

## CHAPTER TWO

### SEMIOTICS AS OSTENSIVE SIGNS IN THE STUDY

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This division of the study should get under way by spelling out the key words falling under it. Thereafter the fallacy of kingship, coronation, throne and heirship from the text's point of view, should receive attention as well. Neither comparison nor critical evaluation between Scottish and Vatsonga's beliefs should be entertained by this research. The reason behind that is the gap that exists between the two nationalities.

Under the philosophy and psychology of evil, various aspects as listed in the third paragraph below, should be discussed. The focus thereof should mainly be on Vatsonga's beliefs in kingship naming, coronation, the throne and the heir to the throne.

There should be no detailed historical background of the three chieftaincies I interviewed comprising the undertaken research. However, some of the activities to be mentioned under this subdivision have been adopted by their forefathers as moral codes. They are practices such as: *ndzalama* (gem); *mudya-ndzhaka* (heir); *ku vekiwa ka Hosi* (coronation); *ku lahla Hosi* (burial rites); *ku lahla n'anga* (burial of a witchdoctor); *ku lahla xihlangi* (burial of a child); *ku khuma* (dysmenorrhoea); *xitlen'wana* (evil smelling rodent); *xikhovha* (an owl); *nyoka yo tshwuka* (brown snake); *nyoka-hansi* (blind snake); *ximbala* (Blackwood stick) and many more.

The theoretical approaches that should be used in this unit are a combination of the functional and hypothetical deductive structural approaches. They should be based upon the literary work and also the philosophy and psychology of evil with regards to Vatsonga's belief in witchcraft and superstitions.

## 2.2 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

The theoretical words, which are symbolic in nature that should be outlined, are: kingship, coronation, throne and heir as indicated in 2.1 paragraph 1. Various sources should be visited wherever possible. However, dictionaries and encyclopaedias should come to the fore for those words that are not defined by literary texts.

### 2.2.1 KINGSHIP

Under this section of the study, the nouns king and kingdom should be defined as way of enriching the sub topic above. To start off, Solomon (1984:66) has quoted Nahum Tate's general interpretation description that says:

A King, the grounds natural ruler plus  
permanent tenure, encountered in Shakespeare's  
tragedy a king who having abdicated his office really  
loses it (national ruler plus "man" denotes an  
entirely different value)

From the above extract, the grounds, simply means the justification of a belief. It supports the fact that a king is a national ruler, in the sense that he

is supported by the state and according to the statutory laws of the state. If a king does not follow the governmental rules, it means that the state has power to dethrone him from power.

The word, abdicated, means giving up the throne due to the failure to fulfil the obligation of kingship. Such a ruler loses his throne and turn to an ordinary man, a value that is not considered very important by the people. Such a person loses all the privileges that are benefited by other kings.

In the Shakespearean texts King Lear and Macbeth, noblemen of their country forged their ways through blood shedding to the throne, that is, a sum of grounds, literally as a result of. This is in opposition of the real and normal customs of kingship. As a tradition the king is born along the lineage of kingship and inherit to the throne when the time has come.

Meanwhile Sinfield (1986:63) defines the functions of a king under feudalism as:

the one who held authority among his peers, his equals, and his power was often little more than nominal, authority was distributed also among overlapping non-national institutions such as the church, estates, assemblies, regions and towns.

The adjective, nominal, from the above definition denotes the amount of the name king during the Feudalism in the sixteenth century. Kingship of the time existed in the name only just because all of his authorities were distributed to others. The formal way of kingship is seen only of the ceremonial nomination of a king and thereafter the power is shared with other noblemen of the state.

The nominal authority is further shared with institutions that were not part of the state's origin such as churches, estates, regions etc. In other nationalities decentralization of power played a very important part during the feudalism reign in Europe. This could be considered as one of the reasons that prompted king Duncan to give authority to Macbeth as the Thanes of Glamis and Cawdor respectively, and also, to Malcolm as Prince of Cumberland. The danger of this practice is that the Thanes could develop ambitions to become highly recognized and kill the king in order to take up the throne. This is similar to how Macbeth killed Duncan and declared himself an Absolute King of Scotland. Further discussions should follow under 2.3 subheading 2.3.1.

On the other hand Brown (1993:1491) describes kingship as:

the office of king, the fact of being king; reign  
as a king; monarchical government, etc.

From this definition one could deduce that kingship is about an office, that is, a title of being king, that is, the essence of a person; reign, that is, a rule, and monarchical government, simply meaning the empire under single emperor as Romans do.

Brown suggests that kingship, is merely a title given to a man whom the nation deem fit to have it and empower him to the office of leadership in order to lead them. Brown further maintains that being, meaning the state of existing, referring to the past and the present history of the lineage that qualifies that person to be a king. Such a person has to reign as a king, denoting that his pre-eminent period as a leader of his nation. Lastly,

monarchical government, refers to the governance that is led by him as a sovereign head of his people. All these components display to us what kingship entails. Since the king becomes the ruler of his territory demarcated to him, then it qualifies such a territory as a kingdom, which Kipins (2001:549) explains as:

the base of power, which can also invoke strong means of influence

The noun, base, means a premise underlying an assumption in this case of a kingdom. The noun, kingdom, originally is derived from king, meaning a ruler and kingdom, is a state or territory or realm where a particular person reigns as its sovereignty.

The associates, that is, the royal family and the country to rule them, give such a person power. Kingdom, in other words, is associated with the spiritual authority of God as in the Kingdom of God or Thy Kingdom come, in one of the Lord prayer's petitions.

To call territories kingdoms like the United Kingdom, is to give those territories more strength and influence than other states. Their ruler is more than king, who looks at his country or state only. This kind of power is more absolute than that of a king. Further discussions should be given in 2.4 of this research in connection with the king and his kingdom.

However Peck (1978:xxi) *kingship is viewed as a form of maturity. It is a balanced rationality*. Peck sees kingship as a sign of mutual relationship that exist between the subjects and the royal family. It is an understanding if not

agreement between the subjects and the ruling lineage. The subjects have the rights to abandon the king when not in favour of his ruling procedures.

Living and falling under him is just a mere rationale.

To expatiate on Peck's definition, one must understand that men institute the king in order to preserve peace in their society. The king's successes rest on the fact that the people are satisfied with his ruling procedures. When he rules them offensively, he's likely to be overthrown just like what is happening in some of the Western countries of Africa today.

Biblically, kings like Nebukadnezzar gained fame and became proud to an extent that he failed even to follow instructions from God and was punished by being made deformed until he repented. It is against this background that the Vatsonga beliefs are basically on the rituals so that the new chief cannot become boastful and proud. The rituals are aimed at making him humble at all the times.

In the text, Macbeth is portrayed as a greedy and selffish king who envies everybody born along the royal lineage. It is one of the reasons that made him a king who ruled Scotland for a shorter period as it would be discussed in this research.

A definition of kingship that is given by Crapotta (1984: 25) is in line with the functions that are performed by the king when she says:

The king commands the total respect of his subjects and that respect is earned only by quickly avenging the slightest offence to his personal honour.

The phrase saying`... commands the total respect of his subjects...`, shows the limitless powers that are possessed by the king. This power must not supersede his egos but morally applied where it deem necessary. It must not be a compulsive power from other natural herbs such as dagga smoking in order to deaden his feelings, but the real power prescribed to him by the law.

Crapotta relates the pathological power exercised by the Benin king Atila, which is comparable to the power exercised by Macbeth. King Atila had no personal honour himself and as a result his subjects were innocently tortured and annihilated with no apparent reasons. It is a similar situation to what the Scottish people suffered under Macbeth.

Meanwhile McCloskey (1962:321) sees the kingship of Macbeth as that of:

a king who is not wise enough to protect himself  
but of his own volition throws himself upon the  
untended mercies of the evil, which he does not  
even recognize as evil.

The subsequent killings of certain characters as indicated in the play, are evident of Macbeth's unwise decisions. His actions make the Scottish kingship a fallacy. It lacks wisdom that was supposed to have bestowed by God and not the immortal gods, the witches.

In contrast to the Vatsonga cultural society, honouring their chiefs and the chief in return is a shared status. What is related about the early childhood as well as the adolescent stage of an heir really contributes very much towards his future personality. This could be read under 2.4. of this section.

For the king or chief to take up his throne, coronation as ceremonial rites is organised. On that particular occasion, the king is officially made known to the people. More about it should be discussed under the following sub-heading.

### 2.2.2 CORONATION

Before the discussion about the crowning ceremonies of kings, it is wise enough to define the concept, coronation. According to Barthes (1973:35) *coronation is to acknowledge that the king is king by the divine right*. By coronation, Barthes is referring to the ceremony of crowning a chief or king, where in other cultures the newly crowned chief is given power to rule his country or tribe. On that particular day, the whole country or tribe is invited to come and witness the crowing of their chief. A big feast is thrown to the people. Other dignitaries in particular, the neighbouring chiefs are also invited to the crowning ceremony.

It could be by the divine right, because of the fact that the newly crowned chief must be the first son of the previous one. Besides crowning only, the new chief in other cultures like Vatsonga, has to swallow *ndzalama* (gem) as a sign of the divine right to the throne. This *ndzalama* (gem) shall stay in his stomach until he dies and it would also be given to his first son and so forth. More information about coronation and what happens there should follow under 2.4 of this study.



Meanwhile Brown (1982: 203) has quoted James I in connection with the state and family when he says:

by the law of nature the king becomes a national  
Father to call his Lieges at his “coronation”.

What Brown suggests is that there’s no king who becomes a king without having undergone by the process of coronation. It is at this function where he is made known as the father of his people. As a father, he is not expected to choose amongst his people whom he loves and also those he hates most.

A liege is the kind of relationship that exists between the king and his vassals. It is the relationship that distances the subjects away from the sovereignty. It could be kept like that and it also demands respect from the subjects.

Even Macbeth who gained the kingship in an illegal manner, he went to Scone for coronation. As a sign of his welcome by the Scottish people as seen from the cassette, he was lifted high with a crown around his head. More information about the philosophy and psychology of the Vatsonga people in this regard, should be discussed under 2.4.

According to Nevadomsky J (1984:41) *coronation is a title that officially acknowledged the right of a king to the throne*. In line with the African traditions, coronation, is a way of acknowledging their kings to the throne. Prior to the ceremony, various practices are conducted such as rituals, which is esoteric in nature. It is done some few weeks before and after the day of coronation. The most important aim is to strengthen the new king.

However Sjogren (1965: 156) gives a broader perspective about coronation when saying:

At the most solemn moment the ordinator, asked the twenty Councillors to come forward and join simultaneously in putting the crown on the head of the king, admonishing those who could not come near to stretch out their arms so that they at least touched the crown.

This is the customary practised by other African states in the past. The gathering of the leading figures of a clan was regarded as legal ordaining of a new king. It was a sign of swearing into office and also, a guarantee that if he misbehaves, the twenty Councillors have all the powers to remove him from the throne.

In another customary manner that Ward (1939:162) describes is that coronation ceremony:

is a bare sequence of seven prayers and triciprecepta, with one rubric for acclamation and enthroning.

Ward is giving us an unusual practice that was common in other African cultural group. The figure seven is the highest number when referred to the creation period by God. It is a religious number that shows perfectness. The seven prayers, are the indications that their deity should hold the outcomes of their new king.

On the rubric side, it indicates the set of instructions and rules to be followed during acclamation, that is, eulogising the reading of the pledge as a

customary to all their previous kings, and the other for enthroning, that is, as a ceremonial installation practice.

For Vatsonga, on the official day the heir is sworn to the throne in a formal way and also in front of his people. Nowadays it is done in the presence of the officials of the legislature of the ruling government. A round bead is placed around the chief's head as a sign of crown, an assegai, skins of leopards or tigers the most fierce animals are wrapped around the chief while ascending to the throne. The belief about leopard skins should be entertained within this study.

### 2.2.3 THRONE

Stories about the throne should be dealt with under this section of the study. For the king or chief to sworn to the throne remains a general belief in all traditions. However Overbeck (1976:186) defines the throne as

*a seat for the king, judge or priest.*

During the Biblical era the throne, refers to the seat that is occupied by those were chosen by God. It is linked to anointment to the throne, just like Moses, Melchizedek, and Jesus Christ to mention but few, as an honour for the quality of the work rendered before God.

After Anno Domini era, the Biblical implications of the word throne, changed to the ceremonial chair of a bishops, kings and other important rulers of that period. When a bishop is bestowed to the office, he seats on the throne, and culturally, all people of universe have adopted it . In many

cultures the successor to the throne must either be the son of the deceased or the younger brother of him if ever there is no boy under that lineage of a chief.

Meanwhile Horwick (1978:365) supports that it

*is the royal family that occupy the throne...*

What Horwick elucidates here has reference to the Scottish throne by the time Shakespeare wrote the play, Macbeth. Horwick refers to the forces that were against the joint of leadership between Malcolm and Macbeth. The former it was his father, Duncan, who said, `we will establish our estate upon our eldest son, Malcolm...` referring to the preparatory stage as Prince of Cumberland to the Scottish throne.

Even though the ceremonial rites were not official at that moment, the `we` shows how public the possibility of the throne should be occupied in future. It was the royal family's wishes on how their power of the throne should be transferred from one person to another.

Yet a pithy definition comes with Briggs (1989:1055) when he defines the throne as:

*chair of State or seat of a high dignity.*

*In fact* the chair, meant a stool and later on, an ordinary bench in other traditions. It became an ornate armchair raised on its dais as time goes on and as the people become enlightened. These days the chair, is called a

throne, which is lavishly decorated with some lovely engraving on it the most intelligent animals such as an eagle with its wide opened eyes.

Briggs' explanation is more precise and to the point about the throne in Black cultures. According to his justification, the chair is occupied once the late chief or king has passed away and his eldest son is sworn to the office. He refers it to `... a high dignity...` symbolizing the greatness that was expected from the newly elected chief.

The eagles' eyes symbolize sharp-sightedness, keenly observations as things that were expected from the chief during his ruling period. It denotes that the chief must see things before they happen and must make a scrutifying observation before passing a fair and clear judgement. It could be the reason that in the making of an amulet as explained in 3.4 the fats of an eagle are also required as a belief of the Vatsonga people. The fats should make the chief very skilful and have an eye that sees all things clearly.

To give more meanings to the throne, Brown (1993: 3294) comes again with the following definition:

a chair of State for a potentate or dignitary especially an ornate, elaborate, and usually raised chair occupied by a sovereign on State occasions.

From the extract, a chair, refers to in the above definition is not the common one we use to have at our homes. This is a flamboyant chair, one that is exaggerated with baroque and flowers, but usually in Black traditions, with different skins of fierceful animals like lions and leopards. No one is allowed to sit on it even the new chief is forbidden to sit on it before coronation is

done. This kind of a chair, is not occasionally used but only on State ceremonies.

It is the custom practiced in many cultural societies of the Shakesperean period up to our era. It elevates the ruler to the most absolute State of being a ruler, and not only so, but closer to God or as God's second hand in command. This kind of chair, is hidden for the ordinary people when it is not in use. The reason behind that is to preserve the dignity of the chief or king.

In addition to that, Bernett (1994:10) describes the throne as something that:  
embodies a concept of service to something above  
and beyond ourselves...

The verb, embodies, means something that is visible in form or a constituent part of other things. In other words, a throne, is something that is not fanciful but tangible. It could be seen and touched by the ordinary bare hand.

Barnett suggests that at the throne it is where a person who is swearing into office bows his head before officially sitting on it. It is a symbol of where all countrymen pay their allegiance. It is totally a sacred place where one cannot go alone and declare oneself a king in the absence of clergymen.

For Macbeth's enthroning, there was no sacred solemnity were done as it was supposed to be. However, a forced situation can be viewed from the filmstrip whereby he sworn into the throne. It could be explained under 2.3.2.

Furthermore, Bernett (1994:61) shares with us another British stories about the monarchy in this way:

This royal throne of kings, the sceptred isle, this  
fortress built by nature of herself against infection  
and the hand of war.

According to Barnett's story, the British people regard the royal throne as a historical embellishment. It is liken to a place that demanded residential care for the British royal families. None other than the royal family touched the throne. It is highly honoured as the most sacred stool.

All valued public services in the past were conducted while the majesty was seated on the throne. It proved the altruism of the royal family by defending it from any infections. All of the British laws were passed and amended and also, pronounced to the people while their majesty was sitting on it.

In proportion to Vatsonga traditional beliefs, all tribal assembly summoned by their chief are done while the majesty is sitting on the throne as well. It is done in the same manner as the British monarchies.

During the Shakespearean time, Macbeth who murdered king Duncan and declared himself to the throne weakened the dignity of the throne. A mockery that the Scottish people were not happy about it. Macduff as explained in this research recaptured their throne and restored its dignity again. The incidents are expounded in 2.3.3 as well as in 2.4 of this chapter.

The one who occupied the throne in the past and even today is the heir. Before explanations of how it is done in the Vatsonga traditions, below are the definitions of one who is entitled for the throne, namely, the heir.

#### 2.2.4 HEIR

Just before stories are told about the heir, various definitions on this title should be looked into them. One of the definitions comes with Elliot (1960:228) when giving the meaning of heir in collaboration with royal and king to show the purity of the lineage when he says:

The royal heir to the throne, is, far more importantly, king by reason of his royal character.

The heir, literally, is a person who has the legitimate rights to inherit things such as money, properties, or the title of the father after death. In the case of chieftainship, the heir, is the first son from the first marriage. If the first wife failed to give birth to a son, then the second wife is married in order to give birth to the king to be. But her son should be regarded as the son of the wife from the first marriage. If the first wife gives birth to a son as well, the rights of that son from the second marriage is nullified. The Vatsonga people have this practice in common.

The royal, refers to the kings, queens and all members born from the chief of the tribe. It does not matter whether those children are born from the first, second or fifth wife. No matter they are referred to as royals, that cannot qualify them to the throne. This is just a status of birth and has no credit as far chieftaincy is concerned.



To give more views about the heir, Brown (1993:1213) says the following:

a person receiving or entitled by law to receive  
property or rank as the successor or legal  
representative of the former owner.

Normally the person referring to in the extract above is the first and legally born son of the deceased king or chief. This son must be a heirdom, that is, the succession must be of blood birth and not lineage. The heir must be the one whom the state know and also known by the community.

The conditions of the heir are that he must come from the first wife of the deceased chief. He must also command a good bill of health, morality, good and trustworthiness to the villagers. The new king to be must have accepted the ceremonial rites and rituals power that were secretly done to him as a way of consolidating his throne. Other stories related to the heir should follow under 2.4 as well as the Vatsonga's beliefs and superstitions about the heir.

At the same time, Nevadomsky (1984:43) relates how the Benin people treat their heirs before they take their offices in this fashion:

as in other traditional communities, in Benin the life  
of a heir is characterized by long suffering, including  
periods when he had to harvest plum nuts for a living.

Yes, of course, even in the Vatsonga traditions. the preparing of the future chief, the heir, undergoes the same processes of heavier punishment as soon he's ten years old. At that tender age, the heir is separated from his parents for good and only return home when his father has passed away.

As a custom, the heir is given to one of the chief's relative who stays faraway from his home and grew up there under going severe conditions. The relative should teach him how to endure difficult circumstances and also not to trust everybody in fear of witchcraft as a possibility that may fail him to be a chief. Further discussions on this subject should follow towards the end of this section.

It is similar to what is done in Benin where the heir is chased away from home and seek refuge elsewhere he's unknown until his father passes away. The heir should grow up in strength and wisdom as well as developing respect to other people.

Webster's 1913 Dictionary defines heir presumptive as:

One who, if the ancestors should die immediately, would be his heir but whose right to the inheritance may be defeated by the birth of a nearer relative, or by some other contingency.

The adjective presumptive, means something that is presumed in the absence of further information. It intends to express that the heir, in question cannot be the adopted one who can be withdrawn immediately the legitimate son is born.

This is also common to Vatsonga. A son from the second marriage cannot become a chief or king after the heir is born from the queen. As a result, he may be taken to her mother's kraal to grow up there. His brother may compensate him by a settlement where he shall rule as an Induna and it is regarded as a favour from the chief.

The Easton Bible Dictionary comes with another version in the Biblical times when it says:

Under the patriarchs, the property of a father was divided among the sons of his legitimate, the eldest son getting a larger portion than the rest.

The succession of property as in the case illustrated above, is not the matter of favour but fiduciary. The trustee, that is, the father, regarded his relationship to the beneficiaries as legitimate. Therefore, all of them have the legal rights to benefit from what he has left behind.

It is true that in many traditional practices, the first-born son enjoyed the largest portion of the wealth. Other cultures regard him as the father of the whole family and that his younger brothers can finish up their portions and still they must be looked after by the first born son. This tradition should be clarified within this study.

### 2.3 HOW THE OSTENSIVE SIGNS ARE INTERPRETED IN THE STUDY

The ostensive signs should be discussed under the fallacy of kingship, coronation, the dignity of the throne and the heir as the future king of that particular country or tribe. The Xitsonga translation should come to the limelight of this section in order to show its relevancy to the topic under the following subheadings:

### **2.3.1 THE FALLACY OF KINGSHIP IN SCOTLAND**

The divine status of the king in Scotland of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was not feudalism, that is, the nobility of the king has to be exchanged for military service. In this regard, the vassals of the country were handed over to the power of the military ruler as tenure. At the time of king Duncan feudalism was totally not in favour than an Absolutist state. It can be one the reasons why Scotland accepted Macbeth's reign.

Under the Absolutist state, the power centred on the monarch. The ruler had unlimited power over his country. While the legitimate man in power was weak and the military leader highly favoured by the subjects, it was easy for the military leader to jettison him out of power. That was another reason that made kingship in Scotland a fallacy of ostensive positions.

A state violence in support of the military leader was regarded as official and was supported by those who were not happy about the king's rule. Such a system was regarded as natural and being conferred by God. Macbeth handled such system of natural justice and by sword and blood, he won the kingship reign under the banner Absolutist ideology, and was officially declared the kind of Scotland, an ostensive sign of delusion.

In the play of Macbeth, Duncan and his son Malcolm are kings by virtue of birth rites. However, there are other members of the royal family who are very close to the throne as well. Macbeth was very far from becoming a king but forges his way into the sacred throne of Scotland.

The fallacy part of kingship is seen from the text when the witches in three high titles greet Macbeth. The third title inspired Macbeth to go for a kill in order to grasp it in two hands. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:5) say:

*Xewani Macbeth, u ta va Hosi endzhaku ka leswi.*  
(All hail, Macbeth, that shall be king thereafter)

Normally one becomes a king, by virtue of being the first son of the former king. Macbeth is far from being a king of Scotland when considering Duncan's genealogy. Such predictions motivate what has been indicated in paragraph 2.3.1. The illusion about Macbeth's kingship should from now onwards be revealed as one filled with ambitions, jealousy and hideous criminal offences.

The introductions of Macbeth from war as quoted by Favila (2001:5) takes us back to the beginning of the book where it reads thus:

Our first view of Macbeth is as an impressive adult would be. Rumour paints him as a legendary general and loyal Thane. His head, heart, and hand defended his court from bloody broils of war. We, as an audience, wait for Macbeth to enter, as do the witches, Duncan, Scotland herself- like children waiting for their favourite grown-up to come play with them and take care of them.

These words show the expectations from the Scottish people about the veteran of war. It becomes a fallacy when Macbeth took the path that is laid to him by the witches.

Banquo as well, reiterates the prophecies of the witches that spurred Macbeth's desires. Nkondo and Shilote (1982: 6) say:

*U ta va Hosi wena.*  
( You shall be king)

This phrase shows the possibility. It does not matter how it'll reach him but Macbeth, should be king. It is an error that'll blind Macbeth and forget his loyalty to Duncan as a worthy soldier and cousin whom the king intends to meet as a sign of friendliness.

The dubious assurances have influenced Macbeth to think more and more of becoming a king, another misconception of that kind. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:8) pronounce it as:

*Etlhelo. Loko swi fanerile leswaku ndzi va Hosi, swi ta va tano handle ko va mina ndzi endla nchumu ehenhla ka swona.*

(*Aside.* If chance will have me king, why Chance may crown me without my stir.)

The noun, Chance, is written in capital letter `C` to denotes the dangerousness of the challenge that faces Macbeth. On the other hand it may show a possibility or destiny, which requires Macbeth to hold very firm so that it may not slip out. By any Chance, Macbeth shall become king of Scotland. Such an opportunity shall certainly come but it needs Macbeth to change his personalities.

Temptations became more active temptations when Duncan declares his son, Malcolm, the Prince of Cumberland. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:10 ) are quoting following words that were uttered by Macbeth:

*Hosana ya Cumberland! Leyi hi yona mhaka leyi nga ta*

*ndzi wisa kumbe ku endla leswaku ndzi tirha hi matimba...  
Tinyeleti tumbetani ndzilo wa n'wina. Ku vonakala ku nga  
voni swinavelo swa mina leswo enta swa xinyami. Kambe  
a swi endleki leswi tihlo ri nga ta chava ku swi vona.*

(The Prince of Cumberland ! That is a step on which I must  
fall down, or else o'ersleep. For in my way it lies. Stars,  
hide your fires, let not light see my black and deep desires.  
The eye winks at the hand, and yet let that be which the eye fears,  
when it is done, to see.)

The naming of Malcolm by his father as his heir, destroys Macbeth's hope that chance may crown him. At the same time, it challenges Duncan's authority as shaky and directionless. Malcolm is seen as a foil character, which even at war does not like to come forward like a future leader. Now Macbeth invites the nameless acts of the hand to accomplish his wishes within a blinded eye. He calls stars, not to shine so that his malicious duties of the darkness can be carried out. Deeds that disqualifies him to be the true and faithful leader. These words show the extremity of Macbeth's situation that would inspire him the desire to kill in order to rise to the fame.

Another fallacy of Duncan's thinking is perceived where he opted to visit Macbeth's castle as a token of appreciation. There's no need for a king to spend a night at his subject's house. But for Duncan it is contemplated as honour. This gives Macbeth plenty time to accomplish his plans of killing the king. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:15) say:

*Loko wa ha swi endla a wu ri wanuna. Naswona loko  
a wu ta va hosi a wu ta va wanuna wa xiviri. Leswi a  
ku nga ri na nkarhi kumbe ndzhawu yo endla mhaka leyi...  
( When you durst do it, then you were a man, and to be  
more than what you were, you would be so much more  
than man. Nor time no place did then adhere...)*

The murder of Duncan become an experiment of Macbeth's virility, his failure to go on with the murder, he is lessened to helplessness man, who in fact has turn to an infant's innocence. Lady Macbeth attacks his manhood and lowered him to an emasculated man , who is suffering from the greensickness disease of young virgin women.

By such evoking words, Lady Macbeth wants to pump in him power to overthrow Duncan from a more absolute power than those energized by the witches. Macbeth then notices his vulnerability involved by his wife and consequently gains courage to carry on with the plot.

As the conspiracy is carried on, Lady Macbeth becomes petrified. She thinks of the guards and even the noise that would follow. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:12) presume that:

*Yo, twanani! i xikhovha lexi a xi cema-Muchayi wa  
nsimbhi ya rifu- lexi a xi perisa...*  
(It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman which  
gives the stem'st goodnight. He is about it to set...)

According to Vatsonga customs, owls, are viewed as night birds that spell omen. In Scotland and England of those days, seeing an owl in the city particularly in daytime, that was a direful omen. The deaths of all noble men in the Shakespearean literatures are suggested by these birds of the night. The belief is merely a fallacy since the bird itself was not aware of its consequences.

Many extraordinary events in the text are said to have taken place at the night that Duncan was murdered. Another supernatural disorder is narrated



by Lennox on the night of Duncan's butcherings. Nkondo and Shilote (1982: 23) are presuming that:

*Vusiku lebyi nga hundza a byi nga rhulanga. Laha a hi etlele kona tichumele ti wiseriwe hansi hi bubutsa... ku twala ku rila emoyeni, ku cema ka rifu ni ku profeta... Xikhovka xi ririle vusiku hinkwabyo. Van'wana va ri misava yi rhurhumela..*

(The night has been unruly. Where we lay, our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say, lamenting heard in the air, strange screams of death... The obscure bird clamoured the livelong night. Some say the earth was feverous and did shake.)

The unruly night, blown down chimneys, screams of death, "shrieking owl and the shaking of the earth, are all the philosophical and psychological beliefs that the king has been anointed by God. His death shall result in the disturbance of the natural order. The catastrophes that are listed above, mark Macbeth's unruly life to follow as the result of his deeds. They also made possible his intended kingship which tended to a fallacy.

Macduff showed discontentment about the death of his father but failed to revenge. This act is cowardice and makes their kingship a fallacy. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:24) quoted him saying:

*Vutomi byi tlurile mpimo! Vudlayi bya tihanyi swinene byi fayile tempele ya Hosi leyi katekisiweke byi yiva kona vutomi.*

(Confusion now hath made his masterpiece, most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope, The Lord's anointed temple and stole hence, the life of the building.)

The murdering of Duncan is perceived as sacrilegious one, that is, the misuse of the sacred gift from God. Duncan is also viewed as an anointed

temple, an idea that makes the dead king parallel to Jesus, the Son of God. The philosophical belief here shows the kind of confusion, as it is mentioned about kingship in Scotland that would follow. From that time onwards, Scotland should have broken into the holiness of God and stole the deity that was preserved there for future kings. This became both the philosophy and psychology of kingship that was completely tarnished by the stains of the blood of Duncan.

The clumsiness of Scotland's kingship is also manifested by the cannibalism practices done by Duncan's horses. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:27) say:

*Tihanci ta Duncan-mhaka yo hlamarisa kambe yi  
humelerile-swifuwo swo sasela swa matsambu... to  
na swipfuketana to tlhwanya, ti tshova switala ti  
tsutsuma...*

(And Duncan's horses-a thing most strange and  
certain-beauteous and swift, the minions of their  
race, turned wild in nature, broke the stalls, flung  
out...)

This is the most horrifying scene, which is seen as signs of God's displeasure of what befall to Duncan, the anointed king. It led also to the secret departure of his sons prior to the crowning of Macbeth, a fallacy of kingship that they were supposed to have contested for.

To further the ostensive signs from the semiotic context, the following subdivisions shall outline the sovereignty of coronation so as a way of bringing out the meaning of the topic of the study. The Xitsonga text shall again be used as a main source of information in this regard:

### 2.3.2 THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CORONATION

The sovereign's consort in Scotland as depicted by Shakespeare differs completely from how it is done to date. Macbeth by virtue of subterfuge is said to be declared the king of Scotland. The discussion between Ross and Macduff end in one wanting to know about the new elect king, Macbeth in question. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:28) say:

... sweswi vuhosi onge byi wela eka Macbeth, ku vula  
Ross. U yile ni le Scone ku ya vekiwa, ku hlamula Macduff.  
(The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth, says Ross. He is  
already named and gone to Scone to be invested, replied  
Macduff.)

The noun, named, refers to the designated Macbeth, one who is not born from the royal lineage but because he wanted to be a king, then forged his way out to the highest position. Scone, is a place where in those days kings were invested to the throne. The sacredness of this place is nothing but a mockery as most of the kings who were invested into power were from royal family except, the recent one, Macbeth.

The ceremony at Scone differs to the burial rites of Duncan at Colmekill, a place where all Scottish kings were buried. No formal burial rites were conducted for him and even the filmstrip does not show anything related to the burial and this make the sovereignty a mockery.

What has been observed from the filmstrip, Macbeth strode onto a very hard crystalline rock composed of quartz, mica and feldspar. Footsteps were engraved on this rock. As a Scottish tradition, all kings that ruled Scotland

between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, had to undergo similar coronation. The crown that Macbeth received at Scone mocks his hideous deeds of the night. It is also a sign of fallacy to the sacredness of the Scottish coronation.

Macduff mocks the fallacy of coronation bestowed upon Macbeth. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:28) voice it in this way:

*Onge swilo swi famba kahle kwaleyo. Famba  
khwatsi! Swiambalo swa hina leswa khale swi  
nga hi tshami ku tlula leswintshwa.*  
(Well, may you see things well done there-  
Adieu! Lest our old robe, sit easier than our new.)

The phrase that states, `... our old robes sit easier than new` gives a symbolic representation of a robe. As a fallacy, Macbeth's new robes are ostensive signs of illusion. Macbeth is dressed in new robes at Scone, the robes that he does not deserve to put on. His ordinary robes are the one and the only robes he is to put on. The new robes are just for whiling the time and those who deserve them would fight for.

After the oath, Macbeth is sworn into office, an ostensive fallacy that the Scottish did because of fear for being killed as well. When he is in the office, peace never prevailed in Scotland. This is the contrast of what the coronation is supposed to be since the new king is given a guiding book of law in order to govern his people peacefully.

At the end of the play, Macduff kills Macbeth and another coronation is done. This time Macduff is better of Macbeth since he's along the lineage of Duncan. Nevertheless, that coronation is still a fallacy because Duncan's

son, Malcolm and Donalbain, at least, one of them was supposed to be the elect king.

At the coronation, Macduff announces his intentions as follow: that all his loyal Thanes shall from then on be known as Earls; that he plans to invite home all those who fled from Macbeth's tyranny, that all those who acted as agents for Macbeth would be found and punished, ( an idea parallel to those of Macbeth, ) that would perform all the tasks and duties ahead of them..

The promises sound like a turning curve of Scotland from feudalism to absolutist, and now, a democratic state that is dominated by the royal sovereign power. It could be said that from there onwards, coronation` is no longer a fallacy in Scotland but one that is made up of members of the royal family. The sub division below shows the value of a throne in the Shakesperean time.

### 2.3.3 THE POWER OF THE THRONE IN THOSE DAYS

As a customary, most of the Shakespeare's literary works are all about kingship of the ruling party of the Scottish monarchy. In Macbeth, Malcolm who stands for the legitimacy power challenges the leadership of Macbeth. However, Macduff is the one who defended it and successfully conquered the tyrant, Macbeth.

Those who have legal rites to the throne are said to be cowards, voiceless and powerless when it comes to challenging Macbeth. As a result of their cowardice, their throne is brandished by blood shed by Macbeth for those

who are legitimate. The aim behind the killing is to eliminate them. Macduff is ready to challenge Macbeth after hearing of his wife's death. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:54) say:

*Halaka ngati! Halaka ngati mbuya, tiko ra rikwerhu.  
Vufumi bya nsele lowukulu, titiyise hikuva vunene bya  
chava ku ku tshinya! Kombisa vubihi bya wena;  
xidlodlo xa wena xi thyakisiweke.*

(Bleed, bleed, poor country. Great tyranny, lay thou thy  
basis sure, for goodness dare not check thee; wear thou  
thy wrongs; the title is affected.)

The repetition of the verb, *halaka ngati* `bleed` symbolizes the continuous murder executed by the tyranny Macbeth in Scotland. The motive behind the killings is to do away with those are threats to the throne. Our sentiments are called into question about these words. It shows the speaker's deepest condolences to the bereaved families, friends and countrymen about the deaths that befell them. And also it is a wish for revenge in the near future..

Macbeth's success is due to the failure from the legitimacy to challenge for their throne. The line that says: ` *xidlodlo xa wena xi thyakisiweke* ' (...the title is affected...) refers to the throne, which is a mere fallacy to Macbeth. It is similar to dysmenorrhoea, that is, when there's a funeral in a family and all the activities are forbidden. Macduff is gathering courage to challenge the annexation of the throne. Malcolm adds more fuel in Macduff's heart as quoted by Nkondo and Shilote (1982:55) saying:

*Ndzi n'wi vula muhalati wa ngati, munhu wa makwanga,  
mubihi, muxisi, munhu wo juma, wa mona, wa swidyoho  
hinkwaswo leswi nga na vito.*

(I grant him bloody, luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
sudden, malicious, smacking of every evil)

These are the chilling accounts that an ear of royal man would not love to hear. These are the deeds that the true and just man would not love to see someone practicing it. Horwich, R. (1978:366) gives short account of what the rightful person to the throne would do when he says:

If integrity is taken to mean a devotion to moral principle rather than to personalities or private ends, it would appear that one of Macduff's roles at this point in the play is to exemplify a disinterested concern for justice.

The noun, integrity, in this context refers to the quality of being honest and morally upright. Therefore Macduff to whom the deeds of the tyrant Macbeth are referred to, has to revenge on what happened to his family. At that time, it was obvious that the throne of Scottish kings was on the bloody hands that make it a fallacy. According to Nkondo and Shilote(1982:56) Macduff is furious and said the following:

O Scotland, Scotland!

The cry is translated in a similar way in both English and Xitsonga, and it shows how miserable Macduff is. It is a cry for gaining strength in order to fight the untitled Macbeth whose claim to the throne is sceptical and delusive. Macduff denounces Malcolm who is powerless hence he is the rightful successor of his father, Duncan.

At the end of their deliberations Macduff is eager to face Macbeth. He knows that defeating him should have elevated him to the throne and become a new king of Scotland. From then the rites of the throne should no longer be looked as a fallacy but that of the royal blood.

The evidences to the throne after defeating Macbeth emanates from the following factors: he is a man of many faces, as a father and at a certain time a soldier; he sometimes weep and retaliates, he is a man ripped out from his mother's womb and yet the most noble man. Unlike Macbeth who possessed a single state of man, Macduff alone, and he as a solitary man, holds a single state of man. His character is a fusion of a wilderness of paradox unlike Macbeth. Therefore he qualifies for the throne.

Of course Macduff qualifies to take up the throne. The question behind this possibility is that he is not a heir. The following component of the study reveals that kingship in Scotland of those years was not proper..

#### 2.3.4 ENTITLEMENT OF HEIRSHIP

Scotland of the time of feudalism had a person entitled to continue with the work of his predecessor but had neither influence nor convincing power as a heir. Duncan's sons Malcolm and Donalbain are portrayed in the play not as strong contenders for their father's kingship. No matter the king has granted Malcolm with the title of being, Prince of Cumberland as mentioned before, there's nothing so effective that warrants him as a heir to the throne.

Another point of delusion that the reader may question in the text is the reason being not given as to why Malcolm receives such an honour. Maybe Duncan was a bit suspicious of what the other noble men would say if his son is not honoured. Nkondo and Shilote (1982:10) say:

*Hosana ya Cumberland. Kambe xiyimo xo tani a  
xi nyikiwi yena ntsena, kambe hinkwavo lava xi va*



*faneleke hikwalaho ka mintirho ya vona a va ta xi  
kuma.*

(The Prince of Cumberland! Which is honour must not  
unaccompanied invest him only, but signs of nobleness,  
like stars, shall shine on all deservers)

Malcolm's position came to him just because he is the son of a noble king.  
The title is invested in him merely as an honour and the fact that many were  
honoured at that function. The fallacy part of it is when he is dumb and  
silent when his father is murdered. Instead he opted to runaway from  
Cumberland and his position becomes a fallacy in deed.

On the other hand, Macduff is not an legitimate person to the throne. At the  
death of Duncan he tried to lure Banquo, Malcolm and Donalbain to fight  
the doer but all were afraid to challenge Macbeth. For being of the royal  
lineage became a fallacy because of their failure to react. Nkondo and  
Shilote(1982:24) further say:

*Yanani le ndlwini mi ya tidlaya mahlo ho `Gorgon`  
lontshwa... Pfukani, pfukani, chayani nsibhi yo tivisa  
khombo... Banquo na Donalbain, Malcolm, pfukani.  
(Approach the chamber and destroy your sight with a  
new Gorgon...Awake, awake! Ring the alarm bell!  
Murder and treason! Banquo and Donalbain, Malcolm,  
awake!)*

The word, Gorgon, has been adopted from the Greek mythology, where as a  
belief three sisters with snakes as a sign of hair would turn anyone who  
looked at them to a stone. The word symbolizes the lifeless body of Duncan  
to a stone.

Again Macduff tries to influence them by proclaiming treason, an act where the king is killed or sabotaged in order to overthrow him for his office of the government. As a result Macduff invites both the heirs and Banquo who is of the royal blood to stand up and fight the perpetrator. The awake call becomes a fallacy when the apparent heirs secretly left Scotland. Later Macduff left as well. The throne is left at the hands of Macbeth, what a fallacy!.

#### 2.4 BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS AS A PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF EVIL AMONG VATSONGA CHIEFTAINCIES.

This unit is emulated from beliefs and superstitions that are mostly common to the Vatsonga traditional leaders and other members in general. These beliefs affect our psychological point of view and our lives as well. Some of them are being philosophised without a proof or some traces. For instance, a stone like *ndzalama* (gem ) no one can tell exactly where it stays in the stomach but the belief is that it stays with the chief and comes out when he dies. This research shall try to bring out some of these mythologies but no solutions should be entertained.

##### *NDZALAMA* (GEM)

This heading has been included in this study in order to illustrate the philosophy that is there in Vatsonga chieftaincies about the heir. No chief should become a chief without having undergone by swallowing the gem. There are two relevant traditions about it. The first is the belief that *ndzalama* (gem) has been adopted from the Swahili, meaning dirhem

money, but this tradition should not be entertained in this research because of its little information, unlikely the second one.

The second one according to Vatsonga tradition, it is regarded as a pebble from crocodile's stomach that is supposed to be removed from it when it is killed. It is then given to the chief elect to swallow and is supposed to remain in his stomach for many years. Its stay symbolizes the chief's rightfulness to the throne. If it should fail to be swallowed or kept it in his stomach, his chances of being a chief is in jeopardy and therefore the chieftaincy is passed on to his younger brother.

Another belief that is related to those that were discussed above is that of *xiluku* ( a ballous shape object made from the mixture of fats and furs in the voice box of a lion.) It is believed that this ball like object rolls when the lion roars and it makes the he-lion's voice very strong and forceful. It holds the same beliefs among the Vatsonga people.

All the chiefs are believed to have undergone this practice. Surprisingly, of the three chiefs I interviewed none of them declared the truth about it citing that their ancestors won't be happy when they disclose this tradition. The only explanation provided to me is all about how *ndzalama* (gem) is taken since it is a general practice to them all.

As a result none of the Vatsonga chiefs dies in a hospital. All of them meet their deaths while at home in order to vomit this gem. Normally when the queen sees that the condition is very bad, she would close the door and stays

in until death arrives. Immediately she grabs the gem, it is then that she announces the death.

For two to three weeks the throne remains covered by skins and amulets as a sign of mourning. It signals a temporary existence, which, is being undertaken by kingship. This practice is echoed by Ray, (1991:74) when he says following:

When the king has died, the kingship temporarily cease to exist, and it had to be reinstituted through a series of rites in which the new king and his chiefs enacted the founding deeds of the early kings.

Prior to the days of coronation for the new chief and his mother would secretly give each other *ndzalama*(gem) to swallow. Thereafter the elders of their tribe are also invited to witness the success of the swallowing process. The process remains a secret to the common members of the family. Anyone who discloses it could be fined very heavily.

It is a philosophical belief that to protect the chief from witchcraft, *ndzalama* (gem) is treated by the strongest Inyangas from across the border, say Maputo, Swaziland, or Zimbabwe even Nyasaland. The elders choose these Inyangas and that must remain a secret.

These Inyangas would knit *xitshungulu* (amulet) that would be worn by the chief either around his waist or arm during the day and it must be placed under the pillow at night. The reason is to protect him from witchcraft. These Inyangas are kept secret because if known, people may also go to

them and pay heavy sums of money in order to become stronger and popular than their chief.

*Xitshungulu* (amulet) is prepared by mixing jujus and fats from strongest animals such as a lion, crocodile, tiger, and a snake like mamba whose venom is very powerful and deadly. The chief should then know no illness, witchcraft nor physical injury. He would lead a life free from witchcraft and all related diseases. This is a psychological belief rooted in Vatsonga chiefs.

This practice is done only to the heir when the time to take the throne is done. Below are stories about the heir.

#### *MUDYA-NDZHAKA* (HEIR)

Just like other African cultures, Vatsonga have similar beliefs as far heirloom is concerned. Webster's Dictionary supports this when it says the following about the heir:

He is one who receives any endowment from an ancestor or relation; as, the heir of one's reputation or virtues.

In most African cultures the apparent inheritor is a son. Daughters are not valued very much since they are subject to change their surnames and adopt those of their husbands. In other words, the son is by virtue the one who should carry on with the clan surname to the next generation.

Usually the heir is the first son of the chief from the first marriage. According to Vatsonga, when the first wife fails to give birth to a son, the chief is requested by the elders to marry another woman who could give

birth to a son. The woman must come from another chief's kraal rather than one from a clan that is of common people. Just before she's married, an Inyanga is summoned to the chief's kraal to ask from his divine bones where to get to point the most suitable wife to bear an heir to chieftdom. It is then that cattle are driven to the family shown by the divine bones as lobola.

Should the chosen wife manage to bear a son, he should be the heir to the throne. Should the queen fails to give birth to a son as well, the second wife is married in order to bear the heir. As a custom, when the queen manage to give birth to a son at a latter stage, the chances of the second wife's son of becoming a chief is nullified. Macbeth became a king who according to Vatsonga should have swallowed the gem before he taking up the throne. As a result he became suspicious to anyone who is from royal family.

According to Vatsonga philosophical beliefs, kingship is from blood. It is only the heir who qualifies to become a king. But Macbeth never came out like that. As such this study argues the entitlement of the heir

*Mudya-ndzhaka* (heir), is one who inherits after the death of his father and automatically become the successor of the father. He is usually raised differently from other children within the chief's kraal. At the age of seven he is separated from his family to stay with relatives who are also of the royal family. Nearly all the Vatsonga chiefs have grown up like that. At that family he is taught among others endurance, patience, fear of women, control of temper, straight-forwardness, and so forth. The raising of an heir has a philosophical bearing on the side of the chieftain's family.

Other reasons for him to live away from home is to discourage ambitions and entertaining thoughts that may lead him to assassinate his father. And also to stay away from his peers so that when in power he might have no friend, in fear to being witched by those who may be jealous.

The boy only comes home for short stays of not more five days when there are important family occasions as *muphahlo* (ceremonial rites) and funeral of a relative. He would only come home immediately his father's death to lay claim to the throne. His coming back could be signalled by arrangements of coronation

#### *KU VEKIWA KA HOSI (CORONATION)*

In the play, Macbeth's coronation is conducted as if it is for one who deserves to be the king of Scotland. The practice is against the Vatsonga way of doing it. The Vatsonga people have their own traditional ways of the installation of their chiefs. Normally the chief to be, is kept aside for a week at the place known by the elders and his mother if she's still alive. It is done in the presence of the Inyangas from across the border as already indicated who are strengthening him.

It is on the same week that *ndzalama* (gem) is taken in. Various and vigorous rituals such as cuttings and smearing of muti, *xixambo* (vapour bath) and other related practices are being conducted in order to strengthen the chief.

At dawn the elders and his aunt lead the chief to the graves where they would kneel before the former chief's grave and do the ceremonial rites. She

then pours traditional beer and snuff on a leaf while calling out the names of ancestors one by one. At the end she should spit beer onto the face of the chief to be and the crew.

The chief to be would be dressed in skins of a leopard denoting that he is now a chief. The symbolism of the leopard skin is explained by Fagg (1978:12) in this way:

In Africa, the leopard is treated as the main symbol of chieftainship because it embodies qualities such as courage, strength, ferocity and cunning, which are considered appropriate to chiefs.

This is evident to Vatsonga chief, who is dressed in skins of leopard, with *mbodi* (a beads around the head) as a symbol of a crown, holding an assegai in his right hand and a shield at the left. He is led to the ceremonial place by the elders of the country. The orator of the chief's kraal should recite his surname, mentioning all the successes done by his forefathers as he's led to the scene of ceremony. The recitation should have a psychological impact to the chief while on the throne.

Usually the kind of ceremony is attended by other chiefs and nowadays the chief to be is announced to the throne by the representative of the current government. As he ascends to the throne, women and men of his tribe should ululate and whistle, until he sits on the throne. The government representatives would then present a document with policy guidelines and legal parameters when the chief is exercising his authority.



As from that day onwards, the leopard's skin should be hung in his hut as preventative measure against witchcraft. From Notes and Queries (1955:38) quoted by Opie and Tatem say the following about this belief:

the slough of an adder hung on the rafters  
preserves the house against fire or it'll bring one  
luck to hang an adder skin over the chimney.

The hanging of skins of poisonous snakes on the wall of the chief's hut's common among the chiefs I have interviewed. However they declined to let me know about the secrets because their forefathers could get angry with them therefore their lifespan may be shorten by divulging such a heritage.

Preferably the snake must come outside the borders of South Africa and should be poisonous snake like a mamba from Mozambique or Malawian Black mambas but depending on the country the chief's Inyanga comes from.

The references that were highlighted above, all form the cog of the Vatsongas beliefs in connection with kingship, heir, coronation and the gem. This section has aligned itself to the philosophy and psychology of the Vatsongas belief. Besides these beliefs, there are other ones that follow:

#### *KU LAHLA HOSI* (BURIAL RITES)

Unlike King Duncan whose burial is not explained in the text, this subheading should highlight the burial procedures of Vatsonga chiefs in a philosophical manner. The burial rites of any of the Vatsonga chief are done secretly and probably at night. No coffin is so the body is wrapped by using the hide of a cattle slaughtered for that purpose only the chief's wives, the

elders and very close relatives should attend and must also be able to keep a secret. During that week there could be no comment on meetings and children shall be ordered to play outside the kraal after being told not to make noise for the ailing chief. The public would only be informed of his death a week after his secret burial.

A day after his death the elders go out to the chief's Inyanga to inform him about the death. He would come with them and conduct his practices before the chief is buried. The chief's sister should also go to the graves with beer and snuff and inform to the ancestors about his death and request them to welcome his spirit.

Should the death did not come naturally, say the chief was bewitched, the Inyanga should perform his fetish on the corpse so that all those who did the damage could follow soon. In the past the witch was pointed out and killed by the mob as a sign of anger. Nowadays, the family members do it secretly and only the results could be heard in a due course.

In the olden days chief's corpse was wrapped in using the hide of the beast slaughtered for the occasion as indicated above, but nowadays casket is used. Usually people come unknowingly to mourn an empty box the deceased has already been buried a week before.

When looking at Macbeth, Scottish people have various superstitious stories about funerals. Wilke (1816:27) says the following about the sun that may shine on one's head while at the graveyard:

If, at a funeral, the sunshines brightly on the face of one among the attendants, it marks him for the next to be laid in that churchyard.

This was strictly looked at and many people were afraid to go to the funeral places in fear of being blinded by the sun. This belief gave chance to those who practised witchcraft to carry on with their practices in order to cite the death to what has been seen by all at the churchyard.

Another belief can be quoted from Opie and Tatem (1992:47) in connection with funerals when they say:

Two funerals on the same day lead to quarrels as the spirit of the person last buried must sit and watch the place until next burial releases it from its lonely vigil.

This belief was common to the Scottish of the sixteenth century. Nowadays it is common to have two or more burials taking place in the graveyard. Nevertheless what is common to many traditional cultures is that those who came first must finish their burial before the next one can proceed with theirs.

The Vatsonga people believe that if one falls down at the graveyard, especially an adult man, it is a sign that the deceased and the fallen man had had sexual intercourse to the same woman. Therefore such a fallen man should meet his death as well unless strong Inyangas are consulted as soon he leaves the graveyard. As result it is better to stay away if one knows that both of you have had sexual intercourse to the same woman. This practise had an effect of minimizing adultery.

Once more Opie and Tatem (1992:170) come with another Scottish belief of the time that says:

If you meet a funeral procession, or one passes by you, always take off your hat: this keeps all evils spirits attending the body in good humour.

It was believed that the dead spirit could fly and enter into the hat and stays with you for a while. After some few days, one could also die because of those dead spirits that could call one to the graveyard every night.

Sometimes one was bound to join the procession for some few metres and then moves out of them to continue with one's journey. The best way to avoid this, is for one to remain inside a house until the mourners are far from one's home. Even peeping through the windows was not allowed. Others prefer to change direction as a safe measure to protect oneself against dysmenorrhoea.

Among other things taboos and superstitions are regarded as signs of bad omen. Another interesting story is of how an Inyanga is buried, *KU LAHLA N'ANGA* (Burial of the witchdoctor).

The burial of the famous witchdoctor normally known as, *dzwavi* (expert diviner-doctor), is more or less the same as what happen when the chief of a tribe is buried. As a custom, he dies in his hut in the presence of his gods. Just before his death, a successor is nominated by him and takes charge while still alive. All the tricks are laid down to the successor before his death.

On the day of his death, the elders go out to another witchdoctor to consult divine bones about his chances of being alive and dead. If he dies, all the trainees, especially the recent ones are summoned to the kraal to mourn the *father* as they normally address him.

The burial is done according to what he had instructed. Some are buried seated with an assegai in the right hand, others are buried in a sleeping positions as most deceased are.

In our village, one of the most famous and fearsome Inyanga was buried in a very strange manner. His mouth was opened and a reed from the river inserted in it. The hide of the beast that was slaughtered for the occasion covered him. As his grave was being filled with soil, the reed was kept upright until it was left protruding out of the grave. Another surprising fact was that in his right hand he held a knife and a live chicken on his left.

All of his jujus are buried with him as it was instructed. Only few of the jujus are left behind as a starter for the successor. This practice is not done for the chiefs due to the continuity of chieftaincy. As a result this research is trying to show the tradition beliefs among the Vatsonga inyangas that is still in progress to date.

#### *KU LAHLA XIHLANGI ( BURIAL OF STILL SUCKING CHILD)*

It is a belief in practice even today that very young children are buried by old women of the neighbouring families. These women are usually accompanied by the mother of the deceased child. According to Tsonga

tradition, it is done on the bank of a river. These elders dig a grave of about half a meter deep to bury the corpse. The psychological belief behind it is that the same women should dig out the corpse and take some of its parts to be used as muti as it is well known at my area.

It is said that the one to lay the child to rest is the mother of the child. The child is covered by a shawl and sleep in the right hand side position. If the child is put on the left position, it is believed that the mother shall no longer give birth.

It is easy for the grave to be wiped away by water on rainy times. That could be the reason for cases where children's bones have been discovered along the banks of the river after heavy rains. Maybe it is done in order for those elders who practice witchcraft to can come back and exhume the corpse.

This is because according to Hart (1971:48)

Old ladies dug up a baby's corpse and used it to change themselves into other shapes. Having it there they boiled some of it in a pot and some of it on coals and ate.

This is a common practice to all those people who are witches and wizards. These people either dig out the corpse or place a reed and suck fats and blood from it. Others remove the joints between the bones and use them as divine bones. This is another philosophy of the Tsonga's beliefs in connection with witchcraft. Another belief, which often happens due to sexual intercourse between a man and a woman who has just undergone miscarriage, is the one explained below.

### *KU KHUMA (DYSMENORRHOEA)*

According to Vatsonga's philosophy and psychological thinking, when one passes away, the whole family is not clean. Therefore nothing must be touched in the case of his goods until cleansing time is organised. But Macbeth did not wait for cleansing before taking up the throne. As a result, there are many funny stories that followed the spirit of Duncan. Macbeth so to say, has been ritually unclean ..

According to Vatsonga's beliefs in a case of a woman who had miscarriage, she would stay for almost one year without sleeping with a man. The period is taken as a sign of grief for the loss she is experiencing. Rigorous ritual cleansings are done in order to make her clean again.

If she secretly engages in sexual intercourse within that stipulated period, the partner would suffer from *makhuma* ( dysmenorrhoea) It is a disease of the joints when they are painful and sometimes swollen. Also the hands and the nails change complexion becoming pale.

The sick is taken to a witchdoctor renowned in curing such diseases. There, three medium sizes stones are burnt by fire and boiled very strong medicine and get three blankets to cover the sick in a vapour called, *xixambo* (vapour bath) for three hours.

After that he is released and be given herbal medicine to vomit and eat soft porridge. Some of the herbal medicine is placed in small earthen pot to soak and to be used while cooking for his soft porridge at home. Within five days, the sick shall get better and better. This disease makes the Vatsonga people

scarce to sleep with a widow who is still mourning her husband or child through miscarriage.

### *XITLEN'WANA* (EVIL SMELLING RODENT"} }

In the play, there is mention of Graymanlin, which is a cat. It is the kind of a cat that Vatsonga people believe that those who bewitch others use it. The Vatsonga people regard it as one of the most fearsome rodent that is used by the witches to bring omen to people. These rodents are nocturnal. Coming across it, it is highly considered as an omen. Biggins (1976:257) expresses the bad deeds of witches in a rat form as follows:

The witch will assume rat form in order to creep unobserved abroad the Tiger, where she will work evil spells on the ship and its master, she will harass him and waste him by means of her magic, although she cannot destroy either his vessel or himself.

The scenario above relates to a man who can change himself into a rat, and gets into his neighbour's through the door knob and opens up a bag of 80kg full of mielie- meal to his home. The process of this man continued like that until one day the rat was killed by dogs and his wife cried bitterly that the dogs have killed her husband. The truth of the matter is that he died instantly as the dogs kill that rat. It means that it was not a rat but her husband who was stealing from his neighbours.

*Xintlen'wana* (evil smelling rodent) is black and greyish spotted nocturnal animal, its skin has a very bad smell that lasts for days when one comes into contact with it. It is smaller than a cat and live in the holes of anthills places. It is very rare to see it at daylight even at night.



A convincing explanation comes with Hart (1971:25) who confirms that witches have an unnatural liking for rats and toads when he says:

Rats and toads are both looked upon as noxious creatures and therefore generally loathed by all people who generally have a natural antipathy against the sort of veinim, unless it be witches and such, who are said to cherish them.

These rodents have peculiar behaviour as stated above. When they show up to a victim, it is done in a dancing tactics. They could hold each other by a tail until they are all in a circle and start moving around while making a shrieking sound as if they are singing. When one comes closer to them, they would disperse into their burrowings. Their dance is similar to the one done by the witches before meeting Macbeth for the last time as it is explained by Nkondo and Shilote (1982:49) in this way:

*Ndzi ta thinda moya leswaku wu endla pfumawulo  
n'wina mi ri karhi mi cina hi ku rhendzelaka...*  
(I'll charm the air to give a sound while you perform  
your antic round...)

The antic round, is the similar dancing style where the dancers move in circle while singing and dancing. It is an activity that is very strange to be seen being performed by animals especially the witches and those mentioned before.

During my interview with chief Nxumalo he related to me an incident with this rodent that frightened his family. It was in his late 40's and his father the then chief Gidja was very ill. An evil smelling rodent came from nowhere on a day light and went directly to the hut of the ailing chief. The boys tried to

whistle it but it kept on going. One of the elder ran before it and obstructed it before it could enter, it is then it ran away. His father didn't live for the next two days. This is a philosophical belief that these rodents foretell the sorry state and it is not easy to meet them on daylight.

When killed, its skin is used as muti to bewitch people. It is believed that when part of its skin is mixed with muti and the water that has washed the corpse and one is cleaned by while asleep and when one comes into contact with others, they would feel a very bad smell. In the case of a woman, her husband won't be happy to have contact with her. As a result he could send her home citing that she is careless and cannot look after herself. In the case of a man, he would not be loved by his employers and would lose job after job without any success.

### ***“XIKHOVHA” (AN OWL)***

In the play again, there is mention of owls, which according to Vatsonga philosophical beliefs, are the messengers of the witches. This study also wishes to share with its readers the philosophical beliefs in owls and how Vatsonga people uses them as messengers to their targeted victims. In other cultures as indicated by Opie and Tatem (1992:296), owls are regarded as birds used for charms. They say the following about them:

If an owl, which they reckon a most abominable  
and unlucky bird, sends forth its hoarse and  
dismal voice, it is an omen of the approach of some  
terrible thing that some calamity is near at hand.

The tradition is still held by the Vatsonga. If this bird comes and hoots while someone is very ill in the family, it is believed that it foretells his death. As a

custom, the next morning, members of the family should leave as earlier as five o'clock to consult the Inyangas. If the ailing person dies, the belief is held that the owl was predicting his death.

Superstitiously, it is used as a messenger by the witches. Opie and Tatem (1992:296) went on to support it in these words:

Its visits and wild shrieking foretells the death of someone in the neighbourhood. It has thus gained the name of a death-bird.

In this kind of a situation, this bird must do the shrieking just before sunset at a close proximity of sick person. If it were at the gate, it would be taken as an omen. The family members should try all means to save the sick and the belief usually become true as predicted. Therefore these birds were even hunted and killed by hunters on daylight in order to eliminate their species and witchcraft. Normally it is a guileless bird that hides during the day and come out from its hiding place at night but surprisingly it is regarded as a superstitious bird.

Normally these birds live in caves. They can be likened to the weird sisters in Macbeth's play, who performed their charms while in dark caves. Other traditions hold the belief that owls are the Tokoloshe who were not good at carrying instructions and as a result were chased away from the group and their skins were decorated with feathers so that they may look different from others.

The owl presages a warning on bad omen when it comes before sunset and sits on the roof of the hut or at the gate and starts hooting. Somebody who is

related to the family should die or is dead. But that one that hoots at night does not mean anything. Analysis within this study has shown that owls played an important role during the preparations done by the witches when they are to meet Macbeth. Their presence near the cave and also at Duncan's death bring out the philosophy and psychology of evil very clear to the reader of this research. Snakes are the other creatures that are considered as predictors of bad and good things. Much can be read about them below.

### *NYOKA ( A SNAKE)*

Vatsonga people hold the beliefs that there are other people who were bewitched with snakes inside their bodies. It is the reason certain inyangas are able to smell it out when healing their sick. The bowlessness snakes are the ones that are commonly used.

Meanwhile not all snakes are poisonous and dangerous to human kind. However there are beliefs rooted in different cultural groups like the Scottish as it is explained by Opie and Tatem (1992:362-363) in this way:

The killing of the first adder you see predicts that  
you'll triumph over your enemies.

The tradition is still in use by some of the Vatsonga people, who like to kill any snake they come across at the beginning of the year, cut its head and put it either in the bottle or the matchbox for the rest of the year. It is believed that nothing could befall the doer throughout the year.

On the other hand Addy (1895: 67) has another tradition that says:

It is unlucky to dream about snakes, which are  
your enemies. If in your dream you get safely

past them you will overcome all your enemies.

This tradition is considered the worst by the Vatsongas. If one is working in Johannesburg and had such a dream, it means that one should come across the criminals who would try to rob one's money or clothings. Therefore it is considered a taboo. To overcome that kind of a situation, one must fight one's way through their midst and bypass these snakes without being bitten.

There are two types of snakes that are not popular to people. The brown snake, with whitish bottom part is said to be *nyoka-ya-vakokwana* (the snake of the grand fathers). It is a harmless snake and always quiet and leaves its spot after a snuff has been poured down to thank the ancestors.

Its strange behaviour is when it can place itself in the grass that made up a thatched roof and remains there dangling without falling down. Sometimes it could stay at the opening of an earthen pot filled with water and one could insert a mug to draw water but it won't do any harm. Once a snuff has been poured on its head as a sign of thank you it disappears. If it is killed, another one shall emerge within a week's time. Usually they are chased by a snuff as mentioned before. Therefore their appearances are happily welcomed by family members as a way of meeting their forefathers. This is a philosophical beliefs deep rooted in Vatsonga cultural group.

There is a blind snake with two heads, called *nyoka-hansi* (typhlops). Maybe the Whiteman call them blind snakes just because when one head is disturbed, the other one takes over by changing its direction. According to Vatsonga custom, on seeing it running, it foretells a bad omen.

Other traditions say that if a snake or a viper do cross your path, watch out for false friends. But the Vatsonga people hold the tradition that when the typhlops, in particular, the blackish one crosses your path ahead of you, and also, at full speed, it is a signal of bad omen. It is a belief rooted into Vatsonga mind and no one could convince them as nothing but a mere crawling of the snake.

Usually and under normal circumstances, these snakes are very respectful. When they feel that a person is coming, they bite the ground and wait like that until one has passed. Thereafter the snake would proceed with its journey.

Another tradition is that of those whom are bed wetting. It is psychologically believed that collecting of a slough that is not broken, and tie it around one's waist while going to bed, according to the belief, one could stop bed-wetting. The belief is used by many and it does work. Even myself has tried it during my boyish stage and it became a success.

#### *XIMBALA* ( A STICK MADE FROM AFRICAN BLACKWOOD)

An African Blackwood is a tree called *xilutsi* in Xitsonga. Its inner part is black in colour and very strong. Most of the African sticks are made from this tree. They are found in densely populated areas like the Limpopo Province next to Kruger National Park.

*Ximbala* is a stick made from this tree. It is made in the mode of an assegai. Chiefs used this sharp-pointed stick when they are demanding overdue fines

from their subordinates. Usually the chief with Ximbala and his provisions sent out a very strong and courageous man to the family of the debtor.

Along the road that man should not speak to anybody and even at the plaintiff's home. On his arrival, he would dig in the stick at the middle of the family and stay there without talking to anyone. If the payments were not met by sunset, he would sleep there and even do the toileting without moving to a safer place.

After a day or so, the family should come together and agree to pay the debts for their chief. In those olden days the payments were cattle. Then two or three cattle could be grazed from towards chief's kraal. This was a belief to express the chief's anger towards a debtor.

The chief would praise him for his bravery and promote him to be his Indhuna. He would be praised as a capable man, one who can demonstrate the chief's anger. Then *ximbala* is return to the chief to be kept for future guilty parties and it is seen once there's a debtor who is resisting paying the chief.

## 2.5 SUMMARY

This episode has successfully managed to give a brief survey on the Scottish kindship, coronation, throne and heirship of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Scottish beliefs in superstitions has also been examined under this unit of study.

On the side of Vatsonga, this analysis didn't take the trouble of getting deeper into the historical background of their chieftaincies. Nonetheless, their philosophical and psychological beliefs on the same bearing as in paragraph I, namely, kingship. Coronation, throne and heirs, has been outlined in accordance with their traditions.

Rooted in the Vatsonga chieftaincies are the things that are designated as sacred and prohibited by their social custom. Few of what I have collected through oral examinations have been included in the chapter.

However, some of these scenarios have been linked to what is in the play with reference to the philosophical and psychological beliefs in witchcraft and superstitions as Vatsonga people do. Some were linked to the Scottish belief in their kingship, coronation, throne and heirdom.