 1992 Swati poets were in different smaller clusters, according to their ability to employ form in poetry, namely those who were able to use form correctly and those who were not sure how to use each element of form, for example rhyme, convincingly.



## CHAPTER SIX

### 6. GENERAL CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

#### 6.1 POETRY TYPES

In poetry in general the theme of the poem will determine the form or structure, for example: A ballad will characteristically have long verses of  $\pm$  eight lines each and written largely in blank verse. A sonnet will have fourteen lines. A Shakespearean sonnet will have three quatrains and a rhyming couplet. An Italian sonnet will have two sections, namely the octave (8) lines that is an argument and the sextet (6) lines, which resolves the mystery of the argument.

None of the poems studied in this work conformed to the above. The poets were, however, aware that the structures – especially the sonnet – might be a misfit in Nguni poetry if the poet would follow the conventions to the letter. Furthermore, poems studied revealed that some poets simply compose fourteen lines in prose form and call them a sonnet. After having explored a few Swati sonnets, I discovered that nobody has written a true sonnet in Swati.

The anthologies examined cover a wide range of the different types of poems, namely lyrics, satire, elegies and so forth. The only weakness observed, is the language used, which is prosaic. It is a pity that there is nobody who attempted to compose an epic poem throughout the development of Swati poetry between 1977 and 1992,

#### 6.2 Stanza patterns

Pattern here means a combination of qualities and tendencies that form a consistent and characteristic arrangement. In poetry for example, pattern is the verse form expressed through movement of words and lines in a stanza.

In this study, the researcher discovered that some Swati poets do not conform to the above patterns in their works. A very good poem will exhibit pattern breaking regarding the arrangement and number of lines in a stanza. One verse will have five lines; the following verse four lines and so forth. The number of words in each line varies. Although poets need not follow the pattern so slavishly, their deviation must have a sound reason. Their inconsistency tends to lower the quality of the work.

### **6.3 The use of rhyme and linking**

It might be awful or clumsy to follow the rhyme scheme of e.g. abab cdcd efef gg for a sonnet written in Nguni (Swati) because the tone and intonation system of English differs tremendously from that of the SiSwati intonation system, notwithstanding that Nguni languages are also tonal languages. The major difference is that English is a stress language Swati has no stress. However, this study's observation is that there are poets who handle rhyme effectively whilst others simply force rhyme in their poems. There are also very few variations in linking. What is common is the repetition of a word in the second line exactly as it appeared in the first line.

### **6.4 Use of figurative language**

A poem is a composition that is characterised by a highly developed artistic arrangement and the employment of heightened language to express an imaginative interpretation of a situation or idea. If a poem is good, it is seen by its use of a metaphorical language to give it a poetical flavour.

The researcher's observation from the selected poems studied, is that the employment of figurative language – namely figures of speech, imagery, symbolism and so forth – from some of the author's works, has been well handled. However, amongst some of these authors there are those whose works suffer from platitude.

The second category comprises authors who use prosaic language and also use platitudinous poetic devices. These authors need help in order to enhance their originality.

## 6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In casual reading the recommendations which follow may appear simplistic and basic. However, it must be borne in mind that as a written variety, Swati is a very young language which will need a lot of groundwork in order to develop. At present, poets are still experimenting through trial and error and largely through imitating Zulu models. The inspiration is undoubtedly there, what is lacking are skills.

In order to enhance the standard and the calibre of writing among siSwati writers in general, the researcher would strongly recommend the following views:

### 6.5.1 Group work

All the siSwati writers should, at some stage, converge as a group to discuss, *inter alia*, the following:

- The question of relevance and necessity of writing in modern society.
- The question of urgency and duty to write as much as possible in order to build up a siSwati treasure of literature.
- Writing about current events and avoiding repetition.

### 6.5.2 Access of information

Writers must have access to the enormous body of information locked up in books in the libraries – locally and nationally. This empowers them to find out how other poets, before them, wrote better poems.

### 6.5.3 Workshops

It is imperative for experts in the field to organise workshops from time to time to sharpen the writers on some skills or expertise. Some veterans in the field of writing may be invited to come and share their experiences with other writers, especially budding authors. Such

workshops should deal with questions of focus and relevance, quality and standards of writing.

#### **6.5.4 Publishers**

Although it is not the responsibility of the publishers to train poets, they probably have a moral obligation to assist.

Publishers must not only concentrate on the financial aspect, they should also develop the author's skills of writing. A better author will produce a better piece of writing, so if publishers workshop their person-power, books produced will be of a very high quality. A well written book has a high readership and its marketing is also high. When writers are badly groomed, they produce work of poor quality, hence the decline in readership and a poor marketing value.

#### **6.5.5 Association of siSwati authors**

The researcher strongly recommends that writers from various localities and regions merge to form an association of writers (writer's guild). This will bring all authors together so that they can be in a position to achieve a common goal, namely quality work. Other activities of the association should be to organise meetings, promote publications and to invite speakers from other language committees for the sake of enrichment. Usiba, Writer's Guild for isiZulu writers has successfully improved isiZulu writers; hence the high quality of work produced by members of Usiba. Umhlahlandlela, the Writer's Guild of the Swati writers also improved the writing skills of the budding Swati writers; hence the comparatively high standard of work produced by some of these Swati writers.

#### **6.5.6 Annual conference of different language committees**

- In the academic world, cross-fertilisation of information and skills is important. Writers will be exposed to their language experiences and how they make it possible to achieve their goals.
- Papers on different aspects of writing may be presented to help young writers.

- Recognition of young writers' talents in the form of prizes and acknowledgements should be given at such special conferences.

#### **6.5.7 The Department of Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture**

This department must make a visible contribution by developing the following:

- Formation of language Committees (Language boards) whose duties should be:
  - Coining of suitable words to be used by writers.
  - Choosing of suitable books by means of screening. The purpose of this exercise is to prescribe these books for schools, keeping some copies in public libraries – locally and internationally – to be read by the community.
  - Encouraging writers to write siSwati by giving incentives such as bursaries to those who would like to pursue siSwati at higher institutions of learning such as universities.
  - Coordinating all activities of authors by means of financial support.

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