

THEMES, DICTION AND FORM IN THE POETRY OF C S Z NTULI

by

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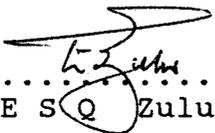
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DECLARATION

I declare that **THEMES, DICTION AND FORM IN THE POETRY OF C S Z NTULI** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.


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Mr E S Q Zulu

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DATE

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THEMES, DICTION AND FORM IN THE POETRY OF C.S.Z. NTULI

by E.S.Q. Zulu

Degree: Master of Arts

Subject: African Languages

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Summary

This dissertation deals with the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli, with specific reference to themes, diction and form.

The introductory chapter deals with the aim of study, the author's biographical background, the development of modern Zulu poetry, the state of critical studies in modern Zulu poetry, the scope of study and the method of approach. Chapter 2 examines the main themes manifest in the poetry of Ntuli.

Chapter 3 is devoted to diction, with particular reference to imagery, compound words, ideophones and deideophonic derivatives. Comment is also made on ways in which these amplify the theme in selected poems. Chapter 4 discusses outstanding formal features and techniques including stanza formation, refrains, alliteration, parallelism, linking and rhythm. Chapter 5 concludes the study by giving observations about the quality of Ntuli's contribution to modern Zulu poetry, and by exploring some possibilities regarding future studies on the poetry of Ntuli.

Key terms:

Themes; Diction; Imagery; Simile; Metaphor; Personification;
Symbolism; Compound words; Ideophones and ideophonic derivatives;
Form; Refrains; Rhyme; Parallelism; Linking; Rhythm.

CHAPTER 1**1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION****1.1 AIM OF STUDY**

The aim of this study is to make a critical analysis of the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli with specific reference to themes, diction and form.

Since Ntuli's first appearance on the scene as a poet in the anthology entitled AMEHLO KAZULU (The eyes of the Zulu) (abbreviated AME.) in 1972, his poetry has been widely read. It has been prescribed in secondary schools, colleges of education and universities. Such prescription has facilitated the exposure of his poetry to many a student of Zulu literature. It is therefore hoped that this study will be of assistance to students, teachers, lecturers and critics engaged in the study of Ntuli's poetry.

Moreover, it is worth noting that except for my Honours B.A. article (Unisa, 1992), of which the present study is an extension, no other critical appraisal of Ntuli's poetry has so far been undertaken. Only brief commentaries on certain poems or aspects thereof are found in Taljaard (1979) and Msimang (1986 & 1988). Part of the aim of this study is thus to challenge further in-depth studies on the poetry of Ntuli.

1.2 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Canaan Sipho Ntuli was born at Gcotsheni near Eshowe in Zululand on

11 March 1931. He is the third of the eight children of the late Zabulon Jakalase and Mellina Zondekile "MaShezi". He received his primary education at EGcotsheni Primary, Samungu Combined, Enembe Combined, and Ndulinde Combined Schools. He then proceeded to Mpumulo Institution where he did his Junior Certificate, and subsequently a T3 Teachers' Certificate, which he completed in 1950.

From 1951 to 1983 he taught at the following schools: Enembe Primary, St Cyprian's Combined, Khangelani Combined, Dlangezwa High School, Bhekuzulu College, and Tshana Secondary School. In all but one he served in the capacity of Principal.

He married Jestina Siziwe in July 1954. They were blessed with eight children - four sons and four daughters. Sadly, however, their third son Mlungisi Velaphi died at an infant age after a short illness. It was this unfortunate loss which inspired the writing of the elegy *Lapha Kulele UMlungisi (Here Lies Mlungisi)* (AME. p.4).

During the early part of his teaching career he pursued and completed his Matriculation through private studies. In 1974 he obtained a B.A. degree from the University of South Africa with Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology and Zulu as major subjects. In 1982 he was ordained as a minister of the United National Church (Lutheran). In 1983 he received a B. Ed. degree from the University of Zululand.

From 1984 to March 1991 he served under the Department of Education and Culture, KwaZulu, as an Inspector of Schools at Msinga Circuit, and as Circuit Inspector at Umlazi North and Mahlabathini Circuits.

When he retired from the service of the Department in March 1991 he became a full-time minister in his above-mentioned church.

Although Ntuli developed love for poetry at an early age, he never started writing until 1970. In an interview Ntuli intimated:

The moving spirit behind my love for poetry was my father, who not only collected and committed to paper the praises of members of our lineage, but also recited them on occasion. But due to my academic commitments I never really settled down to writing until 1970.

His first 15 poems appeared in 1972 in the anthology AMEHLO KAZULU which he co-authored with D.B.Z. Ntuli. In 1975 he contributed 10 poems in a collection compiled by D.B.Z. Ntuli, entitled UGQOZI 2 (Inspiration 2) (UGQ.). Again in 1975 he contributed 6 poems in a collection entitled AMAGAGASI (The Billows) (AMA.), compiled by C.T. Msimang. Thus altogether C.S.Z. Ntuli has published 31 poems, which form the subject of this study.

Ntuli also made a name for himself as an essayist with the publication of his Zulu essays in AMAWISA (Knobkerries) (1982), IZIZENZE (Battle-axes) (1986) and INDUKU (The stick) (1992). D.B.Z. Ntuli contributed short stories in all the above publications.

Commenting on Ntuli's essays, G.S. Zulu (1991: 3) states:

They are regarded as the best Zulu essays of this stage.

However, since our focus in this study is on Ntuli's poetry, nothing further will be said about his essays.

1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ZULU POETRY AND NTULI'S POSITION IN AND CONTRIBUTION TO IT

As this is only a brief survey, mention will be made of the

contribution of only the leading Zulu poets vis-à-vis that of Ntuli. The phases of the development of modern Zulu poetry will be roughly divided according to decades.

1.3.1 1930 - 1939

The first and only Zulu book of modern poetry produced during this period was written by B.W. Vilakazi. This was entitled INKONDLO KAZULU (Poetry of the Zulu), published in 1935. As izibongo (praise-poems) were hitherto the only known form of Zulu poetry, the poems contained in this book were a significant deviation from this norm as the poems were mainly of a lyrical nature, with rhyme used consistently in them and with many of them having regular stanzas.

1.3.2 1940 - 1949

Published in 1945, AMAL' EZULU (Concavity of heavens) was the second and last of B.W. Vilakazi's poetry books. Obviously unimpressed with the result of his experimentation with end-rhyme in his first book of poetry, Vilakazi eschewed this poetic device in all the poems in this book except one. Instead he relied more on the formal techniques prevalent in izibongo such as parallelism and initial rhyme. In fact one of the widely acclaimed merits of Vilakazi's poetry is that he was able to blend traditional and Western styles with a remarkable degree of success.

Although Vilakazi's works of poetry were of a pioneering nature, they were generally of such a high standard that they have since often been used as a norm against which to gauge those of later poets.

1.3.3 1950 - 1959

A total of 7 books emerged during this phase. Most of the publications of this phase can at best be described as mediocre in comparison to Vilakazi's.

J.C. Dlamini's first volume entitled INZULULWANE (Giddiness) (1958) was, however, on a level of its own. The poems in it were characterized by well-managed formal techniques and striking imagery. Like Vilakazi, Dlamini exploited traditional poetic techniques to great advantage. Philosophical and thought-challenging, his poems were tinged with a peculiar sense of humour. Mavundla (1982: 32) sees Dlamini in INZULULWANE in this light:

Dlamini could be said to be more of the metaphysical temperament: he has thoughts arising from the reason of his mind rather than "feeling" flowing from the "affections" of his "heart".

Thus, after Vilakazi, Dlamini distinguished himself as a poet of some destiny despite his predilection for puns and paradoxes which tended to obscure meaning in certain parts of his poems.

1.3.4 1960 - 1969

This phase saw the production of 15 anthologies. O.E.H.M. Nxumalo and D.B.Z. Ntuli made their mark in modern Zulu poetry during this phase.

Nxumalo, who had initially contributed some of his poems in two anthologies compiled by Sibusiso Nyembezi, put out two publications of his own in 1965 and 1968, viz. IKHWEZI (The morning star) and

UMZWANGEDWA (Personal feeling) respectively. Bar the weakness of lack of word economy in some of the poems, Nxumalo rendered a fine repertoire of poems in these anthologies.

D.B.Z. Ntuli, who had also contributed some poems in earlier anthologies compiled by Nyembezi, published AMANGWEVU (Upward blows) in 1969 with 50 poems of his own. This was undoubtedly one of the best collections of modern poetry in Zulu. Couched in vivid imagery and colourful language, Ntuli's poetry displayed a wonderful economy of words, and harmony between form and idea.

1.3.5 1970 - 1979

During this period, 12 books came out, the highlights of which were AMEHLO KAZULU (1972) by C.S.Z. and D.B.Z. Ntuli, IMVUNGE YEMVELO (The hum of nature) (1972) by D.B.Z. Ntuli, IMFIHLO YOKUNYAMALALA (The secret of disappearance) (1973) by J.C. Dlamini, UGQOZI 1 & 2 (1975) by D.B.Z. Ntuli (Ed.) as well as AMAGAGASI (1979) by C.T. Msimang (Ed.).

With IMFIHLO YOKUNYAMALALA, J.C. Dlamini further entrenched himself as the eccentric metaphysical Zulu poet. D.B.Z. Ntuli contributed more of his characteristically well-finished poems in the first two above-mentioned books.

This is the era which produced C.S.Z. Ntuli, who was instantly seen to be one of the most talented poets in the Zulu language. All his poems, which form the subject of this study, appeared during this period. His prowess as a poet lies in the felicity of his language, his bold imagery, an orderly command of ideas, a masterly handling

of formal techniques and a delicate sense of humour. Though by no means faultless, his works have a stamp of true poetry. Maphumulo (1985: 48-49) states his opinion of Ntuli unequivocally:

Among the contemporary poets I regard C.S. Ntuli to be the best. It is a pity that this poet has written few works.

1.3.6 1980 - 1989

This phase has proven to be the most prolific in the history of modern Zulu poetry. In the eighties alone no fewer than 25 publications sprouted forth, and the most noteworthy of these were collections produced by J.C. Dlamini, D.B.Z. Ntuli and C.T. Msimang.

J.C. Dlamini evinced a greater measure of maturity in his later poems published in AMAVOVO EZINYEMBEZI (Residue of tears) (1981), ISIHLUTHULELO (The key) (1988) and SADABUKISA ISIZWE (How pathetic the nation is) (1989), as well as those he contributed in mixed collections. Although D.B.Z. Ntuli did not produce any independent collection of his own poems during this phase, he made significant contributions in mixed anthologies.

It was during this phase that C.T. Msimang surfaced as a poet of notable stature in Zulu. His greatest merit lay in his ability to forge a more sophisticated synthesis of Western and traditional techniques of form in modern Zulu verse. His poems appeared in IZIZIBA ZOTHUKELA (The ponds of uThukela) (1980), IMINDUZE (Crinum lilies) (1986), IZIMBONGI IZOLO NANAMUHLE (Poets yesterday and today) 1 & 2 (1986 & 1988 respectively), and IBANDLA LASENTABENI (The mountain congregation) (1988). Besides these, Msimang also edited other books of poetry which did not include any of his poems,

of which the aforementioned AMAGAGASI is one.

Another poet and compiler who made a noteworthy contribution in the field of modern Zulu poetry during this decade was L.T.L. Mabuya, who had by the close of the decade proliferated in excess of 140 poems appearing in 17 publications. A few other poets such as L.B.Z. Buthelezi, M.S.S. Gcumisa, D.B.K. Mhlongo, N.F. Mbhele, and A.M. Maphumulo also deserve mention as they positively influenced the development of modern Zulu poetry during the eighties.

1.3.7 1990 -

Although the nineties have only just begun, there are already positive signs that many more books of modern Zulu poetry might spring forth during this phase. Even though among the more notable poets only Msimang has produced an anthology entitled UNODUMEHLEZI KAMENZI (Nodumehlezi of Menzi) (1990), several other collections by some lesser known poets have already come forth. The production of mixed collections accompanied by notes on the theory of poetry appears to enjoy greater preference during this early part of the decade than collections containing poems by single poets.

It must be clear from the above exposition that C.S.Z. Ntuli emerged as a poet at a time when some foundation had already been laid in modern Zulu poetry. But a clearer vision of what modern Zulu poetry could and should be, had yet to be established. Comparatively small in number though his poems may be, Ntuli has contributed significantly towards the attainment of that vision.

1.4 A SURVEY OF CRITICAL STUDIES IN MODERN ZULU POETRY

It is necessary also to take a broad look at the amount of critical study already conducted in modern Zulu poetry, with especial reference to those dealing with works of specific poets. I propose to discuss this under four different headings, viz. doctoral theses, masters dissertations, honours articles, and books.

1.4.1 Doctoral theses

So far only two doctoral theses on modern Zulu poetry are available, but only one deals with the works of a specific poet. This is D.B.Z. Ntuli's D. Litt et Phil thesis, entitled **The poetry of B.W. Vilakazi** (Unisa, 1978), which has since been published into a book. This authoritative work on the poetry of Vilakazi discusses all Vilakazi's 41 poems with emphasis on this poet's formative influences, themes, imagery and form.

1.4.2 Masters dissertations

None of the 6 dissertations in this category devotes full attention to the works of some individual poet. Nevertheless P.C. Taljaard's **Tradisionele elemente in die moderne Zulupoësie** is worthy of mention because one of the four poets from whose works he gleans examples of the various concepts with which he deals, is C.S.Z. Ntuli. The other three are D.B.Z. Ntuli, O.E.H. Nxumalo and J.C. Dlamini. In this study Taljaard examines structural devices found in both oral and written (modern) Zulu poetry.

1.4.3 Honours articles

More studies have been conducted on modern poetry at this level than

in any of the previous ones. As such, greater attention has been devoted to works of individual Zulu poets in this category.

To Vilakazi alone, three articles have been devoted. In his **Water as a focus of symbolism in Vilakazi's prose and poetry** (Unizul, 1979), E.Z.T.S. Mthiyane discusses the symbolic significance of water, not only in the poetry but also in the prose works of B.W. Vilakazi. In the same year came A.T. Wainwright's **Remarks on Zulu written literature, with emphasis on Vilakazi's poetry** (Unisa, 1979). Alli Cassem's article **The socio-political and economic background of Vilakazi's poetry** (Wits, 1985) is an illuminating piece of work on the times which produced and moulded Vilakazi as a poet.

Both M.A. Hlengwa and Joyce B. Sukumane's articles focus on the poetry of O.E.H. Nxumalo. Hlengwa's **The poetry of O.E.H. Nxumalo** (Natal, 1981) appraises Nxumalo's themes, imagery, and style and technique, while Sukumane's **The use of imagery and symbolism in the poetry of O.E.H. Nxumalo** (Unisa, 1981) has Nxumalo's imagery and symbolism as its focal point.

With four articles having been devoted to J.C. Dlamini, this poet appears to be the most popular subject of study so far. M.J. Mavundla's article, **A critical appreciation of J.C. Dlamini's poetry in Inzululwane** (Natal, 1982) sheds light on Dlamini's themes, imagery, and style and technique in the said anthology. In **The use of parallelism in J.C. Dlamini's poetry** (U.D.W., 1991), Princess N. Mlaba presents a detailed and very informative study of parallelism, as manifest in the poetry of Dlamini. Makhosazana V. Ngcobo evaluates Dlamini's themes and imagery in the light of Dlamini's

metaphysical disposition in her article **J.C. Dlamini as a metaphysical poet** (U.D.W., 1991). One more article on J.C. Dlamini is T.M. Mtshali's **J.C. Dlamini: The voice of protest in his works** (U.D.W., 1991) which examines Dlamini as a Zulu protest poet.

So far D.B.Z. Ntuli, M.S.S. Gcumisa, C.T. Msimang and C.S.Z. Ntuli have attracted one article each. In the article entitled **Izinkondlo Zika D.B.Z. Ntuli** (Natal, 1985), V.O.S. Hadebe makes a critical appraisal of the poetry of D.B.Z. Ntuli with reference to themes, style and technique, as well as imagery. In the article **A critical analysis of M.S.S. Gcumisa's poetry** (Unizul, 1985) A.M. Maphumulo offers an insightful evaluation of the use of themes, imagery and form in the poetry of Gcumisa.

M.C. Mkhamba in the article **A survey of Msimang's praise-poetry in IZIZIBA ZOTHUKELA** (U.D.W., 1990) examines the devices used by C.T. Msimang in his praise-poetry published in the said book, while a critical appreciation of the use of imagery in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli is rendered by E.S.Q. Zulu in the article entitled **Imagery in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli** (Unisa, 1992).

Putting aside the number of articles produced per poet, it is interesting to note that the choice of these poets as subjects of study seems to largely coincide with our inferred notion in the previous sub-section that the above are by and large the most outstanding poets in the Zulu language thus far.

1.4.4 Books

Three out of four existing publications are of relevance in this

survey. The first is Ntuli, D.B.Z., 1984. THE POETRY OF B.W. VILAKAZI (Van Schaik) which was published from a D. Litt et Phil thesis of the same title. As this thesis has been dealt with above, this publication will not be discussed any further here.

Msimang, C.T., 1986 & 1988. IZIMBONGI IZOLO NANAMUHLA, Umqulu 1 & Umqulu 2 (Bard Publishers), published in two volumes, discusses various poetic devices, and gives greater attention to themes. It then deals with a selection of poems by different writers, showing how the theme is expressed in each of them, and how the different poetic devices operate in some of the poems to amplify the theme at hand. Five of C.S.Z. Ntuli's poems are also treated to varying extents in the two volumes.

Nkabinde, A.C., (ed.) 1988. ANTHOLOGY OF ARTICLES ON AFRICAN LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE: A FESTSCHRIFT TO C.L.S. NYEMBEZI (Lexicon Publishers), contains, in addition to various others, two articles on modern Zulu poetry, viz. **Poems on C.L.S. Nyembezi** by D.B. Ntuli and **Time and scope in three poems of D.B. Ntuli** by C.S. van Rooyen.

In conclusion, it must be pointed out that the apparently numerous theses, dissertations, articles and books referred to above might give the impression that much ground has been covered in the field of criticism on modern Zulu poetry. That is, however, not the case. Considering the amount of poetry literature there is in Zulu and the tempo with which this is produced year after year, very little ground has in fact been covered by way of criticism. Also, besides Vilakazi, and to a certain extent Dlamini, very little has yet been

written on other outstanding Zulu poets such as D.B.Z. Ntuli, C.S.Z. Ntuli, Nxumalo and Msimang.

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study will focus on the published poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli as available up to March 1992. The 31 poems to be appraised are those recorded in the three publications already mentioned under sub-heading 1.2.2. above.

The study is in essence a general survey treating of a number of aspects, and has no pretensions to being exhaustive. Chapter 2 will deal with the themes found in Ntuli's poetry with a view to establishing the amount of success which the poet achieves in dealing with them. Chapter 3 will investigate the use of imagery and other aspects of diction and the degree of success achieved by the poet in their application to particular poems. Chapter 4 will examine the features and techniques of form discernible in the poetry, and in what way each of them enhances the poem or poems in which it is applied. Chapter 5 will offer a general conclusion expressing opinion about the standard of Ntuli's poetry as perceived in terms of themes, diction and form, as well as the quality of his contribution to modern Zulu poetry in general.

1.6 METHOD OF APPROACH

As regards the method of approach, the 31 poems of C.S.Z. Ntuli published in the three said anthologies will form the point of departure. These will be evaluated broadly on the basis of three

theories of criticism, viz. New Criticism, the Reception Aesthetics theory, as well as the Historical-Biographical theory.

Although we have no intention of following all the principles of criticism which the school of New Criticism stands for, we however wish to recognise and apply the procedure central to the new critic's theory of criticism, which Abrams (1981: 117 - 118) explains as follows:

The distinctive procedure of the new critic is explication, or close reading: the detailed and subtle analysis of the complex interrelations and *Ambiguities* (multiple meanings) of the component elements within a work.

This principle, popularly referred to as explication de texte, is explained by the Webster's College Dictionary (1991) as:

...a method of close analysis of a literary text concentrating on language, style, content, and textual interrelationships.

Our choice of this theory is motivated by our view that this particular approach is essential if the text of the poems of Ntuli must form the point of departure in this critical analysis. We will therefore strive to study the text closely and bring out the interrelationships of language, content, style and other aspects of the text while bearing in mind the main terms of reference of this study, i.e. themes, diction and form.

The Reception Aesthetics theory emphasizes the reader's own response to a work of literature. Cloete et al (1985: 50) describe this theory as follows:

In breë trekke kan die begrip resepsie omskryf word as die ontvangs, reproduksie, aanpassing, assimilasie of kritiese beoordeling van 'n literêre produk of sy elemente deur 'n leser of lesers. Die leser "konkretiseer" die teks as hy lees, gee dus konkrete gestalte daaraan as 'n estetiese objek.

We feel that if the text must be explicated and its interrelationships illuminated, the reader must have latitude to bring, within responsible scholarly limits, his own interpretation of the text to bear in the exposition. This approach will thus be applied as widely as possible in this study, and my stated views substantiated with appropriate citation from the relevant text.

On the Historical-biographical approach, Grobler et al (1987: 2) have this to say:

According to this approach, the literary work is studied to determine the role of the author's personal circumstance in establishing the particular tone of his works....

This theory will be used where some text is seen to have a direct bearing on the author's real life experience or to that of some segment of the community to which the author might be referring. The necessity to apply this approach is borne out by the fact that some of the poems of Ntuli are based on real people and on actual events in the poet's life, which fact will be fully substantiated in the discussion of the relevant poems.

Critical studies assessing the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli, whatever their nature and extent, will be consulted and cited accordingly.

The beginning of each of the next three chapters, which deal with themes, diction and form respectively, will pay attention to the definition of terms pertinent to each chapter, and to any theoretical issues which may call for clarification. Available publications which shed light on such terms and theoretical issues will be referred to or cited accordingly. The rest of the chapter in each case will examine the relation of those terms and issues to the

poetry of Ntuli.

Interviews with Ntuli have been held to clarify certain issues relating to him both as a poet and as a person. Information emanating from these interviews has been of help in putting some of his assertions in the poems into more accurate perspective.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In this introductory chapter we have declared the aim of this study and why the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli has been chosen as the subject of study in this thesis. We have also given the poet's biographical sketch and his writing career in brief in order to establish his personal and literary background.

His chronological position in the development of modern Zulu poetry was established. So was his contribution to that development. The point was made that although Ntuli has published no more than 31 poems, he has been rated among the best poets in the language. Some are of the opinion that he is indeed second to none. To confirm or refute these views is the onus of this study.

A survey of critical studies dealing with specific poets in modern Zulu poetry was also given with the aim of demonstrating how much criticism has been devoted to this field of literary endeavour, and to C.S.Z. Ntuli's poetry in particular. We came to the conclusion that the quantity of poetry already available far exceeds the quantity of critical studies devoted to it. Very little critical material on the poetry of Ntuli himself is available.

Lastly, the scope of this study and the methodology to be followed were explained. The next three chapters will thus deal specifically with themes, diction and form in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli.

CHAPTER 2

2. THEMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A plausible explanation of the concept 'theme' is that propounded by Abrams (1981: 111), who says:

... the term theme is more usefully applied to an abstract claim, or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader.... Some critics claim that all nontrivial works of literature, including lyric poems, involve an implicit conceptual theme which is embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery.

In the above definition we note, firstly, that 'theme' is an "abstract claim, or doctrine", i.e. a rational view which permeates the body of words used in a work of literature. Secondly, we note that 'theme' may be implicitly or explicitly expressed. Thirdly, 'theme' can only be fully grasped and formulated after due consideration of all the "evolving meanings and imagery " in a particular work. This implies that in order to arrive at the theme of a literary work, the work concerned must be considered in its entirety.

Simpson (1972: 460) makes this important observation regarding the concept 'theme':

Also, loosely used, 'theme' can mean the subject of a work, such as time, love, death, beauty, and so on.

Conscious of the close affinity between 'theme' and 'subject', Lenake (1984: 15) highlights the distinction between the two

concepts:

The term *subject-matter* relates to 'what' is being said in a poem, while *theme* refers to the underlying idea of a poem.

While recognizing the basic distinction between the concepts 'theme' and 'subject' as stated above, we however acknowledge their interrelation. It is our contention that any discussion of 'theme' invariably involves a consideration of subject and subject matter as well. Thus in this particular study we use the term 'theme', as D.B.Z. Ntuli (1984: 59) puts it:

... in a wide sense to include the subject matter and the underlying idea in a poem.

As such, in the following exposition the subject matter of each poem as well as the underlying idea in it will be considered together. An interpretation of the tone of the poem and the extent to which tone reflects the attitude (mood) of the author towards his subject, will as far as possible also be given. Cannington (1976: 68) explains 'tone' as follows:

... the term used for the manner of 'speaking', the 'tone of voice' used by an author; it helps to reveal his attitude toward his subject. If his tone is *sarcastic*, his mood is probably *hostile*, or *contemptuous* or *disgusted*; if *ironic*, his mood is the opposite of what it may seem to be.... Unless the tone is determined, it is difficult to arrive at the author's true mood and almost impossible to read his work with complete understanding.

On the term 'mood', Cannington (op. cit.: 53-54) says:

... the emotional state of the author as he expresses what he has to say; it is his attitude toward his subject. Sometimes the author's mood and tone may be identical; often they are not. For example, the mood may be *disgusted*, and tone *sarcastic*; the mood *sympathetic*, and the tone *inspirational*; the mood *bitter*, but the tone *ironically gay*; the mood *hopeless*, but the tone *hysterically defiant*.

As far as possible, remarks about the author's handling of the theme in any particular poem will be made. The theories of criticism mentioned in the previous chapter will be applied in accordance with their relevance to each poem. However, it is necessary to say that it will not be possible to comment on 'theme' in equal depth in all Ntuli's poems in this chapter.

2.2 THEMES IN NTULI'S POETRY

There are eight broad categories of themes discernible in the poetry of Ntuli, and which will be discussed in this chapter, viz. nature, love, death, religious poems, philosophical poems, committed poetry, personalities as well as historical poems. We must emphasize the fact that the above categories of themes are not watertight as some poems are bound to overlap into other themes. These categories represent a functional classification whose purpose is to facilitate the explication of themes, which is the cardinal aim of this chapter.

2.2.1 Nature

Regarding poems on nature, we heed the word of caution sounded by Brooks and Warren (D.B.Z. Ntuli, op. cit.: 82) when they say:

A mere listing of qualities gives a rather flat description; it may be accurate but it does not stir the imagination.

To this comment, D.B.Z. Ntuli (Ibid.) adds:

Such comments indicate that in such description we expect to be given a new view of the object. In other words the poet should provoke certain responses to the known natural phenomenon.

Among other things, therefore, we will be on the look out to see if C.S.Z. Ntuli in his nature poems gives us "a mere listing of qualities", or goes a step further to "provoke certain responses to the known natural phenomenon".

Under this heading we include all those poems dealing with scenery and inanimate phenomena such as mountains, the moon, etc., as well as those dealing with animate nature, i.e. animals.

2.2.1.1 Scenery and inanimate phenomena

The following poems fall under this category: EZingolweni (At Zingolweni); Iqhwa OKhahlamba (Snow on the Drakensberg); Phansi KwaMahalazibeke (Under the Magaliesberg); Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (I love you even where you are), and Ngijulise Nkosi (Make me profound, Lord).

The theme of the poem EZingolweni (UGQ. pp.49 - 51) is that nature, in its pure form, does not only epitomize beauty, but is also emotionally stabilizing and spiritually enriching, as in nature one is in communion with the divine force which is behind all creation. The poet describes in vivid imagery the scenic beauty of EZingolweni, the place otherwise known as the Oribi Gorge on the south coast of Natal. In the opening stanza the poet importunes his interlocutor, probably the muse, to move him to the gorge as he can scarcely wait to get there. Moving, as it were, from one point to another, he gives a "running commentary" of the scenery around him, and the fauna and flora which grace this picturesque valley.

However the poet does not merely describe what meets the eye. He

pauses momentarily at places to reflect on the impact of the surroundings on him. In the fourth stanza he expresses a belief that in nature there is a divine presence, the Creator, whose authority there is absolute:

Mangehlele ezinzulwini zendalo,
Laph' uMdali enguNqamula-juqu:...

(Let me descend to the depths of creation,
Where the Creator is the final Arbiter:...)

He is of the opinion that in nature one can regain emotional stability:

Ezingoxini zeZingolweni
Kumbe inhliziyo ingazotha,...

(In the inner recesses of Zingolweni,
May be the heart could find stability,...)

In the tenth and final stanza, he craves the spiritual enrichment found only in nature where the individual is in unison with creation and the Creator:

Kumbe umphefumulo unganotha
La ngilele phans' eZingolweni,
La kungekho matshe abaziwe,
.....
Kuyimi, nendalo, noMdali.

(May be the soul could find enrichment
If down I lay at Zingolweni,
Where there are no carved stones,
.....
But I, and nature, and the Creator.)

This perception of nature has much in common with that of English Romanticism as discernible in the works of such poets as W. Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, J. Keats and P.B. Shelley. Fowler (1987: 210) gives a succinct description of the world view which characterized romanticism:

The central distinctive feature of the romantic mode is the search for a reconciliation between the inner vision and the outer experience expressed through 'a creative power greater than his own because it includes his own' (Frye); or the synthetic imagination which performs this reconciliation and the vision it produces of a life drawing upon a sense of the continuity between man and nature and the presence of God (Wellek).

In Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. pp.15 - 16) the snowy Drakensberg landscape is the focal point of the poem. Unlike in the previous poem, there is no deeper meaning in this poem besides the pleasure, on the part of the poet, of viewing and admiring the singular beauty of the snow on the mountain. The persona, a train passenger, entreats the train-driver to stop the train so that all may view the spectacle:

Sibukel' imvunulo kaMdedelele
Yomshad' omhlophe wakobelungu.

(So we may watch the apparel of Mdedelele's
White wedding, the wedding of the white race.)

The wedding image introduced in the opening stanza is followed through to the second, where the groom, Mdedelele (personifying the mountain, or probably one of its peaks) is said to be clad in a brown suit and a white hat. The bride and the bridesmaids (the vegetation) are all dressed in white. White, which is the colour of the snow, and which is suggestive of purity and perfection, is the dominant colour in the poem. In the second stanza alone the word -mhlophe (white) is repeated seven times. In the following stanzas the white colour is again repeated several times, first in the metaphor of Zulu beer (often associated with merry-making), then of milking cows, milk, and umcaba (crushed boiled mealies). Finally gratified, he urges the train-driver in the final couplet to let the

train resume its journey.

The author's mood is that of admiration, hence the laudatory tone of the poem. His intention, though, is not to give a bare reproduction of the spectacle, but to convey to the reader its overwhelming, enthralling impact on him. He anticipates expectation by couching the experience in strong figurative imagery of the wedding.

Phansi KwaMahalazibeke (AME. pp.10 - 11) also has a mountain as its subject, this time the Magaliesberg Mountains in North Western Transvaal. This poem is, however, more descriptive in style than the previous one. Also, whereas in the previous poem the focus was solely on the snow, the focus in this one is wider. Initially focusing on the appearance of the Magaliesberg range, he later turns his attention to the climate and to animal and human life inhabiting the place.

In the opening stanza the poet expresses a sense of wonder at what he finds the Magaliesberg to be in reality. What he sees of the mountain is at variance with his childhood impressions formed when he saw his grandfather enjoy the "Magaliesberg" tobacco. In the second stanza he points to the discrepancy between the Magaliesberg in his mind and the Magaliesberg in reality:

Bengithi ngizozithela
Emadundwin' abekile,
Eveth' ugwayi nomhlaba,...

(I thought I would see
Hills with gentle slopes,
Covered with tobacco crops and aloe trees,...)

He is amazed when shown the rugged, almost inaccessible Magaliesberg mountain terrain. There are no cornfields to justify the smoke (of

cooking fires, apparently) which rises from the foot of the range in the early morning and the early evening. In the sixth stanza the poet's attention is captured by a group of men who suddenly appear a short distance away. He reckons that the men are descendants of the people of Mzilikazi, and they are here, apparently, to attend the initiation school. Apprehensive though he is of them, the poet manages to establish rapport with them in a soliloquy in the eighth stanza.

In the last stanza the poet's attention reverts to the smoke rising from the foot of the mountain. In a light-hearted tone he admonishes the entire Magaliesberg community to beware, as the smoke could well be a portent of some impending volcanic eruption.

The poet's mood is at first pensively aloof. But as soon as he accepts the discrepancy between expectation and reality, he warms up to the place and the life which inhabits it. Only later in the poem does he succeed in establishing real rapport with them. Although his main focus is on scenery, he does not resign himself to flat description, but strikes a delicate balance between rationale and sensory appeal.

The three poems we have discussed so far have scenery as their basis. Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (AME. pp.18 - 19), on the other hand, is a eulogy to an object, viz. the moon. The full moon is personified as a beautiful Zulu maiden, and is apostrophized throughout.

Stanzas 1 to 4 constitute the first of the three main sections of

the poem. Here the poet affirms that he has no sympathy with those who have travelled to the moon and, as a result, have lost sense of its beauty. This is clearly an allusion to astronauts. In the poet's opinion they have shown no respect for the chastity of the moon. Thus the poet equates the moon to a virgin who, upon sexual contact with a man, becomes deflowered. He himself has no intention to defile and deflower the moon by stepping on it like astronauts.

In the fifth stanza, which constitutes the second section of the poem, he declares to the moon that all the nocturnal discomforts of the open air do not deter him from standing out there to feast his eyes upon her, the maiden of the heavens.

The third main section comprises the sixth stanza, which is the highest point of the eulogy. Also, the equation of the moon to a Zulu maiden is given more detail in this stanza:

Umhl' uggishazel' egcekeni kwenu
 Uphephezelis' itetana;
 Ngibon' usimo sincwelekile,
 Ngibon' uthanga liqumbelene,
 Uzihlathi ziyizimukuthu,
 Ngibon' umehlo akhany' inhlansi,...

(Your beauty becomes pronounced as you walk with a heavy,
 swinging gait at your home
 Your itetana fluttering in the air;
 I see your well-shaped figure,
 I see your plump thigh,
 Your cheeks are full and round,
 I see your sparkling eyes,...)

His love seems to be requited as the moon appears to be concentrating its gaze on him alone. Filled with love and jealousy, he asks the moon in the final verse:

Ngabe nje uthanda mina zwi?

(Could it be that your love is for me only?)

The title reflects the poet's profound admiration for the moon, as does the body of the poem. The tone is that of extolment. As Msimang (1988: 266) observes, the poet associates the beauty of the moon with that of Zulu maidens. In as much as he admires and loves the moon for its fullness, he admires and loves Zulu maidens for their chastity. The use of personification makes the moon so much less remote than it really is, and this facilitates greater rapport with it for both the poet and the reader.

The subject of Nqijulise Nkosi (AME. pp.5) is the sea. While the poet enviously admires the sea for its great depth and its humility, he is also implicitly comparing the sea with God and man. God is just as profound and humble, in spite of His being the Creator of all things including the sea itself and all the life in it. Man, on the contrary, lacks these qualities. This is why, as the title says, the poet asks God to grant him profundity, and humility will follow from it.

As the poet looks at the sea and reflects upon its depth, he is fascinated that depth and height are combined in it through the reflection of the sky in the water. He envies it for its great depth. But what amazes him even more is that despite its being the possessor of such vast livestock living under its surface, it still affords to be modest:

Kwesakh' isibaya kuyeqana kuyaphithizela,
Okungenamilenze nandleb' okungenampondo;
Okupheshezay' okupulukutshelayo.

(In your kraal there is plenty of creatures swarming about,
Those without legs, without ears and without horns;
Those with dashing and those with darting movements.)

The sea is also rich in water supply, as all the neighbouring streams and rivulets pour their supplies into it. The water which flows in is equated with regiments converging in an arena for a dance. The pool is thus depicted as being at once the dance arena and king, to whom regiments come from far and wide to pay their tribute. Yet all this does not cause the sea to assume airs.

In the closing couplet the poet asks God to grant him depth too. It is logical to assume that the poet is asking for spiritual and intellectual, and not physical, depth:

Ngijulise nami Nkosi:
Nkinsel' ezishay' impabanga.

(Grant me profundity too, O Lord:
You who feigns poverty when in fact you have plenty.)

Although at one level this poem is about the sea, on another level it is a commentary on the nature of God and of man. God is the maker and possessor of all things. Yet He is humble and does not even complain when we appropriate them for ourselves. But when man acquires possessions and becomes rich, he turns arrogant.

Having examined the five poems in this sub-category, we come to the conclusion that Ntuli has a fascination for natural scenes and phenomena. In poems such as Phansi KwaMahalazibeke, Iqhwa OKhahlamba and Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho, his primary interest is in the appearance of the subject, while in EZingolweni and Ngijulise Nkosi, he goes beyond appearances and has some transcendental truth to

project as well. His imagery, both literal and figurative, is carefully chosen and effectively applied. The subject remains the centre of focus from the beginning to the end of the poem.

2.2.1.2 Animals

Three poems fall under this category, viz. Inkani Yomnyuzi (The obstinacy of a mule), Ihwanqazana Lakwethu (Our spotted heifer) and Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (Elephant, which one is to your liking?)

In the poem Inkani Yomnyuzi (AMA. pp.8 - 9), Ntuli has chosen a rare subject for a poem, i.e. a mule. Hardly any poem has been written on a mule in Zulu, probably because a mule is an alien animal to the Zulu way of life. However, its stubbornness is so well-known that it has become idiomatic: ukuba nenkani yomnyuzi (to be as stubborn as a mule). As the title indicates, this is precisely what the poem is about.

Ntuli's view in this poem is that whereas a mule is the most obstinate of animals, its temperament is mitigated by the fact that humans sometimes treat it harshly. In this dramatic monologue, the persona is the mule itself. A dramatic monologue is defined by Simpson (1972: 416) as:

A poem consisting of words spoken by a fictional character to a silent audience. Sometimes the speaker reveals aspects of his personality of which he himself is unaware.

In the first stanza the persona describes itself as a male mule: powerful, rebellious and currying no favours. But it justifies its

headstrong attitude:

Qha, ngenqab' uba kugangwe ngami,...

(No, what I object to is being treated inconsiderately,...)

In the next stanza he advises that whoever wants to discover the secret to his total obedience must consult with his mother. If one should treat him with love and understanding like his mother, he can perform any constructive labour and obediently carry out any instruction. He relates, in the fifth and sixth stanzas, how his mother displayed her total love for him from the minute he was born. He admonishes, in the concluding stanza, that should he become totally unmanageable, it can only take his mother's love to assuage him:

Nxa ngingasethuswa ukusongelwa,
Nxa ngingasezwa sitshwebhu namvubu,
Nxa ngingasanqandeki ngezagila,
Bizani uMa.

(When I remain unmoved even when threatened,
When I defy whips and sjamboks,
When I can no longer be stopped with knobkerries,
Call Mother.)

Although the tone is light-hearted, the mood is earnest. Animals need as much love and understanding as human beings. The author is largely rational and sympathetic to the mule's cause, and the use of the mule as the persona is calculated to make the reader get the message, as it were, "from the horse's mouth".

Unlike mules, cattle are a popular subject of poetry in Zulu. Understandably so, because traditionally cattle are an important facet of the Zulu economic way of life. Sometimes cattle feature in the form of imagery in Zulu poetry. Ihwangazana Lakwethu (AMA. pp.13

- 14) is a humorous narrative account of how the poet, early one morning, discovered the truth contained in the Zulu idiom: ilanga selinkomozinhle (the sun is now where it makes cattle the most beautiful).

The time of the day is crucial to the logic of the poem, and this is highlighted in the opening lines:

Langa lithize ngavuka ngovivi,
Entathakusa empondozankomo,...

(One day I woke up at dawn,
Truly at daybreak it was;...)

He went to the cattle kraal and, amongst the beasts that lay there, was a full-grown grey heifer dotted with grey spots. He was astounded; a heifer of such colour was completely unknown to him! His favourite heifer was simply grey, and not spotted. Could the black spots have been wrought by the hand of some man, or wizard?, he asked himself. Cautiously, he extended his hand to caress this strange looking heifer to see what its reaction was going to be. It was not startled by his caress, and this confirmed in him that it was truly the one he had always known and loved. With astonishment, he muttered to himself:

Sihle kanje kant' entathakusa!

(How gorgeous it looks at daybreak!)

The above utterance echoes the last word in the poem:

lisenkomozinhle (the time of day when cattle are at their most beautiful, i.e. daybreak).

At that point the sun appeared on the eastern horizon. The black spots began to disappear and the heifer resumed its normal colour,

grey without spots! In the last stanza, the poet drives the point home:

Angisaphuthi ukuma ngempundu
Lingakaphumi, lisenkomozinhle.

(Now I never fail to stand by the gatepost
Before sunrise, when cattle are at their most beautiful.)

The style used in the poem is conversational, and the tone is humorous, flowing and relaxed. The theme is perfectly original, a deviation from the usual theme of cattle as a mark of prosperity and status. To make his theme even more interesting, the poet has chosen to amplify it through a reminisced account.

Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (AME. pp.70 - 74) has music as its subject although it deals with the theme of animals. The persona is a dove, which addresses itself to the elephant in monologue. Msimang (op. cit.: 104 - 105) advances two reasons why the persona chooses to address itself to the elephant in particular. First, he says, it is because of the importance of the elephant among the animals of the jungle, and secondly, because of the elephant's importance in music. The elephant, he continues, is associated with music in two ways. Firstly, in days gone by trumpets used to be carved out of elephant tusks, and secondly, the sound it makes is referred to in English as "trumpeting":

Bayakusho bonk' abaseNgilandi,
Bathi nguwenaga gagu lecilongo;...)

(All the English people talk about you;
They say you are master trumpeter;...)

In the first seven stanzas the persona recites praises to the elephant in accordance with the Zulu custom whereby a subject will

approach the king reciting his praises in order to solicit his attention. It concludes the praises by acknowledging the elephant's reputation as a musician. The dove wants to know from the elephant who, in his opinion, is the best musician around. Is it the hammerhead bird? Is it the ground-hornbill? Is it the weaverbird? Or is it possibly the frog? As if to prompt the elephant's answer, the dove informs the elephant that the music which inspires it the most is its own. As it offers to sing its song, it invites the elephant to provide accompaniment with its trumpet. Then it belts out its usual song:

"Amdokwe...Amdokwe...Amdokwe,
Avuthiwe...amabele... ehlanzeni."

("Amdokwe...Amdokwe...Amdokwe,
It is ripe...the corn...in the bushveld.")

This song they must sing, says the dove, until the Zulu people hear it and get inspired to also sing and dance to their own favourite song:

"Kakh' oyogcin' umhlaba yedwa,
Kakh' oyophelela phezulu;
Asikho sonke."

("No-one will live forever in this world,
No-one will live forever;
We all must perish.")

Finally the dove wants to know from the elephant which of the two songs he likes better. While the dove regards itself as the best singer in the animal world, it is uncertain if it can surpass humans in music, particularly the Zulu.

The point which the poet is making in this poem is that in the animal world the dove, in his opinion, makes its mark as the best musician, but in the human world the Zulu have no equal. Moreover,

with these two songs the poet tacitly points out one of the fundamental differences between animals and human beings. In its song the dove registers its delight about the fact that the corn is now ripe in the fields. To the dove, feeding is an end in itself; it has no other purpose about life. Man, on the other hand, has the capacity to rise above petty organic considerations and philosophize about things, including the destiny of mankind in this life.

The light-heartedness of the poem can be felt throughout, starting from the title itself where the poet, using a pun for humorous effect, praises the elephant as Gatsheni (literally meaning: in the branch/es), which is a clan praise of the Ndlovu (meaning: elephant) people. The section of praises to the elephant is largely original and particularly eloquent. The poem as a whole is subtly philosophical and humorous.

In the three animal poems we realise that Ntuli's interest is in one specific aspect of the chosen animal or animals. In Inkani Yomnyuzi his interest is in the obstinacy of the mule; in Ihwangazana Lakwethu it is in the colour of the heifer in relation to the time of the day, and in Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? it is in the music of the dove. As such the poet does not burden the poem with irrelevant details about the animal, but goes straight into the heart of what he intends to deal with. The poems are interesting and the themes in them are properly focused.

Thus, Ntuli's fascination for nature is evident in this category. He is observant, yet he does not, as Brook and Warren (D.B.Z. Ntuli: *ibid*) put it, simply give "a mere listing of qualities", but strikes

a fair balance between sensory experience and imagination. If his main focus is on the beauty of the subject, such as the full moon in Ngikuthanda Ukhona Lapho and the snow in Iqhwa OKhahlamba, he employs a set of figurative images to highlight that beauty, and the effect is pleasantly astounding. In other cases, such as in Ngijulise Nkosi, he uses the subject as a starting point to project some metaphysical or moral view. Ntuli handles both these approaches dexterously. As such, his nature poems are aesthetically fascinating, and some have a peculiar intellectual appeal.

2.2.2 Love

Regarding the subject of love in Zulu poetry, Msimang (op. cit: 240) points out that poems on this subject are abundant, and that between 1935 and 1980, over a hundred poems on love have been produced.

Three of Ntuli's love poems relate to family members. Sinembali (We have a flower) is about his brother, and the other two, Sengethembile (I cherish hope) and Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa (Because you have heard and believed), are about the poet's niece, i.e. his brother's elder daughter. Although love is the basic emotion in all of them, other emotions of hope, appreciation and anxiety also come into play. Zinonya (They are wicked) on the other hand deals with love from the point of view of a Zulu maiden in a traditional rural setting.

Sinembali (AME. pp.53 - 56), written in four parts, is an expression of love and appreciation for the poet's own brother. The poet's pride in his brother's accomplishments also comes out strongly in the poem. He equates his brother to a flower, which symbol is

reflected in the title and is also predominant in the poem as a whole.

Part I is a prelude to the birth of the poet's only brother. In the month of May, a few days before the baby was born, there was a storm which wreaked havoc in the whole of EGcotsheni, the subject's place of birth. The wind, the rain and the cold which came with the storm are personified as dignitaries uSiwulukuhlu, uSivunguvungu and uMghughisi respectively. Later in the poem, in Part IV, we are given a hint of the significance of these elements in the birth of the baby.

Part II deals with the birth of the subject on Wednesday the 8th of May. The new-born baby is metaphorically described as a seedling:

Kude buduze neziko,
Isithonjana sathi thushu.

(Next to the hearth,
A seedling emerged.)

For the other children in the home it was a joyful surprise. The poet himself was among them. From the description of the plant, we surmise that the baby boy looked cute and healthy.

In Part III the subject is already 30 years old. The metaphorical plant is now in bloom, and bears a bright yellow flower. He has achieved much in life and has gained popularity. The young man has already begun, as it were, to show his true colours. To the poet and the rest of the family he is a source of great pride. In Part IV the poet wonders if the aforementioned dignitaries had been sent by his forefathers to plant the seed which has given rise to the exceptional metaphorical plant, his brother. This view is congruous

with the traditional Zulu belief that all the good things received by the living are given to them by uMvelingangi (God) through amadlozi (ancestors). Thus the poet, in the last paragraph, entreats the aforementioned dignitaries to convey the family's appreciation to uMvelingangi for the exceptional gift given to them.

The four parts of the poem fit harmoniously together. Even where there is a gap in time, i.e. between Part II and Part III, the effect is not jarring. The poem is deeply couched in beautiful imagery which makes it a veritable work of art. The equation of the subject with a flower might seem somewhat incongruous when applied to a male, but it works well in this poem because the flower symbol refers not to physical beauty but to personal excellence.

In the poem Sengethembile (pronounced as: sé.ngethembî:le) (AMA. pp.5 - 7) the poet's love transcends fraternal bounds and reaches to his brother's family. In this poem the poet expresses his heartfelt joy at the birth of his niece, Thembile, after a pregnancy marked with problems and uncertainties. In an interview, Ntuli intimates:

Thembile, my niece, was born after an unsettled pregnancy. As she was coming after a stillborn baby, we had reason to panic that the unpleasant history might repeat itself.

Apostrophizing his beloved niece after her birth, the poet intimates to her that his hands had been itching to hold something more important and dearer than mere objects. They were itching to hold a baby. But one day they were filled with hope when the poet came to know that there was a baby on the way.

In desperation he could scarcely wait for her to come on her own. He felt like rushing forward to meet and protect her as she, figuratively speaking, came plodding along. But izinyandezulu (plural of a species of green snake associated with ancestral spirits in Zulu culture) admonished him to wait. Evidently, Ntuli assumes ancestral intervention in conception and birth. The symbolical forest, introduced in the ninth stanza, through which Thembile was to walk, signifies uncertainty and insecurity. The suspense of waiting was simply unbearable:

Wo, yeka imisiko yokulinda
 Utho lwami ludukuza lodwa
 Kwelomathanazana nomantindane.

(Oh, the pangs of waiting
 When my little thing was groping her way forward all alone
 In the territory of she-baboons and omantindane!)

(Omantindane is plural of a human-like, dwarfish water sprite). But at last she was safely delivered into his hands by some benevolent bird. (The metaphor of a benevolent bird derives from a Zulu folktale.) The poet, who had almost lost all hope, was overjoyed.

This is a well-written poem. The title expresses the poet's hope for his niece's welfare. His love for his niece and his ecstatic joy at her birth permeate the entire poem. Ideas flow smoothly, and the system of metaphors and symbols help concretize ideas which would otherwise have been very abstract for the reader.

The poem Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa (AMA. pp.10 - 12) is a dramatic monologue directed to Bezweni, who is referred to as Thembile in the previous poem. It was composed upon the poet's seeing Thembile's photograph taken on her first school day. This poem demonstrates a parent's (uncle's in this case) ambivalence when his child is

growing up and is starting to assume new roles in a wider world. While he is pleased that his child is growing up, he is at the same time concerned for her about the challenges that lie ahead of her. The refrain at the beginning of four out of ten stanzas expresses the poet's doubts about the judgment of Bezweni's parents when they decide to send her to school. In the poet's view she is yet too small for the demands of the wider world of school:

Uthi bezwe kahle kodwa, Bezweni?

(Have they heard correctly, Bezweni?)

In two other stanzas the refrain, whose meaning is essentially the same as that of the above refrain, is:

Baqinisile yini, Bezweni?

(Are they telling the truth, Bezweni?)

The pun in the name Bezweni (What have they heard?) comes out clearly in the above refrain. Objecting to her being sent to school, he equates this to being included in a dance party of grown up girls who accompany a bride to a groom's place, or with being made to fetch wood from the bush, or with being made to walk long distances. To him, she is not yet fit for such exacting activities.

But to the poet's great discomfort, Bezweni herself appears eager to accept her new role of a school-going child. Tell-tale physical changes are now manifesting themselves in her, and she appears to harbour new aspirations which her uncle had never before presumed in her. As the title suggests, she has heard and believed that she is now a young girl and no longer a baby. Resigning himself to the bitter truth that she is growing up and that he cannot hold on to her forever, he commends her to uMvelinqangi as she ventures out into the world:

Aze akubone uMvelingangi
 Kakhokho wakho, uNkungwana-zoNdi;
 Akuphuzise amanzi nxa woma,
 Akufunze ukudla nxa ulamba,
 Nxa ukhubeka uwa akuvuse.

(May He look after you, uMvelingangi,
 God of your great grandfather, Nkungwana-zoNdi;
 May He give you water to drink when you are thirsty,
 May He give you food when hungry,
 And when you stumble and fall, may He lift you up.)

The poet's mood is that of paternal love mingled with concern. The poem develops logically and chronologically from the previous one. It is organically coherent and the imagery in it is impressive. The first six stanzas wherein the poet still refuses to accept the reality of the changes in his niece, are linked with refrains which question the wisdom of Bezweni's parents. However, as soon as he accepts the inevitable, the refrains are discarded.

In Zinonya (AME. pp.20 - 21) the focus is on Zulu maidens' expression of love in their traditional rural world. Zinonya (they are wicked) refers to the hills of Zululand which are said (in the song sung by the maidens in the poem) to be wicked because they stand in the view of their sweethearts who live far away from them. The poet seems to suggest that they are wicked for a different reason: they stand between him and the maidens of his nation who are dear to him, and whom he misses profoundly.

At the beginning of the poem he observes a few bundles of wood neatly tied up, and reflects about the people who have laboured to put them together:

Ukuyibekelel' iz' ibe ngaka
 Kudl' isikhathi, kwakham' umjuluko.

(To put them into bundles this size
Cost time, and drew sweat.)

Out there in the bush the young wood-gatherers are not in the least perturbed by the bodily travails they have to suffer in going about their work. In most jovial mood they tell stories, they giggle freely and they sing their hearts out. They sing about their sweethearts who live in distant places and are separated from them by distant hills. The concluding line of their song is:

"Yebuya Ntaba zakwaZulu, ninonya!"

("You Hills of Zululand, you are wicked!")

Warming up to their song, the maidens line up, each with a piece of wood in hand, and they sing and dance to the rhythm of the song. The discomforts of being in the bush are clean forgotten. Moved by these thoughts, the poet exclaims nostalgically to himself:

Hawu, Ntaba zakwaZulu,
Ninonya!

(Oh, you Hills of Zululand,
You are wicked!)

The poem has a nostalgic ring. To the poet there is nothing more heart-warming than witnessing the young Zulu maidens go about their task of collecting wood in the bush, singing and dancing away, and oblivious of all bodily discomforts as they do so. The poet's mood is relaxed like that of the maidens themselves. The rhythm coincides with meaning. Where the maidens dance the lines are short, thus coinciding with the rhythm of the dance.

The first three poems are dedicated to the poet's younger brother and the poet's niece. This is a refreshing deviation from the beaten

track in Zulu poetry where love poems are mostly about lovers and parents. Although the basic emotion in the three poems is love, the mood is different in each of them. In Sinembali the mood is that of outright appreciation; in Sengethembile it is that of anxious hope; in Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa it is that of ambivalence born of excitement and concern, and in Zinonya the mood is that of appreciation mingled with nostalgia.

2.2.3 Death

Msimang (1986: 121) differentiates several categories of poems written in Zulu on the theme of death. According to him there are poems based on the death of loved ones; those based on the nature of death; those dealing with the poet's own death, as well as those dealing with the state of the deceased and the feelings of those left behind. The writer hastens to add that these categories are however not rigid since a single poem may well include two or more of these shades of emphasis.

Ntuli has three poems on the subject of death. Written on the occasion of the unveiling of Mlungisi's tombstone, Lapha Kulele Umlungisi (Here lies Mlungisi) is an elegy on the death of the poet's third son who died at infancy after a short illness. Bengithi Lizokuna (I thought it was going to rain) is a lament on the poet's brother's stillborn baby. Thus these two poems deal with the death of those beloved to the poet. Ngilungiselani? (What am I preparing for?) on the other hand, is about the nature of death.

The poem Lapha Kulele Umlungisi (AME. p.4), in which the deceased is apostrophized, is written in two parts, with each part cast in

sonnet form. The poet laments the death of Mlungisi and deploras the suddenness with which this happened.

Part 1 is a recollection of the day on which Mlungisi was born, and how ecstatic the poet was about the event. When his son died so suddenly, he was shattered. He still wonders what exactly went wrong, and God Himself provides no answer. But what he does know is that the castles he was building in the air about his son all crumbled with his death. Just by being born, Mlungisi himself had done him a good turn. What then remained for him to do was to put things right for his son, which sentiment he expresses in a pun based on the name Mlungisi (The one who puts things right):

Yebo, Mlungisi, was' ungilungisele,
Nami ngangithi ngizokulungisela.

(Yes, Mlungisi, you had done me a good turn,
I, too, was hoping to reciprocate.)

Part II develops from the last quoted statement. The things the poet was hoping to acquire for Mlungisi were those fit only for a prince. He would cut him sticks of iron wood, and fashion his ibheshu (buttock-covering made of skin) and izinjobo (loin-coverings) from the best animal skin. He would even pay lobolo (bride price) for him for a princess. The final couplet sums up the depth of his sense of loss:

Manje anginakh' okusangakufanelayo;
Sal' usumbatha lona lel' itshan' eliqandayo.

(Now I have nothing which can suit you;
Rather cover yourself with this little piece of cold stone.)

This is undoubtedly one of Ntuli's most magnificent poems. It is generally held that a sonnet is most conducive to conveying the most

intense emotions and feelings. As the poem deals with intense sorrow, it is thus befitting that it be cast in sonnet form. The two sonnets may be considered as signifying father and son united in the bond of consanguinity and love. We also note that the structure of the first sonnet is unique, with four tercets and a closing couplet, which itself signifies the odd turn of events in the death of Mlungisi. The second sonnet is cast in the Shakespearean mould, with three quatrains and a closing couplet. The return to this more usual sonnet form is compatible with the reversion of the poet's thoughts to the happier times preceding his son's death. Thus there is a remarkable degree of harmony between content and form.

As an elegy, Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. pp.58 - 60) is slightly different in its motivation and content. The fact that the poem is about a stillbirth accounts for its being deeply couched in imagery. In Zulu culture a stillbirth situation is treated with greatest deference and is, more often than not, referred to in figurative terms.

The poem opens with the description of a drought situation, which symbolizes infertility. The condition of infertility is, however, reversed as signs of pregnancy on the part of the poet's sister-in-law become manifest. This too is couched in symbolic terms:

Ukuthi lizokuna bengingabazi,
Ngithi lizothi bani, lindindizele,
Lithi qhaba qhaba, lithi walakahla.

(That it was going to rain I had no doubt,
I thought it would throw some lightning, then thunder,
Then let a few drops fall, and then let go a heavy downpour.)

Yet just as he holds out his thirsty tongue to catch the first

raindrop as it falls, iqilikazana lentulo (a cunning salamander) dashes forth to lick it off. This is a fitting allusion to the myth of the chameleon and the salamander through which the Zulu people of old used to explain the origin of death. In the myth the salamander outran the chameleon to deliver the message that people would die. And so death came about. As such the salamander here symbolizes death and failure to procreate.

Even though deeply saddened and disillusioned by the mishap, the poet does not give up hope. He tells the salamander that he refuses to drop dead from disappointment, for he knows the One (God) who had caused the first cloud to form. The poet has no doubt that He will yet cause another one to form, and that rain will finally fall, i.e. another baby will be conceived:

Lizohloma, lidume, ngikhongozele.

(Clouds will gather, thunder will break, and I will hold
out a hand to receive.)

The poet's mood is chiefly sanguine. In his tone he goes full circle from despair to hope, to anticipation, to disappointment, and finally back to hope.

In Ngilungiselani? (UGQ. pp.68 - 70) Ntuli feels that if death is the inevitable destiny of man, then some of those pursuits which we cherish most in life are but an exercise in futility. Unless life's activity includes some sort of preparation for death, it is pathetically incomplete.

To the poet as a young man, it seemed logical that he should

practise stick-fighting because he realized that one day he would have to secure himself against adversaries. There was a practical purpose behind that exercise. He, however, questions the purpose of erecting elaborate houses for homes when at the end of it all one is going to be buried deep in the ground where there is neither door nor window:

Indlukaz' enje ingilungiselani?

(What does a mansion like this prepare me for?)

In the same vein he challenges the purpose of acquiring the most expensive and best-fitting clothing, or cultivating freedom of thought and freedom of expression in this life, when in death there is no room for any of these luxuries. He concludes by posing the poignant question:

Inkululeko ingejwayezani?

(What does freedom familiarize me with?)

This is one of Ntuli's most inspired and beautiful poems. The greater part of its thesis is presented in a series of detailed rhetorical questions calculated to challenge the reader's participation in the unfolding of the truths conveyed by the poem.

Ntuli's elegies are magnificent works of art. In Lapha Kulele Umlungisi the poet conveys his intense emotion in a striking set of metaphors reinforced with sonnet form. In Bengithi Lizokuna, however, he relies more on imagery than on form. He uses the extended metaphor of drought coupled with mythological allusion. In Ngilungiselani? he uses a set of rhetorical questions to amplify his message. The result in all three poems is commendable.

2.2.4 Religious Poems

Ntuli is a committed Christian, and his religious poems reveal his Christian faith and reliance on the one and almighty God. This is also reflected, to a greater or lesser extent, in some of the poems which are not basically religious. A case in point is the poem EZingolweni, in which he confesses to experiencing a communion with God in primitive nature. Another one is Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa in which he commends his niece, Bezweni, to God for guidance and protection.

Barber (1983: 178 - 179) says that religious poems can be grouped into three basic categories:

Some poems on religious themes are simple lyrics of praise or rejoicing.... Other poems are for devotional purposes.... Yet other religious poems deal with religious experience, including doubt and struggle....

Ntuli has two specifically religious poems in his repertoire. The first belongs in Barber's first category, and the second one to the third. The two poems are: Kawubongeki Nkosi (You are impossible to praise, Lord) and Ngeke Baxole Nkosi (They will never forgive (me), Lord).

The poem Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. pp.2 - 4) is motivated by the fact that the poet is requested by a group of people to praise God for them, ostensibly because he is a praise-poet. The poet feels that this is an unfair request, as no human being, poet or no poet, is really fit and able to truly praise God:

Awungangakubongwa zimbongi
Zakobantu nezakobelungu,...

(No poet is fit to praise you
Whether black or white,...)

Unlike humans, whatever their nationality, God does not do good for the sake of recognition, or for praise by humans. If praise were to be his prize for doing good, not one of us would be able, or even fit to praise Him. In his prayer the poet says that there is only one way to praise God, and that is not by word of mouth but by striving for perfection. Even that goal is impossible for man to attain without God's help. We humans should only beseech God to lift us from our baseness and mould us into worthier creatures. Only in that newly acquired God-given dimension, can man aspire to praising Him meaningfully:

Nkosi engabongeki ngezibongo,
Cosh' ubuntu bethu obungelutho,
Bubumbe bube zibongo zakho:

(You God who can never be lauded with praises,
Lift up our worthless humanness,
And mould it into praises for Yourself:)

The poem is deeply embedded in the Christian philosophy of the baseness of man vis-à-vis the righteousness of God. Its tone is that of complete submission to the omnipotent yet merciful God. Although the poet does pray to God, the tone he adopts is conversational. This tone, coupled with a subtle sense of humour, lifts the poem up from too much solemnity. While the poet doubts his own worthiness to extol God, we feel that he does in effect thank and extol Him through self-abasement.

Ngeke Baxole Nkosi (UGQ. pp.54 - 56) is a sorcerer's prayer for forgiveness for all his transgressions against humanity, and against

God Himself. The poet's main preoccupation is man's lack of compassion and capacity to forgive. The title itself says as much: They will not forgive (me), Lord. Only God whose compassion is limitless, can be trusted to forgive even a sorcerer:

... nguwe kuphela
Onesih' esingenamkhawulo,
Ongas'uxolele ngisho nami
Engingumthakathi wezigodo.

(... only you
Whose compassion is infinite,
Can forgive even me
A sorcerer of the worst order.)

The sorcerer in the poem maintains that people may forgive a thief, a liar or a burglar, but not a sorcerer. Sorcery, in Zulu culture, is a capital offence punishable by death. Hence this sorcerer expects no mercy from the people who have lost their loved ones as a result of his nefarious practices. He believes that only God can have mercy on him. Though he has sinned against humanity, and he confesses to it, he feels that above all he has sinned against God, for while God is the creator of life, he himself precipitates its destruction.

The repentant sorcerer's confession strikes a ludicrous note when he catalogues the mediums he uses against his victims. Familiars such as impundulu (a bird species used in sorcery to inflict paralysis), imikhovu (a human-like, dwarfish water sprite), and impaka (a witch's cat), are his stock-in-trade. But, in mitigation, he points out that all his malevolent practices are a direct result of an insizi (a mixture finely ground and burnt to ashes) rubbed into an inhlanga (incision) executed by his father on his body. This, he says, is the root cause of his compulsive desire to bewitch and kill

people.

Finally he pleads with God to receive him in His arms when man has punished him by death. In this poem Ntuli displays a talent for balancing solemnity with humour. The reader is led to empathize with the sorcerer, but at the same time, laugh at the weird things he admits having done to chastise his victims. Through the sorcerer persona the poet highlights the subject of divine mercy.

Both poems are prayers in essence, and both convey a Christian outlook. Although the first is distinctly a "lyric of praise and rejoicing" (Barber: *ibid*) the tone of both poems is pleasantly mundane and practical.

2.2.5 Philosophical Poems

Read, as cited by D.B.Z. Ntuli (1984: 122), observes that metaphysical poetry is abstract because it deals with concepts; that as poetry it is no less 'emotional' than lyrical poetry, and that there is a good measure of logic and reason in this type of poetry and the triumph of reason brings about aesthetic satisfaction.

C.S.Z. Ntuli has seven philosophical poems. Each deals with a different theme, but their common characteristic is that they are all fundamentally concerned with ideas and concepts. They cover a wide variety of themes, such as education, the tyranny of death, anger, and specific aspects of human nature. These are: Ngimfunge EkwaNzuza (I swear by her, who is at the Nzuza place); Zophela Ngaphakathi (They (tears) are shed internally); Ubani Omubi? (Who is ugly?); Uyise KaThuleleni (Thuleleni's father); Uvete Ewindini (Frog

on the window); Nxa Ngingxamile (When I am angry), and lastly, Okwesabekayo (The fearsome).

Ngimfungu EkwaNzuza (AME. pp.57 - 60) is about an individual's inalienable right to choose the kind of life one would like to lead, and be committed to that choice. The poem seems to have come about in response to certain people attempting to dictate certain options to the poet. He swears by his spiritual sister, Buhlebethu or Buhlebuni, or simply Buhle, married to the Nzuzas, that he will never deviate from his chosen course. When a veritable Zulu man swears by his sister, he regards that as a solemn vow which he means to abide by unto very death. Hence says the poet:

Ngimfung' uBuhlebethu kababa,
Ngimfung' impela, ekwaNzuza!
Ngithi ngiya lapha ngiya khona;
Awusoze wangiphindis' emuva
Emgudwini engawushiyayo,...

(I swear by my father's daughter, Buhlebethu,
I solemnly swear by her, who is married to the Nzuzas!
I am resolved to follow my chosen course;
You will never turn me back
To the course I did not choose,...)

He avers that he is perfectly content with the choice he had made many years before, with Buhlebethu as his mentor. He is not prepared to entertain any suggestion that he should reconsider his choice. Upon his and Buhlebethu's honour, he is truly prepared to take up cudgels against anyone who is trying to change his mind:

Wena-k' olokh' ungifundekele,
Uthi lendlela iyangedusa,
Man' uthath' ezakho sigadlane,
Sibon' uphond' oluyogoba,...

(You, who are nagging me,
Saying that this course is leading me astray,
Take your fighting sticks and let us fight it out,
And let us see who of us comes out the worse for wear.)

In this poem the poet evinces the mood of thorough indignation. We can feel that the poet is dealing with a subject which touches his heart sorely. Though emotion-charged, the poem evinces a good measure of artistic discipline. The names of places and people referred to in the poem are real, which leads us to the conclusion that the central episode which motivated the writing of the poem, though its details are not divulged, is equally real.

The burden of the poem Zophela Ngaphakathi (AME 22 - 23) is the poet's discovery of the truth that the real male fatality rate is that unlike women who vent their sorrows and frustrations, males harbour them. Males shed their tears internally, so to speak; hence the title of the poem: They (tears) are shed internally.

To make his point, the poet recounts an incident in which a sorrow-stricken woman who has apparently lost her loved one, steps out of her hut and cries out her sorrow. Tears stream down her cheeks as her body writhes with the anguish of her sad loss. Out of another hut steps the male of the household. Unlike the female, he is silent; only his brooding aspect betrays the turbulence within him.

From this little "drama" the poet discovers a hidden truth:

Ubukhona obuphindiwe
 Babafelwakazi kunabafelwa,
 Isisusa, imbangela yabo
 Namuhla ngiyibhijile,...

(The incidence of there being many more
 Widows than widowers,
 The cause of it
 Today I have discovered,...)

He explains his discovery in stanzas 9 and 10. Female tears flow unimpeded. A woman's crying voice is high-pitched; it rises to the clouds on high. On the other hand, the tears of a male are sour, hot and full of blood, but they are shed internally. A male feels as much anguish as the female, but he does not let out tears to release the tension. This is the root cause of a higher male fatality rate as compared to that of women.

The poet has withheld the subject izinyembezi (tears) from the title of the poem, and he only introduces it for the first time in stanza 4. This creates suspense in the poem and displays commendable craftsmanship on the part of the poet. His mood is meditative, philosophical and serious, and the dramatic element in the poem helps to inject life into it.

In Ubani Omubi? (UGQ. pp.51 - 52) the poet poses the key question in the title: Who is ugly? The body of the poem is thus a thesis in answer to this question. The poem illustrates the simple but profound truth aptly contained in the Zulu idiom: Akusilima sindlebende kwabo (Even a fool with one long ear is beloved to kith and kin). Ntuli says, therefore, no matter how ill-favoured a person may be to many, he is perfectly beloved to family:

Kwabo kodwa, cha, kakh' ongangaye;
Kwabamthandayo kakh' onjengaye.

(To family, no, he is unequalled;
To those who love him there is none like him.)

In the first five stanzas out of seven, Ntuli paints an imaginary picture of the most poorly endowed person. Yet, to his own family and circle of friends, the same person is second to none.

The poem is short, lively and witty. Though the tone is generally light-hearted, the message is earnest. Parallelism, linking and other kinds of repetition have been used at key places to emphasize the content. For example, perfect parallelism has been used in the concluding couplet to put a pertinent question and to give a reply to it:

Bath' abakwenu umhle kakhulu?
Bath' abakwethu ngimhle kakhulu.

(Do your family think you are very attractive?
My family think I am very attractive.)

Judging from some of the details in the poem, Uyise KaThuleleni (UGQ. pp.52 - 53) must have some real life experience as its basis. Thuleleni (which literally means: why are you silent?) is the name of the poet's eldest daughter. Thus the title Uyise KaThuleleni (Thuleleni's father) refers to the poet himself. As such we feel that there must be a direct link between the poem and the fact that the poet's eldest daughter was named Thuleleni.

The theme of this peculiar poem is that one does not have to commit an offence or a crime in order to attract malice. Even though one may consciously try not to offend anyone, one may still invite trouble thereby. The ninth and last stanza says precisely that:

Bengith' angizukuba nanxa namuntu;
Kepha kuse sengimelwe yisithunywa,
Singibizela enkundleni Komkhulu!
Nxa ngibuza ukuthi ngoneni,
Singiphendule ngamafuphi
Sathi, "Kuthiwa UTHULELENI."

(It was my aim not to offend anyone;
Yet early in the morning a messenger was standing there
waiting for me,
He had come to summon me to the chief's court!
When I asked him what offence I had committed,
He gave me a curt reply

Saying, "The charge is WHY ARE YOU SILENT.")

The poet accepts that when one has committed an offence, one should accordingly be charged, tried, and convicted if found guilty. If one insults someone, or falsely accuses someone of practising witchcraft, or threatens to injure or kill someone, or violate a taboo, that person should expect to be summoned before the law. But to be charged for being silent is beyond the poet's comprehension.

In his usual style, Ntuli inculcates the truth through dramatized experience. He employs fictional characters whose names coincide with the roles they play in the poem. For example, the name uPhoshoza (He who talks too much) wakwaDlelekhanda (of the place of the one who gets intoxicated easily) befits the person who is accused of insulting uNomacala (The lady of lawsuits) by saying that she is no longer a virgin. The poet is in complete control of the language, marshals his argument in an orderly and persuasive manner, and reserves the main clout of his argument for the last stanza or two. The sense of humour in the poem is well-controlled but unmistakable.

Uvete Ewindini (AME. pp.2) is about the struggle for education. The poet takes the view that the pursuit of education is a noble but arduous one. Ntuli amplifies his theme through the metaphor of a frog scaling a window pane. It is at midnight. Very much awake, the poet is working through a pile of books. As he glances at the window he sees uvete (a small tree frog of the hyla species) climbing up the window pane. Immediately the poet perceives a commonality between his own struggle for education and that of the frog to climb up the window pane. He further equates the pursuit of education with

climbing a steep and slippery hill, which conveys the idea of the strenuousness of the challenge:

Ak'imi ngedwa kant' engiqoph' intaba,
Intab' emshipiliz' ebushelezi!

(So I am not the only one to venture up the hill,
A smooth and slippery hill!)

Impressed with the venturesome spirit of the frog, he adopts the view that the frog is not here to scoff at him, but to encourage and teach him, metaphorically speaking, how to scale a slippery surface. In the final stanza he entreats the frog to shake his hands and feet in order that the glue on its feet may rub off onto his own, and so improve his holding capacity.

Ngixhawul' izinyawo nezandla,
Nezami zithol' inomfi yezakho
Nginombeke ngingashibiliki.

(Shake my feet and hands,
So that mine too can acquire the glue from yours
And enable me to climb without slipping off.)

The most significant feature of this poem is the metaphor of uvete on the window pane. The poet does not only liken the pursuit of education to the strenuousness of climbing a window pane, but he also likens himself to the frog. The two of them have two qualities in common, viz. ambition and perseverance. The metaphor elevates the poem artistically, and renders it much more effective.

Nxa Ngingxamile (AME. pp.6 - 7) is a satirical attack on bad temper. The poet ridicules those who suffer from this folly and consider it virtue. The persona is irascible, superlatively egocentric and boastful about the fact that he is quick-tempered and that he is quick to take the offensive against whoever dares test his temper.

His language is teeming with idioms expressive of extreme rage:

UNgxangxa-xoxo ngiyamgcagcela!

(I become wedded to a frog!)

Inhliziyo yam' igay' izibhucu!

(My heart grinds rotten grain!)

Umuntu kuth' angimdlel' indlala!

(I would eat a person for hunger!)

Once angry, his opponent's stature so diminishes before his eyes that he seems no larger than an ant, or a mere louse:

Ngimbheke wangangentuthwane;
Waya wancipha wangagentwala:

(I sized him up and he was no larger than an ant;
In time he diminished to the size of a mere louse:)

The poet adopts a sarcastic tone throughout. At the surface he seems to be extolling ill-temper, but his mood is unmistakably disparaging. The fact that his language is teeming with dead similes and metaphors is not a fault; he is deliberately using the kind of language used by such people as he is depicting in the poem. Instead we commend him for using the idiom typical to the context.

In Okwesabekayo (AME. pp.26 - 27) the poet ridicules the African people's inordinate fear of witchcraft. An African person would sooner face a lion or a black mamba than countenance anything associated with witchcraft. The creatures he truly fears, says the persona, are very few, and these are: uhodoba egibel' indangala (a sorcerer on a baboon's back), imfakabili (a human-like, dwarfish water sprite), uthekwane (hammer-head bird), and isikhova (owl). All these creatures are used by sorcerers as familiars. Thus, before

them the persona feels extremely vulnerable as his fighting skills cannot stand him in good stead against them.

In the last stanza he adds that there are two other creatures which he fears, but unlike the afore-mentioned, he has trust in these: umngoma (sangoma or divining doctor), and Inyok' eluhlazan' othangweni (a small green snake in the hedge). He reveres umngoma because he uses his supernatural powers for the good, and he reveres inyok' eluhlazana because it incarnates ancestral spirits.

We note that the poet has devoted twelve out of fourteen stanzas to the description of the lion and the mamba, and how formidable these creatures are. The creatures which he really fears are dealt with in only two stanzas at the end. We are convinced that the poet's intention is to implicitly compare the fierceness of the former creatures which he says he does not fear, with the apparent harmlessness of the ones which he intensely fears, in order to highlight the singularity of such a reaction. We feel therefore that the discrepancy in word quantity serves an intellectual purpose. The tone of the poem is ironical; the poet is amusedly fascinated by the fact that the fear of the creatures associated with witchcraft appears to be rather paranoid and ostensibly exaggerated.

In each of the poems in this category we feel that the poet has some philosophical insight to project. With most of them we find that, as D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 122) states in his paraphrase of Read, "the triumph of reason brings about aesthetic satisfaction."

2.2.6 Committed Poetry

We adopt D.B.Z. Ntuli's (op. cit.: p.134) explanation of "committed poetry", which is as follows:

By committed poetry we usually understand the works which are written with the main aim of conveying strong convictions about some issue or situation. We have many poems which prescribe moral codes of conduct for society. These may be purely didactic, aiming at reprimanding or sermonizing. But along this continuum of didacticism one may move to the other extreme of poems which protest against some order.

Msimang (1988: 102) states that the concept "committed poetry" is also referred to by others as: protest poetry, poetry of resistance and apocalyptic poetry.

Committed poetry has been written and published in Zulu since the publication of B.W. Vilakazi's collection of poems in INKONDLO KAZULU (Poetry of the Zulu) in 1935. Zulu poets have expressed their misgivings on a wide range of issues affecting their lives socially, economically, religiously, culturally, educationally and politically. Apartheid legislation alone is at the root of the largest volume of committed poetry.

C.S.Z. Ntuli has four poems which can best be described as committed poetry, and these are: Amathol' OkaMathole (The calves of the son of Mathole); Impi Yomndeni (Family feud); Vimba Phambili! (Please intercept!) and Kulo Lolo (From that very one).

In the poem Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. pp.42 - 44), the poet expresses his disquietude about the plight of the Zulu people as a nation, downtrodden and divested of their land and civil rights. He

hails Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Honourable Chief Minister of KwaZulu and the then President of the National Cultural Liberation Movement (Inkatha) as a capable leader who should lead his people to freedom, and regards education as a sine qua non for liberation.

OkaMathole (son of Mathole) refers to Dr Buthelezi.

The poem is rendered in two parts. In Part I the poet apostrophizes the Zulu nation. He laments the nation's state of deprivation, and urges the nation to realise that they are nothing short of any natural endowment which can enable them to stand their own against any nation:

Zulu, ak' ungitshela, wancishwani?

(You Zulu, tell me, what is it you lack?)

He questions why the Zulu people must vie for land with peoples of alien origin when they, the Zulu, are native to the land. This fact notwithstanding, the Zulus are persecuted from many parts of their land. Territories which once belonged to the Zulu have now been taken over by Afrikaners, the English, Indians and Coloureds. Referring to the different nationalities in bovine metaphor and parallelism, he says in stanza 7:

EzakoPewula zafika, zakubovula!
 EzakoSomtsewu zafika, zakubovula!
 EzakoGandi zafika, zakubovula!
 EzakoJantoni zazalwa, zakubovula!
 Nkomoni le'bovulwa ngezokufika?

(Those (cattle) of Paul (Kruger) came, they gored you!
 Those of Sir Theophilus (Shepstone) came, they gored you!
 Those of (Mahatma) Gandhi came, they gored you!
 Those of John Dunn were born, they gored you!
 What kind of beast is this, which is gored by newcomers?)

In Part II the poet appeals to Dr Buthelezi to make a clarion call to the Zulu nation to send their youth to KwaDlangezwa (The place

where one does not feel it when one has had a meal) to acquire education. KwaDlangezwa is renowned as a centre of education in Zululand. Apart from the above tone and meaning of this place name, a change of tone affords a different meaning which is even more relevant to the theme of the poem, i.e. KwáDlangêzwá (The place where I feel better off after a meal). That is what the poet maintains education will do for the Zulu people. To put it figuratively, the Zulu will feel better off after a meal of education; their standard of living will be improved, and gone will be the days of the emaciated beast.

The poet is sympathetic to the plight of the Zulu people without being pitiful. He is full of hope, and is out to encourage both the Zulu leader and his followers that all is not lost, and that, armed with education, the Zulu people can yet rise and shine. This is undoubtedly an inspired work of art. Ideas are expressed in beautifully compressed and evocative language, and the formal techniques used, e.g. parallelism, linking, and initial rhyme, enhance the expression of ideas in the poem.

Impi Yomndeni (UGQ. pp.63 - 65) is one of the lesser known of Ntuli's poems. This is a poem of censure directed at the Zulu royal family for lack of harmony in the royal household, which led to the infamous assassination of King Shaka by his half-brothers Dingane and Mhlangana with Princess Mkabayi's connivance. It is noteworthy that the poet uses a juggled time-scale whereby the remote past is given present tense status, and he comments from that position. The poet's purpose in so doing might well be to make a tacit comment that even at the present the state of affairs in the Zulu royal

household still leaves much to be desired.

In the opening stanza he cynically admonishes the core clans of the Zulu nation, viz. the amaBhele, abaThembu, abaNguni, amaShandu and abakwaMthethwa, that no matter how strongly they disagree with what is happening in the royal household, it would be unwise for them to meddle. This is put across in the form of the proverb Impi yomndeni kayingenwa (It is unwise to meddle in another family's squabble) which is used as a refrain at the end of several stanzas.

Strongly disapproving of the treacherous conduct of the members of the royal family involved in the assassination, Ntuli holds that it is the duty of the subjects to reconstruct the Zulu Kingdom from the fragments of its erstwhile glory:

Nxa sebehlephulene bahlikizana,
Thina siyocosha izicucu,
Sibumb' ubukhosi bukaZulu.

(When they have destroyed one another,
We will pick up the pieces,
And rebuild the Zulu Kingdom.)

This poem lacks the poetic and intellectual lustre of many of Ntuli's poems we have seen previously. Even as we have tried to justify the poet's use of a juggled time order, we maintain that this robs the poem of its historic substance, and that he could have written it as an historical poem to a much better effect.

Vimba Phambili! (UGQ. pp.65 - 68) is about the continent of Africa which, in the eyes of the poet, is being lamentably exploited by alien nations. The poem is written in the form of allegory.

Explaining allegory, Altenbernd and Lewis (1966: 71) say:

When a metaphor is much extended, and especially when the poet develops a narrative out of a complex of subordinate metaphors derived from the main one, we designate the result as allegory.

Thus the continent is likened to a whale; its rivers are likened to deep gashes on its body, and the oceans around it are likened to blood from the whale gathered in large earthen pots. To the east of the whale stood one of the pots labelled as "The pot of India"; to the west a pot labelled as "The Atlantic of the Americans"; to the north was "the Mediterranean of the Europeans" and "the red pot of the Arabs" (clearly the Red Sea). But none of the pots belonged to Africa herself. This is the sight, or vision, which the poet purports to have seen one day while flying alone in his airplane over the continent of Africa. The airplane in allegorical terms represents the poet's imagination.

The poet calls upon leaders of Africa to prevail upon their people to stop warring among themselves and prevent the blood of Africa from flowing out into foreigner's pots. He counsels them to assemble on the edge of the Kariba Gorge and watch the blood which has been saved there, and follow the same example. To the pygmies of the Congo (this is directed to Africans in general) he asks:

KuMvelinqangi nophendula nithini?
Niyothi ngeKhongo nenzani?

(What reply will you give to God?
What will you say you did with Congo?)

The poem registers a protest chiefly against Africa's economic exploitation by foreign powers, groups and individuals. Its beauty lies in its allegorical nature whereby characters, objects and events have underlying socio-political meanings. It also lies in the

strong sensory appeal of the poem, especially the sense of sight.

In Kulo Lolo (AME. p.3) the poet protests against discrimination on the basis of race and colour as nurtured in the culture of apartheid.

Of particular interest is the poet's style in this poem. In each stanza he omits the subject, (i.e. the thing that the poet is asking for from his implied interlocutor) and uses in each case a locative pronoun followed by a demonstrative pronoun. However from these, and other linguistic elements in the stanza, the reader is able to deduce accurately what the unstated subject is. Let us consider the first stanza as an example:

Nami nginenggondo!
Ak' ungiphenyele kuyo leyo
Ekheth' ubuchopho!
Wangibuka wangichizela?

(I too have a mind!
Just open that very one for me
Which is only for chosen brains!
Why do you regard me so disdainfully?)

Taking up our cue from such words and phrases as nginenggondo (I have a mind), ak' ungiphenyele (just open for me), and kuyo leyo (that very one), we can safely deduce that the subject is incwadi (book). In this particular stanza the poet is protesting against intellectual discrimination.

In the second stanza lona lelo (that very one) suggests ibheshu (skin cover for the buttocks) as the subject. Here the poet is protesting against poverty bred by economic discrimination. In the third stanza kuyo leyo (that very one) stands for the subject imali (money) which the poet clamours for. In the last three stanzas the

unstated subjects are inyama (meat), igula (calabash for keeping sour milk) and ukhamba (beer pot) respectively. In these stanzas the poet is also remonstrating against economic discrimination.

We also note the refrain which occurs in a slightly different form in the last verse of each stanza. In the refrain the persona remarks about his interlocutor's changing facial expressions, which reflect his changing moods as the persona continues to express his various demands. We can infer from the poem as a whole that the persona is the deprived South African Black person, and his interlocutor the privileged South African White. Judging by his various moods, it is obvious that the interlocutor is averse to the persona's demands.

This is a simple yet witty poem. Though emotionally poised, the poet is steadfast in his demands for his rights. We noted earlier in this discussion that the poet withholds the subject of his agitation in each stanza. This makes the poem even more interesting as the reader is made to supply the subject in each stanza, and thus actively participate in the experience of the poem.

We thus conclude that Ntuli's committed poetry ranges from criticism of the Zulu royal house to that of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and finally to that of the international community in its exploitation of the continent of Africa. Ntuli, as a rule, opts for persuasion rather than outright invective. He prefers the dramatic approach to a direct statement. He has an abiding awareness that a poem is, first and foremost, a work of art, and whatever the nature of the ideas expressed in it, it must justify its artistic value.

2.2.7 Personalities

The two poems Buzani KuMkabayi (Ask Mkabayi); Imbali Yehlunqu (The flower of the burnt veld) belong in this category.

In the poem Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. pp.60 - 63) Ntuli recounts, in mock epic style, the exploits of the strong-willed Zulu princess, Mkabayi, against her suitors from the neighbouring chieftaincies. Princess Mkabayi is described as a woman of striking beauty and compelling personality. Bursting with confidence, Zwide, the celebrated chief of the Ndwandwe tribe, came out to woo the princess. At the courtship encounter, however, Zwide faltered and stammered as he tried to express his feelings about her:

Wath' uyakhuzela wankwankwaza,
Wath' uyakhuleka wankwankwaza.

(He stammered as he tried to utter a courtship cry,
He stammered as he tried to salute her.)

Two more chieftains who came out to woo the princess also emerged second best from the encounter. These were Phakathwayo, chief of the Gumede tribe, and Dingiswayo, chief of the Mthethwa tribe. Each of them went back home thoroughly deflated.

In the poem Ntuli challenges the popular notion that a woman can only realise her full potential as a person through association with a man. He refutes this notion and demonstrates its falsity by recounting the above-mentioned episodes in the life of Mkabayi. In the last two verses he makes the point in the form of a rhetorical question:

Siphalaphala segungele lakwethu,
Ngempel' intombi ingumuntu ngendoda?

(Beautiful maiden of our land,
Does a maiden truly realise her personhood through a man?)

The mock epic style used in the poem befits the heroism of the redoubtable Princess Mkabayi. The language is very colourful and highly evocative. There is a strong cattle symbolism associated with Princess Mkabayi, and through which the poet makes subtle but positive comments on her womanhood and strength of character. The poet's mood is laudatory, and the tone of the poem appreciative. Princess Mkabayi occupies the centre stage throughout, and the male figures, despite their avowed personal accomplishments and royal glory, find themselves pathetically overshadowed by her. The poet succeeds in making his point that a woman, like Princess Mkabayi, needs no man to prove her worth.

Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. pp.56 - 58) is dedicated to the now late Bishop P.B. Mhlungu of the South Eastern Diocese of the Lutheran Church. As stated in the caption, the poem was composed on the occasion of his consecration as Bishop.

The Bishop is equated to a child because of his gentle nature, and to a maturing lion's male cub as well as to the celebrated Zulu warrior Nozishada for his bravery. He is also symbolically equated to a flower, a gladiolus bulb which grows in newly burnt velds and which portends the coming of rains. We construe the flower symbol here to signify spiritual grace rather than physical beauty. He is also likened to a red flower, reminiscent of the tongues of fire in which the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles in the Bible. The poet hopes that by his spiritual shine the Bishop will attract God's

blessings for his people.

The beauty of these poems rests in its imagery which competently brings out pertinent qualities in the Bishop's personality. The mood is that of hope that the Bishop's leadership will be a capable and God-guided one. The pun based on the Bishop's clan name, Mhlungu, also features prominently, and this further advances the beauty of the poem.

Both these poems are beautiful works of art. In Buzani KuMkabayi we have the mock epic and the lyrical styles blended together while in Imbali Yehlungu we have a fusion of praise poetry and lyrical styles. The fusion of the different poetic styles in the poems enhances their aesthetic quality. In both poems the poet succeeded in keeping the subject at the centre of the stage throughout the poem, and in highlighting those character traits which made the two personalities worthy subjects of celebration.

2.2.8 Historical Poems

Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (Catastrophe in France) (AME. pp.49 - 52) is the only veritably historical poem in the collection. Although the poems Buzani KuMkabayi and Impi Yomndeni also have elements of history in them, we have placed them in other categories where they are more at home than here.

In Imbedumehlwana Efulansi the persona relates the experience of the French Revolution as a first hand witness. In the first six stanzas he addresses himself to the poor and oppressed in South Africa, saying that if you complain about being oppressed, deprived,

disenfranchised and discriminated against through job reservation, group areas legislation and prohibition of inter-marriages, you would have been worse off in France in 1789.

He narrates an event which illustrates the callousness of the nobility towards peasants in France before the Revolution. He tells of a hunting expedition by a group of mounted noblemen who, in the heat of the hunt, callously ran through a poor woman's field, destroying all her crops in the process. The woman's remonstrations were treated with absolute scorn.

He goes on to relate the revolt of the Paris mob, and the march to the Bastille. The defence of the Bastille by gunfire from the army was to no avail as the Bastille was soon engulfed in flames. At their wits' end the luxury-ridden nobility could not but take to their heels.

Thereupon the concourse made its way to the palace of the unpopular King Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette in Versailles. Before long the king and the queen were put to the guillotine, and thousands more followed suit. The guillotine took the lives, not only of those from the ranks of amambuka (sellouts) but also of the revolutionaries themselves. Thousands were massacred in this way.

Ntuli in this poem gives a chilling account of the French Revolution in his characteristically evocative language. The use of an eye-witness persona renders the experience much more immediate and enthralling. He reinforces this element of immediacy in the first six stanzas by insinuating parallels between political conditions in

South Africa today and in France at the time of the Revolution.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have given a picture of the thematic scenario in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli. This we have tried to do without being too detailed. Thus we have restricted quotations from poems only to the key parts of each poem. Besides themes, we have also commented on other aspects of each poem such as imagery, style, mood and tone without deviating too much from the main subject of the chapter, i.e. themes.

We noted eight different categories of themes in the poetry of Ntuli, among which the category of nature poems emerged as the most predominant with eight poems in it. That of philosophical poems came up as the second largest, with that of historical poems emerging as the smallest. This reflection indicates to us that Ntuli, like many other Zulu poets, has a propensity for nature. However Ntuli, unlike many of his Zulu counterparts, does not merely dwell on the physical attributes of the subject, but brings to bear a fair balance between sensory appeal and intellectual experience.

The merits which we must highlight in Ntuli's treatment of themes in his poems are numerous. First of all we appreciate the fact that the poems generally display a marked degree of harmony between theme, diction and form. We also acknowledge his ability to deploy a variety of styles in a single poem to advance the theme at hand. We commend him, moreover, for his greater reliance on imagery and dramatization of experience than on plain statement to propound the

themes. Lastly, we appreciate and value his sense of humour as this makes the poems so much more enjoyable to read.

We must also highlight Ntuli's logical development of the theme in a poem. His poems are generally characterised by the presence of an introduction, followed by exposition, which in turn is followed by a conclusion of some kind. In most poems the sting is in the tail of the poem, and this is usually in the form of a rhetorical question or a statement which brings the argument to a definite conclusion.

On the whole we feel that Ntuli's range of themes and the varied modes and styles in which he presents them, make his themes and their treatment a valuable contribution to Zulu poetry. Although, generally speaking, the themes he selects are by no means peculiar to him, his approach in dealing with them evinces a remarkable degree of maturity.

CHAPTER 3

3. DICTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Riccio (1980: 170) defines the term "diction" as follows:

In its simplest definition, diction is the selection and arrangement of words in a literary work.

In his definition of the same term, Abrams (1981: 140) further clarifies the concept 'diction' by mentioning some of its qualities:

The term diction signifies the choice of words, phrases, and figures in a work of literature. A writer's diction can be analysed under such categories as the degree to which his vocabulary and phrasing is abstract or concrete, ... colloquial or formal, technical or common, literal or figurative.

Summing up the chief factors influencing the writer's diction in a poem, Riccio (op. cit: 172) states:

This diction will vary from poem to poem, based on the dictates of the work's subject, details, images, structure, and intended mood and tone. But these are internal influences, and the choice of diction will also respond to the external influences of the poem's goal: to eulogise, to mark a special occasion, to teach, to move politically, whatever. It will also be influenced by the current use of language in general.

We note also Aristotle's remarks in Dorsch (1965: 62) concerning the current as well as the unfamiliar usages in the diction of a work of art:

The greatest virtue of diction is to be clear without being commonplace. The clearest diction is that which consists of words in everyday use, On the other hand, a diction abounding in unfamiliar usages has dignity, and is raised above the everyday level.

The significance of diction in poetry can be discerned from its cardinal functions in a poem. First of all, diction plays the key role in supplying meaning, be it denotative or connotative or both, to a poem. As such, diction is the property which affords the basic statement of subject-matter and amplification of theme in a given poem. Secondly, diction is the vehicle through which the poet establishes his / her mood in a poem, and gives the poem its characteristic atmosphere. Thirdly, diction is the fundamental material with which the form of a poem, including rhythm, is established. And lastly, diction indicates the peculiar chronological position of a poem in the history of a people's literature.

As diction is too wide a concept to be covered in its entirety in this exposition, we will limit its treatment to the use of imagery, compound words and ideophones including deideophonic words in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli.

3.2 IMAGERY

'Imagery' is part of a larger aspect of poetry known as 'diction', already dealt with above. Explaining the concept 'imagery', Abrams (1981: 78-79) says:

'Imagery' (that is 'images' taken collectively) is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other work of literature whether by literal description, by allusion, or in the analogues (the vehicles) used in its similes and metaphors.... Also, imagery includes auditory, tactile (touch) thermal (heat and cold), olfactory (smell), gustatory (taste), or kinesthetic (sensations of movement) as well as visual qualities.

As Maxwell-Mahon (1984: 58) relevantly points out, images can either

be literal or figurative :

With a literal image, the poet represents his subject in actuality so that the reader can picture it directly Figurative imagery depends on shifts in literal meaning of matter-of-fact description that enables us to see things in new and more striking ways.

Although imagery may be found in prose, it is generally held that imagery is more concentrated in poetry than in prose. This constitutes one of the major differences between the two styles of writing.

The value of imagery in poetry lies in its capacity to evoke concrete mental pictures in order to render ideas, concepts and experiences more immediately perceptible to our senses. Emphasising the value of imagery in poetry, Reeves (1965: 159-160) asserts:

... poetry, like life itself, depends on a balance between the intellect and the senses, the mind and the body, thought and action. Yet in the best poetry it is the sensuous element which predominates. If there are to be ideas in a poem, it is better that they should be apprehended through concrete and sensuously realised imagery.

In this discussion of imagery in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli, figurative imagery will be the main point of focus. As it is generally held that the four main forms of figurative imagery are Simile, Metaphor, Personification and Symbolism, our attention in this exposition will thus be confined to these.

3.2.1 Simile

Altenbernd and Lewis (1966: 18) explain a simile as follows :

A figure of speech closely related to metaphor is simile, in which similarity, rather than identity, is asserted. The figure includes one of several words such as 'like',

'as' or 'than'.

Van Rooyen's (op.cit.: 179) explanation is even more elaborate and is worth looking at as he specifically mentions how a simile is applied in Zulu.

Simile draws an explicit or direct comparison between two elements that belong to usually dissimilar categories. The two elements consist of a tenor and a vehicle: the vehicle serves to emphasise, clarify and enhance the tenor. In Zulu a simile is always introduced by explanatory conjunctives like 'njenga-', 'fana na-', 'nganga-' etc.

Like other forms of imagery, a simile helps concretise abstract concepts and experiences. It may be used to describe such concepts and experiences as appearance, sound, manner, size, degree, number, etc.

In the poetry of Ntuli the use of simile can best be studied under these sub-headings: common similes including idiomatic expressions, original similes, implicit similes, as well as extended and/or compounded similes.

3.2.1.1 Common similes including idiomatic expressions

D.B.Z. Ntuli (1984: 152) makes this point about hackneyed similes:

There are comparisons which have lost their effect through repeated use. Such similes are now felt to be ordinary idiomatic language which any person can use.

The validity of this view is beyond doubt. A few such instances are in evidence in C.S.Z. Ntuli's poetry as well. A simile found in the poem Ubani Omubi? (UGQ. p.51) is a case in point:

Bathi uyingunsula-mehlwana,
Okwembuz' iphekwe nezimpondo.

(They say he/she has eyes popping out,
Like those of a goat cooked with its horns.)

This poem is a humorous description of those less endowed with beauty. Describing someone with disproportionately large eyes, the simile has lost its thrust through overuse.

Yet it must also be recognised that in the hands of a skillful poet an ostensibly hackneyed simile may well be seen to have been aptly chosen in some given context. C.S.Z. Ntuli is such a poet who can give a new lease of life to a trite simile. Let us consider this simile which is admittedly a hackneyed one, but which Ntuli has put to good use in the poem Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.59):

Kuqhamuk' iqilikazana lentulo,

 Liqhamuke lidweba njengombani

(There appeared a cunning salamander,

 It came dashing like lightning)

The woman's failure to conceive, as alluded to in this poem, is expressed in the symbol of drought. When at long last there are signs of conception in her, a miscarriage takes place which dashes all hopes of procreation. Hence the allusion to the myth of the salamander and the chameleon explained in Chapter 2 above. The simile lidweba njengombani, which refers to the dashing salamander, is at face value a worn-out expression. Yet in the context of the poem where the skies are said to be working up for rain, the image of lightning represented in the simile is most congruent. The simile appeals to the kinesthetic sense, and thus reinforces the idea of speed with which the cunning salamander acts in the situation.

Thus we have established in the above discussion that Ntuli does on

occasion make use of worn-out similes which have lost their effect. Yet very often the apparently worn-out similes which Ntuli applies can be seen to be well-chosen and very effective in the context of the given poem.

3.2.1.2 Original similes

It is as important for the poet to use original similes in his poems as any other form of imagery. Emphasising the importance of original similes (and metaphors) in poetry, Miller (1970: 61-62) states:

It was Aristotle ... who was of the opinion that the quality of a poet, and hence of poetry, could be established by the originality and fitness of the metaphors and similes employed To be effective, the metaphors, or similes, of poetry have to be fresh, vivid and original.

The same idea is affirmed by D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 151) with regard to simile :

We expect every poet to demonstrate his ability to put his originality behind such a figure of speech (viz. simile).

C.S.Z. Ntuli is adept at originating similes which add freshness and vitality to his poetry. In the poem Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AME. p.15) we find this simile:

(Utshwala) Buhaza njengomkhizo wentwasahlobo,...

(Beer) Babbling like a springtime drizzle,...

When Zulu beer ferments it produces froth which makes a babbling sound on the surface. The poet likens that sound to that of a drizzle in springtime. The sound of a drizzle, especially if one listens to it from inside a thatched hut, is heart-warmingly pleasant. The simile is perfectly original and demonstrates the

poet's creativity with similes.

In Ihwanqazana Lakwethu (Our Grey Heifer) (AMA. p.14) we come across a rather surprising comparison in these lines :

(Isithole) Saz 'ubumsulwa balesisandla
Esimhlophe njengezomthakathi.

(The heifer) Knowing the purity of this hand
Which is as white as those of a wizard.

In this poem Ntuli relates his strange experience when one early morning he visited his father's cattle kraal. On arrival there he is puzzled over his favourite heifer which seems to have suddenly changed colour, from white to grey. In utter amazement the poet extends his hand to caress the heifer so as to ascertain if it is still the one he has always known. But for him to liken the whiteness of his hand to that of a wizard is indeed unexpected and surprising, yet completely logical. A wizard will always deny his involvement in witchcraft, claiming that his hands are white and perfectly innocent. The poet's hand appears literally white in the poor light of daybreak, and is, of course, indubitably innocent. This brilliant simile is thus used simply for emphasis.

What we have been demonstrating above is the fact that Ntuli has a flair for creating original similes. We will now proceed to discuss implicit similes in his poetry in a further attempt to demonstrate his ingenuity with the use of simile.

3.2.1.3 Implicit similes

As already pointed out above, a simile in Zulu is explicitly expressed through such words and formatives as njenqa-, -fana na-, kuhle kwa-, etc. There are cases, however, where such words and

formatives are not used, but other grammatical forms of comparison are employed to constitute implicit rather than explicit similes. Ntuli makes use of this rare type of simile in his poetry.

In Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.4), for example, Ntuli has ingeniously forged a series of implicit similes by using a verb in the imperative mood, followed by a noun naming the quality being compared in the tenor and the vehicle, and this in turn is followed by a possessive formed from the noun which is the vehicle of the simile.

Siph' ukukhuthala kwentuthwane.
 Siph' ubunono bukathekwane.
 Siph' ukucothoza kwentinginono.
 Siph' isibindi sebhubesi ,...

(Grant us the diligence of an ant.
 Grant us the neatness of a hammerhead bird.
 Grant us the strutting gait of a secretary bird.
 Grant us the courage of a lion,...)

Ntuli has altogether produced nine consecutive lines of similes like these. We have quoted only four because the pattern is the same in the rest. The entire poem is a prayer, hence the listing of various items in litany fashion. Each of the above lines has the effect of a simile despite the omission of the usual formatives used in similes. In the first line, for example, the poet could have said: Siph' ukukhuthala okufana nokwentuthwane to much the same effect. These similes have thus an element of ellipsis in them as a result of the deliberate omission of the words and formatives normally associated with simile. This deviation from the usual pattern in the formation of similes is not only fascinating but also lends greater impact to the lines concerned.

The poem Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. p.42) offers an example of a

somewhat different grammatical construction of a simile:

Wangalwana zephela, Zulu?

.....
Wamzonzo kathekwane, Zulu?

(Why are you small arms of a cockroach, you Zulu?

.....
Why are you thin legs of a hammerhead bird, you Zulu?)

Here the simile is a verb-possessive-possessive in contracted form, which is not so commonly used. The longer forms are: Waba nezingalwana ezinjengezephela, Zulu? or Wanezingalwana ezinjengezephela, Zulu? (Why do you have small arms like those of a cockroach, you Zulu?), and: Waba nemzonzo enjengekathekwane, Zulu? or Wanemzonzo enjengekathekwane, Zulu? (Why do you have thin legs like those of a hammerhead bird, you Zulu?). As we can see, the more usual words and formatives denoting comparison have been omitted from the constructions used in the poem. The contracted form in each case is much more forceful than the longer form. Both similes denote size (the size of arms and legs), and are thus visual.

The next two instances of simile are worthy of mention here because of their uniqueness. They are both found in the poem Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56). The first one is:

Ngeke ngikufanise nebhongo
Lengonyam' elithath' ubunkunzi.
Kuwe kangiyibon' indlovuyangena,...

(I will compare you not to a lion's cub
Which is just maturing into a bull.
In you I discern no brute force,...)

The second one is:

Ngeke ngikufanise neshinga lempi
UNozishada kaMaghoboza.
Kuwe kangiboni sijula esandleni...

(I will compare you not to a war hero
Nozishada, son of Maghoboza.
In your hand I perceive no spear...)

In both instances the comparison is expressed in the negative Ngeke ngikufanise, and in both of them the point of difference between the tenor and the vehicle is explicitly eliminated: Kuwe kangiyibon' indlovuyangena and Kuwe kangiboni sijula esandleni to emphasise the relevant point of similarity, which is courage in both instances. Also, the use of the negative at the beginning of each comparison has the ironical effect of highlighting and accentuating the very opposite, i.e. that the two (the tenor and the vehicle) are comparable and are in fact being compared. This unique formulation further demonstrates Ntuli's ingenuity with simile.

3.2.1.4 Extended and compounded similes

An extended simile is the one whose vehicle is given elaborate detail. Commenting on extended similes, D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: p.159) states:

In such instances we find a simile leading to some digressive development of the figurative action or object, and this becomes a phenomenon of aesthetic beauty.

On the other hand, a compounded simile is that simile which is used together with or alongside another figure of speech, which might also be a simile as well. It is also possible to have a simile which is at once extended and compounded.

In Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. p.42) there is this extended simile:

Zul' owehl' enyuka njengamaza
Alotatalamb' oluhlazakazi,
Engiwabon' elukuzela eza kimi,....

(You Zulus who move up and down like the waves
Of this mass of blue water,
Which I see come tumbling towards me,...)

Here the poet compares the Zulu people to the waves which are ever in motion. The simile in the first line is extended in the second

where the poet explains that the waves are of a mass of blue water, evidently the sea. The extension continues to the third line where the poet asserts that the waves come tumbling towards him. The thrust of this simile lies in its concrete visual description of the countlessness of the Zulu people whom he is addressing.

In the poem Nxa Ngingxamile (AME. p.7) a simile which is both compounded and extended is used:

Ngimbheke wangangentuthwane;
Waya wancipha wangangentwala;

 Ngamcosha ngamathuphakaz' omabili,
 Ngizomqhifizel' ozisheni ngozipho!

(When I looked at him he was the size of an ant;
 In time he diminished to the size of a louse;

 I picked him up between my two big thumbs
 For I was going to crush him between my fingernails.)

This is a satirical poem in which ill-temper is ridiculed. In the first two successive lines we have a compounded simile constituted of two similes, the second developing logically from the first. Both similes describe the diminishing stature of the poet's opponent before the eyes of the enraged poet. In the last two lines Ntuli extends his original comparison of his human opponent with a mere louse (as originated in line 2 of the excerpt) and describes how he seized him, intending to crush him between his fingernails exactly as he would do to a louse. The scene is expressive of absolute scorn on the part of the persona towards his opponent.

From what has been said above concerning the various uses of the simile, we realise that Ntuli is both skillful and resourceful in the use of this form of imagery. Although he does use common similes and idiomatic expressions at times, he applies some of these very

tactfully. More often than not he employs a variety of original similes to spice the language and reinforce the idea at hand.

3.2.2 Metaphor

Explaining a metaphor, Murray (1978: 83) observes:

'Metaphor' is based on a combination of two Greek words meaning 'to carry over' or 'to carry across'. A term or expression is carried over from its common usage to another uncommon one, or some qualities or attributes of one object are carried over to another in such a way that the second object is then referred to as if it were the first. All metaphors imply the recognition on the part of their user of some point of identity or comparison between normally unconnected objects.

Although their actual impact may differ to a lesser or greater extent, metaphors and similes perform much the same function or functions in literature. Murray (op.cit.: 87) explains those functions as follows:

Metaphor, along with simile, is the writer's chief mode of achieving concreteness and vitality. By means of a successful metaphor, he gains strength and clarity of impression. A vivid metaphor can impress its meaning more memorably and more indelibly than almost any passage of abstract discourse, however well written.

The categories or sub-headings under which Ntuli's use of metaphor will be discussed are: idiomatic expressions, noun base, verbal base, copulative construction, extended metaphor, as well as metaphor with implicit tenor.

3.2.2.1 Idiomatic expressions

As we have observed with similes above, poets sometimes use common idiomatic expressions which have lost their force from frequent use. This is also the case with metaphors. Some refer to these as dead

metaphors. Abrams (op.cit.: 64) offers the following definition of a dead metaphor:

A dead metaphor is one which ... has become so common a usage that we have ceased to be aware of the discrepancy between vehicle and tenor.

We have such a case in point in Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.51):

Ngezw' ichaph' ihhashi, ihash' ichalaha:
 "Hamba Mdluzula! Mbambe Dlabantu!"
Insakavukel' umchilo wesidwaba!

(I heard him swear at the horse and praise the dog:
 "Go Mdluzula! Catch her Dlabantu!"
This was an everyday happening!

The literal translation of this idiom in English would be: 'An everyday occurrence, the cord of a leather kilt.' In Zulu this is now too common an idiom to impart any meaningful significance in the context of this poem. Moreover, the actual metaphor in the idiom is somewhat at variance with the context as the metaphor is based on traditional Zulu attire while the poem is about France and the French!

Having given a definition of a dead metaphor, Abrams (Ibid) goes on to make this important observation:

A dead metaphor, however, is only moribund, and can readily be brought back to life.

This is an important assertion in the context of our discussion. The point we made earlier on under simile that Ntuli is a capable poet and can often apply a trite but contextually tenable expression, holds good with metaphor as well. Such instances abound, but we will consider only one case in point here.

In Ngeke Baxole, Nkosi (UGQ. p.54) we will examine the last line in the following excerpt:

Bakhumbul' omakoti babo
 Engababhulela bekhulelwe,
Inyanda yemuka nesibopho.

(They remember their young wives
 Whom I bewitched while they were pregnant,
And the bundle went away with its fastening cord.)

The idiom in the last line is normally used when a pregnant mother dies together with the foetus. This has relevance in the context of the stanza. However the metaphor of the bundle (of fire-wood) and the fastening cord has further significance when one takes into account that in the Zulu way of life it is the responsibility of a woman to gather wood for making fire from the veld. It is equally her responsibility to weave a cord for fastening that bundle of wood. Therefore the metaphor suggests that in as much as the woman is dead and gone, so is the precious bundle of fire-wood lost to her family. The loss is of course compounded when the woman dies in pregnancy. The idiom is indeed thoughtfully chosen.

3.2.2.2 Noun base

Naming the parts of speech from which metaphors are commonly formed, Miller (op.cit.: 61) says:

In metaphor, which can operate using noun, verb, adjective or adverb, we refer to something in terms of something else which, for the metaphor-maker, has some resemblance to it.

Miller, however, bases his opinion mainly on English metaphors. With regard to Ntuli's poetry we will deal with noun-based metaphors, then the ones with a verbal base, and then other interesting constructions prevalent in his works.

From the poem Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.62) we will look at these lines:

Imisebe yelanga yamxhoph' okaLanga,
Ephum' emehlweni omntakaJama.

(The rays of the sun dazzled the child of Langa,
 (The rays) emanating from the eyes of the child of Jama.)

This poem describes the courtship encounter between Zwide, the chief of the Ndwandwe tribe, and Mkabayi, the beautiful Zulu princess, as already explained earlier on. Her penetrating gaze is equated with the rays of the sun which are said to dazzle the young chieftain's eyes, and the latter is put to the worse in this contest of stares. The metaphor does not only concretise the abstract idea of staring, but also gives indication of the intensity of Mkabayi's stare which in turn indicates the inner fortitude behind it.

One more beautiful example of this category of metaphors is found in Vimba Phambili! (UGQ. p.65):

Empumalanga bekum' umphanda:
 Umbhalo uthi "Umphanda waseNdiya."

(To the east stood a large earthen pot:
 The writing (on it) was: "The pot of India.")

The poem is about the continent of Africa, which the poet metaphorically regards as bleeding, as the rivers of Africa flow into the surrounding oceans. Africa is of course personified in the poem. Thus the Indian Ocean to the east of Africa is equated with umphanda into which the metaphorical blood of Africa flows. It must be further noted that this poem is allegorical and has strong political undertones. Africa, in the eyes of the poet, is an exploited continent whose lifeblood is lamentably being drained off by foreigners.

One further aspect of Ntuli's noun-based metaphors worthy of remark is his use of compound nouns as metaphors. However, as this aspect

will be dealt with more fully later in the chapter, we would rather say no more about it here.

3.2.2.3 Verbal base

Concerning metaphors with a verbal base, D.B.Z. Ntuli (op.cit.: 167) makes this comment:

When metaphor is based on the verb, the verb may have an effect of inanimating the animate object or animating the inanimate one.

True though this assertion may be, it must however be noted that there are cases where the verb does not necessarily affect the object as stated above.

Instances of metaphor with a verbal base are numerous in C.S.Z.

Ntuli's poetry. Let us consider this one from the poem Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p4):

(Uqugaba) Luthi wophinde unise izicolo
Njenganamuhla izolo nakuthangi.

((The crowd) says you must please shower blessings
Like today, yesterday and the day before.)

The word unise is a verb with a causative extension (from the verb stem -na) which means 'to shower' or 'cause to rain'. In these lines the crowd asks the poet to beseech God to shower blessings on them like always. Blessings may be concrete or abstract. Just as God causes rain to fall, purely out of love, He is being beseeched to give blessings to His people out of sheer love. Here the metaphor of rain has a connotation of giving bounteously and with love. As unise is a visual metaphor, it helps concretise the idea of giving generously. In this particular example, the verb unise does not have an animating influence on the inanimate object izicolo as such.

In stanza six of Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. p.43) the following lines occur:

Esibayeni kwaDukuza ngek' uziphunge,
Kuhwaq' ufiphana lwakwabo,
Luhlab' usentu ngamagwegwana!

(At the kraal of Dukuza you will not rest,
 A dark-skinned one is frowning there,
Tossing up the soil with its rickety legs!)

Nearly all the metaphors in this poem relate to cattle although the poem itself is about people. As such Indians at KwaDukuza (Stanger) are likened to a dark skinned bull with an aggressive facial expression. This notion is strengthened by Luhlab' usentu (tossing up the soil) which is an act performed by a bull to challenge other bulls to a fight. Thus the poet looks upon the Indians at Stanger as being assertive of their authority there, and the Zulus as being impotent at the place where their own king, Shaka, lies buried.

3.2.2.4 Copulative construction

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op.cit.: 163) observes that the identifying copulative is commonly used to identify one object with another. C.S.Z. Ntuli employs this construction in some of his metaphors.

Our first example comes from the second stanza of the poem Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.58):

Ngikwahlongasibi wogwadule;
 Ezinyaweni uhlalu ngamalahle,
 Okhakhayini ilanga yilangabi.

(I am in a desert where there is no sign of life;
 Under my feet, pebbles are (burning) coal,
 On the crown of my head the sun is a flame).

The drought metaphor in the poem represents incapacity to procreate. In line 2 the tenor uhlalu is equated with the vehicle ngamalahle which is an identifying copulative. Likewise in line 3 the tenor

ilanga is likened to the vehicle yilangabi, also an identifying copulative. The equation is direct in both cases, with the tenor and the vehicle explicitly mentioned. Both metaphors describe the severity of the heat on the scorched earth, and both are thermal.

The next example of this form of metaphor occurs in the poem Sinembali (AME. p.53) in the salutary words of the personified Sivunguvungu (Wind) and Siwulukuhlu (Rain):

"Sikhulekile, Nkosikazi,
Esomhambi yinso yenyoni!"

("We greet you, Lady of the house,
That (the stomach) of a traveller is a kidney of a bird!")

The full version of the proverbial expression in line 2 above is: Isisu somhambi asingakanani singangenso yenyoni (The stomach of a traveller is not large; it is as small as a kidney of a bird). The expression is used by a hungry traveller who is asking for some food from a prospective host. For aesthetic effect Ntuli has condensed the expression into just three words. Thus the subject isisu is implied in the relative construction Esomhambi, followed by the copulative ysinso (yenyoni)! Although we do not condone the use of fixed proverbial and idiomatic expressions in poetry, we do however, appreciate the dexterity with which Ntuli has re-worded this particular proverbial expression to give it greater momentum.

3.2.2.5 Metaphor with implicit tenor

There are instances where C.S.Z. Ntuli does not explicitly state the tenor of the metaphor he uses. Again we heed D.B.Z. Ntuli's (op.cit.: 169) comment on this type of metaphor:

It (the tenor) is replaced altogether by the metaphor. The context tells us what exactly is represented metaphorically.

This type of metaphor is found in the first stanza of Uvete Ewindini (AME. p.2):

Ak' imi ngedwa kant' engiqoph' intaba,
Intab' emshiphiliz' ebushelelezi!

(So, I am not the only one climbing the mountain,
The mountain which is smooth and slippery.)

Intaba in the above metaphor represents both the pile of books in front of the poet, and education generally. The tenor is not mentioned anywhere before these lines. It is only in the fourth and last stanza that it is mentioned for the first time, in the line:

Kulentabakazi yamabhuku...

(On this great mountain of books...)

Be that as it may, the explicit equation in this part of the poem serves only as confirmation of what the reader has already surmised earlier in the poem. The metaphor of the mountain suggests that the books being studied by the poet are a huge pile, and to master them is as arduous a task as climbing a mountain, or scaling a window-pane as the frog is doing. Thus the poet perceives commonality between himself and the frog on the window-pane.

Another metaphor of the same type is found in Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.15). Addressing the train driver, the poet says:

Nciphisa les' isivinini
Senhlwath' ensundu yakobelungu,

(Decrease the speed
 Of the brown python of the White people,...)

Although the tenor is not mentioned, one is able to deduce from the context that the tenor here, which is likened to a brown python, is the train. Only the train moves like a snake (python), is often brown in colour, and is a White man's invention. Otherwise nowhere in the whole poem is the train explicitly mentioned.

The advantage of using a metaphor with an implicit tenor is that, while on the one hand it enables the poet to conserve words, it also challenges the reader to discover the tenor for himself / herself, which heightens his / her participation in the experience of the poem.

3.2.2.6 Extended metaphor

Hasley and Friedman (1984: Vol. 9: 695) offer this definition of an extended or sustained metaphor:

A sustained metaphor is a metaphor that is extended over several lines or even for an entire work.

Extended metaphors in Ntuli's poetry are numerous, but as in other aspects previously dealt with, we will select only a few representative examples here. In Amathole OkaMathole (AME. p.42) we have an extended metaphor in these lines:

Ubanga utwa namahlengethwa
Engiwabone ngiseSibubulungu.

(You wrangle over the deep with the porpoises
Which I have seen at the port (Durban).)

The extended metaphor here is that of porpoises which represents White people. Porpoises are a gregarious species of water animals. The association derives from the fact that Whites came to this land in groups by sea. He extends the metaphor by saying in the last line that he saw them while he was at the port (near the sea). As this is a protest poem, the poet remonstrates against the fact that the indigenous peoples of this land have to wrangle over the land issue (utwa), with alien people from across the seas.

In the following lines from Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.51) it

will be observed that in this instance the metaphor extends over the entire stanza.

Zulu lahloma phansi eFulansi
 Kwafukuzel' ifu leza libomvu,
 Lasho lagwavuma landindizela
 Isaho kwangasamfula ungenisa
 Kwasamgqumo wemvula yesangquma.

(The heavens worked up for a storm in France
 A heavy red cloud formed,
 They (the heavens) roared and rumbled
 The echo was like that of a river rising in flood
 Like the rhythm of rain in a hailstorm.)

The principal metaphor is Zulu, or simply izulu (the heavens), representing the explosive situation in France leading to the well-known French Revolution. First the heavens evinced symptoms of a rising storm (lahloma). The red colour of the cloud in line 2 forebodes the shedding of blood. Then the heavens roared (a threatening noise such as is made by a lion) and rumbled. Its echo is compared to that of a river rising in flood, and to the rhythm of rain in a hailstorm. The volatile situation is couched in lurid terms. There is a succession of metaphors and similes in these lines, but they all develop from and are subordinate to the principal metaphor of the heavens preparing for a storm.

In concluding this discussion on extended metaphors, we need to deal briefly with those poems which, in their entirety, are based on a single overarching metaphor. Starting with Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. pp.42-44) we need to bear in mind the literal meaning of the title: 'The calves of the son of Mathole'. The 'calves' here metaphorically refer to the Zulu nation. The name Mathole, which is the name of Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi's father, also literally means 'calves'. Thus we have a pun here. But what is more remarkable is that the entire poem, particularly Part 1, is based on the metaphor of cattle

(calves inclusive). For that reason we regard the metaphor of cattle as an extended metaphor embracing the entire poem. Although Part II is addressed to Dr Buthelezi himself, we still find the metaphor of cattle being used there too.

Sinembali (AME. pp.53-56) which means: 'We have a flower', is rendered in four parts. Part 1 deals with the antecedents of the coming into being of a little plant isithonjana from which the flower is later to develop. Part II recounts the event of the appearance of the plant in question. Part III deals with the plant and the flower itself, and Part IV relates, through the use of a series of rhetorical questions, to the metaphorical flower with the Ntuli ancestry. Clearly the flower represents a member of the Ntuli family who is much beloved, and who is a source of great pride to both the poet and the Ntuli family as a whole.

Although in the poem Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56) there are other subsidiary metaphors and eulogues interspersed throughout the poem, the encompassing metaphor is also that of the flower.

We have demonstrated above that Ntuli uses a wide variety of metaphors in his poems. In a few instances he does adopt rather worn-out metaphors which have become part of idiomatic and proverbial language. But he deserves credit for the wide variety of original metaphors which he uses with great artistic sensitivity.

3.2.3 Personification

Abrams (op.cit.: 65) defines personification as:

Another figure related to metaphor is personification, or

in the Greek term, *prosopopeia*, in which either an inanimate object or an abstract concept is spoken of as though it were endowed with life or with human attributes or feelings.

Van Rooyen et al (1984: 179) describe the function of personification in poetry as follows:

The object can be addressed as if it is a human being, or be made to speak. In so doing the poet breaks the barrier between the human and the inhuman or inanimate, so that the reader can readily identify himself with the object, so that the feelings expressed by the object have immediate appeal to the reader. The object can even be used to comment on human nature.

There are many poems in which Ntuli employs this figure of speech to achieve a variety of effects. This we will discuss under five sub-headings, viz. apostrophe, human features, human actions, human emotions and animalisation.

3.2.3.1 Apostrophe

Ntuli sometimes makes use of apostrophe, which Altenbernd and Lewis (op.cit.: 22) explain as follows:

Personification is often involved in apostrophe, a rhetorical device in which the poet speaks to a personified abstraction or to an absent person.

We may add here that living though non-human creatures may also be apostrophised.

In some of the poems the apostrophe is used only in certain parts of the poem. An example of this occurs in Phansi KwaMahalazibeke (AME. p.10):

Nkomo, sengathi niduke nezwe
Egelen' eMahalazibeke.

(Beasts, you seem misplaced
On the slope of the Magaliesberg.)

In this example, animals are apostrophised to make them seem more immediate to the reader. The figure is applied in other parts of the same poem as well.

In the poem Sinembali (AME. p.55) the wind and the rain are apostrophised in Part IV. Here we will examine only a couple of lines:

We Sivunguvungu! We Siwulukuhlu!
Enedlula kwamila lesisithombo,
Kanti nanipheth' imbewana yini?

(You Wind! You Rain!
You on whose trail this seedling developed,
Were you carrying some seed with you?)

Wind and rain are referred to and addressed as dignitaries in the poem. They are looked upon as envoys of Mother Nature, bringing with them the seed of the most beloved flower (the poet's younger brother) into the Ntuli family.

In the above examples we were examining Ntuli's use of apostrophe on certain parts of certain poems. Ntuli, however, quite often applies this figure on a whole poem or a large section of it. In Uvete Ewindini (AME. p.2) a frog is apostrophised in three out of four stanzas. In Ngijulise Nkosi (AME. p.5) the sea is apostrophised throughout except in the last stanza. The poem Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (AME. p.18) in its entirety is an apostrophe to the moon. The use of the apostrophe enables the reader to identify more readily with the animal, object or concept referred to in the poem.

3.2.3.2 Human features

In his discussion of the poetry of B.W. Vilakazi, D.B.Z. Ntuli (op.cit.: 172) briefly clarifies this element of personification:

In some of his poems Vilakazi gives his inanimate objects physical characteristics which are found in human beings.

We come across this phenomenon in C.S.Z. Ntuli's poetry as well. In Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (AME. p.18) we have an excellent example in stanza 2:

Ngizwa bekugxeka, Ntombi Yezulu,
Bath' umzimba wakh' ulal' uthuli,
Bath' ubuso bumathunduthundu,
Bath' umazinyo azikhunkwana,
Bath' umehlo azinkolombela,
Bath' usifuba siwungqoqwane.

(I hear them criticise you, Lady of the Heavens,
They say your body is covered with dust,
They say your face is full of ridges,
They say your teeth are mere stumps,
They say you have deep-set eyes,
They say your chest is snow.)

In line 1 above, the moon is personified and apostrophised as Ntombi Yezulu (Lady of the Heavens). Her physical features are equated to those of a human being, viz. umzimba, ubuso, umazinyo, umehlo, and usifuba. These are copulatives in which the connective -na- indicating possession has been omitted. Personification here makes the moon a lot less remote than it really is, and the terms used in its description are much more familiar to the reader since they signify human attributes.

The poem Ezingolweni (UGQ. p.49) offers another interesting example where personification is used in such a way that not only the vehicle but the tenor is mentioned as well:

La imvelo yonk' ingemukela
Ngezingalo ezintofontofo

Zothikithi lwemithi notshani.

(Where the whole of nature receives me
In its tender arms
Of close-knit trees and grasses.)

Nature in this example is endowed with arms, like a human being. One infers from the description of nature's arms as ezintofontofo (tender) that the poet regards nature as feminine. While izingalo (in ngezizingalo) is the vehicle in this equation, Zothikithi lwemithi notshani in the third line is the tenor. This is not a usual occurrence where personification is used, but it is all the more interesting for its rarity.

3.2.3.3 Human actions

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op.cit.: 173) explains this feature of personification in these words:

Inanimate things are sometimes made to do what is normally done by human beings.

There are not so many instances in Ntuli's poetry where human actions are captured in personification. Uncommon though this phenomenon may be in his poetry, Ntuli accomplishes in two ways. In some instances an unpersonified subject is personified by the chosen verb, and in other instances personification is effected earlier before the verb denoting human action. In the last line of the third stanza in Ighwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.15) we have this line in which an unpersonified subject is personified by the chosen verb denoting human action:

Iphunga libiz' odlula ngaphesheya.

(The smell calls a passerby over there.)

Calling is a human act which in the above line is attributed to a

sense experience, viz. smell. This means that the smell (of beer) was so strong it could be picked up from a distance. Here the unpersonified subject, smell, is personified by the verb "call". The device has a much greater impact than a plain statement that the smell was strong would ever have had.

In the following example from the poem Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (AME. p.72) personification is effected earlier before the verb denoting human action:

Uthand' inhlokomo yawoHlokohloko

Behuba sebedl' obamaganu....

(You like the clamorous noise of Weaver-birds

 As they sing after enjoying beer brewed from the
'amaganu' fruit,...

In this example personification starts from the word oHlokohloko (Weaver-birds) in the first verse, in which personification is indicated with capital letter "H". oHlokohloko are said to be singing after enjoying beer, as Zulu men would do after a beer drinking spree. Here the poet shrewdly alludes to the Zulu idiom, Kuzalele ihlokohloko (There is a hubbub of voices), which idiom is often used when the already intoxicated beer-drinkers talk and sing in raised voices. The device has been used ingeniously and most effectively.

3.2.3.4 Human emotions

Van Rooyen et al (Ibid) cover this phenomenon in their explanation of what personification entails:

Through personification the poet attributes human traits, actions and emotions to something that is not human....

Examples of this phenomenon are not many in Ntuli's poetry either. However we do come across it in the following extract from Zinonya (AME. p.21):

Hawu, Ntaba zakwaZulu,
Ninonya!

(My goodness! Mountains of Zululand
You are wicked!)

In this example the mountains are apostrophised, and are accused of being wicked. Wicked because they conceal from view all the beauty of the life that goes on in Zululand. Cruelty is a human attitude or disposition which in these lines is transferred to mountains.

There is yet another example of human emotions suggested in these lines from Sinembali (AME. p.53):

Isithunzi senkosikazi sazisinda;
Dica, bohloholo, zanyobozela,...

(The dignity of the lady was too much for them;
Their fury abated, and they cringed with shame,...)

The lines still refer to OSivunguvungu noSiwulukuhlu already mentioned a few times above. Ntuli captures the idea of the abatement of their fury in two carefully chosen ideophones: Dica, bohloholo.... Their fury is replaced by bashfulness after the havoc they had wreaked on their arrival, which feeling is captured in the verb zanyobozela.

3.2.3.5 Animalisation

Closely linked with personification is what some scholars refer to as animalisation, in which a human being, or an object, or even an abstract concept is endowed with animal instead of human attributes. This is how Zulu et al (1988: 310) explain animalisation:

Isenzamuntu yileso sifengo okufaniswa kuso into ethile

nomuntu, kanti isenzasilwane yilesa okufaniswa kuso into nesilwane.

(Personification is the figure in which a thing is endowed with human qualities, and animalisation is the one in which a thing is endowed with animal qualities.)

We find an interesting example of animalisation in these lines from EZingolweni (UGQ. p.50):

Ngitakul' ebugodlogodlweni
Bemishini engenamhlabelelo
Eghunsul' amehlo angaboni,
Ebhiza ngezidladl' ezingezwa....

(Rescue me from the rumblings
Of machines whose wound has no cure,
Whose staring eyes have no sight,
And which speed away with insensitive paws.)

Cars in the these lines are equated with animals. They are referred to as beasts wont to inflict incurable wounds, which stare with sightless eyes (headlights) and whose paws (wheels) have no nerves. One gets a feeling that the poet hereby makes a wider reference than just cars; that he is making a point about the insensitivity of modern civilisation and technology vis-à-vis Mother Nature whose beauty, freedom and considerateness he extols throughout the poem.

Another example of animalisation is that found in the fourth stanza of Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. p.42):

Namhl' usuqubulund' uqwatha lwengongoni?
Uludleleph' ubabe lwakuthangi?
Usidleleph' isinandi sayizolo?

(Today you are groping for the bare remnants of the ngongoni
grass?
Didn't the bufallo grass of the day before yesterday give you
any nourishment?
Didn't the teff grass of yesterday give you any nourishment?)

In the above extract the Zulu people are given animal attributes. They are referred to in terms of cattle feeding on grass. This evokes images of cattle emaciated by hunger as a result of lack of

grass. As such the Zulus are said to be deprived, and therefore poor. The impact of animalisation here is bound to catch the reader's attention and thus underline the intended message.

The above exposition in respect of personification and its sub-categories demonstrates clearly that Ntuli is at home with this figure of speech and applies it in various modes for a variety of effects, all of which enhance the quality of his poetry.

3.2.4. Symbolism

Altenbernd and Lewis (op. cit.: 73 - 74) define a symbol as follows:

The term "symbol" can then be reserved for an object, an action, a situation, a verbal formula that represents the complexity of an abstraction, an unseen object, an unfamiliar object, any phenomenon so vast or complex that it cannot be dealt with directly or literally -- or several of these at once.... The symbol will have some kind of natural relationship to the thing it stands for.

We heed the distinction between public and private symbols as highlighted by Reaske (1966: 109):

... we should be careful to realise that there are public symbols and private symbols. That is, some symbols, through repeated use, have the same connotations whenever they occur; others, in contrast, are products of a particular poet's imagination and remain fairly mysterious.

We must hasten to point out that C.S.Z. Ntuli's symbols can be described as more public than private as they are not entirely exclusive to him and his poetry. This will become clearer when we discuss specific examples from his poetry later in this exposition.

As regards the function of symbolism in poetry, we note Riccio's (op. cit.: 202) succinct statement:

The importance of symbols in poetry, or literature in general, is that they afford the poet the opportunity to exploit their connotative or associative meanings in a wider sense for purposes of intensification, tightness, particularisation, and heightening expression. Symbols serve to enrich a poem through their radiational aspects.

3.2.4.1 Profundity: intellectual and spiritual

The poem Ngijulise Nkosi (AME. p.5) is, at one level, about the sea and its great depth. In an apostrophe to the sea, the poet says:

Kuya ngokuya okwakho' ukujula,
Kuya ngokuya okwakh' ukudepha ...

(Your depth increases gradually,
Your profoundness increases gradually)

On reading these lines one feels that the depth referred to here is only physical, and therefore literal. But in the closing couplet the poet, in an apostrophe to God, also asks for depth, and the impression one gains from those lines is that the poet is asking God, not for physical, but for spiritual and intellectual depth:

Ngijulise nami, Nkosi:
Nkinsel' ezishay' impabanga.

(Give me profoundness too, O Lord;
You who feigns poverty when you, in fact, have plenty).

In Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.4), thanking God for his blessings and beseeching Him for more divine endowments, Ntuli says:

Siph' ububanzi bePhasifiki,
Siph' ukujula kwe-Athlantiki,...

(Grant us the width of the Pacific,
Grant us the depth of the Atlantic,...)

The Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans are renowned for their vastness and depth. In using them as symbols of vastness and profoundness, the poet, we feel, is in fact asking God for greater intellectual and spiritual endowments.

3.2.4.2 Insensitivity and treachery

In our discussion of animalisation under 3.2.3.5. above, we quoted the lines from the poem EZingolweni (UGQ. p.50) where the poet projects the insensitivity of modern civilisation by describing vehicles in animalistic terms. This is only one of the instances in which vehicles are used symbolically to signify the insensitivity and treachery of modern civilisation.

Ntuli again mentions vehicles with the same kind of suspicion in the poem Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa (AMA. p.50):

Usuzontininiza ungishiye
Ngejubane lamadolo alula,
Eliyongezwa ngelezithuthuthu,
Eliyongezwa ngelamabhanoyi,...

(Are you going to run away from me
With the speed facilitated by young knees,
Which will be augmented by that of motorbikes,
Which will be augmented by that of aeroplanes,...)

Motorbikes and aeroplanes here are only representative. Reference applies equally to all modern vehicles characterised by speed. The poet harbours suspicion and remonstrates against them for their potential to whisk away his beloved niece, Bezweni. Their symbolic quality of insensitivity and treachery applies as much in this poem as in the one previously mentioned.

The train in Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.15) is animalised with a similar symbolic effect:

Nciphinciphisa les' isivinini
Senhlwath' ensundu yakobelungu,
Eginge muntu, yaginga mlungu,...

(Decrease the speed
Of the brown python of the White people,
Which has swallowed Black and White people alike,...)

The equation of the train to a brown python and its suggested act of

having "swallowed" humans has a strong symbolic connotation of callous treachery.

3.2.4.3 Security

The shield in Ntuli's poems symbolises security. Although this is in evidence in several poems, we will cite only two typical examples.

In Okwesabekayo (AME. p.26) he says:

Angazi nakuthi lidumephi!
Nxa ngibamb' inkumba yenkabi kababa,
Ngigqishe ngesikhumba senqam' emhlophe,...

(I have no fear whatsoever!
With my shield carved from the skin of my father's ox,
And decorated with the skin of a white ram,...)

Face to face with a lion the poet has no fear at all, as long as he has his shield in hand. Thus the shield clearly symbolises security in the above lines.

In Sengethembile (AMA. p.5) the poet intimates how confidently he can charge his foes with his shield and spear in hand. His ability to protect himself is indubitable:

Bengipheth' isihlangu nesijula,
Ngithathela kugqibuk' amaviyo,...

(I have been carrying a shield and a spear,
Sending brigades running as I charged at them,...)

In many cultures of the world the shield is a weapon closely associated with security. This is so in Zulu culture too. Thus we feel that this is one of several public symbols which Ntuli exploits in his poetry.

3.2.4.4. Excellence

Whereas the flower is generally known to symbolise beauty, in the

poetry of Ntuli the flower clearly symbolises excellence. The flower symbol is commonly associated with feminine beauty, but in Ntuli's two poems where the flower is used as a symbol, it is associated with men to signify excellence.

In Sinembali (AME. p.53 -56) the flower refers to the poet's younger brother and symbolises personal excellence. This comes out clearly in the following lines:

Luyolile usi lwembali yethu,
 Luheh' izinyoni nezinyosi
 Zemihlanjana namaqulwana:

 Zibabel' umpe nempova, okwekhethelo
 Kwembali engenjengembali,...

(Sweet is the smell of our flower;
 Attracted, the birds and the bees
 Approach it in swarms and droves:

 They come after the sap and the pollen, the most excellent
 Of the flower which is like no other.)

The birds and the bees in these lines represent people who come from far and wide to gain what they can from the subject, who has only the best to offer. In the above lines, as indeed in the rest of the poem, we feel that the symbolic flower relates not to physical beauty but to personal excellence.

In a similar vein the poet equates Bishop P.B. Mhlungu to the flower of a pink gladiolus in Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.57):

Ngikufanisa nembali yesidwa;
 Ngikufanisa nembali yamahlungu
 Ebikezel' ukuphela kwezinhlungu
 Emhlabathin' obhadle kabuhlungu...

(I liken you to the flower of a pink gladiolus;
 I liken you to the flower of a burnt veld
 Which portends the ceasing of pains
 On the earth so excruciatingly incinerated...)

The poet fervently hopes that P.B. Mhlungu's appointment to the

bishopric, and through his excellence as a church leader, will heal the bishopric of its travails. As in the previous poem, the flower symbol here refers not to physical grace, but to personal excellence.

3.2.4.5 Divine favour

In several of Ntuli's poems, rain symbolises divine favour. Here too we will cite only two examples. From the poem Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.4) in which the poet addresses God, we will consider the following lines:

Kepha loluquqaba luth' angibonge;

 Luthi wophinde unise izicolo
 Njenganamuhla izolo nakuthangi.

(But this crowd says I must commend you;

.....
 They ask you to let favours rain (upon them) again
 Like today, yesterday and the day before.)

Also in the poem Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.58) we have the same symbol in the three concluding lines:

Mbali yehlungu lezwe laBantu,
 Qhweb' izinkanyezi zehlis' umkhizo,
 Kuhlum' uhlaza, kusimam' i-Afrika.

(Flower of the burnt veld of the African people,
 Beckon the stars to let fall a drizzle,
 So that green grass may spring forth, and Africa thrive.)

In both poems the rain symbolises divine favour. In the last quoted lines uhlaza (green grass) is a metaphor for regeneration after a period of travail as indicated under 3.2.4.4 above. Thus the poet implores Bishop Mhlungu to beseech God for His blessings for the hitherto afflicted bishopric and the African people.

Even though the above symbols occur in the poetry of Ntuli, one feels that symbolism is not his great strength. Most, if not all of

the symbols dealt with above are traditional symbols which have been used by other writers before Ntuli. He has not developed any original symbols exclusively his own. But even though they are not original symbols, there is no doubt that he has exploited them to recognisable advantage in his poems.

3.3 OTHER PROMINENT FEATURES OF DICTION

Other features of diction which occur commonly in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli are compound words as well as ideophones and deideophonic words. These will be treated briefly in the remainder of this chapter.

3.3.1 Compound words

Compound words, including compound eulogues, are a common feature in the poetry of Ntuli.

Commenting on compound words as a linguistic feature, Bloomfield (1935: p.227) has this to say:

Compound words have two (or more) free forms among their immediate constituents.... The forms which we class as compound words exhibit some feature which, in their language, characterises single words in contradistinction to phrases. In meaning, compound words are usually more specialised than phrases....

Since under this aspect we also include compound eulogues, we must take a look at how Kunene (1971: p.xxii) explains a eulogue:

... eulogue is used to refer to the different kinds of praise reference: names such as deverbative nouns describing the hero according to his actions, or metaphorical names comparing the hero to natural phenomena; and, for example, praise by association of the hero with some other person, whether himself (or herself)

praiseworthy or not.

A compound eulogie can thus be construed as a eulogie which, to use Bloomfield's words, has two or more free forms among its immediate constituents.

Compound words generally facilitate word economy and enhance the linguistic beauty of a poem.

In this discourse, we must distinguish between compound words in common currency which Ntuli draws from the usual vocabulary of the language, and those originated by the poet himself. The compounds in the cited verses are indicated with an underlining.

3.3.1.1 Common compounds

Common compounds found in Ntuli's poetry fall into five different word categories, viz. nouns, adnouns, copulatives, possessives, and descriptives. Although many examples representative of the various categories exist, only one typical example will be treated under each category.

3.3.1.1.1 Compound nouns

In Nxa Ngingxamile (AME. p.7) we have the following compound noun constituting a verse:

Ubulanga-phuma-nce-sikothe!

(Beauty par excellence!)

Its chief constituents are noun + verb + conjunction + verb:

{ubu- (class prefix) + langa (sun) + phuma (rise) + nce (so that) + sikothe (we may enjoy you)}

Although this compound is in common usage, it adds colour to the

language of the poem, especially because the poet has adapted its form and meaning slightly to denote beauty as an abstract concept instead of the usual idiom uphuma langa sikothe (a beautiful person).

3.3.1.1.2 Compound adnouns

In the poem Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.63) the compound adnoun features in the following verse in the sixth stanza:

Umpunzo ompukane-zibangubisi;

(A spotted buttock covering made from the skin of an aborted calf,)

The relative compound ompukane-zibangubisi (grey with black spots) is constituted of noun + verb + noun:

{o- (relative concord) + (izi)mpukane (flies) + zibang(a) (vying for) + ubisi (milk)}

Besides the fact that this compound adnoun achieves compression of expression, it also introduces alliteration involving the bilabial combination mph and the bilabial compound mp, as well as assonance involving the u vowel in the verse.

3.3.1.1.3 Copulative compounds

This compound occurs in Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (AME. p.18), in the following verse of the third stanza:

Sengath' uluntonjana-mbuzana?

(As if you are a despicable, good-for-nothing young woman?)

The chief constituents of the above compound are noun + noun:

{u- (subject concord) + (-ngu-) (copulative formative) + (u)luntonjana (despicable young woman or women) + (i)mbuzana (small goat)}

The term u(lu)ntonjana-mbuzana refers to the lowliest of women of marriageable age, and the compound is thus most compatible with the

word ucunjazwayo (that which is the object of everybody's fondling) in the preceding verse.

3.3.1.1.4 Possessive compounds

This example of a possessive compound occurs in the following verse in the fifth stanza of the poem Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.16):

Mfana weNkomo-kaHaga,

(Young man of Afrikaner stock,)

This compound is composed of possessive concord + noun.

{wa- (possessive concord) + (i)Nkomo (cattle) + possessive concord} + Haga (Haga)}

The compound lends an interesting variation to the way in which the White train-driver has been referred to earlier in the poem, viz. mntanomlungu (child of the White man). With ample reference to milk and meat in the preceding stanzas, and the close association of these with cattle in the mind of any Zulu, the above compound involving inkomo is a suitable choice.

3.3.1.1.5 Descriptive compounds

In Ngimfunge EkwaNzuza (AME. p.58) we have a descriptive compound in this verse in the sixth stanza:

Esefike emhlangana-ndlela

(Having arrived at the junction)

This is a compound constituted of locative + noun:

{e- (locative prefix) + (u)mhlangana (deverbative noun from verb hlangana (meet)) + (izi)ndlela (paths)}

The constituent noun stem -ndlela (path) in the compound echoes the word lendlēla (this path) in the previous three verses. As the path is the key image in the stanza, the use of this particular compound with its peculiar sound constitution is strategic.

Although the above compounds are admittedly in the common idiom of the Zulu language, their occurrence at relevant places, as demonstrated above, enhances the quality of the language of Ntuli's poems.

3.3.1.2 Original compounds

Ntuli makes as much use of original compounds as common ones, and to broadly the same effect. However original compounds provide the added benefit of freshness. These, in his poetry, can be seen to fall into four word categories, viz. relatives as well as descriptives.

3.3.1.2.1 Compound nouns

This category of compounds is distinctly in the majority in Ntuli's poetry. However, only two representative ones will be cited here.

In the poem Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.50) we have this compound noun in the following verse:

Amahlwempu ethel' intelakaningi.

(The poor paying tax after tax.)

This particular compound is composed of deverbative noun + adverb:

{iN- (noun prefix) + thela (pay tax) + kaningi (many times)}

The noun root -tel- (-thel- in the underlying structure) in the first half of the compound echoes the sound of the root -thel- in the preceding verb ethel(a). As such the repetition is of aesthetic value to the verse.

The second example, a compound eulogium, comes from the twelfth stanza of the poem Okwesabekayo (AME. p.27):

Yebo, mgal' uMagadl'aphindelele.

(Yes, provoke him, the Striker who strikes repeatedly.)

The above compound eulogie is constituted of the deverbative noun + verb:

{u- (class prefix) + Magadla (Striker) + aphindelele (verb with an adverbial connotation, meaning: repeatedly)}

The eulogie itself has an element of personification in it, in that the black mamba is eulogised in the same manner as humans are.

Furthermore, the four **a** vowels and the three **e** vowels in the compound echo similar vowel sounds in the preceding words Yebo and mgal', thus constituting the two sets of assonance in the verse.

3.3.1.2.2 Compound adnouns

This example of a compound adnoun occurs in Nqimfunge EkwaNzuza (AME. p.60) in the following verse in the thirteenth stanza:

Ezazincwadi-mbili iyinye!

(Which were two letters in one!)

The above compound has a copulative + relative construction as its components:

{ez(i)- (relative concord) + -a- (past tense formative) + -zi- (subject concord) + (yi-) (copulative formative) + (izi)ncwadi (books) + (ezi)mbili (two)}

This is a rare construction and there is no doubt as to the effectiveness of its compression. Moreover the **i** sounds in the compound form strong assonance with the **i** sounds in the succeeding word iyinye.

3.3.1.2.3. Copulative compounds

This copulative compound is found in the fourth verse of the fifth stanza of the poem Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.57):

Elithathankemba kwabaseGalile.

(Who was a sword-bearer among those of Galilee.)

The compound is constituted of deverbative noun + noun, as follows:

{e- (situative subject concord) + (yi-) (copulative formative) + (i)li- (noun prefix) + -thatha (verb meaning: take, from which the noun i(li)thatha, meaning: taker or bearer derives) + (i)nkemba (sword)}

The l sound in the compound forms alliteration with the same consonant in the succeeding word, and the a vowels in the compound collaborate with those in the succeeding word to constitute assonance.

3.3.1.2.4 Descriptive compounds

The descriptive compound here is a locative, and it occurs in the eighth verse of the eighth stanza of the same poem, Imbali Yehlunqu:

Biza amathamsanqa kuNqcebonkulu

(Solicit blessings from the One whose riches are infinite)

The compound kuNqcebonkulu is composed of locative + adnoun:

{ku- (locative morpheme) + (u)Nqcebo (the rich one) + (e)nkulu (huge, infinite)}

UNqcebonkulu above refers to God, so-called in the poem because He is the creator of everything there is, and thus the ultimate owner thereof. Ntuli has coined the compound to achieve concision.

From the above discussion on compounds, it is clear that Ntuli uses compounds for a variety of effects, all of them carefully thought out and enriching to his poetry. We commend the poet for employing original compounds, but we also appreciate his dexterity in using common compounds.

3.3.2 Ideophones and ideophonic derivatives

Another very prominent feature of diction in Ntuli's poetry is the use of ideophones and deideophonic word formations.

Describing what an ideophone is and how it is used in African languages, Finnegan (1970: p.64) has this to say:

This is a special word which conveys a kind of idea-in-sound and is commonly used in African languages to add emotion or vividness to a description or recitation. Ideophones are sometimes onomatopoeic, but the acoustic impression often conveys aspects which ... are not normally associated with sound at all -- such as manner, colour, taste, smell, silence, action, condition, texture, gait, posture, or intensity. To some extent they resemble adverbs in function, but in actual use and grammatical form they seem more like interjections. They are specifically introduced to heighten the narrative or add an element of drama. They also come in continually where there is a need for a particularly lively style or vivid description and are used with considerable rhetorical effect to express emotion or excitement.

3.3.2.1 Ideophones

Ideophones abound in Ntuli's poetry, and these are used in different syntactic forms and for a variety of effects. Generally they add colour to the language and, as Finnegan points out above, they make the style more lively and more vivid.

Sometimes Ntuli uses the ideophone as an independent predicate. A magnificent example of this is found in the second verse of the seventh stanza of the poem Sinembali (AME. p.53):

Isithunzi senkosikazi sazisinda;
Dica, bohlololo, zanyobozele;

(The dignity of the lady was too much for them;
Their fury abated, and they cringed with shame;)

The two ideophones account for the lively style, the colourful language as well as the economy of words in the verse.

To achieve emphasis, Ntuli sometimes uses the ideophone as a descriptive, as in verses three and four of the fourth stanza of EZingolweni (UGQ. p.49):

Laph' okumnyama kumnyama bhuge,
Lapho uhlaza luluhlaza cwe,

(Where what is black is pitch black,
Where the green is absolutely green.)

In the first verse above the ideophone bhuge describes and emphasises the copulative kumnyama, and in the next verse the ideophone cwe describes and emphasises the copulative luluhlaza.

At times the poet uses the ideophone as a complement to the verb stem -thi. We find an impressive example of this usage in verses two and three of the seventh stanza of Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.59):

Ngithi lizothi bani, lindindizele,
Lithi qhaba, qhaba, lithi walakahla.

(I thought it would throw some lightning, then thunder,
Then let a few drops fall, and then a heavy downpour.)

The device in the above two verses brings about assonance involving the i as well as the a vowels. Moreover the repetition of the verb -thi followed by an ideophone each time results in a parallelism effect, especially apparent in the second verse where the first unit of the verse is balanced by the second unit.

3.3.2.2 Ideophonic derivatives

Deideophonic word formations are also common in Ntuli's poetry, and their effect in the verse is well-nigh similar to that of pure ideophones. Here we do need to differentiate between primary ideophonic derivatives, i.e those word formations which are directly derived from ideophones, and secondary ideophonic derivatives, i.e. words formed from primary ideophonic derivatives. Ntuli uses both

these forms as a variation to straightforward ideophones.

3.3.2.2.1 Primary ideophonic derivatives

Two forms of primary ideophonic derivatives are manifest in Ntuli's poetry, viz. deideophonic nouns and deideophonic verbs.

The formation of the deideophonic noun almost invariably involves the prefixing of the noun class 14 prefix ubu-, as in verse two of the eighth stanza of Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.50):

Ubuhulukushu ku'buhulukushu,

(Scuttling away was the order of the day,)

In the above verse the class 14 prefix ubu- is prefixed to the ideophone hulukushu (of scuttling away) to produce the noun ubuhulukushu, which by and large still retains the semantic as well as the graphic impact of the derivative ideophone.

In some cases the derivative ideophonic stem is a reduplicated one, which often indicates repeated action. We have examples of this in verses three and four of the third stanza of Sinembali (AME. p.53):

Kwaduma ububhidlibhidli,
Kwasuka ubuvathevathe.

(There were sounds of heavy things falling,
There was a tumultuous rushing around.)

In the formation of deideophonic verbs Ntuli applies any one of several suffixes such as -ka, -la, and -za to the ideophonic stem, as in the following example from verse two of stanza eight of Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa (AMA. p.12):

Usuzontininiza ungishiye

(You will now run away from me)

The above verb is derived from the ideophone ntinini (of running

away) by adding the suffix -za to the ideophonic stem. As with deideophonic nouns, the deideophonic verb still retains the semantic and the graphic impact of the derivative ideophone, thus lending greater rhetorical effect to the verse.

3.3.2.2.2 Secondary ideophonic derivatives

Besides the primary ideophonic derivatives which we have discussed above, Ntuli also uses secondary ideophonic derivatives, i.e. words formed from primary ideophonic derivatives. In this group there are mainly qualificatives, predicatives and descriptives.

As regards qualificatives, Ntuli employs chiefly relative constructions, such as we have in verse four of stanza eight of Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (AME. p.71):

Ezidawuzayo nez'ntininizayo,

(Those that walk inanely, and those that run swiftly,)

This relative construction is formed from the verb -dawuza (walk inanely), which is itself formed from the ideophone dawu (of a foolish gait). This construction is balanced by a contrasting adverbial construction nez'ntininizayo, similarly formed from the verb -ntininiza (run swiftly) which is itself a derivative of the ideophone ntinini (of running swiftly). The two members together constitute a form of parallelism.

From among the many predicatives formed from ideophonic derivatives we will take a look at the copulative construction in the tenth verse of stanza five of Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.62):

Wezw' esifubeni kubugidigidi;

(He felt the throbbing of the heart in his chest;)

The copulative ku(wu)bugidigidi derives from a noun ubugidigidi (pattering of hooves or feet; throbbing of the heart), which noun is in turn derived from the ideophone gidi gidi (of pattering hooves or feet; of a throbbing heart). The copulative here imparts the idea of the sound made by a throbbing heart, such as is conveyed by the base ideophone gidi gidi.

Descriptives formed from ideophonic derivatives also abound in Ntuli's poetry. Here we can cite the descriptives occurring in the first two verses of stanza five of Ezangoiweni (UGQ. p.50):

Ngenyule ebunsegensegeni,
 Ngitakul' ebugodlogodlweni
 Bemishini engenamhlabelo,

(Lift me away from the screechings,
 Rescue me from the rumblings
 Of machines whose wound has no cure,)

The locative ebunsegensegeni is formed from the noun ubunsegensege (screeching), which in turn derives from the ideophone nsege nsege (of something screeching). Likewise the locative ebugodlogweni is derived from the noun ubugodlogodlo (rumbling), which derives from the ideophone godlo godlo (of something rumbling). Both locatives suggest the sounds originally represented by the base ideophones concerned. Moreover, the two locatives balance each other in the successive verses in which they occur to establish parallelism, which helps to highlight the harshness of the sounds referred to in the two verses.

With the above examples we have established that Ntuli makes use of not only ideophones, but also of ideophonic derivatives, both primary and secondary, in his poetry. The employment of these word formations enhances the language of his poetry in the ways already

pointed out above. Thus we commend this poet for his ingenuity in the handling of such and other linguistic devices in his poetry.

3.4 CONCLUSION

What emerges from the above discussion of imagery and other features of diction in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli is that Ntuli is a resourceful poet in the use of language. His diction is rich and colourful. Imagery can well be regarded as the cornerstone of his poetry. One is reminded of what D.B.Z. Ntuli (op.cit.: 187) says about the importance of imagery in poetry generally:

We consider imagery to be the hallmark of good poetry.

Although C.S.Z. Ntuli does employ hackneyed similes and common metaphors in some parts of his poems, it must be realised that his rich knowledge of the Zulu idiom is largely accountable for this fact. Idioms seem to come easily and naturally to him, and do not sound forced. As a result, one is inclined to admire rather than disdain his use of common idiomatic expressions where he has used them. More often than not, they account for the vibrant language of his poetry.

Yet a poet is credited even more for originality in any aspect of his poetry. Ntuli, despite his use of clichés at certain parts of his poems, is a very original and enterprising poet. There is evidence of this in the wide variety of fresh similes and metaphors he employs. His application of personification is just as outstanding. We have already pointed out that symbolism is not a strong point in his imagery, yet even the use of traditional symbols

is enriching to his poetry.

As for compound words, ideophones and ideophonic derivatives, they lend a special rhetorical effect to the poetry, and facilitate economy of words which is so essential to poetry generally.

Colourfulness of language and word economy are indubitably among Ntuli's virtues as a poet.

CHAPTER 4

4. FORM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'form' in literature means a diversity of things to different people. Abrams (1981: 67) makes this point very lucidly:

"Form" is one of the most frequently discussed - and variously interpreted - terms in literary criticism. It is often used in limited senses for a literary genre or type ("the lyric form", "the short story form"), or for patterns of metre, lines and rhymes ("the verse form", "the stanza form"). It is also, however, the common term for a central critical concept. The "form" of a work, in this central sense, is its central organising principle; and here we find great diversity in critical formulations.

For the purpose of this exposition, we would like to adopt the definition of form as advanced by Riccio (1980: 62):

... we consider form as the visual or outer shape of the poem, made possible by particular arrangements of structural components. These include the physical skeleton of a poem and the pattern occasioned by the organisation of sounds and rhythms.

Whereas some scholars regard the terms 'form' and 'structure' as being synonymous, others make a clear distinction between the two. For example, Lenake (1984: 119), in support of the latter notion, concurs with Riccio's conception of form:

Form, poetic form, is seen as a term which refers to the external shape of a poem in contrast to structure, which is seen as the internal organisation, the composition, of the poem.... Form is the outcome of a particular patterning of structures, a patterning that has been recognised and accepted.

Thus, for the purpose of this analysis, the term 'form' will be construed as a "central critical concept" under which, as regards the poetry of Ntuli, will be discussed the following aspects: stanza forms, refrains, alliteration and assonance, rhyme, parallelism, linking and rhythm.

Although for purposes of a critical analysis we often deal with form and content as separate entities, the two aspects are in fact functionally interrelated and interfused. They complement and enhance each other. As such, the importance of any particular formal technique lies in its relevance to content.

Repetition is an essential aspect of poetic form. In fact, most of the formal techniques which will be discussed in this chapter, are but different manifestations of repetition. We concur with Kunene (1971: 68-69) who points out that repetition may be aesthetic or unaesthetic, and that the latter is of no value to poetry:

Typically, unaesthetic repetition is the one that repeats what has just been said, in exactly the same words and without alleviation by incremental elements.... By contrast, in aesthetic repetition, selected words and/or phrases are repeated while additional ones are brought in as 'incrementing' phrases to advance the narrative, or the syntactical order is reversed to attain emphasis, etc. In other words there is always a device included in the repetition for purposes of 'alleviation' among other things. Such repetition creates suspense, it makes for sustained curiosity through the expectation of a new and surprise element. Also, it makes for a chain-linking of ideas and thus unifies, sometimes by a muriform design, what might otherwise be either a discrete juxtaposition of ideas, or straight and possibly dull narrative.

Manifestations of aesthetic repetition to be dealt with in this chapter thus include refrains, alliteration and assonance, rhyme, parallelism, and linking.

4.2 FORMAL FEATURES AND TECHNIQUES

The formal features and techniques mentioned in paragraph four above will be discussed hereunder in the order in which they are listed there.

4.2.1 Stanza forms

Simpson (1972: 454) defines a stanza as:

A group of lines considered as a unit, forming a division of a poem, and recurring in the same pattern or variation of the pattern. A stanza pattern is determined by the number of lines, the kind of feet and the number of feet per line, and the rhyme scheme.

However, most poems written in Zulu, including Ntuli's, are not characterised by groups of lines which subscribe to some consistent rhyme scheme, and do not adhere to any conventional metrical pattern. Referring to units such as these, Altenbernd and Lewis (1966: 44) say:

Sometimes lines are irregularly grouped so that the divisions correspond to important stages in the development of the narrative or discussion. Such units vary in length and are not marked by any set scheme of rhymes, if, indeed the lines are rhymed at all. These groupings are called verse paragraphs.

Riccio (op. cit.: 76) associates verse paragraphs with free verse:

In free verse, we often refer to textual divisions as "stanzas", but properly, these groups of lines forming rhetorical units not restricted in line length or rhythm are called verse paragraphs. They may be as long as content requires, or they may form components in patterns of the writer's designs.

Explaining free verse, Reaske (1966: 18) states:

Poetry composed in lines which are free of the traditional

patterns of rhyme and meter and whose rhythm is based, instead, on the stress resulting from the meaning of the line and its natural and punctuated pauses. Each line contains varying numbers and types of poetic feet; however, although the strict traditional patterns of versification are not followed, free verse cannot be said to be formless. A pattern of rhythm is established within the poem, and the lines move away from, and back toward, this norm.

We feel that Ntuli's stanza divisions are closer to free verse style than to Western traditional stanza conventions. Although these divisions sometimes have a regular number of lines, they do not pretend to subscribe to any conventional rhyme or metrical pattern. For convenience sake, however, we will use the term "stanza" in a wider, unrestricted sense to refer to all the groups of lines which form a distinct physical unit within a poem, including verse paragraphs. We will discuss stanza forms under the following functional headings: regular stanzas, expanding stanzas, diminishing stanzas, bulging stanzas, mixed stanzas and sonnets. The various headings are designated in relation to the number of lines in the stanzas concerned.

4.2.1.1 Regular stanzas

Some poems have a regular number of lines. Regular stanzas are very often associated with equanimity and a systematic thought pattern. Uvete Ewindini (AME. p.2) for example, has four stanzas of five lines each. The regularity of the number of lines in this poem corresponds with the mood and the content of the poem. The mood is poised and ponderous. The poem deals with education and learning, thus the presentation of thoughts is significantly systematic. Kulo Lolo (AME. p.3) has six stanzas of four lines each. The mood is calm yet resolute. Each stanza also follows a regular thought

pattern which fits into four lines, viz. statement, demand, extension, question, e.g.

Nami nginengqondo!
 Ak' ungiphenyele kuyo leyo
 Ekhethe' ubuchopho!
 Wangibuka wangichizela?

Statement: (I too have a mind!
 Demand: Just open that very one for me
 Extension: Which is only for chosen brains!
 Question: Why do you regard me so disdainfully?)

In EZingolweni (UGQ. p.49) there are ten stanzas of six lines each. The poem moves in a leisurely pace as the content systematically progresses from one aspect of wild nature to another. The six line format of each stanza is reminiscent of the Biblical lore that God created the universe in six days, and rested on the seventh.

Thus, in such poems with regular stanzas, we can perceive, as demonstrated above, a definite correspondence between form and content.

4.2.1.2 Expanding stanzas

This stanza pattern is such that the number of lines per stanza is incremented by degrees from the first to the last stanza. D.B.Z. Ntuli (1984: 234) points out the motivation behind this stanza pattern:

The significance of such an arrangement of lines is that the poet's ideas are expressed in order of importance and range towards a kind of a climax.

Ngikuthand' Ukhona Lapho (AME. p.18) subscribes to this pattern. The first four stanzas of this poem have six lines each, and the last two have ten each. In the first four stanzas the poet criticises the

astronauts who paint a grotesque picture of the moon. In the last two stanzas, however, the spotlight falls on the poet himself and his love for the moon which is described in feminine terms. Thus, one feels that ideas in the poem have a definite influence on the number of lines per stanza.

In Zinonya (AME. p.20) the first four stanzas have five lines each, the next two have six, and the final stanza has seventeen. In the four opening stanzas the poet descriptively tells us about the three wood-gatherers going about their chore of wood-gathering. But from stanza five the poet introduces a dramatic element whereby we are shown the "characters" in action rather than being told about them.

As such, Ntuli's employment of this stanza pattern bears relevance to content. Stanzas with a uniform number of lines contain a unique train of thought, a deviation from which is accompanied by a corresponding change in the length of subsequent stanzas.

4.2.1.3 Diminishing stanzas

Of this stanza pattern, D.B.Z. Ntuli (ibid) remarks:

...the first stanza is the longest and the last one the shortest.

It appears that in poems with diminishing stanzas, Ntuli uses the shorter stanzas at the end to establish climax. A typical case in point is the poem Ubani Omubi? (UGQ. p.51), in which the first five stanzas have four lines each; the penultimate stanza has three, and the final stanza has two. In the four-line stanzas the poet discusses different examples of persons who can only be described as

unattractive. In the penultimate stanza he makes the point that while the unkind may describe one as being ugly in the extreme, that same person is unreservedly dear to his kith and kin. The closing couplet, couched in perfect parallelism, reiterates the same idea in more colourful language.

In Impi Yomndeni (UGQ. p.63) in which the first six stanzas have seven lines each, the seventh stanza has six lines and the last one has three, the effect is the same, i.e. the shortest stanza at the end conveys the climax.

4.2.1.4 Bulging stanzas

With regard to bulging stanzas, D.B.Z. Ntuli (Ibid) submits:

... the middle stanzas have more lines than the first and the last portion of the poem.

Sengethembile (AMA. p.5) affords a typical example of this pattern. Each of the first eleven stanzas has three lines, the next four have four lines each, the next one has five, the next two have eight, and the last two again have three. At first the poet is in a state of calm expectancy, but later in the poem the suspense gives way to anxiety, and we see a corresponding increase in the number of lines to four. At last anxiety turns into excitement as his hopes become fulfilled, and this brings about a further increase in the number of lines. The excitement is followed by a sense of relief, and the poet captures this feeling in the two shorter stanzas at the end which thus represent something of a climax and a denouement.

4.2.1.5 Mixed stanzas

Some of the poems have stanzas of mixed length which do not follow any ordered pattern. This phenomenon manifests itself mainly in Ntuli's longer poems, such as Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (AME. p.70), Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56) and others. Although Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.15) is a comparatively shorter poem, it too has a mixed stanza pattern. The number of lines in the various stanzas is 9, 10, 8, 8, 4, 2.

In poems with mixed stanzas the length of the stanza seems to be governed by the volume of content and by the poet's mood in specific sections of the poem.

4.2.1.6 Sonnets

The only two sonnets there are in Ntuli's poetry both feature in a single poem entitled Lapha Kulele Umlungisi (AME. p.4). This is an elegy wherein the poet laments the sudden death of his infant son, Mlungisi.

The first sonnet constitutes Part I, and the second constitutes Part II. The first has an unorthodox structure; it is composed of four triplets and a couplet. The uniqueness of the structure of this sonnet is in keeping with the odd turn of events in the death of the infant. The second has the trappings of a Shakespearean sonnet with three quatrains and a couplet. The return to the more orthodox sonnet form marks the reversion of the poet's thoughts to more congenial times prior to the death of his son. The juxtaposition of the two sonnets is itself an expression of a bond of love between father and son, a bond which not even death could break asunder.

From what has been said above regarding stanza forms in the poetry of Ntuli, we conclude that there is a purpose behind Ntuli's employment of a particular stanza form in any given poem. As such, Ntuli's poems display splendid harmony between form and content. He follows a particular pattern where it best suits his poem, and changes to another as circumstances so dictate. This is a mark of the poet's mastery over his material.

4.2.2 Refrains

We have already pointed out above that the refrain is one among several manifestations of aesthetic repetition found in poetry.

Cuddon (1976: 559) defines the term "refrain" as:

A phrase, line or lines repeated at intervals during a poem and especially at the end of a stanza.

In summing up the function of a refrain, Heese and Lawton (1988: 61) state:

The refrain satisfies our natural love of repetition, gives continuity and enhances the lyrical quality of any poem, be it joyful or serious.

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 201) perceives emphasis as the most important function of a refrain:

A refrain is most effective if it is used for underlining some idea.

These are, of course, general statements of the functions of refrain. In the discussion which follows hereunder, specific functions of various refrains in C.S.Z. Ntuli's poetry will be mentioned.

Only ten out of Ntuli's thirty one poems feature a refrain or refrains. We note also that refrains in all the ten poems occur only in certain, and not all, stanzas. For example, in Ngijulise Nkosi (AME. p.5) refrains appear in 3 out of 5 stanzas; in Okwesabekayo (AME. p.26) they occur in 7 out of 14, in Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2) they occur in 4 out of 16.

In most poems Ntuli uses a single form of refrain. In such poems the wording of the refrain may either be precisely the same in every instance, or may have slight variations. Impi Yomndeni (UGQ. p.63) is the only poem in which a single refrain, whose wording is consistent throughout, is used. The refrain is:

Impi yomndeni kayingenwa.

(It is unwise to meddle in another family's squabbles.)

Here the refrain echoes the title of the poem, and reinforces the theme that no matter how strongly Zulu commoners might feel about the indiscretions of the royal household, it would be unwise for them to meddle. The reason for consistency in the wording of the refrain is, apparently, the fact of its being a proverb, whose form is always fixed.

In several other poems where there is a single form of refrain, a new variation is introduced to the refrain as the poem progresses. A case in point is the refrain in Ngijulise Nkosi (AME. p.5), where not only a new word is introduced in each line of refrain, but the word order is also juggled slightly. In the first stanza the refrain, in line seven, is:

Uyadela, Siziba, ngokudeph' okujulile.

(I envy you, Mr Sea, for your profound depth.)

In the second stanza, the word order changes and the word ngokudeph' is substituted with ngokuzoth':

Sizib' uyadela ngokuzoth' okujulile.

(Mr Sea, I envy you for your profound serenity.)

In the third stanza the word order in the refrain is similar to that of the first, but a new word is introduced, and the last word is changed from a relative to a locative:

Uyadela, Siziba, ngokufuyel' ekujuleni.

(I envy you, Mr Sea, for the livestock you rear in the deep.)

Cast in the form of an apostrophe, the refrain in this poem equates the sea to a human being, thus making it seem less remote. The variations in it are calculated to foster progression and to preclude monotony.

In certain poems Ntuli uses two different kinds of refrain in a single poem. Although several poems display this phenomenon, one example will suffice. In Ngoba Usuzwe Wakholwa (AMA. p.10), the following refrain appears in 4 out of 10 stanzas:

Uthi bezwe kahle kodwa, Bezweni?

(Have they heard properly, Bezweni?)

In two other stanzas a different form of refrain is used, viz.

Baqinisile yini, Bezweni?

(Are they telling the truth, Bezweni?)

Both refrains are rhetorical questions, and they serve to express and emphasise the poet's disbelief that Bezweni, his niece, is now of school going age. It is of aesthetic significance that the last word in either refrain is the name Bezweni (What have they heard?). Each refrain is therefore, in effect, a double question.

Ntuli also chooses the position of the refrain in each poem very carefully. Where the refrain is in the first line of the stanza, as in Iqhwa OKhahlamba (AMA. p.15), it marks the beginning of a new stanza while establishing continuity with other stanzas. If at the end of the stanza, as in Phansi KwaMahalazibeke (AME. p.10), the refrain indicates the culmination of a stanza and re-echoes the dominant theme in the poem or a section thereof. Sometimes the poet places the refrain at different positions in the various stanzas. This is the case in Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2), where the refrain in the first stanza occurs in the third and last line; the next one occurs in stanza four, in the third of five lines; the next one occurs in stanza ten, in the first of three lines, etc. Such juggling of the position of the refrain brings in a surprise element which precludes the monotony of predictability.

Thus Ntuli's dexterity in the use of refrain is evident. Whether he employs a single refrain or two refrains in one poem, he does so with a clear purpose in mind. Although he does use refrains with consistent wording, he evinces a distinct preference for refrains with varied wording. The position of his refrains in the stanza is carefully thought out and can be seen to play a significant role in each poem.

4.2.3 Alliteration, consonance and assonance

4.2.3.1 Alliteration

Contrary to the popular notion that alliteration is simply a repetition of identical or similar consonant sounds, this sound device is a much more specialized concept than that. According to

Miller and Greenberg (1981: p.114), alliteration is:

the repetition of consonant sounds at the *beginnings of words*. (my italics.)

The point of emphasis in the above quotation is that, to constitute alliteration, the repeated consonant sounds must be at the beginnings of words.

Abrams (op. cit.: p.7) makes exactly the same point:

Alliteration is the repetition of speech sounds in a sequence of nearby words; the term is usually applied only to consonants, and especially when the recurrent sound occurs in a conspicuous position at the *beginning of a word* or of a stressed syllable within a word. (my italics.)

Because the stress is not a conspicuous prosodic feature of the Zulu language, we will disregard the latter part of Abrams' definition which concerns a stressed syllable, and confine the meaning of the concept "alliteration" to the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginnings of words.

As a poetic device, alliteration promotes the musicality of words in a poem, enhances its mood, and fosters coherence of sound and idea in it.

Alliteration is not too common a feature of Ntuli's poetry. It is however significant that in almost every instance where it occurs, it happens, not by design, but as a result of concordial agreement in successive words. In Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.50) we have the following example:

Isithole somziki sasigqanqula,
 Saside sizwibeka sikhahlazeka,
 Siphons' inselele emachalaheni,
 Siphons' inselele nasemahhashini,
 Sithi "Salani, nohamba ningibuza!"

(The young female reed-buck was bounding gracefully along,
 Now gliding through the air, now landing on the ground,
 Challenging the hounds,
 Challenging the horses,
 As if saying to them, "Goodbye, you will never see me
 again!")

There are nine alliterative "s" sounds positioned at the beginnings of words (as underlined) in the above stanza. Except for the last one in the word salani, the rest are the consonant "s" of the class 7 subject concord "si-", relating to the subject isithole at the beginning of the stanza. Although the alliteration here is not accomplished by a conscious effort, the musical effect of the alliterative sound in the stanza is nevertheless unmistakable. This is, of course, reinforced by the occurrence of other "s" and "ns" sounds in the middle of certain words.

In the above example, only a consonant constitutes alliteration. However in the following example from stanza 4 of Nxa Ngingxamile (AME. p.6) the alliteration comprises a syllable:

Uban' othi mina ngilizimu?
 Mina ngizimuke nje ngidl' abantu?

(Who says I am a cannibal?
 Is it because I eat people that I am obese?)

Here the alliteration is constituted of the syllable "ngi-", which is the subject concord of the first person singular. This too has come about as a result of the morphological structure of the language and not by the poet's own design. Nevertheless it produces a pleasurable effect in the listener's ear, and helps concentrate attention on the subject of the poem, the persona himself.

4.2.3.2 Consonance

Defining consonance in relation to alliteration, Miller and Greenberg (op. cit.: p.415) say:

Consonance refers to the repetition of consonant sounds that are not confined to alliteration, though they may support a particular alliterative pattern.

This, in effect, means that consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds in the middle, rather than at the beginnings, of words. Consonance will either support an alliterative pattern where this occurs, or perform the same functions as ascribed to alliteration above.

Ntuli makes ample use of consonance in his poems. The device may comprise a single sound, as in the first line of stanza 1 of Ngilungiselani? (UGQ. p.68):

Mhla ngihlom' isihlangu samahlamvu,

(On the day that I was armed with a shield of branches,)

The abrasive lateral sound "hl" is repeated four times in the line. The poet is armed for a mock fight, hence the description involving the repetition of this rather harsh sound. As such the consonance in the line establishes the atmosphere pertinent to the situation, and thus brings about harmony, as it were, between sound and idea.

Often Ntuli deploys more than one sound in the device. The latter part of stanza 5 of the poem Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.62) is a pertinent example:

Wath' uzokhuzela kwaqin' imihlathi;
Wath' uyawahlohla lawomehlo
Ahlanjwe ngomkhando wamakhosi,
Ahlangana nezimbumbul' ezimhlophe,
Kwangath' ubhekwa nguNomkhubulwane.

(Intent to court though he was, his jaws went tight;
 He tried to intensify the gaze from those eyes
 Washed in the medicinal charm of kings,
 But his gaze encountered her big white eyes,
 As if he was being stared at by Nomkhubulwane.)

In the above extract there is an interplay of the "hl", the "m", the "n" and the "w" sounds. In the context of the stanza the abrasive "hl" sound captures the tension between the young Ndwandwe chieftain, Zwide, and the Zulu princess, Mkabayi, as the two are locked in a silent war of stares. Congruent with the tongue-tied condition of the chieftain under the Zulu princess' resolute stare, are the muffled "m" and the inarticulate "n" and "w" sounds.

Thus the sounds forming the consonance have been most aptly chosen to reflect the prevailing atmosphere in the stanza.

4.2.3.3 Assonance

Reaske (op. cit.: p.21) defines assonance thus:

Assonance is the use of identical vowel sounds surrounded by different kinds of consonant sounds in words in close proximity to each other.

The general functions of this device are summed up by Yelland et al (1980: p.14) as follows:

Assonance often pleases the ear.... It is one of the commonest methods of producing a musical effect in verse.

Instances of assonance in the poetry of Ntuli are plentiful. One interesting example of assonance can be found in stanza 14 of Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.49) where there is an interplay of "u" and "a" vowels:

Zulu lahloma phansi eFulansi
 Kwafukuzel' ifu leza libomvu,
 Lasho lagwavuma landindizela
 Isaho kwangasamful' ungenisa
 Kwasamgqumo wemvula yesangquma.

(Clouds amassed, down in France,
 A heavy red cloud approached,
 The heavens rumbled with thunder,
 Its echo like that of a swelling river,
 Like the rhythm of rain accompanied by hail.)

In this stanza the lurid advance of the Paris mob at the outset of the French Revolution is equated with the building up of a thunderstorm, which in turn is likened to a swelling river and the outbreak of a hailstorm. Besides the musical effect of the interplay of the two vowels, it is significant that the predominant vowels in the stanza are the high vowel "u" and the low vowel "a", which seem to correspond with the sense of high and low as represented by the sky and the earth's surface.

To conclude, we feel that Ntuli does not rely so much on alliteration as he does on consonance and assonance as sound values in his poetry. We praise the poet for not foisting alliteration on his poetry, but letting it emerge naturally through the structure of the language. We have demonstrated his outstanding command of consonance and assonance in several of his works, and we are satisfied that these devices, where and when employed, are exploited to their full capacity.

4.2.4 Rhyme

We adopt Lenake's (op. cit.: p.122) definition of rhyme for its explicitness regarding the three main types of rhyme based on the

position of occurrence in verse lines:

The term rhyme indicates the correspondence of sounds at the beginning, or in the middle or at the end of verse lines. These rhyme schemes are normally referred to as initial rhyme, middle rhyme and end-rhyme with various possible sub-divisions. The corresponding sounds could be syllables, parts of syllables or morphemes depending on the possibilities provided by the language concerned, and the genius of the poet.

Although by no means indispensable, rhyme is an important element of poetic form. Cohen (1963: p.194) sums up its functions as follows:

Rhyme of any kind obviously contributes to the musical quality of poetry.... It is perhaps most effective when it contributes not only to sound but also to the development of meaning and mood.

The different types of rhyme are chiefly determined by their position in the pertinent verses (initial, middle or end), and by the nature of their manifestation (perfect, partial, interlaced, etc). In this particular discourse we will concentrate mainly on the types of rhyme manifest in Ntuli's poetry as determined by position in verse lines. Before we come to this aspect, however, we must heed Lenake's (op. cit.: p.150) comment on the applicability of rhyme to African languages:

In African languages with their different syllabic structure consisting mainly of a consonant-vowel combination, the rhyme possibilities are more restricted than in a language such as English.... Another problem is the fact that African languages are tonal languages.

It is probably because of the awareness of such limitations in the use of rhyme in Zulu that Ntuli uses rhyme very sparingly. Stanzas in which rhyme has been used throughout are few and far between, and none of the poems uses rhyme throughout. However, in places where he does employ rhyme, he does so with a measure of sensitivity, as will

only one syllable. The vowel of the penultimate syllable is usually the longest and most conspicuous in the last word. In fact, stress is more on this vowel than on its consonant. The articulation of the consonant is comparatively momentary. We consider the vowel of the penultimate syllable to be the best starting point for the rhyming portion.

We share Ntuli's opinion that rhyme consisting of the vowel of penult plus final syllable is better than rhyme by final syllable. In the above example, the rhyme in the closing couplet is much more noticeable because it commences from the vowel of the penult.

However, we do not fault the poet for using rhyme by final syllable in the first four verses because we feel he had valid reasons for preferring this particular type of rhyme in the verses concerned. It is our considered opinion that the poet has preferred rhyme by final syllable in the first four verses since it is less conspicuous than the one in the closing couplet. In those four verses the rhyme is further toned down as a result of its interlaced *a b a b* pattern, as opposed to the more conspicuous *a a b b* pattern. Nevertheless the rhyming -li and -si sounds in these verses do not only have a musical impact on the lines, but also highlight the relationship between the rhyming words. That is to say, the rhyme in the words yenkosi (of a king) and lwebhubesi (of a lion) highlights the folkloristic relationship between these words and reminds one that the lion is, after all, the acclaimed king of all animals. It is logical that a stronger and more conspicuous type of rhyme (that which commences from the vowel of the penult) be reversed for the final couplet to lend more impact to the conclusion and effectively bring the poem to a close.

We are satisfied therefore, that although Ntuli does not resort to end rhyme too often, he utilizes this device adeptly at places where he employs it.

4.2.4.2 Initial rhyme

Explaining initial rhyme, Riccio (op. cit.: p.180) says:

Initial or head rhyme sometimes indicates rhymes occurring at the beginnings of lines, but at other times, *initial* means the beginning consonants of words within a line -- which brings it into the province of alliteration.

As we are dealing with initial rhyme per se, and not alliteration, only the first half of the above definition is relevant to us. Initial rhyme may either involve the initial syllables of the first words in successive verses, or consonants in the same position. In African languages, as D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: p.205) rightly points out, initial rhyme often results from the repetition of the subject concord. Besides its being best suited for highlighting and emphasis because of its initial position in the verses, initial rhyme generally discharges the same functions as other types of rhyme.

From the copious examples of initial rhyme in Ntuli's poetry, we will look at the following verses drawn from stanza 9 of Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.58):

Bengithi lizongithela ngesihlambi,
Linyakambis' ulimi lwami nomphimbo,
Lipholis' iminkenke namabibane,
Lingigez' iqegeba lothuli,
Lingenze muhle nami njengabantu,....

(I thought it would shower on me,
 Dampen my tongue and my throat,
 Soothe the cracks and the cuts on my feet,
 Wash away the layer of dust,
 And make me clean like everybody else,....)

In the above excerpt we have initial rhyme involving a syllable, viz. Li-, which is the subject concord of the unnamed subject izulu (weather / rain). Through the repetition of this subject concord at the beginning of verses 2 to 5, attention is concentrated on the subject, which is at once the syntactic subject of the verse sentence and the subject of the poem. Moreover, the rhyme marks the commencement of each new verse. It further enhances the musical quality of the stanza, which effect is intensified by the repetition of the rhyming syllable at some other point in each of the first four verses, in the words lizongithela (it would shower me), ulimi (tongue), Lipholis' (soothe) and lothuli (of dust).

The above example demonstrates the poet's remarkable skill in handling initial rhyme and exploiting the range of its capacities in the given section of the poem.

4.2.4.3 Internal (middle) rhyme

Reaske (op. cit.: p.20) gives us a succinct explanation of what internal rhyme entails:

Sometimes we find *internal rhyme* where the rhyming words are found within the line, often a word in the middle of a line rhyming with the last word or sound in the line.

Ntuli makes use of both these moulds of internal rhyme. In stanza 3 verse 7 of Ngimfunge EkwaNzuza (AME. p.57), both words with rhyming syllables (the relevant syllables are underlined) are found in the middle of the verse. We note also that the rhyme on -amba commences from the vowel of the penult, and is suitable for emphasizing the poet's certitude that the course he has chosen is the right one.

Ngabamba le engihamba ngayo,
Ngokubon' ukuthi yiyonayona.

(I took the one I am following,
As I was certain of its being the right one.)

In the selfsame poem, stanza 6 verses 4 and 5, the rhyming words appear in the middle of consecutive verses. Here, too, the rhyme on -ela starts from the vowel of the penult:

Ngishiye lendlela eligugu,
Engangidudanela kuyo noBuhle?

(For me to deviate from this prized path,
On which Buhle and I so indulged each other?)

The rhetorical question above sums up the spirit of fondness and harmony between the poet and his companion. The rhyme in the two verses therefore amplifies precisely this spirit.

Ntuli sometimes employs the type of internal rhyme in which a sound in the middle of the verse rhymes with one at the end of the verse. An excellent example of this rhyme form obtains in stanza 3 verses 1 and 2 of Lapha Kulele Umlungisi (AME. p.4):

Uyingaba, Mvelinqangi ngokwengaba
Ukungikhombis' ingam' eyangqubuz' umhlaba ...)

(You puzzle me, Lord God, for refusing
To show me the ram that knocked the world ...)

In the first verse line the rhyming sound -ngaba appears both in the middle and at the end of the verse line. The influence of this rhyme extends to the next verse where -ngam' (-ngama in full) also rhymes with -ngaba in the first verse line. The consonant of the last syllable in both these words, i.e. "b" and "m", are voiced bilabials and are thus compatible for purposes of rhyme. To further strengthen this rhyme, the same nasalised palatal click "nq" as in

the penult of the rhyming words, and the prenasalised palatal click with breathy voice "ngq", are echoed in verses 1 and 2 in the words Mvelingangi and eyangqubuz' respectively. Furthermore, the internal rhyme described above is accompanied by end rhyme in the two verse lines, as they both end with -aba.

In these two verse lines the poet has used a complex but admirable pattern of rhymes. The rhymes have a wonderful binding effect in the verses concerned. Moreover, the repeated use of the aggressive nasal clicks projects the tyranny of death in the poet's loss of his son.

What has been said above affirms that although Ntuli does not often employ rhyme in his poetry, he nevertheless uses it tactfully where he does. Wary not to use it dogmatically, he reserves it for only those places in his verse which call for special focus. We share the poet's attitude that rhyme, if used in Zulu poetry, should be used sparingly and with discernment.

4.2.5 Parallelism

Parallelism is a form of repetition commonly found in traditional Nguni praise-poetry. As Ntuli generally appears to favour those formal devices which characterize traditional poetry, as distinct from those predominant in Western poetry, instances of parallelism abound in his poetry.

As defined by Yelland (op. cit.: p.137), parallelism is:

Balancing one statement against another in clauses or phrases of similar length and grammatical structure so as to make a pattern of sound and sense that has a pleasing, if

sometimes artificial, effect. The ideas expressed in the statements are generally balanced by similarity or contrast.

We must hasten to point out that balancing (the balancing of one unit in the first member with another in a succeeding member), and not repetition, is the main characteristic of parallelism. Although it is not uncommon for similar words or formatives to feature as balancing counterparts in parallelism, such repetition is merely incidental. We need to specifically highlight this point as instances of parallelism in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli almost invariably include the repetition of similar words and formatives.

Concerning the manifestation of repetition of similar words and formatives in parallelism, Msimang (1986: 13) states:

Emiggeni ehambisanayo kuvamile ukuba kuphindwe izakhi noma amagama athile.

(In successive verse lines it is common to have certain formatives or words repeated.)

Commenting on the selfsame phenomenon in the poetry of B.W. Vilakazi, D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 90) refers to it as "simple repetitive parallelism", and explains as follows:

In some of Vilakazi's poems we find instances of simple repetitive parallelism. One unit in the first member is repeated in the second member. The only difference is in the other unit whose counterpart in the second member is not the same word.

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: pp.190-191) mentions three different types of parallelism, viz. perfect parallelism, incomplete parallelism, as well as parallelism by contradiction.

Before we deal with the different types of parallelism in C.S.Z.

Ntuli's poetry, we must point out that parallelism has three main functions in poetry. It brings about harmony of sound, helps to emphasize the intended meaning, and establishes rhythm in the relevant verse lines.

4.2.5.1 Perfect parallelism

D.B.Z. Ntuli (ibid) explains perfect parallelism as follows:

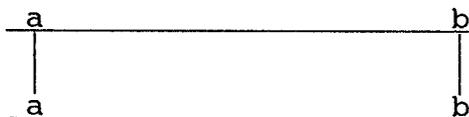
In parallelism we expect each unit in the first member of a verse to be balanced by another unit in the second member. If this correspondence is found between all the units, we have perfect parallelism.

There are various manifestations of perfect parallelism in C.S.Z. Ntuli's poetry. In some instances this occurs in a single verse line where each member in the first half of the verse line is balanced by another in the second half. The second verse line of stanza 1 in Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.58) affords an example of this phenomenon:

(a) (b) (a) (b)
Akukho mganu, akukho mdoni,

(No umganu tree, no umdoni tree,)

The resulting pattern is:



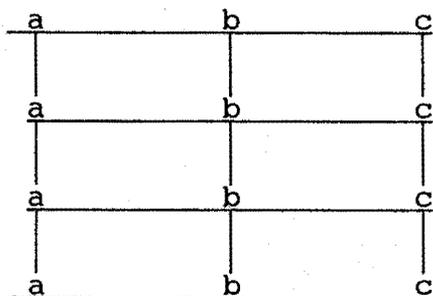
Here the unit akukho in the initial position in the first member is repeated for balancing in a similar position in the second member, and the noun mganu in the final position of the first member is balanced by the noun mdoni in a similar position in the second member. This "repetitive parallelism" emphasises the idea of the absence of trees in the whole neighbourhood.

Very often C.S.Z. Ntuli uses perfect parallelism in two or more successive verse lines. This has the effect, inter alia, of binding together the verse lines concerned. Where this device is used cumulatively on a succession of lines, as in the first stanza of Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.60), the result can be very impressive:

(a) (b) (c)
 Umugala mude umntakaJama,
 (a) (b) (c)
 Ukhanda lincane umntakaJama,
 (a) (b) (c)
 Ubunzi libanzi umntakaJama,
 (a) (b) (c)
 Umehlo azimbumbulu umntakaJama,....

(She is long-necked, the child of Jama,
 She has a diminutive head, the child of Jama,
 She has a broad forehead, the child of Jama,
 She has bold eyes, the child of Jama,....)

Thus we have this pattern:



Each member has three units. The first unit is a possessive in contracted form, e.g. in the first member the long form is unomugala (she has a neck) while the contracted form is umugala. The second unit in each member is a copulative, and the third member is the compound noun umntakaJama. Perfect parallelism in these lines accounts for elegance of style and regularity of rhythm. This serves to underline the fact that Mkabayi is a princess and a woman of rare beauty.

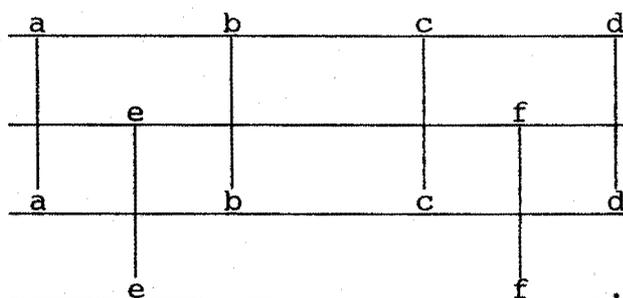
There are instances also where Ntuli uses perfect parallelism in

alternating rather than successive verse lines. In Imbali Yehlunqu (UGQ. p.56) in stanza 5 we have the example in which each unit in the third verse line is balanced by another in the fifth, and each unit in the fourth verse line balanced by another in the sixth:

(a) (b) (c) (d)
 Owadl' uSimoni ezalwa nguJona,
 (e) (f)
 Elithathankemba kwabaseGalile;
 (a) (b) (c) (d)
 Wadl' uSawuli wamenz' uPawulose,
 (e) (f)
 Elithathankemba kwabaseThasose.

(Who ate Simon, born of John,
 A sword-bearer amongst Galileans;
 Who ate Saul and made him Paul,
 A sword-bearer amongst Tharsusians.)

The pattern we have here is:



The balancing units in the first and the third members are verb - proper noun - verb - copulative / proper noun. We say that the copulative nguJona is balanced by the proper noun uPawulose because the proper noun uJona from which the copulative is derived, is still clearly recognisable in the copulative. In the second and the fourth members, the units are identical except for place names in (f).

We appreciate variety in the use of any poetic device including perfect parallelism. As perfect parallelism tends to be repetitive in nature, variation in its use helps preclude monotony. Although perfect parallelism is definitely the most common type of

parallelism in Ntuli's poetry, other types also feature to varying extents, as we shall see below.

4.2.5.2. Parallelism by contradiction

Concerning parallelism by contradiction, D.B.Z. Ntuli (ibid) says:

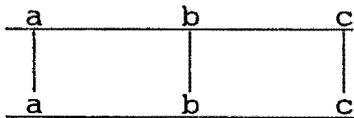
A more interesting type of parallelism is where some units balance each other by contradiction. The contradiction may be in antonyms or in the general sense of the statements.

From the numerous examples of this type of parallelism in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli, we will look at the following lines from stanza 2 of Zophela Ngaphakathi (AME. p.22):

(a) (b) (c)
Lewusa zonke izigojana,
(a) (b) (c)
Lenyusa onke amaqelana...

(It traversed down all the dales,
It traversed up all the hill-sides...)

The manifest pattern is:



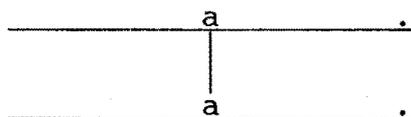
Here the contradiction is in antonyms in units a and c. However, in unit b the same word zonke / onke (all) features in both members. The contradiction highlights the fact that the voice of the crier carries to all, even opposite, directions in the neighbourhood.

Another way by which Ntuli achieves parallelism by contradiction is by having an affirmative statement in the first member balanced by its own negative in the second member. This we have in the second verse line of stanza 10 in Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2):

(a) (a)
Uyabongeka, awubongeki,....

(Whether You can be lauded, or cannot be lauded,...)

The pattern achieved above is:



Here the affirmative uyabongeka is balanced by the negative awubongeki. This is a shortened form of: Noma uyabongeka, noma awubongeki. The statement implies that the crowd's solicitation that the poet commend God on their behalf, is steadfast. They do not stop to reflect whether or not God is moved by commendation.

4.2.5.3 Incomplete parallelism

D.B.Z. Ntuli (ibid) explains incomplete parallelism thus:

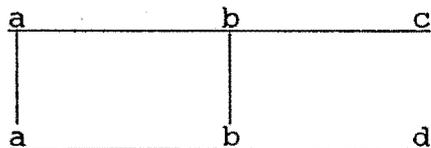
Parallelism is incomplete when some units in the second member have no counterparts in the first, and vice versa....

Instances of incomplete parallelism are as common as those of perfect parallelism in the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli. We find this example in the twelfth stanza of Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.58):

(a) (b) (c)
Ligwedl' umoya ngezidladlana,
(a) (b) (d)
Livule umlomokazi obomvu,

(Rowing the air with tiny claws,
Its large red mouth open,)

The resulting pattern is:



What we observe in the above example is that units a are both verbs and units b are both nouns. Thus each of these units has a balancing counterpart in the other member. But unit c in the first member is a

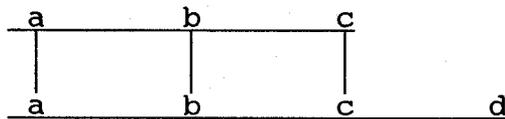
descriptive and has no balancing counterpart in the second member as unit d is a relative. We therefore have incomplete parallelism in the above verse lines.

A slightly different example comes from stanza 5 of Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2):

(a) (b) (c)
 "...Yizona ziyosala zibadabula,
 (a) (b) (c) (d)
 Yizona ziyosala zibalilela emanxiweni."

("...They will remain behind to declare them,
 They will remain behind to mourn them in the abandoned
 kraal sites.")

This is the pattern we find in the above example:



Unit a and b in the first member are repeated in the second. The verbs constituting unit c in the two members are dissimilar, but they are both verbs in the indicative mood, and therefore balance each other. Unit d in the second member is a locative, and has no counterpart in the first member.

That parallelism is incomplete is not a shortcoming, but a reflection of the fact that language is not always, and does not have to be, perfectly symmetrical. We commend the poet for following a pattern only to a point, and deviating from it when he deems it best to do so. This provides freshness and variety in the language as well as the form of the poem.

4.2.5.4. Cross parallelism (or chiasmus)

According to Simpson (op. cit: p.409), chiasmus is:

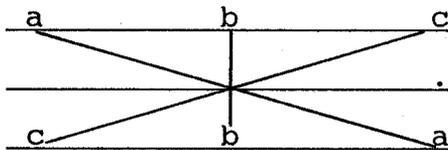
A rhetorical figure with two syntactically parallel constructions, one of which has the word order reversed.

Although cross parallelism is not a common occurrence in the poetry of Ntuli, it is there nevertheless. In the last stanza of Imbedumehlwana Efulansi (AME. p.49) we have cross parallelism in the following verse lines:

(a) (b) (c)
Zamakhand' angasenamizimba!
Ngapha kwatikiz' izimpukuza
(c) (b) (a)
Zemizimb' engasenamakhand:

(Of heads without bodies!
On the other side fell the ungainly forms
Of bodies without heads:)

The resulting pattern in these lines is:



As shown above, unit a which occurs in the initial position in the first member has its counterpart in the final position in the third member. Unit c, which is in the final position in the first member, has its counterpart in the initial position in the third member. In this way correspondence is crosswise rather than vertical. Chiasmus in the above lines does not only serve to highlight the reversal of fortunes as the perpetrators of the revolution become its victims too, but also to demonstrate that the destruction of man's life by man is tantamount to subversion of the divine order.

We note that C.S.Z. Ntuli employs, to varying degrees of frequency, all forms of parallelism in his poetry. Perfect parallelism is

however by far the most common. He uses parallelism mainly for emphasis.

4.2.6 Linking

Defining what he calls "parallelism by linking" (we refer to the same phenomenon simply as "linking"), Cope (1968: p.41) says:

... parallelism by linking advances the idea by means of an identical word or stem or root.

Thus, whereas the main characteristic of parallelism is balancing, the distinguishing feature of linking is repetition. As Cope implies in the above excerpt, linking is accomplished through repetition of whole words, or stems or roots of words.

Linking, like parallelism, is a characteristic feature of Nguni traditional poetry. As we have noted in the preceding section that Ntuli has a predilection for formal devices found mainly in traditional Nguni poetry, we are not surprised that he uses linking as liberally as he does parallelism.

The main functions of linking in poetry are, firstly, to emphasise through repetition, and secondly, to bring about harmony between idea and form.

Before we peruse the subject of linking in any detail, we must state that our approach in this section is similar to that adopted and described by D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: p.192), i.e. a synthesis of the method used by Cope (op. cit) and the linear approach used by D.P. Kunene (op. cit.). We will discuss the subject of linking under the the sub-headings vertical linking and oblique linking. As

cross-linking scarcely occurs in the poetry of Ntuli, we will not deal with this phenomenon in this exposition.

4.2.6.1 Vertical linking

We adopt D.B.Z. Ntuli's (ibid) definition of vertical linking, which is as follows:

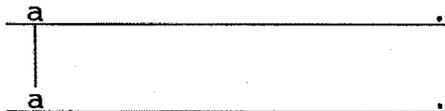
... the type of linking where a word in the first line corresponds almost vertically with one in the second line. This usually happens when similar words (or stems, or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or at the end (final linking).

In our first example initial vertical linking occurs in successive verse lines. The example is from stanza 1 of Sengethembile (AMA. p.5):

Bezipheth' imalana lezizandla;
Beziphethe amasi nenyama,....

(They were handling some money, these hands;
They were handling sour milk and meat,...)

The above pattern can be represented as follows:



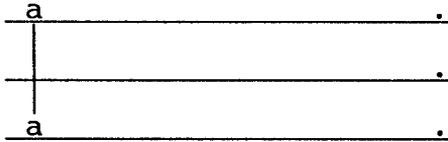
In the above example, the emphasis is on the act of handling: Beziphethe. The poet makes it clear in the stanza that although his hands had had money and food in them, they had felt like empty because they had, until then, carried no baby. Thus, through initial vertical linking, emphasis is brought to bear on the verb beziphetheth.

When initial vertical linking is applied in alternate lines, its effect is cumulative. This we can observe in the following lines from the last stanza of Zophela Ngaphakathi (AME. p.22):

Kepha zophela ngaphakathi;
 Ukubalisa kwendoda kunesankahlu,
Kepha ngendlebe kakuzwakali,...

(But they are shed internally;
 The broodings of a man have a violent impulse,
 But are to the ear imperceptible,...)

The above example offers the following pattern:



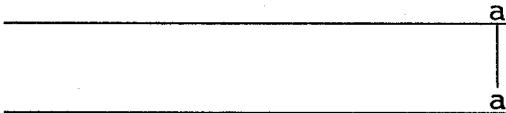
In this example initial vertical linking applies in alternate lines with the conjunction kepha. Kepha introduces contradiction between the forcefulness of a male's tears and the fact that those tears are often not shed outwardly. The effect of the repetition of kepha in alternate lines is cumulative, as we can discern from the above example.

Final vertical linking too may occur either in successive or in alternate verse lines. In the following example, taken from stanza 14 of Bengithi Lizokuna (UGQ. p.58), the phenomenon applies in successive verse lines:

Ubuthi ntulo ngizodikibala ngife?
 Ntulo, zwana: Ngiyenqab' ukufa!

(Salamander, you thought I would be so discouraged I would die?
 Salamander, listen: I refuse to die!)

The manifest pattern here is:

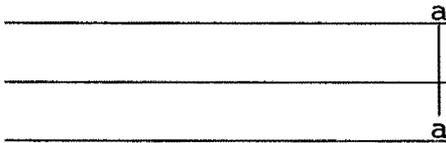


In the following example, however, we have final vertical linking occurring in alternate verse lines. The example comes from stanza 9 of Ihwanqazana Lakwethu (AMA. p.13):

Saya saliphath' ihwangakazi.
 Yeluleka, yafinyelel' iminwe,
 Yalenwayanway' ihwangakazi;...

(It proceeded to touch the spotted one
 The fingers unfolded, and reached out,
 They caressed the spotted one;...)

The pattern we encounter here is:



In the last example the repeated word is ihwangakazi, which is given added momentum through final vertical linking. The functions of vertical linking are, broadly speaking, to focus on the key word, to bring emphasis to bear on its meaning, and to promote harmony between sense and sound.

4.2.6.2 Oblique linking

This is how Kunene (op.cit.: p.71) describes oblique linking:

In oblique-line repetitions the line-position of a repeated phrase is shifted, and this shifting may result in a phrase that was mid-line-position or end-line-position in a preceding line becoming initial-line-position in a following line; or an end-line-position in a preceding line becoming a mid-line position in a following line.

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: p.195) states that the corresponding words need not belong to the same morphological category, and that the link may be forged by merely using the same root.

Two basic patterns are possible under oblique linking, and Kunene

(op. cit.: pp. 71, 74) refers to those as the right-to-left slant and the left-to-right slant. The most common type of right-to-left oblique linking is where the corresponding words occur in successive lines, with the last word in the first line corresponding with the first word in the succeeding line. We have such a case in point in stanza 5 of Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56):

Mangikubize ngenzalo yomlilo:
Umlilo wegubula ubulavulavu,....

(Let me call you the descendent of fire:
 The bonfire of grass long unburnt,....)

This yields the following graphic image:



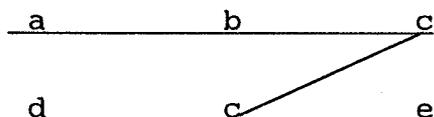
In the above example the repetition which results in oblique linking brings focus to bear on umlilo (fire), which is the cardinal image in this and the preceding stanzas. It also links the two verses together.

Other variations in the line-position of the corresponding units are possible. In the following example taken from stanza 8 of Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2), the corresponding word is in the mid-line-position instead of initial-line-position as in the preceding example:

Uma ubungafuna imbuyiselo,
 Ubani obengabuyis' imikhombe:...

(If you should have wanted reimbursement,
 Who would have reimbursed the troughs,...)

Its graphic representation is:

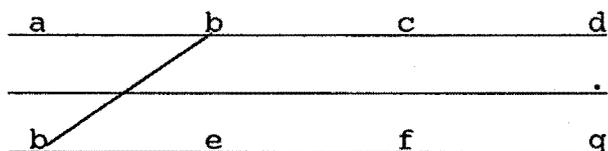


Sometimes the corresponding units are found, not in successive, but in alternate lines, as in this example from stanza 4 of Zophela Ngaphakathi (AME. p.22):

Ngoba leyomvula kayehli yodwa,
 Imdibi munye kulezozihlashana
Nemvula yezinyembezi.

(As that shower of rain is not on its own,
 But mixed, on those little cheeks,
 With the rain of tears.)

The last example can be represented thus:



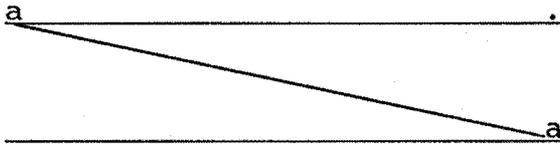
In each of the above examples, the function of oblique linking is to focus attention on the repeated word because it is central to the meaning of that immediate group of lines. It also helps knit the relevant lines together and to highlight their relationship in meaning.

Left-to-right oblique linking in Ntuli's poetry is rarer than the right-to-left pattern, but it is there all the same. The most common type is the one in which the first word in the first line corresponds with the last word in the succeeding line. This example comes from stanza 1 of Inkani Yomnyuzi (AMA. p.8):

Angethenjwa muntu nasilwane,
 Futhi nje angincengi kwethenjwa.

(I am trusted by neither person nor beast,
 As a matter of fact, I care less about being trusted.)

Thus the pattern here is:

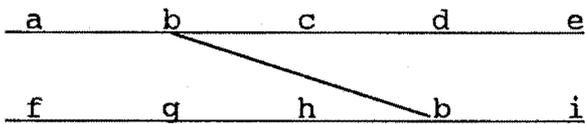


As with the right-to-left pattern, other variations in the line-position of the corresponding units are possible also with the left-to-right pattern. In this example, taken from stanza 7 of Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56), the corresponding words are both in mid-line-positions:

Indab' eshis' igobongo kwaphuphum' idlozi;
Umlil' othungel' ebheshwini kwash' izidwaba.

(The story which burnt the calabash and displaced the
ancestral spirit;
The fire which caught the buttock covering and burnt the
kilt.)

This results in the following pattern:



Another pattern of left-to-right oblique linking is that in which the corresponding units are found in alternate lines, but the incidence of that pattern in Ntuli's poetry is negligible.

In the use of linking, as in parallelism, we compliment the poet for the sensitivity with which he applies each variation to suit a specific purpose. Although he does not employ cross-linking, Ntuli is obviously alert to the diverse possibilities of linking as a poetic device, and does not hesitate to exploit and experiment with them. He uses this powerful repetition technique mainly to underline the key word or words in some section of the poem, and to bind

together those parts of the poem whose relationship must be recognised as immediate.

4.2.7 Rhythm

Throughout this discourse we have been making constant reference to rhythm. Rhythm is not only an integral part of the form of poetry, but also relates to other aspects of form, such as we have been dealing with above, as well as to the diction and meaning of a poem. Cohen (Ibid) defines and remarks about rhythm as follows:

The measured movement or beat in the musical flow of poetry established by the technical resources of both the poet and the oral interpreter of his work. Although sometimes associated solely with the alternating stresses or beats of meter, rhythm is really created by many factors involved in the reading of poetry. In addition to meter, such elements as pauses, speed of delivery, intonation of voice, and volume of sound can contribute to the rhythmical pulsations of poetry.

We must point out at this juncture, though, that the concept 'meter' is inapplicable in Zulu and other Bantu languages, as these languages are not stress but tonal languages. Taljaard (1979: 99) makes the point as follows:

Die feit dat metrum soos in Westerse poësie bekend, nie op poësie in die Bantoetale van toepassing gemaak kan word nie, word deesdae allerwee aanvaar. Die struktuur van hierdie tale maak die skandeer van verse onmoontlik. Daarom word die term 'ritme' dikwels gebruik wanneer daar veral na mondelinge poësie verwys word, maar gewoonlik sonder 'n duidelike verklaring van hoe ritme in hierdie poësie gebruik word.

D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 221) explains this in the following terms:

While languages like English have patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables, languages like Zulu use patterns of tone and length.

We endorse the view propounded by D.B.Z. Ntuli (op. cit.: 225) that the role of the pause should be recognised as decisive in determining the rhythm of verse in a language such as Zulu:

If we use the pause as our key concept we shall have more agreement because we can use it to mark the end of a rhythm segment irrespective of the presence or position of length in the preceding syllables.

In our discussion of rhythm below we will use the slash (/) to mark a pause or end of a rhythm segment, and a colon (:) to mark syllable length. The number within brackets at the end of each line indicates the number of syllables in the line.

4.2.7.1 Long verse lines

C.S.Z. Ntuli very often uses long verse lines in poems or sections of poems where the mood is pensive but relaxed. In such verse lines where there are no caesurae interrupting the flow of words, the rhythm is correspondingly smooth and flowing. Lines 4 and 5 of stanza 1 of Ngijulise Nkosi (AME. p.5) provide an excellent case in point:

Uth' uyothubeleza phansi emathunjin' omhla:ba/ (17)
Ub' usuphendul' umzizima wezulu wayisico:co/ (18)

(By the time you reach the depths of the earth
You have transformed the sky into a head-ring,)

With seventeen syllables in the first line and eighteen in the second, these lines are relatively lengthy. The first of the two lines has no punctuation marking a pause, but the logic of the sentence suggests a natural pause. The pause at the end of each line invariably gives rise to length in the penultimate syllable of each line. As the flow of the preceding syllables in each line is

unimpeded, the result is a graceful, flowing movement, which, as pointed out earlier on, reflects a relaxed though pensive mood.

4.2.7.2 Short verse lines

We often associate short verse lines with quick movement or action, or with apprehension and anxiety. There are however not many instances in the poetry of Ntuli where this is the case. In the last stanza of Zinonya (AME. p.21) we have the following short lines which reflect a dance tempo:

Zithi lacu/ (4)
 Zithi sika/ (4)
 Zithi disha/ (4)
 Zithi gqishi/ (4)
 Zithi gikli/ (4)

(Swiftly they (the feet) rise,
 They make as though to fall,
 Now they thump the ground,
 Now they pound the ground,
 Again they pound the ground.)

The lines are short with a regular number of syllables, viz. four per line. The first syllable of the auxiliary verb Zithi in every line has a high tone, and each of the succeeding disyllabic ideophones is articulated with stress on the first syllable. This produces a very regular, moderately fast movement, consistent with the rhythm of the dance depicted in the lines.

4.2.7.3 Caesurae

A caesura is a pause occurring in the middle of a verse line, often indicated with a punctuation mark. As Altenbernd and Lewis (op. cit.: p.43) rightly point out, a skillful poet can enhance regularity of rhythm by a precise placing of the caesura in the same place in each succeeding line, or give a loose, flowing or

informally conversational effect to his lines by varying the position of the caesura.

In the following lines from stanza 2 of Amathol' OkaMathole (AME. p.42), for example, the caesura is similarly positioned in both lines, which results in the rhythm of the lines being regular:

Wangalwana zephe:la/ Zu:lu?/ (9)
Wambanjana z'yaba:lwa/ Zu:lu?/ (9)

(Why are your arms as thin as those of a cockroach, you Zulu?
Why are your little ribs so bare, you Zulu?)

The above lines constitute parallelism. Thus in order to emphasise the similarity of ideas in them, they are accorded similar rhythmic qualities as well. In both lines the caesura is positioned after the seventh syllable.

However, there are instances where the poet prefers staggered rhythm to regular, and he achieves this by varying the position of the caesura, as is the case in stanza 10 of Kawubongeki Nkosi (AMA. p.2):

Sandl' esiphethe ko:nke/ Soma:ndla/ (10)
Uyabonge:ka/ awubonge:ki/ (10)
Na:mpa/ bathi angibabonge:le/ (10)

(Hand that rules over everything, Almighty,
Whether You are laudable, or not laudable,
Here they are, they say I must praise you for them:)

Although the line-end pause in each of the three lines occurs after the tenth syllable, the rhythm is very much affected by the position of the caesurae. In the first line the caesura occurs after the seventh syllable, in the second line after the fifth, and in the third line after the second. Thus as the syllables with length occur

at irregular places in the lines, the resulting rhythm is irregular too.

We note that Ntuli's poetry, as indeed the bulk of Zulu poetry, has a definite leaning toward free verse style. As such, the rhythm of his poetry is not bound by convention, but arises naturally from the structure and the texture of the language. By a tactful positioning of caesurae and other pauses, he creates such variations of rhythm as will harmonize with specific sections of the poem, thus advancing their meaning and underlining the mood in them.

4.3 CONCLUSION

We must conclude this chapter by observing that Ntuli combines Western and traditional formal techniques with remarkable success. Although he evinces a definite preference for traditional techniques such as parallelism, linking and initial rhyme, he carefully selects those aspects of Western technique, e.g. end rhyme, as will suit his purpose at a given place in some poem, and applies them with great discernment. He structures his verse lines and stanzas in such a way as to complement meaning and highlight mood. His rhythm is carefully measured to suit the content of the poem or a part thereof. Above all, we compliment the poet for the fact that in all aspects of form he does not merely conform to convention, but applies each technique or device with due cognizance of the peculiar requirements of the poem at hand.

CHAPTER 5

5. GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.1 MAIN OBSERVATIONS

We declared, at the beginning of this dissertation, that the aim of this study was to evaluate the quality of C.S.Z. Ntuli's contribution to Zulu poetry in order, firstly, to assist teachers, students and others engaged in the study of the poetry of Ntuli, and secondly, to challenge further in-depth studies on the poetry of this writer. We also pointed out that this study was a general critical survey dealing with themes, diction and form, and that the study had no pretensions to being exhaustive. It is by its nature wide-ranging but superficial as it attempts to cover as much ground as possible without delving deep into each aspect.

To achieve the above objective we have tried to apply as consistently as possible the four theories of criticism specified in the introductory chapter. The Reception Aesthetics theory formed the main basis of our approach to the poems as we expounded our individual response to each. In accordance with New Criticism we, as far as possible, made a close analysis of the poetry of Ntuli with reference to themes, diction and form, and their interrelationships. Equally consistently we applied the Historical-biographical theory as we highlighted manifestations of the poet's own experience, or the experience of some segment of the community to which we understood him to be referring, in the poetry under scrutiny. Where applicable we also employed the Moral-philosophical theory, and

accordingly pointed out any moral or philosophical implications which the text at hand appeared to have.

In Chapter 2 we examined the themes which emerge from the poetry of Ntuli, and we also briefly commented on the styles and modes he employs in propounding them. What strikes us first of all is the sheer diversity of themes he propounds in his relatively small collection of 31 poems. These include nature, love, death, religion, philosophical issues, protest, personalities and history. The largest of these categories is that of nature poems which has eight poems in it, and the smallest is that of historical poems which has one poem.

The fact that the largest category is that of nature poems indicates to us Ntuli's propensity for nature. We view this reflection as being consistent with the broader scenario of Zulu poetry where nature poems seem to predominate. In the poetry of Ntuli, however, we appreciate that in his nature poems he does not merely list the physical attributes of the subject, like many other poets tend to do, but strives always to establish a balance between sensory perception and intellectual appeal. We feel that this fact counts to Ntuli's favour as a poet.

We note that Ntuli's second largest category of themes is that of philosophical poems, which has seven poems in it. In this group we are struck by the fact that the themes he chooses are far from being common. With the exception of the theme of education which is common amongst Zulu poets, these include bad temper, the male versus female fatality ratio, appearance as a factor in love, the individual's

right of choice, fear of witchcraft, and others. We are impressed that in all the poems in this category, to borrow from D.B.Z. Ntuli's (1984: 122) paraphrase of Read as quoted in Chapter 1, "the triumph of reason brings about aesthetic satisfaction".

Other categories are also handled equally well. In the category of committed poetry we appreciate the poet's use of the dramatic approach and persuasive rhetoric as against direct statement. The poet is evidently cognizant of the fact that a poem is a work of art, and has to balance its protest mood with artistic discretion. The religious poems too are not merely celebrations of the Christian experience, but are largely expressions of empirical experience from a Christian perspective. We are therefore satisfied that Ntuli's choice and exposition of themes is that of a mature poet.

But beautiful ideas must be robed in beautiful words, and that brings us to the domain of diction. For practical reasons we preferred to confine our discussion on diction to imagery and other features of diction, viz. compound words as well as ideophones and deideophonic words. We demonstrated Ntuli's skill in using a variety of similes in his poetry. We established too that some of the similes he uses are worn-out similes including idiomatic expressions. However there are many instances where an apparently trite simile he uses can be seen to be appropriate and highly effective in the particular context in which he has used it. But we also noted Ntuli's resourcefulness in creating original similes including extended and compounded similes.

His use of metaphor is equally impressive. His poetry is based on a

solid foundation of metaphor, most of which is drawn from the traditional rural Zulu world. We are particularly impressed with his extended metaphors in which he creates a scene around the vehicle.

Some of these are limited to certain portions of the poems concerned, while others overarch the entire poem, e.g. the drought metaphor in Bengithi Lizokuna (AME. p.58), and the flower metaphor in Sinembali (AME. p.53). We applaud the poet for his ingenuity with this figure of speech. He also uses personification in its various forms, including animalisation. In certain poems personification is used throughout the poem. We feel that the poet handles this form of imagery with skill. Symbolism also forms part of his imagery. Even though he does not show much originality with this particular figure of speech, he nevertheless uses conventional symbols to good effect.

Compound words are a common feature of Ntuli's poetry. They facilitate word economy and add lustre to the language of his poems. Ideophones and deideophonic derivatives, which he uses so effectively in his poetry too, account for concision of style and lend a special rhetorical effect to the verse.

In Chapter 4 we observed that Ntuli combines Western and Nguni traditional formal techniques very successfully. We noted too that although he has a predilection for traditional formal techniques such as parallelism, linking and initial rhyme, he displays a fair amount of skill and discernment in applying Western formal techniques as well. His stanza forms have a marked leaning towards free verse style. As such his stanza formation is not governed by any stanza convention but by mood and meaning. Hence the range of

his stanza patterns includes regular, expanding, diminishing, bulging and mixed stanzas. The refrains are either single or of two different forms in one poem. In most cases the wording of the refrain has slight variations. We appreciate the use of such variations as this offers an element of surprise which prevents monotony.

Three types of rhyme are manifest. The most common of these is initial rhyme which often arises from a repetition of the subject concord in the initial positions of verse lines. This is among those sound values which are more common in traditional Nguni poetry than in the Western tradition. Internal rhyme also features in various forms. Though less conspicuous than initial and end rhyme, we appreciate its use and the way it is handled in the various poems. End rhyme is less frequent compared to other types. We have already pointed out above that Ntuli uses parallelism and linking liberally in his poetry. Perfect parallelism is the most common, but other types such as parallelism by contradiction and incomplete parallelism also feature prominently. As regards linking, we find that whereas vertical and oblique linking are common, cross-linking is wanting and we have therefore not dealt with it in this discourse.

Concerning Ntuli's rhythm, we would like to recall the statement made by Reaske (1966: 18), as quoted in Chapter 4, that rhythm in free verse is based not on conventional metrical patterns but on the stress resulting from the meaning of the line and its natural and punctuated pauses. This applies equally to Ntuli's rhythm which is based on free verse principles. Thus by and large Ntuli's rhythm is

uncontrived as it arises naturally from the way the verse lines are structured.

The poet must also be commended for his ability to sometimes combine a variety of styles in a single poem to amplify his theme. In poems such as Gatsheni, Uthanda Yiphi? (AME. p.70), Imbali Yehlungu (UGQ. p.56) and several others, we have traditional praise poetry and lyrical styles blended together in one poem. Buzani KuMkabayi (UGQ. p.60) is a combination of epic and lyrical styles. Vimba Phambili! (UGQ. p.65), though predominantly allegorical, has a plain lyrical beginning. Such blending of styles and modes in single poems lends a peculiar effect to the poems concerned.

Ntuli's sense of humour which is manifest in many of his poems cannot go unheeded. We have mentioned this element at several places in our discussion of the various poems. Although humour is always a welcome element if used with discretion, we particularly note Ntuli's ability to balance solemnity with humour in religious poems such as Ngeke Baxole Nkosi (UGQ. p.54). We also pointed out the predominantly humorous nature of such poems as Ubani Omubi? (UGQ. p.51) and Inkani Yomnyuzi (AMA. p.8). Humour in Ntuli's poems is always well-calculated and fitting. It lifts a poem from austerity and makes the sombre truths of life much more palatable. Sometimes it has a cathartic effect on the reader as it causes him to laugh at human folly, even his own, no matter how serious it may be.

We therefore conclude that Ntuli's standard of poetry is outstanding. His greatest strength as a poet lies in his excellent command of the language which everyone of his poems bears testimony

to. His poetry is couched in bold imagery which gives it a stamp of true poetry. It is characterised by word economy which he achieves through the use of imagery and other language mechanisms. The poems are further characterized by harmony between content, diction and form. The argument in each poem is carefully marshalled and rounded off in a bold statement or a rhetorical question at the end. This, coupled with the poet's subtle sense of humour which permeates many of his poems, makes his poetry a pleasure to read. His workmanship as a poet is characterised by consistency which makes every poem a veritable work of art. The only conclusion we can draw at the end of this study, therefore, is that C.S.Z. Ntuli is truly one of the best poets in the Zulu language, and has a place of his own among the acclaimed giants of Zulu poetry in the persons of B.W. Vilakazi, J.C. Dlamini, D.B.Z. Ntuli, C.T. Msimang and O.E.H.M. Nxumalo.

5.2 FUTURE RESEARCH

Finally we wish to reiterate what we said both in the introductory chapter and at the beginning of the general conclusion in this very chapter that part of the objective of this particular study is to encourage further in-depth studies on the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli. As such we would like to conclude this survey by suggesting some possibilities for such further studies and future research.

As this study dealt superficially with themes, diction and form in the poetry of Ntuli, we would like first of all to suggest that further studies can engage each of these aspects separately and in greater depth. We feel that much more can be said about themes and the ways in which Ntuli deals with them in each of the poems. These

may also be classified differently from the way we have done in this survey. As regards diction, our focus was chiefly on imagery, compound words as well as ideophones and deideophonic derivatives. More can be said about these and other aspects of diction not included in this study. Concerning form, it emerged in the course of this study that the form of Ntuli's poetry evinces, to a greater or lesser extent, influences of Bantu traditional poetic techniques. The extent to which this is the case also does merit investigation.

Another possibility for further investigation is the study of the influence of Christianity and the Bible in the poetry of this author. In our discussion of themes in Chapter 2 we mentioned or alluded to such influences whenever we felt that this was worthy of mention. Therefore this aspect of the poetry of Ntuli is, in our opinion, another possible subject of a more thorough investigation.

A comparative study of the poetry of C.S.Z. Ntuli and one or more of the leading Zulu poets mentioned earlier in this chapter also suggests itself as a possibility. To compare Ntuli with another outstanding Zulu poet like Vilakazi or Dlamini, etc., in so far as themes, diction and form in their poetry are concerned, would indeed make an enlightening study.

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