

# **Zwikumelo – Referential praises for empowerment and talk management strategies for *mahosi* (royal leaders) with special reference to *Thovhele Mīdiyavhathu Tshivhase***

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Praises called *zwikumelo* in Tshivenda are often seen by outsiders as acts of interruption or interjections by royal praise-singers when their rulers are busy addressing people. There are others who see them as flattery; profuse, ridiculous and extravagant exclamations chanted to exaggerate the positions of rulers. The aim of this article is to demonstrate that there are genuine referential praises for rulers which are used to honour them and enhance their status, but that, in addition, they also function as talk management strategies to empower the rulers and to enhance the standard of such talks to be more informative, effective and focused.

## **Introduction**

Among Africans in general and the Vhenda in particular, praising is a way of life. There are various ways of praising in Tshivenda. People sing praises to:

- children after their clans
- people's names, particularly when they are dancing
- men, when involved in a game of fighting
- animals, both domestic and wild. Animals are praised when people talk about them or hear them making sounds, and towards sunset, when herdboys take their flock home
- inanimate objects such as mountains, rivers, meadowlands, trees and the weather
- people when they have done well
- boys and girls when welcoming them back from initiation schools
- someone when he/she arrives home from a long journey.

However, people are in the forefront of all these praises.

Praising is not new among the nations of the world. We read in the Bible that the Israelites praised and sang songs. When David killed Goliath, they sang praises for him. When the Israelites were in captivity, we read that even the Babylonians knew about their praises in that they asked them to sing the 'songs of Zion', which they refused to do because they claimed that they were in captivity. The psalms of David and the 'songs of Solomon' are often chanted when God is praised (*Bible: Authorized King James version*).

According to Milubi (1997:37)

Praise poetry ostensibly attaches value to specific personalities, events and places, and to ceremonial and symbolic objects. It is a means of giving value to the society as a whole, and it awakens awareness and induces a sense of good feeling in the society.

There is much that has been recorded about the praises of Vhenda rulers such as Makhado, Tshivhase, Mphaphuli and Madzivhandila. Most names of the rulers have praises behind them. Finnegan (1988:83) adds that, 'In traditional kingdoms of Africa, with their royal courts and clearly marked differences in wealth, power, and leisure, court poetry flourished'.

There are various ways of praising in Tshivenda. Praises are called *zwikhoḁo* from the verb stem *-khoḁ-a* 'to praise', but they are also called *zwirendo* from the verb stem *-rend-a* 'to praise'. Makuya (1971:41–42) argues that:

There is a difference between *zwikhoḁo* and *zwirendo* in Venda. When we praise (*u khoḁa*) we say something about a thing, person, animal etc. about which we have certain facts. We praise a chief for his brave deeds in war, or to show how great we regard him to be; but when we offer a *tshirendo* about him, we say things not necessarily done by him but what we think of him and what we think he can do.

Makuya's views can open another debate, because most people use these two terms interchangeably. Van Warmelo (1945) on the other hand, uses both terms to refer to praise names (Muloiwa, 1975:2). The two terms are used for praise poems such as those of the rulers mentioned above, and praise names where each name, be it for a person, animal or geographical area, has a praise name behind it.

However, there is another form of praise among the Vhavaḁa known as *zwikumelo*, which is due to *mahosi* 'rulers' at various levels.

### **Background to *Zwikumelo* (Praises) / *U kumela* (Praising)**

*U kumela* literally means 'to groan for' *mahosi* 'rulers' from the verb stem *-kum-a* 'groan'. Within Vhavaḁa society, rulers from the most junior level (*Musanda*), to one level above (*Khosi*), and the most senior level (*Thovhela*), which is at the same level as a king, are praised in the fashion of *U kumelwa* 'to be groaned for' when they are drinking, addressing people, arriving at some place or standing up to leave. However, if all of them are present, it is the most senior ruler who is 'groaned for' by his subjects including all his immediate juniors. When subjects enter the royal residence or come into the presence of a royal leader, they announce their arrival with *zwikumelo* praises. The same happens when they are taking leave from his presence.

In his book *Elelwani*, Maumela (1954:9) depicts a scene where Elelwani arrives home to find people praising someone, who to her was a ruler, chanting praises such as *Gole muḁe wa shango ... Khakhamela! Mbilalume! Marunga-dzi-nndevhelaho! Dada ḁa u ḁa vthathu ...!* 'The guiding cloud, owner of the country... You who appear unexpectedly! The male rabbit! The one who gores those who provoke him! The monster that eats people ...!' This was done when Khosi Vho Ratshihule was drinking beer.

We see in Mathivha's *Mabalanganye* (1983) that praising can be done when communicating with the ruler in ordinary conversation, such as when Kululu, Tshikota, Mabalanganye, Makheila and other subjects 'groan in appreciation' for their ruler Sengeza. This is also noted in Maumela's *Vhuhosi vhu tou bebelwa* (1961), where the subjects 'groan in appreciation' for their ruler Ndaedzo and his senior, Khosi Vho Thavhakhulu in *Vhuhosi a vhu thetshelwi* (Maumela, 1974). In Ngwana's *Vhakale vha hone* (1981:85), there is a poem on *U kumela*, contributed by A.P. Sigama, which is directed at rulers.

In this way, the subjects praise their ruler in appreciation, but they can also indicate their dissatisfaction with him or even protest against his rule with strategic remarks. Milubi (1997:43) adds that 'There are praisers who may add an element of mockery in their praising. The mockery is never taken in serious light, but is regarded as a touch of humour'. He illustrates instances where they make utterances such as *Vha fa lini shango ḁa lala!* 'When will you die so that we can rest in peace!' This and similar appellations can be uttered when the subjects are unhappy with certain aspects of His Majesty's rule.

Though there is an element of praise in *U kumela*, it differs from other forms of praise because the expressions are referential praises that are addressive and appellative in nature, and are accompanied by informative remarks that the subjects add for the attention of His Majesty. The referential titles that are used to praise and all other relevant expressions tend to have some functions other than mere praising, such as responding to His Majesty's utterances, addressing him, alerting him to occurrences in the environment, and managing his speech.

There is no clear-cut structure to this type of praise, as we see in ordinary poetry or even praise poetry. The subjects may praise one at a time, each deciding on what to say and how to say it. If there is only one subject, he/she will sing the praises to His Majesty as if there were a hundred others. As a group, they would sing praises in unison, as Christians praying to God in heaven sing in unison. Each one has the freedom to construct his/her own praise and if another repeats what the other has voiced, there is no censure.

Wessmann (1908:16) says that when His Majesty squats, his subjects immediately show 'a dog-like submission. Everybody bows low, heads nearly touching the floor, and with hands clasped in front they shout in unison and for several minutes such salutes as, "God of heaven and earth", "handsome man with four eyes", "lion", "beast", "goat-stable", "cattle-kraal", "ox", "light of the world", "beast of prey", and many more that refer to his wealth and qualities much of which could be real or imaginary'. Wessmann (1908:17) goes on to say that when His Majesty was drinking beer, the subjects would shout, 'lion', 'handsome man with four eyes', 'beast of prey' so loudly that it was deafening. He adds that if His Majesty coughed or cleared his throat, the subjects would continue to shower him with praises and flatteries.

Molema, a Motswana historian, sees things almost in the same light as Wessmann when he says 'Flattery, profuse and ridiculous, was due to the chief. At his appearance he was received with extravagant exclamations, and praised to the skies by his indunas or immediate attendants' (Molema, 1963:139).

The claims by both Wessmann and Molema raise eyebrows. First of all, neither Vhavenda rulers nor their subjects squat as described by Wessmann. The ruler usually sits on a chair (or any comfortable seating that is provided for him). The subjects usually sit on their haunches with one knee up and the other a bit lower, like a V-sign. They may face down to concentrate on what they are doing or stealthily look up at the ruler now and then to draw his attention to their praises. This is and has always been a way in which subjects show respect to their ruler. The 'dog-like submission' as Wessmann indicates, is a misrepresentation. Wessmann also exaggerates the sitting position of a Muvenda when he/she is praising his/her ruler. His observations and pronouncements should be understood in terms of how European colonial scholars and missionaries failed to understand African languages and cultures, and consequently misinterpreted every sphere of their lives.

When African rulers are being praised by their subjects, both Wessmann and Molema describe what they hear as flatteries and profuse, ridiculous expressions. Whenever the subjects use flatteries and what appear to be 'profuse and ridiculous' praises, they show that they are happy for the ruler and that all is well; although some praises could be used to code veiled criticism, which the ruler would grasp and act upon accordingly. This kind of discourse gives the subjects the licence to protest, and the rulers grow up knowing this full well. However, on the whole, these referential praises are used to express respect and dignity for His Majesty.

Wessmann misinterprets the subjects' reference to their ruler's wealth as being far fetched. These expressions are strategic for the ruler to note that his being wealthy is important to his subjects. Wherever reference sounds imaginary, the subjects are wishing the ruler well. The ruler's alleged likeness to the God of heaven is a strategy by his subjects to remind him of his responsibilities as head of a nation. He is accountable to God. They in no way ever make him their God, a fact of which he too is very much aware. The English translations that most scholars depend on tend to wipe away the freshness of the content, dignity and honour that is expressed in the words for African royal leaders. The figures of speech given in English, which both Wessmann and Molema provide without their Tshivenda or Setswana equivalents, dilute their powerful meaning as expressed in both Tshivenda and Setswana respectively. The words or phrases are not just flatteries, but terms of empowerment and talk management strategies.

Of interest, is how Molema, the Motswana scholar referred to above, interprets these expressions just like Wessmann, who in all respects is a foreigner. Molema is reputed for having produced one of the great masterpieces

of history about Africans, *The past and present – An ethnographical and historical study of the natives of South Africa* (first published in 1923), in which he challenged numerous interpretations by European scholars with regard to Africans. However, he often interpreted issues in the same way as European scholars such as Wessmann. The educational environment in which he grew up might have had an impact, as his grandfather was among the first to embrace the Christian religion. The Christianity that some people were converted to some years ago was almost equivalent to Europeanism.

## Methodology

This article is based on data collected from the royal speech of Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase at Ngweḽani ya Ha Themeli in 1992 during the enthronement of Khosi Themeli, a junior ruler at a level lower than Thovhele. The praise-singer who chanted praises to His Majesty as His Majesty addressed the multitudes, was a member of the Tshivhase royal family. The audience included the people of Ngweḽani ya ha Themeli from the neighbouring villages, other rulers mainly from Ha Tshivhasa, dignitaries, and invited guests.

The data are the referential praises used by the praise-singer, which function as addressive devices. This study focuses on these expressions as they are used within the Vhavenda speech community and is therefore a naturalistic inquiry. While this study is qualitative descriptive research, it will have characteristics of the quantitative in order to manage the data in terms of numbers. These referential praises and strategies for royal talk management were selected or strategically sampled from those used by the royal praise-singer with reference to the royal speech of His Majesty Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase. Other information-rich praises and strategies are also included with regard to this topic, although they were used for other rulers who were not associated with Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase.

## Interpretive data analysis

The study takes an ethnography of communication approach with more emphasis on communicative competence. According to Saville-Troike (1989:362), citing Hymes (1966), communicative competence means ‘what a speaker needs to know to communicate appropriately within a speech community’. Saville-Troike (1989:363) adds that:

Communicative competence involves not only the language code but also what to say, to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. Further it involves the social and cultural knowledge speakers are presumed to have which enables them to use and interpret linguistic forms.

Whenever anyone praises as in *U kumela*, he/she should be able to apply his/her knowledge of his/her culture.

In this case, because the praise-singer is responding and addressing His Majesty, he has to take into account which praises to use and how, when and where they must be uttered.

It should further be noted that some of the praises were repeated many times as His Majesty was addressing the multitudes, but only a few have been selected for analysis.

(See the discourse at the end of the article under appendix.)

*Vele/Vele la-Mbeu* (6/81)  
*Iwe Tshivhase* (30)  
*Tshivhasamiḍiyavhathu* (4)  
*Wa ha Mankilinkili* (16)  
*Mboloma* (93)  
*Mbombela mauu* (89)  
*Marungadz:indevelaho* (101)  
*Mvumi ya shango* (10)  
*Tshivhavhala tsha shango* (12)

*Muhali wa shango* (2)  
*Tshidada Muhali* (105)  
*Ndau ya nduna* (55)  
*Khakhamela* (87)  
*Ngwenyama* (20/59)  
*Silwana* (22/57)

'Vele/Vele ǀa-Mbeu (6/81)  
 You Tshivhase (30)  
 Tshivhasa the one who burns people's homes (4)  
 One of Mankilinkili (16)  
 The great droner (93)  
 The one who groans for the big and humungous (89)  
 The one who pierces/gores those who provoke him (101)  
 The one source of life of the country (10)  
 The most frightening and dexterous beast of the country (12)  
 The fighter and protector of the country (2)  
 The frightening and fearless beast (105)  
 The male lion (55)  
 You who appear unexpectedly (87)  
 The lion (20/59)  
 The fearless beast' (22/57)

The following will show how the praise-singer used referential praises to:

- respond to His Majesty
- support him after every utterance
- manipulate the topic shift in case His majesty dwelt on a topic for too long.

It will be indicated further that the praises are not uttered following a fixed pattern, and that the praise-singer has the latitude to use any praise wherever he chooses, especially where he agrees and supports His Majesty. However, it was also noted that there were some referential praises and appellations which were chanted in response not only to His Majesty's utterances, but also to what was happening in that setting and some scenes there.

The analysis did not necessarily follow the linear arrangement of the praises, but they were categorized in terms of their similar referential forms and functions. Besides, it should be indicated that the researcher's interpretive analysis is quite relative in the sense that while the referential praises are addressed to His Majesty's utterances, each one is not strictly tied to any other although they all have the same function. In other words, they should be understood in both direct and general terms.

### *Vele/Vele-ǀa-Mbeu* (6/81)

The praise-singer praises Thovhele Miǀiyavhathu Tshivhase as *Vele-ǀa-Mbeu* 'Vele of Mbeu', indicating that he is linked to *Vele mulala* 'Vele of old'. *Vele mulala* or *Vele-ǀa-Mbeu* is his ancestor who, according to historical evidence, crossed the river Vhembe from Zimbabwe with a large group of people called Vhasenzi and Vhalemba, as many others had done much earlier.

*Vele-ǀa-Mbeu* has been used to refer directly to His Majesty Miǀiyavhathu Tshivhase, but it is also more embracive as he shares it with the other descendants of Vele. Vele is said to have been a very fearless leader and a forerunner of the Masingo clan. This indicates that Miǀiyavhathu Tshivhase is not the only branch from Vele, but that there are many others who, when they address people, would be praised as *Vele-ǀa-Mbeu*. This makes the Tshivhase dynasty an important kingship among the Vhaventā. In other words, Miǀiyavhathu becomes what the Vhaventā refer to as *Vele-Nda-Sala* and *Vele-ǀa-Mbeu*, *Vele Mulala* 'Vele the ancestor'. Here His Majesty Miǀiyavhathu Tshivhase

was being introduced to the crowd as *Vele-Nda-Sala* 'Vele-the-Remainder' or 'Vele-the-Present'. Wherever this referential praise was used, the praise-singer was not only praising His Majesty, but was also reminding the audience of who was addressing them.

The praise-singer goes on to refer to him as *Tshivhasamiḍiyavhathu*, *Iwe Tshivhase*, *Wa Ha Mankilinkili*. The name *Tshivhasamiḍiyavhathu* was given to Thovhele Mukhesi who had a tendency to subjugate other Vhavenḍa groups by burning their homesteads. The name comes from the verb stem *-vhas-a* 'burn' and the prefix *tshi-* adds the qualification of an expert. The name therefore became *Tshivhasamiḍiyavhathu* and, in the process, it turned into a praise utterance and also his name.

The praise-singer goes on to refer to *Miḍiyavhathu* as *Iwe Tshivhase* 'You Tshivhase', a direct identifying referring expression, thus agreeing with what he is saying. The second person plural pronominal *Iwe* 'You' used here, does not belittle *Tshivhase*, in fact, it honours him as being above all others. This deictic expression is often used in reference to God because He is immortal. When used in this manner, it places *Miḍiyavhathu* just below God to remind him of his guardianship of God's people. The praise-singer cannot refer to him with the usual *Vhone* 'You' used for elderly or senior people, because in *Tshivhenḍa* society rulers occupy a certain level and when they are praised, that level is made more prominent than that of their subjects. The referential praise here means that he is the only *Tshivhase* and there is no other like him.

The word *Mankilimankili* is ideophonic and has been used here to give a picture of something very strong that has been planted and remains standing like a statue. It is unshakable. This means that when other people's homesteads have fallen down, his remains standing like Joseph's bundle of grass stood in the midst of his brothers' bundles (Genesis, 37:7). *Mankilimankili* also became the name of the *Tshivhase* royals, and as a result Thovhele *Miḍiyavhathu* becomes his relative, hence *Wa Ha Mankilimankili*.

*Miḍiyavhathu*'s grandfather Thovhele Rasimphi *Tshivhase*'s forerunners and many in the line of the *Tshivhase* dynasty are reputed for the revival of this praise as now and then they would refer to themselves as *Mankilimankili*. On chanting this praise, the audience see the legendary leader in *Miḍiyavhathu*; especially those who were around during the reign of his grandfather Thovhela Rasimphi *Tshivhase*, who called himself *Phiriphiri* 'Pepper' and *Tshikotshi* 'Scotchman'. I came across many who told me that His Majesty had a slogan that he chanted whenever he wanted to leave, which went like this: *Ndi a godima!* 'I go down!', because he travelled on horseback and the royal village was up in the mountain, as were some of the villages of his subjects. As a result, 'going away' meant 'going down'.

*Phiriphiri* 'Pepper', refers to a spice that is very hot. This implies that His Majesty was never a coward and was always ready to face his enemies. Thovhele Rasimphi *Tshivhase* believed that he was an independent leader who bowed to no one, just like the British Empire, with its praise: 'The sun never sets on the British Empire!' This led to his adoption of the name 'Empire', transformed to 'Mphaya' in *Tshivhenḍa*. In this manner, he was displaying his power and announcing his independence. In the use of all these expressions, the praise-singer is elevating *Miḍiyavhathu* to a higher level. The strategy of adding his ancestors' names to his is a way of empowering him as a fighter, never a coward.

The repeated reference to the ancestors is strategic. According to Obeng (1997:41), 'The deceased, now an ancestor, rightfully deserves reverence more than other persons'. The praise-singer does this to bring the ancestor closer to the subjects. It is a strategy to build unity between the subjects, in other words, he is saying that his ancestors are in *Miḍiyavhathu* and, alternatively, that their forefathers, the very ones who were the subjects of the ancestors, are in the people. This is another way of wagging a warning finger to all present and potential enemies that *Miḍiyavhathu* is as ferocious as his forefathers, and any attempt to undermine him will be met with the same force that was applied during the days of *Tshivhasamiḍiyavhathu* of old.

There is repeated reference to *Vele* or *Vele-ḵa-Mbeu*, *Iwe Tshivhase*, *Tshivhasamiḵiyavhathu*, *Wa Ha Mankilimankili* and all those addressive devices throughout the royal speech. The main reason is to remind the multitudes of who is addressing them. Again it is a way of telling them that Miḵiyavhathu is representing all the other ancestral royals in the Tshivhase dynasty and beyond.

### ***Muhali wa shango!* ‘The great fighter for the country!’ (2)**

A fighter is a protector, a saviour and redeemer. He stands where the battle is fierce to protect his subjects. The praise-singer is acknowledging and affirming Miḵiyavhathu, but also declaring to potential enemies that Miḵiyavhathu is a fighter par excellence. This is an assurance to his subjects that they are safe in the face of any eminent danger.

This referential praise appears first, as a strategy to introduce His Majesty at the ceremony; people were being introduced to their brave and protecting leader. The praise-singer was also informing the general audience about His Royal Highness.

### ***Mvumi ya shango!* ‘The great source of life for the country’ (10)**

The praise-singer goes on to praise Miḵiyavhathu as *Mvumi ya shango*. *Mvumi* refers to rain making white to darkish clouds that gather from afar. When such clouds start to assemble, the Vhavanḵa know for sure that it is going to rain. Rain brings life to the people. When it has rained, they are able to plough and get water for household use. Rain is good for plants, animals and life in general. For this reason, Miḵiyavhathu’s presence is a sign of life and abundance.

The referential praise is part of the praise-singer’s introduction of His Majesty to the gathering. The audience is being told that His Royal Highness, as *Mvumi* ‘the clouds that carry rain for the country’, comes to them as a source of life, which means he takes care of his people.

### ***Tshivhavhala tsha shango!* ‘The most frightening and dexterous beast in the country’ (12)**

The praise-singer goes on to paint Miḵiyavhathu as *Tshivhavhala tsha shango*. In the epithet *tshivhavhala* ‘the most frightening and dexterous beast in the country’, he is likened to a terrible, marauding and harrasing animal; a terrifying, powerful beast with acrobatic and inexplicably sharp movements. One feels a series of painful movements that pierce through one’s body like an electric saw in the hands of an expert cutter slicing bones to pieces in a butchery. Miḵiyavhathu is like a possessed beast with deadly movements, one that can devour his victim alive many times over. This is a rare and unusual animal spelling disaster in any face-to-face encounter, because it creates havoc as it tears people mercilessly to pieces. One remains all agog when told about it. The picture that is painted is that of a man-eating lion, cheetah or snake-like animal, one with deadly power.

This praise comes very early in the beginning, and it is as if the praise-singer is displaying His Majesty to the multitudes. In other words, those who have other agendas might as well shelve them for their own good.

### ***Mboloma!* ‘The great droner’ (93)**

The praise-singer continues to give the audience another picture where Miḵiyavhathu is referred to as *Mboloma*. *Mboloma* is a coined noun from the verb stem *-vholom-a* ‘excessive boiling’. When water has been boiling in a pot, especially when it has been covered for a long time, it reaches a point of *u vholoma* ‘it boils excessively’. This same noise is also heard at places such as waterfalls where water gushes as it makes its way through various pits and corners. The noise can be deafening to say the least. The expression above creates images of well-ordered sounds. With the epithet *Mboloma* ‘The great droner’, the sound that His Majesty makes is well-contained within a big voluminous hole and its effect is able to cause tremors. This implies that when His Majesty comes to his subjects, he does so with a deafening earth-shaking and well-ordered shout.

In the speech, it comes after His Majesty has referred to the importance of the subject, and implies that neither he nor the ruler should take each other for granted. Here His Majesty takes on an advisory role, hence the praise-singer's response with *Mboloma*.

### ***Khakhamela!* 'The one who arrives unexpectedly' (87)**

In Tshivenda culture, senior royal leaders usually do not always alert their juniors or subjects of their visits. The subjects should always be ready, as their superiors could arrive at awkward times, in other words, they could appear unexpectedly *khakha-u-mela*. This means that they are like a plant that sprouts where it is least expected.

This referential praise comes immediately after His Majesty has indicated that the Ngweṅani royal residence is his and that he is free to come there without fear of anyone. In other words, if he arrives there unannounced, nothing is out of the ordinary because whenever he arrives there, he is entitled to do so and no one should question it – after all that is his home.

### ***Mbombelamaulu!* 'The one who groans for the big and humungous' (89)**

The praise-singer creates another image of Miḍiyavhathu when he calls him *Mbombelamaulu*. This is a praise which is derived from the verb stem *-vhombel-a* meaning to 'groan for' and the noun *Maulu* which is in fact *Mahulu*, 'the big or humungous ones'. In the epithet *Mbombelamaulu* 'The one who groans for the big ones', the image painted is that of a huge beast which is fearless and fumes at the sight of his challengers regardless of their size. Before he attacks his foes or those who threaten his people, he first dares them with his tremendous and earth shaking/shattering groans. Here Miḍiyavhathu is groaning, facing the big ones. The groaning here is not caused by any pain, but is enhanced or infused in him so that he should be able to scare the big ones. Miḍiyavhathu is here being likened to an ox, and a humungous one whose groans are so powerful that the earth trembles. The big ones refer to any other leader. This means that as he stands there, Miḍiyavhathu is not afraid of anyone.

The praise implies that those who are his subjects should not fear anything since no person, of whatever stature, will be able to match him. This praise gives a picture of a bull that is ready to fight. When it groans and kicks up soil, there is no turning back. The sound of the groans is often heard far away like the roaring of a lion, which frightens all the other animals, scattering them through the bushes before it even arrives or makes its presence felt.

The image that His Majesty creates is of a big and extended body similar to a bull that groans 'for the big ones'. This is done through the other members of the royal family, such as *makhotsimunene* 'royal uncles' and *dzikhadzi* 'royal aunts' in line 88, who together with a ruler form the ruling cabinet in Tshivenda royalty.

### ***Marungadzindevelaho!* 'One who pierces those who provoke him' (101)**

The prefix *Ma-* shows that the agent is not just a habitual doer, but an expert too. The verb stem *-rung-a* 'pierce' paints a picture of an animal with sharp piercing horns that gore very painfully. The other prefix *dzi-* 'they' implies that many other animals are also pierced. The verb stem *-ndevhel-a* 'provoke' informs us that by nature animals are known for instigating fights, in other words, it is in their nature to provoke others. However, in this instance, no matter how pugnacious they may appear to be, Miḍiyavhathu is ready to pierce them. This means that he is a fighter, and if anyone decides to provoke him, he/she will lose while Miḍiyavhathu will emerge as the winner.

His Majesty is protective of his subjects and would not hear of them being harassed or abused, as this could invite his anger.

### *Tshidada Muhali!* 'The frightening and fearless animal/beast' (105)

The epithet *Tshidada muhali* 'the frightening and fearless animal/beast' paints a picture of a cruel and merciless beast which is rumoured to exist in the darkest of darkness. People tremble at mere rumours about it, because it is known only through rumours and cannot be seen. Whoever dares to look at it is swallowed never to be seen again. In some instances, he can be referred to as *Dada la uḷa vhatu* 'the monster that eats people', as Maumela (1954:9) has shown above. However, here Tshivhase is *Tshidada Muhali*, which makes him a very fast man-eating, terrible and fighting monster, faster than the big lazy-looking and sleeping *Dada* 'monster'. The two eat human beings differently, *Dada* swallows, but *Tshidada Muhali* ferociously tears men to pieces while they are still alive. It taunts one with incredible speed, as it plucks one's flesh in bits and pieces until one dies a slow and painful death. *Dada* 'monster' is known to small children. When they are told about it, they become frightened and keep quiet very quickly, especially if they are the problematic ones given to throwing tantrums. They believe the monster lives in the dark. *Tshidada* does not swallow children, it devours older people and they know it. Miḍiyavhathu is the kind of ruler who is very ruthless towards the enemies of his subjects.

Again His Majesty is protective of his subjects whom no one should abuse.

### *Ndau ya nduna!* 'The male lion' (55)

In the epithet *Ndau ya nduna* 'The male lion', the beast is explicitly identified as the lion. The lion is not a tamed animal; it is seen as the king of the jungle. There is a story line in a Tshivenda reader *Ndededzi* for primary school children about a lion which goes, *Ndau ndi livhandaḷihulu, nda li vhona ndi a shavha!* 'The lion is a big animal. Whenever I see it I run away.' Here it is not just any lion, it is a male lion that has a mane, which makes it more frightening. When it catches an animal, it enjoys the prey by first picking the softest and most delicious meat such as the liver, heart and soft rump. The females and cubs stand afar to enjoy the left-overs later, or else they could be torn to pieces. Bone-crushers and scavengers, such as hyenas, hide in the deep jungle waiting for meatless bones or else they too might become meat themselves. When it has enjoyed itself, the male lion stands up and walks away majestically, allowing the others to gnaw the bones. The lion and Miḍiyavhathu are known as the kings of the jungle.

Note that this praise comes immediately after he has warned the opposing group to stay where they are. The praise-singer is announcing that His Majesty Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase is the king of the country and its inhabitants. He is being put on his throne for all to see. In other words, no one should oppose him.

*Ngwenyama* 'Lion' (20/59)

*Silwana* 'The marauding animal/beast' (22/57)

The praise-singer also uses borrowed praises from other languages such as *Ngwenyama* and *Silwana*. Both praises refer to a lion and are the equivalents of *Ndau ya nduna* 'the male lion' and *Tshivhahala tsha shango* 'the most frightening and dexterous beast (or marauding beast) of the country' respectively. *Ngwenyama* and *Silwana* come from the Nguni culture and include languages such as isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiSwati and isiNdebele. This means that Miḍiyavhathu is able to go across boundaries into other nations' territories and still remain king. It also implies that if those other nations should decide to attack him or his people, they would meet their match in their own languages and territories – after all, he is *Ngwenyama* 'the male lion' and *Silwana* 'the beast or marauding beast' who has no fear.

Both these referential praises appear in lines 20 and 22 while His Majesty is still welcoming the guests and visitors, some of whom may not be Vhenda. Without threatening them, it could imply that Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase has the same position as other rulers of other nations and that his protective powers for his people can extend beyond borders. Again, the praise-singer uses these praises in 57 and 59 where His Majesty warns the opposing group to stay away and never interfere with the process or the chosen leadership.

### **Zwikumelo (Praises)/ U kumela (Praising) as talk management strategies**

The referential praises also function as appellations that the praise-singer uses to praise or address His Majesty or respond to and manage his utterances by either encouraging or alerting him to any discomfort that his subjects may be experiencing, so that he can shift to another issue.

All the referential praises are anaphoric and deictic to Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase. As anaphors, they co-refer with *Nḡe Thovhele wavho* 'I your Majesty' to the same referent, thereby creating coreference, and as deictic anaphors, they are vocatives and call for his attention and therefore create extra-reference with the referent or participant.

Both the anaphoric relations coreference and extra-reference that are created between the antecedent (understood as Thovhele Miḍiyavhathu Tshivhase), and all the epithets given in the form of all elaborative epithets, are explicit to create and confirm his image. They have been used to convey power, diplomacy, history, honour and protection. The praise-singer uses either long or short elaborative and decorative epithets, full of poetic symbols. The expressions are definite expressions consisting of personal names and appellative devices.

In this way of praising, the reciter is addressing His Majesty and encouraging him on his performance. It is as if he is saying to His Majesty, 'Yes, go on ...!' 'Continue ...!' 'You are doing fine ...!' among others. The praises by the praise-singer are a source of empowerment for His Majesty (Yankah, 1991:1).

In a way, the praise-singer is telling him that he is the embodiment of his culture, customs and traditions. He is linking him to his ancestors and his subjects through his history and culture. He is also proudly boasting that, as Miḍiyavhathu is near him, he is not afraid of anything.

The praises index power and the protective strength, which Miḍiyavhathu has for his people. The praise-singer uses them to enhance his status, to honour him and shower him with accolades. He does this to remind him of his position and his responsibility, thus warning him never to abandon his position.

These referring expressions are markers of deference and politeness. They are expressions of power and status, endearment and intimacy. People in the Vhavenḍa speech community expect the praise-singer to chant praises in support of His Majesty. This shows his art and superb eloquence, as His Majesty is not supposed to speak in a vacuum – someone has to affirm him and also confirm what he says now and then. According to Nwoye (1989:260), 'Oratory is a highly cultivated art form and orators are held in high esteem'. The praise-singers who recite praises when His Majesty is addressing people are usually from royal families, and are therefore endowed with the history and culture of the family and the people.

The reciter's manner of praising tends to manipulate the audience, as if he is its representative; he manipulates the audience's emotions to some extent, arousing happy feelings when the scene is joyous, and anger where it is adverse. The audience is able to read the impact it makes on His Majesty and what it means to him as his subjects. However, a praise-singer praises with his Majesty's topic in mind, and ends up as a co-participant on the side of his leader. He acts like a referee or choir conductor, and to some extent, a traffic officer directing traffic, both for His Majesty as well as the audience.

However, as the praise-singer decorates His Majesty with all sorts of accolades, he also manages His Majesty's speech by supporting and encouraging referential praises and appellations. Should His Majesty dwell on an issue for too long, he alerts him to change the topic; wherever he uses the royal titles as addressive devices, he shows that he agrees with him; but where he feels some discomfort, he uses a simple royal addressive device to alert His Majesty with manipulative 'praise-filled' remarks to move to another aspect of the same topic. As soon as the change has taken place, the praise-singer continues to address His Majesty in agreement. See the discourse below:

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 50: *Zwino ndi khou vhudzisa vhozwi uri ndi nnyi a no ri a si ene?*  
 Mukumeli 51: *Muthombeni wa shango!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 52: *Ndi khou amba havhaḷa vha no ri havha Vho-Alfred Themeli a si vhone?*  
 Mukumeli 53: *Muelekanyi!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 54: *Kha vha takuwe ḡamusi vha ri sumbedze uri a si vhone.*  
 Mukumeli 55: *Ndau ya nduna!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 56: *Ha ho?*  
 Mukumeli 57: *Silwana!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 58: *Vha songo sala vha tshi ḡa nga murahu.*  
 Mukumeli 59: *Ngwenyama! ...U nga ri a hu na muthu Muhali.*
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 50: 'Now I am asking you who say he is not the one?'  
 Praise-singer 51: 'The main foundation or source of life!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 52: 'I mean those who say that this Mr Alfred Themeli is not the one.'  
 Praise-singer 53: 'The great thinker!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 54: 'You must stand up today and tell us that he is not the one.'  
 Praise-singer 55: 'The great lion!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 56: 'Is s/he not there?'  
 Praise-singer 57: 'The marauding beast!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 58: 'You should not come later.'  
 Praise-singer 59: 'Lion ... It seems there is no person the most feared one!'

There are two groups that His Majesty has identified in the royal family, namely those who support the chosen leader and those who oppose him. His Majesty chooses to refer to the latter with an accusing finger as *vhozwi* 'you in particular' and *havhaḷa* 'those in particular' in lines 50 and 51 respectively. He avoids referring to them by their names or even their royal titles. This is strategic in order to marginalize them, because whatever their stance, their actions do not count in this instance. As His Majesty goes on castigating the opposing group, the praise-singer continues to support him through relevant referential praises.

There are two different scenes here. In lines 37 to 49 (see appendix), His Majesty introduces the new ruler, which elicits joy among the audience. No sooner has he introduced the ruler, than he immediately remembers the rebels who form a splinter group from the royal family (see lines 50 to 58). This immediately changes the scene from one of joy to one of disgust, hence the use of the accusing anaphors *vhozwi* 'you in particular' and *havhaḷa* 'those in particular'. The first is an addressee expression, attacking and antagonizing the rebels, and the second refers to them as people who are being spoken about; a tracking demonstrative that reminds the audience of those problematic people – those enemies the audience knows about. They all direct the attention of the other participants towards the target referent(s) (Diessel, 1999).

Note how the praise-singer continues to manage His Majesty's utterances in agreement, and later alerts or manipulates a topic shift in line 59, for the royal leader to move on to something else.

When His Majesty reprimands the opposing group for questioning the choice of the family, the praise-singer refers to him as *Muthombeni wa shango* 'the foundation of the country', which implies that the family choice was also his; when he stresses with a pointing and accusing deictic *havhaḷa* 'those in particular', the praise-singer calls him *Muelekanyi* 'the great thinker', which implies that the opposing group's stance was rather feeble and out of order; and when His Majesty dares them to show themselves in the open, he calls him *Ndau ya nduna* 'the male lion' which implies that they will regret their actions if they do not stop; and when, in an angry tone, His Majesty further questions the opposing group whether they are there to be seen by everyone, the praise reciter calls him

*Silwana* ‘the marauding animal/beast’, to imply that he can devour them there and then, as an animal. Then His Majesty warns them not to come later on to make their point, and the praise-singer refers to him as *Ngwenyama* ‘Lion’, implying that His Majesty must be feared, but then the praise-singer enters the fray and immediately alerts His Majesty that there was no opposing person, as if he were His Majesty’s interlocutor. This very act is strategic here. It is a topic-shifting alerting strategy to indicate that His Majesty should proceed to something else. In other words, he is telling him that he has made his point. This is evident in line 60, when His Majesty shifts the topic by addressing the programme director, and the praise-singer responds with satisfaction in line 61 with the chant *Muthombeni wa shango* ‘the foundation/source of life of the country’, implying agreement with him for the topic shift. In line 62, he shifts the topic to the introduction of the new ruler formally and, in agreement, the praise-singer endows him positively with an elaborative praise *Tshivhasamiqiyavhathu* ‘Tshivhasa, the one who burns people’s homesteads’ as if to say, ‘Well done, Your Majesty!’

As His Majesty continues to criticize the opposing group in his speech, his praise-singer continues to manage it with positive referential praises. However, when he notices that the royal leader is dwelling on the criticism for long, he applies a topic managing strategy that immediately alerts him by simply manipulating a shift of topic without telling him to do so openly.

Whilst collecting data I came across many cases in which these expressions are used. Some of the interviewees intimated to me cases where praise-singers used other expressions to alert their royal leaders to shift to other aspects of the topic and not to dwell on the same issue for a prolonged period. I was told of a case involving another royal leader who became very angry with his subjects and went on for a long period castigating them with the praise-singer chanting encouraging referential praises in his honour. In the process, the reciter is said to have chanted *Nga i ponde i sie marambo!* ‘Yes, let the lion devour meat, but leave the bones alone!’ This meant that His Majesty had said a mouthful. The interviewee reported that the royal leader then passed on to something else.

As another royal leader was addressing people, he saw one of his childhood class mates in the audience and went on to talk at length about their friendship and life as young men. The praise-singer intoned in agreement for a while before chanting *Khosi a i na thanga!* ‘A ruler has no age mate!’ Taking the cue, the royal leader allegedly shifted to another topic. This does not in any way imply that royal leaders do not or should not associate with other people, least of all those of the same age, or previous school mates. What this meant is that he was doing it at a wrong place and time. As a ruler, he was to maintain his higher position, and not risk losing the respect of his subjects.

It is the duty of praise-singers to be very vigilant and protective of their royal highnesses during royal speeches because the stakes are high. As Owomoyela (1981:11) cited by Yankah (1991:2) warns: ‘Speech is like an egg; when dropped, it shatters’.

Whereas Wessmann (1908) and to some extent Molema (1963) would see some of the praises as ridiculous and profuse flatteries, each of these praises has a very deep function. At first, I could not see the importance of appellations such as *Lutiitii lwo ambara dzhasi* ‘The small twitching bird has a jacket on’, *Dambatshekwa li na segere* ‘The crab has a sickle’, *Tsha u fuka na tsha u adza* ‘The blanket and sleeping mat’, until I was made to understand that these appellations are used to show that all is well and there is no threat although, depending on the context, their use could also imply something else.

## Conclusion

As the praise-singer praised His Majesty, he was applying communicative competence. He knew which referential praise to use for which utterance. In other words, he could pick and choose which one to use to encourage him. In such instances, a praise-singer is spoiled for choice.

It was also noted that praise-singers become subjective in their chants for their leaders, and that the use of referential praises or addressive devices tend to be relative, as each praise-singer has a duty to support his/her own leader.

## Appendix

### (Discourse on which the analysis is based)

Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 1:	<i>Mutshimbidzamushumo,</i>
Mukumeli 2:	<i>Muhali wa shango!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 3:	<i>Mahosi,</i>
Mukumeli 4:	<i>Tshivhasamiqiyavhathu!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 5:	<i>Gogo lo kuvhangana ho fhano namusi.</i>
Mukumeli 6:	<i>Vele!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 7:	<i>Vhaimeli vha muvhuso.</i>
Mukumeli 8:	<i>Muelekanyi!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 9:	<i>Dzikhantselela vha re hone.</i>
Mukumeli 10:	<i>Mvumi ya shango!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 11:	<i>Vhaeni vhaqivhalea.</i>
Mukumeli 12:	<i>Tshivhavhala tsha shango!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 13:	<i>Vhadzulapo.</i>
Mukumeli 14:	<i>Tshivhasamiqiyavhathu!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 15:	<i>Dzikhonani na vahura.</i>
Mukumeli 16:	<i>Wa ha Mankilinkili!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 17:	<i>Ndi a vha resha.</i>
Mukumeli 18:	<i>Mankili!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 19:	<i>Matsheloni ano.</i>
Mukumeli 20:	<i>Ngwenyama!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 21:	<i>Ndi ri ndaa.</i>
Mukumeli 22:	<i>Silwana!</i>

### (Hu pfala mifhululu ine ya mila zwikumelo)

Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 23:	<i>Magovha na miedzi ya vhutshilo.</i>
Mukumeli 24:	<i>Ngwenyama!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 25:	<i>Ndi mafumo a matshilele kha lino shango.</i>
Mukumeli 26:	<i>Silwana!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 27:	<i>Ri wa ri tshi vutshiledza vhutshiloni kha matshilele.</i>
Mukumeli 28:	<i>Muthombeni!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 29:	<i>Ra bvela phanda nga u tou ralo.</i>
Mukumeli 30:	<i>Iwe Tshivhase!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 31:	<i>Musi mativha o xa,</i>
Mukumeli 32:	<i>Muelekanyi!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 33:	<i>Vho sala vho xeelwa sa lushaka.</i>
Mukumeli 34:	<i>Ngwenyama!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 35:	<i>Zwo ralo na kha nne Thovhele wavho.</i>
Mukumeli 36:	<i>Vele!</i>
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 37:	<i>Ndo da fhano namusi.</i>
Mukumeli 38:	<i>Muelekanyi!</i>

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 39: *U vhumba Vhamusanda vhavho.*  
 Mukumeli 40: *Tshivhase!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 41: *Garaba lavho lo vhuya kha vha li tikedze.*  
 Mukumeli 42: *Muthombeni!*

*(Hu pfala mifhululu hu tshi khou khurumulwa khosi ntswa)*

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 43: *Vhamusanda vhavho ndi Vho-Alfred Muvhango Themeli.*  
 Mukumeli 44: *Vele!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 45: *Muḁuhulu wa ha Tshikovhi.*  
 Mukumeli 46: *Ngwenyama!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 47: *Ndumi yavho ndi Vho-Ntsundeni Themeli, muḁuhulu wa ha Mphaphuli.*  
 Mukumeli 48: *Iwe Tshivhase!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 49: *Khadzi yavho ndi Vho-Anny Ramukuvhate Themeli.....*

*(Hu pfala mifhululu.....)*

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 50: *Zwino ndi khou vhudzisa vhozwi uri ndi nnyi ano ri a si ene?*  
 Mukumeli 51: *Muthombeni wa shango!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 52: *Ndi khou amba havhala vha no ri havha Vho-Alfred Themeli a si vhone?*  
 Mukumeli 53: *Muelekanyi!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 54: *Kha vha takuwe namusi vha ri sumbedze uri a si vhone!*  
 Mukumeli 55: *Ndau ya nduna!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 56: *Ha ho?*  
 Mukumeli 57: *Silwana!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 58: *Vha songo sala vha tshi ḁa nga murahu!*  
 Mukumeli 59: *Ngwenyama ...U nga ri a hu na muthu Muhali!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 60: *Mutshimbidzamusumo...*  
 Mukumeli 61: *Muthombeni wa shango!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 62: *Dzina liswa ndi Vho Ratshinyiwaho...vhone vhane vha ḁo sala vha tshi fhedzisa.*  
 Mukumeli 63: *Tshivhasamiḁiyavhathu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 64: *Maipfi anga kha Vhamusanda vhavho khea...*  
 Mukumeli 65: *Tshivhasamiḁiyavhathu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 66: *Vhakale vha amba vha ri... munwe muthihi a u ḁusi mathuthu.*  
 Mukumeli 67: *Wa ha Mankilinkili!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 68: *Ri fanela u ita mutingati.*  
 Mukumeli 69: *Vele!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 70: *Ndi hone ri tshi ḁo kona u bvedza shango ḁashu.*  
 Mukumeli 71: *Wa ha Tshivhasamiḁiyavhathu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 72: *Ndi ndoḁhe ndi nga si zwi kone.*  
 Mukumeli 73: *Wawe wa sala u tshi penya!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 74: *Hu ḁoḁea thikhedzo yavho.*  
 Mukumeli 75: *Vele!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 76: *Kha zwoḁhe zwavhuḁi na zwi kondaho...*  
 Mukumeli 77: *Muelekanyi!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 78: *Kha vha ḁe Luaḁame, Mukumbani, mahothi oḁhe o vulea.*  
 Mukumeli 79: *Muthombeni wa shango!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 80: *... arali vha na dzithaidzo.*

- Mukumeli 81: *Vele-!a-Mbeu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 82: *Ndi fhana ndi pfa ndi hayani.*  
 Mukumeli 83: *Vele!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 84: *Muḏini wanga.*  
 Mukumeli 85: *Iwe Tshivhase!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 86: *Ndi swika tshifhinga tshiḡwe na tshiḡwe...a thi thivhelwi nga muthu.*  
 Mukumeli 87: *Khakhamela!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 88: *Kha vha muḡa, makhotsimunene na dzikhadzi ... Vhamusanda vhavho ngevha Vho Ratshinyiwaho.*  
 Mukumeli 89: *Mbombela maulu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 90: *Kha vha vha fare zwavhuḏi, kha vha vha eletshedze.*  
 Mukumeli 91: *Iwe Tshivhase!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 92: *Vhathu ndi mapfura a vha tambwi ngavho, na vhone Vhamusanda vha songo tamba nga vhone.*  
 Mukumeli 93: *Mboloma!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 94: *Hu ḡi nga na musi zwo naka kana zwo vhiḡha, vhone vha na vhuḡifhinduleli.*  
 Mukumeli 95: *Mvumi ya shango!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 96: *Kha vhadzulapo na vhalanda, ndi ri vhamusanda vhavho ngevha kha vha shumisane navho kha zwoḡhe.*  
 Mukumeli 97: *Vele-!a Mbeu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 98: *Hu si na u thithisana.*  
 Mukumeli 99: *Iwe Tshivhase!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 100: *Mutshimbidzamushumo.*  
 Mukumeli 101: *Marungadzindeveaho!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 102: *Vhamusanda,...*  
 Mukumeli 103: *Tshivhasamiḡiyavhathu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 104: *Vhalanda ndi mapfura vha a ḡoliwa.*  
 Mukumeli 105: *Tshidada Muhali!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 106: *Kha vha shumisane na mahoro oḡhe a ḡivheaho a re mulayoni.*  
 Mukumeli 107: *Mboloma!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 108: *Hu ḡi nga na dzisiviki, kha vha i ḡanganedze vha pfe mihumbulo yayo.*  
 Mukumeli 109: *Vele!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 110: *Siviki kha i shumisane na Vhamusanda tshipikwa hu u bvedzisa shango phanda....*  
 Mukumeli 111: *Tshidada!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 112: *Hu si na u pikisana.*  
 Mukumeli 113: *Muthombeni!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 114: *Ndo zwi humbula nda wana zwo fanela uri ndi ambe la uri, "Vhana vha musadzi vha ḡhukukana ḡhoho ya nzie."*  
 Mukumeli 115: *Tshivhasamiḡiyavhathu!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 116: *Wanga mukovhe ndi wonou wa tshoḡhe.*  
 Mukumeli 117: *Mboloma!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 118: *Zwavhuḏi na zwivhuya zwi vhe navho nga hu sa fheliho...Mudzimu nga rendiwe.*  
 Mukumeli 119: *Mboloma!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 120: *Vha ḡi vhuse nga mulalo ḡa Ngwenani.*  
 Mukumeli 121: *Ndau ya nduna!*  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 122: *Ndi ri Ndaa.....!*

(*Mifhululu...*)

Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 1:	‘Mr Programme Director,’
Praise-singer 2:	‘The great fighter of the country!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 3:	‘Mahosi.’
Praise-singer 4:	‘Tshivhasa the one who burns people’s homes!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 5:	‘The multitudes that have assembled here.’
Praise-singer 6:	‘Vele!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 7:	‘Representatives of the government.’
Praise-singer 8:	‘The great thinker!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 9:	‘Councillors who are present.’
Praise-singer 10:	‘The droner of the country!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 11:	‘Honourable guests.’
Praise-singer 12:	‘The great animal!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 13:	‘The citizens.’
Praise-singer 14:	‘Tshivhasa the one who burns people’s homes!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 15:	‘Friends and neighbours.’
Praise-singer 16:	‘The one of Mankilinkili!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 17:	‘I greet you.’
Praise-singer 18:	‘...and Mankili!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 19:	‘This morning.’
Praise-singer 20:	‘The great lion!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 21:	‘I salute you.’
Praise-singer 22:	‘The great animal!’

(Ululations and praises from the multitudes)

Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 23:	‘The valleys and dongas of life ...’
Praise-singer 24:	‘The great lion!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 25:	‘Are the spear of how we should live in this world.’
Praise-singer 26:	‘The great animal!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 27:	‘We continuously fall and rise again in life...’
Praise-singer 28:	‘The foundation/source of life!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 29:	‘We continue just like that.’
Praise-singer 30:	‘You Tshivhase!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 31:	‘When the great ponds ran dry...’
Praise-singer 32:	‘The great thinker!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 33:	‘You remained robbed in your loss as a nation.’
Praise-singer 34:	‘The great lion!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 35:	‘It was the same with me your Majesty.’
Praise-singer 36:	‘Vele!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 37:	‘I came here today.’
Praise-singer 38:	‘The great thinker!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 39:	‘To install/enthroned your headman.’
Praise-singer 40:	‘Tshivhase!’
Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 41:	‘Your renewed man has come back, support him.’
Praise-singer 42:	‘The main source of life!’

(There are ululations as the headman is being revealed)

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 43: 'Your headman is Mr Alfred Muvhango Themeli...'  
 Praise-singer 44: 'Vele!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 45: 'A grandson of the Tshikovhi (on the maternal side)'  
 Praise-singer 46: 'The great lion (from Nguni)!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 47: 'His *ndumi* is Mr Ntsundeni Themeli a grandson of the Mphaphuli (on the maternal side).'  
 Praise-singer 48: 'You Tshivhase!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 49: 'The great aunt (Khadzi) is Ms Anny Ramukuvhate Themeli ...'

(Ululations and praises which drown the praises)

- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 50: 'Now I am asking you who say he is not the one?'  
 Praise-singer 51: 'The main source of life!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 52: 'I mean those who say that this Mr Alfred Themeli is not the one?'  
 Praise-singer 53: 'The great thinker!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 54: 'You must stand up today and tell us that he is not the one!'  
 Praise-singer 55: 'The great lion!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 56: 'Is he not there?'  
 Praise-singer 57: 'The frightening animal!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 58: 'You should not come later!'  
 Praise-singer 59: 'The great lion ... It seems there is no person the most feared one!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 60: 'Mr Chairman ...'  
 Praise-singer 61: 'The foundation of life!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 62: 'The new name is Vho-Ratshinyiwaho ... you will fill in the gaps on your own.'  
 Praise-singer 63: 'You Tshivhase!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 64: 'My words to your headman are these ...'  
 Praise-singer 65: 'Tshivhase the one who burns people's homes!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 66: 'Those of old say ... one finger does not pick out cooked mealies.'  
 Praise-singer 67: 'One of Mankilinkili!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 68: 'We must form a united front.'  
 Praise-singer 69: 'Vele!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 70: 'It is then that we will be able to develop our country.'  
 Praise-singer 71: 'You of Tshivhasa the one who burns people's homes!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 72: 'I being alone cannot be able to succeed.'  
 Praise-singer 73: '...with his remaining and shining!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 74: 'It is your support that is needed.'  
 Praise-singer 75: 'Vele!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 76: 'In all that is good and difficult.'  
 Praise-singer 77: 'The great thinker of the country!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 78: 'You must come to Luaname, Mukumbani, all doors are wide open.'  
 Praise-singer 79: 'The foundation of life!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 80: 'If you have problems.'  
 Praise-singer 81: 'Vele-la-Mbeu!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 82: 'When I am here, I feel at home.'  
 Praise-singer 83: 'Vele!'  
 Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 84: 'My own home.'

- Praise-singer 85: 'You Tshivhase!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 86: 'I arrive here anytime...I am not to be stopped by anyone.'
- Praise-singer 87: 'The one who arrives unexpectedly!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 88: 'To the family, the royal fathers and aunts ... There is your headman Mr Ratshinyiwaho.'
- Praise-singer 89: 'One who groans for the big and humungous!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 90: 'You must look after him, you must advise him.'
- Praise-singer 91: 'You Tshivhase!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 92: 'People are like gel, they should not be abused, even they the subjects, should not abuse you.'
- Praise-singer 93: 'The great droner!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 94: 'Even if it is wonderful or it is bad, the one who bears the responsibility is you.'
- Praise-singer 95: 'The droner of the country!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 96: 'To the citizens and the subjects, I say here is your ruler, you must work with him in everything.'
- Praise-singer 97: 'Vele-la-Mbeu!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 98: '...without any arguments.'
- Praise-singer 99: 'Tshivhase!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 100: 'Mr Chairman.'
- Praise-singer 101: 'You who gores those who provoke him!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 102: '...Vhamusanda.'
- Praise-singer 103: 'Tshivhasa the one who burns people's homes!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 104: 'The subjects are like gel, they are meant for smearing...'
- Praise-singer 105: 'The frightening and fearless one!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 106: 'You must work with all the recognized organizations which are legal.'
- Praise-singer 107: 'The most feared one!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 108: 'Even the civic, you must accept it and you must listen to its views.'
- Praise-singer 109: 'Vele!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 110: 'The civic too, it should work with Vhamusanda, the aim being to develop the country.'
- Praise-singer 111: 'The great thinker!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 112: '...without there being arguments.'
- Praise-singer 113: 'The foundation of the country!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 114: 'I thought about it, and found it befitting that I should say this, "Children of the same mother share the head of a locust."'
- Praise-singer 115: 'Tshivhasa the one who burns people's homes!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 116: 'My share is this one in all.'
- Praise-singer 117: 'The droner of the country!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 118: 'All the best and blessings should be with you for ever ... Let God be with you.'
- Praise-singer 119: 'The groaner!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 120: 'You must rule it with peace of Ngwenani.'
- Praise-singer 121: 'The great male lion!'
- Thovhele Vho-Tshivhase 122: 'I say Ndaa!'

(Ululations and praises as His Majesty takes his seat)

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