

**SELECTED CLAN PRAISES AS IMPORTERS OF HERITAGE: A CASE OF
EMASWATI OF ESWATINI**

by

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DECLARATION

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Title of the dissertation: *Selected Clan Praises as Importers of Heritage: A Case of EmaSwati of Eswatini*

I declare that the dissertation entitled, *Selected Clan Praises as Importers of Heritage: A Case of EmaSwati of Eswatini* is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference list.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



Signature

31 January 2023

Date

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SUMMARY

Clan praises are of paramount importance in Eswatini. This research examined selected EmaSwati clan praises to establish if clan praises are importers of heritage to the present generation. Underpinned by the diffusionist and functionalism theories, the study was qualitative, with research conducted among twenty (25) EmaSwati clan names belonging to the four groups of clans namely: Bemdzabuko, Emakhandzambili, Ematalankhosi, and Emafikamuva. A systematic sample of fifty (50) participants was drawn, and semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. After a descriptive content analysis of data, it was revealed that clan praises are importers of heritage to the present generation and confirmed that clan praises are esteemed among EmaSwati of Eswatini, but the youth have limited knowledge of them. In light of these findings, the study recommended that the government incorporates clan praises into the curriculum, initiate writing competitions, and campaigns on clan praises.

Key terms

clan

praises

clan names

importer

heritage

taboo

totem

patrilineal

contrived

genealogy

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my mother (the late Maggie Zandile Simelane), the late Sibongile Mhlanga (the mother who raised me), as well as my two sons, Mzwanele and Mcebisi Phakathi.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction and background

Clan praises are of paramount importance to most Africans. They are a fundamental genre of African oral poetry that has deeper meaning encapsulated in it. Clan praises make each clan distinct from the others. They carry significant information about a clan and are used daily in social and religious functions.

Clan praises communicate information on the genealogy of the clan, names of the heroes and leaders of the clan, remarkable historical events, kinship, taboos and totems, places of origin of the clan, the names of the great forefathers, significant incidents in relation to the clan, beliefs, customs, physique of the founder of the clan, as well as characteristics and attributes of members of the clan. Ginindza (1992:18) confirms this and asserts that “the subject matter of clan praises ranges from history or episodes in the origin of the group, physical characteristics of the founder, beliefs and customs ...”. Tsiu (2001:58) postulates that clan praises comprise the cultures, philosophies, and the historical incidents underlying the establishment of the clan. The information, communicated through clan praises is, therefore, crucial for each clan as it reflects the identity of the clan, educates members of the clan about their origin, and links them to their forefathers.

Clan praises are used for several purposes. In this regard, Kamera (2000:282) points out that “clan praises are used in a number of ordinary everyday situations”. These contexts include using clan praises to address others, establish identity, thank someone for a kind deed, congratulate them on their outstanding achievement, to flatter, as a form of greeting or to soothe a fretting child). Clan praises are used to express an apology, to appease someone, when addressing the ancestors, during traditional weddings, after a family feast, and during funerals. Clan praises are also recited when performing rituals. It is evident that clan praises serve several functions.

Tsiu (2001:91-95) provides an in-depth discussion of the functions of clan praises.

He points out that clan praises do not only instill the values of the clan community but also transmit historical origin from one generation to the next, and avert unwanted intermarriages between people whose blood relation is too close. Another significant function of clan names (which are part of clan praises), is highlighted by Kamera (2000:274), who elaborates that:

Clan names function as a surname and it is found in this role on birth certificates, identity documents, passports, bank books and other documents which characterize and define the modern individual.

It is evident from the functions listed above that clan praises are significant since they serve several social and religious functions. Clan praises are loaded with information that relates to members of the clan. With so much information imbued in clan praises, it is perceptible that clan praises are a valuable inheritance for each clan.

Ginindza (1992:8) asserts that most African people, especially the Nguni group, use clan praises. Therefore, it is not only EmaSwati who cherish clan praises, but other people of African descent do so as well. Rycroft (1976) highlights that “Lestrade, writing in 1933, reported that clan praises were widely employed in Southern Africa, among the Shona . . . clan praises appear to be of greater importance”. Tsiu (2001:1) attests to the significance of clan praises by highlighting that “the importance underlying clan praises is exhibited by the fact that every Mosotho child is expected to memorize, know and be able to recite a Seboko”.

Clan praises are a type of praise poetry; hence they are intertwined with praise poetry. Malungana (1994:14) postulates that praise poetry has been used for centuries in Africa. He claims that this genre is used across the African continent. Although praise poetry is used almost everywhere in the continent, scholars of oral literature have focused more on individual praise poetry for kings, chiefs, warriors, and statesmen. This assertion is supported by Rycroft (1976), who remarks thus:

For the Southern Bantu peoples, on the other hand, one might easily gain the impression that clan praises were non-existent, owing to the overwhelming concentration upon individual praise poetry in existing documentation.

The quote above suggests that individual praise poetry has been more popular among scholars of oral literature than clan praises. It is for this reason that some scholars like Thwala and Twala (2019:21) argue that clan praises are among the least

researched genres of African oral poetry. Clan praises, therefore, must be elucidated on extensively.

Malungana (1994) lists different African languages which have recorded praise poetry. Among them are: Aknepem, Akyem, Ashante, Hausa, Wolof Igbo, Yoruba, Shona, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, Setswana, Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho, SiSwati, isiXhosa, isiZulu, and Tshivenda. In some of these languages clan praises are discussed as part of praise poetry. Some of the scholars who have conducted research on clan praises include Marivate (1978) who published an article on clan praises in Xitsonga, Mzolo (1977) who studied Zulu clan praises, Ndawo (1939) who researched isiXhosa clan praise, Hodza and Fortune (1979) who studied Shona praise poetry – which includes clan praises. Kamera (2000) made a collection of Emaswati clan praises. Malungana (1994) researched clan praises as part of the Xitsonga praise poetry, while Tsiu (2001) deliberated on Basotho family odes.

These scholars published articles, books and theses on clan praises. In some instances, clan praises were discussed along other types of praise poetry. Even though they have recorded clan praises, an in-depth analysis of clan praises still needs to be done. Gove (2002:415) defines a clan as:

an exogamous tribal division that traces descent in the male or the female line from a common real, totemic or mythological ancestor that has a common name and often a common territory and that constitutes the chief political, religious and social unit of tribal society.

Therefore, a clan can be defined as a social group consisting of many families with kinship ties that descended from a common ancestor and trace their origin to a male or female line. In the case of EmaSwati, the origin of the clan is traced to the male line. As indicated, clan praises are a type of praise poetry, and the two are interrelated. Masuku et al. (2011:36) define praise poetry as poetry that “eulogizes the exploits of kings, chiefs or warriors in battle against the enemy”. Meanwhile, Finnegan (2012:111) states that praise poetry is “the type of court poetry”. Finnegan further explains:

but the most specialized forms...are the formalized praises directed to kings, chiefs, and elders, composed and recited by members of a king’s official entourage. Praise names ...often form basis of formal praise poetry. These are often given to people but may also describe clans, animals, or inanimate

objects, and they are usually explicitly laudatory.

In other words, praise poetry extols kings, chiefs, warriors, ordinary people, clans, animals, and inanimate objects. Praise poetry is laudatory in nature, and so are clan praises. Kgobe (1994:17) points out in this regard that praise poetry articulates the good and bad qualities of a person and has elements of satire. This means that praises can also exhibit disapproval and bad qualities of a person, thing or group that is being praised. Therefore, clan praises can be defined as eulogistic words that extol members of the clan and allude to the historical events, totems, beliefs, customs, ancestors, heroes, forefathers, and culture of a clan.

A clan praise is an extension of a clan name, and the two are interdependent. A clan name is the name of a group of people, which originates from one of their chiefs, past or present, or from an animal or object that is revered as their totem (Tsiu 2001:2). Other clans take their names from one of their ancestors. A clan name is known as *sibongo* in SiSwati (Thwala 2018:1), *seboko* in Sesotho (Tsiu 2001:1), and *isibongo* in isiZulu. Clan praises are a significant genre of African literature. They are known as *izithakazelo* in isiZulu, *iziduko* in isiXhosa, and *tinanatelo* in SiSwati (Kamera 2000:276).

Clan praises have significant value for EmaSwati of Eswatini, where daily conversations are marked by these praises. Such a practice is more common among older people who still hold firmly to traditions. Eswatini society puts more emphasis on showing love and courtesy. One of the values that are highly instilled among EmaSwati of Eswatini is showing gratitude for a gift or a kind deed. Mzolo (1978, as cited in Kamera 2000:282) maintains that: "If ...a service is rendered; it is not enough simply to say *ngiyabonga* 'I thank you'. The one who expresses thanks goes further and recites some of, if not all, the clan praises". Such is the norm with EmaSwati of Eswatini.

Ginindza (1992:7) also attests to the significance of clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini. The scholar states that:

A striking feature of Swazi behavior is the use of *sibongo*. In situations of interaction people...show respect, courtesy, express gratitude and recognition by using *sibongo*. A stranger is not asked for his or her personal name but for

her *sibongo*...

The citation above suggests that *sibongo* (the “clan name”) is associated with respect, courtesy, and recognition among EmaSwati. It also forges an identity since a stranger and any other person is recognised by *sibongo*. As mentioned already, clan praises are an extension of clan names, and the two are interrelated.

Another remarkable observation among EmaSwati of Eswatini is that clan praises are used throughout the life of an individual. To this end, EmaSwati of Eswatini observe the various rites of passages throughout the life of a person. These rites of passages are marked by the recitation of clan praises. According to Nyawo, et al. (2009:51), “in Swazi Traditional Religion, rites of passage rituals are performed in a person’s life from conception to death”. These rites of passages that are highlighted by (Nyawo et al. 2009) include birth, initiation, marriage, and death rites. A ritual is performed when an individual moves from one significant stage to the next. The rituals must involve the invocation of the ancestors – where an elder from the family speaks to the ancestors. He introduces the person for whom the ritual is performed and asks for their guidance, protection, and blessings on that individual as he or she enters a new stage. Such a speech is marked by the recitation of clan praises.

Clan praises are also recited during significant ceremonies of EmaSwati of Eswatini. For example, a ceremony is held to thank the ancestors for their protection, or to appease them for an offence committed by a member, or members of the family. A beast is slaughtered and traditional beer brewed. An elderly person addresses the ancestors and recites clan praises. Clan praises are also recited during other ceremonies such as the EmaSwati traditional wedding, known as *umtsimba*, and the ceremony for paying the bride price, known as *bayeni*.

EmaSwati of Eswatini recite clan praises during funerals. It is a SiSwati tradition that when an individual dies, the relatives, neighbours and ancestors of the deceased are informed. The speech that is made to the ancestors is characterized by the recitation of the clan praises of that family. Before the deceased is buried, his or her body is taken to the kraal where the ancestors are invoked and asked to welcome the deceased to after life. Such an invocation is marked by the recitation of the clan

praises of the deceased.

It is also a SiSwati custom that when a member of a family has been sick for a very long time, the ancestors are beseeched to intervene in the condition of the sick. In some instances the forefathers are requested to take that individual to be with them so that he or she is relieved from pain. Even in such instances, the family clan praises are recited.

Clan praises are also used during family celebrations of EmaSwati. It is common among EmaSwati that when a member of a family achieves something, members of that family and friends come together to celebrate that achievement. It could be the establishment of a new home or a business, a graduation or birthday party. In such occasions, clan praises are recited to honour the members of the family and thank the ancestors for the achievement.

The significance of the social functions of clan praises is that clan praises establish the identity of the clan members and give them a sense of belonging and pride. Members of a clan get to know who they are and where they come from. They know other clans that they are related with and establish contact with them. In this regard, clan praises avert intermarriage between people with close blood ties. Such marriages are discouraged because they result in the birth of children with mental and physical disability. Clan praises are so important in Eswatini such that people, especially men, are addressed by their clan names other than their first names.

Clan praises also promote respect courtesy among EmaSwati of Eswatini. Daily conversations of EmaSwati are marked by the recitation of clan praises to show gratitude, to address someone, to congratulate or to greet someone. The use of clan praises in this manner connotes and promotes respect and politeness.

Clan praises perpetuate continuance and well-being in a society. Clan praises are used, among other things, to make an apology, to make a plea, to show gratitude or as a form of greeting. The use of clan praises in this manner fosters peace and unity among the people of a society. Clan praises also embody the practices, customs, values and beliefs of the people that guide them how they should live.

The religious significance of clan praises is that they maintain contact between the people and their ancestors. People recite clan praises when addressing their ancestors. In this regard clan praises connect the living and the dead.

1.1 Statement of the problem

It is evident from the discussions above that clan praises are a valuable inheritance. Scholars of oral literature like Hadebe (1992), Kamera (2000), and Thwala and Twala (2019) have observed that clan praises are the least researched genre of oral literature and they are becoming extinct, and that this is a cause for concern. This is because clan praises contain salient information about the clan. Hence the problem is *'Do clan praises have heritage? If so, Is the heritage passed on to the present generation'* and *'What do people stand to lose if they do not embrace their clan praises?'*

1.2 Aim of the Study

The study aimed to examine the selected clan praises and to establish if clan praises are importers of heritage.

1.3 Objectives and the Research Questions

1.3.1 Objectives

The study set out to accomplish the following objectives:

- to determine if clan praises of EmaSwati have heritage;
- to determine if clan praises import heritage to the present generation; and
- to establish the value of clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini.

1.3.2 Research questions

This research sought to provide answers to the following questions:

- Do clan praises have information on the history and origin of the clan, taboos and totems, beliefs, customs, rituals, list of the forefathers, traditions, attributes, and characteristics of the members of that clan?
- Are the youth being taught clan praises?
- How valuable are clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini?

1.4 Rationale for the Research

As alluded earlier on, some scholars of oral literature argue that clan praises are among the least researched genres in African oral literature. For example, there are only a few in-depth studies conducted on clan praises in SiSwati, yet clan praises carry fundamental information about each clan. It was envisaged that the study would rekindle or reawaken an interest in clan praises and make a remarkable contribution by recording and preserving clan praise. It was also envisioned that the study would inspire EmaSwati scholars of oral literature to consider conducting in-depth research on clan praises.

The clan names that are common among EmaSwati of Eswatini were not common then. They are the clan names of the people called *Emafikamuva* – “Late comers” – according to Ginindza (1992:9). *Emafikamuva* “refers to immigrants also known as tikhonti (lieges). Most immigrants were incorporated into the Swazi nation...” (Ginindza 1992:11). In other words, the group of clans known as *Emafikamuva* are part of EmaSwati nation that were incorporated later than the other clans. Even today some clans are merged into EmaSwati nation through *kukhonta* – that is, “asking to be allocated a piece of land and paying allegiance to the king”. Therefore, an investigation on clan praises is necessary to trace the origin and historical background of these clans (*Emafikamuva*), as well as other clans that relate to them.

The outbreak of pandemic illnesses in Eswatini has contributed to the breakdown of the family institution, where children were taught about their historical background and traditions. Pandemic diseases, like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS hit Eswatini in the 1980s and 1990s and led to the massive death of the people between the ages of 15 and 49 years. Some of these people left behind orphans and vulnerable children. As

a result, there are many child-headed families and families that are regulated by old people in the present-day Eswatini. The elderly people are no longer able to pass traditions to their grandchildren. Therefore, research on clan praises will provide the young people wanting to know about their clan praises with information in this regard.

Industrialisation has resulted in the migration of parents and their children from rural areas to urban areas where the former are working. The parents themselves are busy to an extent that they hardly have time to teach their children clan praises. What makes matters worse is that the children are too far from rural areas where clan praises are often recited. These children are deprived of the privilege to learn about their clan praises which teach them about their historical background. EmaSwati are known to be a nation that still holds on firmly to its cultural values. As these EmaSwati children grow, they themselves tend to develop interest in knowing their heritage, their genealogy, and who their relatives are. The findings of this study will, in this regard, be useful as they will serve as a source of information on clan praises for the present generation of the clans selected for this study.

Moreover, EmaSwati encourage people to know and respect their blood relatives. People whose blood relation is too close are prohibited to marry each other. This dissertation, thus, discusses kinship among clans to prevent incest.

1.5 Motivation

1.5.1 Personal motivation

The researcher grew up in a rural setting where clan praises were much alive. Clan praises were used widely to show gratitude, respect, and politeness among other things. This setup inculcated the idea that clan praises are a valuable tradition that must be cherished and conserved. Therefore, the researcher has always treasured clan praises and considered them valuable assets. With the declining use of clan praises, owing to industrialisation, urbanisation, modernisation, and the influence of foreign cultures and religions, the researcher thus saw the need to embark on this study to ensure the preservation of a written record of the selected clan praises.

1.5.2 Academic motivation

The researcher has identified a gap in research on clan praises in African oral literature. As mentioned already, some scholars of African oral literature are of the view that clan praises have received less attention. Mzolo (1978, as cited in Kamera 2000:272) emphasises that clan praises have been neglected:

Clan praises have largely escaped the attention of scholars of traditional oral literature. Consequently, clan praises scarcely feature in intensive studies of praise poetry. Even Finnegan's 1970 classic on African oral literature makes only a single word reference to clan praises.

The researcher fully concurs with the citation above and is of the view that there is a need for an intensive study on clan praises to preserve this asset.

1.6 Context of the study

One of the impacts of colonisation is that it tarnished the image of the African people, brainwashed them, and instilled a sense of inferiority in them. African people have discarded their cultures and embraced Western cultures. Gerald (2009, cited in Oni and Segun 2014:6) comments on the impact of colonisation in Africa to the effect that "colonial policies forcibly denied Africa from continuing with her traditional cultural activities". Oni and Segun (2014:6) further elaborate on the impact of colonisation and state thus:

During the period of colonialism, traditional African culture and values were seriously threatened and, in some cases, African subjects were forcefully assimilated into the culture of their colonial masters. In extreme cases the colonists categorically denied the existence of African cultural values and worse still, taught the Africans themselves to despise them.

The citations above affirm that colonialism has dealt a heavy blow on Africans and their cultures, values, and traditions, and has denied Africans the right to celebrate their Africanness. Africans can no longer define their identity because they have discarded their cultures which define them. Their image had been distorted, and they have lost confidence in themselves. Research on clan praises is, therefore, imperative as a platform to promote African values and traditions.

In his remark, Chivaura (2014) emphasises the importance of culture among Africans:

African people are defined by their culture, land and history. These are fundamentals of their culture. When Africans are robbed of the fundamentals of their heritage, they cease to live as Africans. Intellectual decolonization in Africa is, therefore, a prerequisite for successful political decolonization and cultural reconstruction strategies.

African clan praises convey the history of each clan, which is fundamental to African people. A study of clan praises is, therefore, a move towards cultural reconstruction. This is because the study set out to promote African traditions and aimed to inspire Africans to embrace and celebrate their traditions. This study also aimed to raise an awareness of the declining use of clan praises and promote African culture and traditions that were eroded by colonialism

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study focused on EmaSwati clan praises. The researcher selected 25 clan names from four clan categories of EmaSwati identified by Ginindza (1992:9). The clan categories are *Bemdزابuko* ("True Swazis"), *Emakhandzambili* ("Those found ahead"), *Ematalankhosi* ("Bearers of kings"), and *Emafikamuva* ("The Late comers"). The researcher further selected six clan names from the categories of *Bemdزابuko*, *Emakhandzambili*, *Ematalankhosi*, and seven clan names from the group of *Emafikamuva*.

Below are the clan names selected for this study:

Emakhandzambili – the selected clan names are Maseko, Shongwe, Gama, Magagula, Mnisi, and Motsa.

In the group known as *Ematalankhosi* - the selected clan names are Ndwandwe, Simelane, Mdluli, Tfwala, Nkambule, Khumalo, and Mndzebele.

Bemdزابuko – the clan names selected are Dlamini, Mamba, Fakudze, Nsibandze, Matsebula, and Hlophe.

Emafikamuva – the clan names selected are Dludlu, Manyatsi, Masuku, Phakathi, Hlatjwako, and Mayisela.

The study focused on these 25 clan names. Since these clans are scattered all over Eswatini, the study covered all the chiefdoms where the clans are found. These chiefdoms are KaHhohho, Zombodze Emuva, Ekwendzeni, Ezikhotheni, Mbilaneni,

KaGwegwe, Ncabaneni, Dvokolwako, Nkhungwini, Ngudzeni, Kudzeni, Mahlanya, Mkhitsini, Sigcineni, Ngwenyameni, Maliyaduma, Ngololweni, Qomintaba, Mbabala, Dlangeni, Buseleni, EMBangweni, Magele and Vusweni.

1.8 Definition of Terminology/Concepts

1.8.1 Clan

A clan is a kinship group. It consists of a group of people claiming descent and takes its name from a common ancestor in the male line (Schapera 1949, cited in Tsiu 2001:13).

1.8.2 Praises

These are laudatory verse recited for kings, chiefs, and even ordinary persons, including children. This signifies how good, brave, strong, or wonderful a person or animal is (Kgobe 1994:17).

1.8.3 Clan name

A name of a group of people, usually derived from the name of one of its chieftains, past or present, or from the name of an animal or object it revered as its totem (Tsiu 2001:2).

1.8.4 Importer

Import means bringing or carrying into, to bear or convey as purported, meaning or information (Gove 2002:1135). Therefore, an importer is a carrier, conveyor, bearer or signifier of meaning or information.

1.8.5 Heritage

This refers to practices, characteristics, cultural aspects, or traditions passed down

from one generation to another. It is an attribute or immaterial possession inherited from ancestors (Google 2021). According to Wehmeier et al. (2006), heritage encompasses the history, traditions (beliefs, customs, or way of doing something), as well as qualities that a country or society has had for many years that are considered an important part of its character.

1.8.6 Taboos and totems

A taboo is a prohibition against touching, saying, or doing something for fear of immediate harm from a supernatural force. It is a rule against doing or saying something in a particular culture (Google 2021).

A totem is an animal, plant, or other object regarded as an emblem of a family or clan that often reminds the family of its ancestry (Gove 2002:2415).

1.8.7 Patrilineal

Patrilineal refers to tracing descent through the father and his ancestry: organised on the basis of a male descent and inheritance (Gove 2002:1656).

1.8.8 Contrived Genealogy

Genealogy is generally defined as an account or history of the descent of a person, family, or group from an ancestor or ancestors: an enumeration of ancestors and their descendants in the natural order of succession (Gove 2002:944).

Contrived means written or arranged in a way that is not natural or realistic (Wehmeier et al.2006:250). Therefore, a contrived genealogy is a list of ancestors and their descendants, which is not arranged in the natural order of succession.

1.9 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

This chapter provides background information on clan praises, defines clan praises, and highlights their functions and significance. The chapter also discusses the rationale, aim and objectives, context, motivation and scope of the research. It further defines key concepts and presents the statement of the problem and research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 reviews the literature in relation to the subject of the research and presents the findings, opinions, and arguments of other scholars who conducted research on this subject. A review of literature provides insight into the theories and methods employed by other researchers who investigated the same subject in the past. The literature reviewed provided, in this regard, more clarity to the researcher on the subject under study as well as the suitable methods that work well in this type of research. It justifies the need to conduct the study and outlines the significance of the study, and how it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

Chapter 3: Research Design, Methodology, and Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3 outlines the conceptual structure or plan used for collecting and analysing the data. The chapter also outlines the data collection methods employed in this research (which are the qualitative research method and the semi-structured interviews). The functionalism and diffusionist theories are discussed as theories that informed the interpretation of data.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion

Chapter 4 presents the 25 clan praises that were selected for this study. These clan praises are presented with their interpretation line-by-line. The information is grouped into sub-topics like historical background of the clan, taboos and totems, contrived genealogy, kinship, prominent events and character traits and attributes of the members of the clan.

Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study and draws the main conclusions. These conclusions are based on Chapter 4 (data analysis and discussion). The conclusions drawn will determine whether clan praises are importers of heritage. The chapter also makes recommendations on ways to unveil and mitigate the challenges of clan praises and recommendations for further research.

1.10 Conclusion

Clan praises are a valuable heritage for African people. They serve religious and social purposes and are recited during significant ceremonies of the clan as well as throughout the life of an individual – from birth to death. Therefore, clan praises are a fundamental asset that must be preserved.

Clan praises have been neglected by folklore scholars. Urbanisation, industrialisation, modernisation, as well as other religions have contributed to the declining use of clan praises. It is hoped that that this study will contribute to the preservation of clan praises by keeping a written record of the selected clan praises. It is also envisaged that the study will reawaken interest in the oral literature genre that has been neglected and inspire other scholars of oral literature to conduct research on clan praises.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the literature reviewed in relation to this study to get more insights into the subject under study. It is imperative, in this regard, that the researcher engages with the literature to ensure the analysis and scrutiny of the body of knowledge in this field, and to determine how much is known and/or not known about the subject under study. Therefore, the chapter outlines the research methods employed by other scholars who were interested in the study of clan praises and presents the findings, theories, approaches, as well as the views and debates of these scholars. This has enabled the researcher to situate the study within the larger framework of knowledge in this field and identify the gap in the body of knowledge. To this end, the researcher explains how the research will bridge the gap and contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field. The researcher also explains how this research differs from and relates with other studies conducted in this regard. This chapter comprises of a review of foreign literature and local literature.

2.1 Literature Review

Tsiu (2001) investigated the Basotho family odes with a view to understanding their origin, structure, content, functions, and how they contribute to morality. The scholar conducted an in-depth analysis of the structure and content of the Basotho family odes. He also elucidated the educational, social, and religious functions of these odes and traced the genealogies of clans. He further investigated the influence of industrialisation, urbanisation, Christianity, other religions, as well as literacy on oral traditions. Tsiu's study is closely related to the current study, which aimed to examine EmaSwati clan praises, analyse their meaning, and highlight the significant events in the history of the clans. The current study also intended to discuss clans' taboos and totems, the genealogy of the forefathers of the clan, the origin of the clan, and how it was divided into sub-clans. Regarding the analysis of the structure and content of Basotho clan praises, Tsiu analysed the clan praises line-by-line. In this study the researcher as well analysed the clan praises line-by-line.

Tsiu (2001) further points out that family odes are an important heritage of the Basotho people.

This statement suggests that there is a relationship between the study conducted by Tsiu and this study because the current study aimed to determine if clan praises are carriers of heritage.

Tsiu also alludes to the fact that some people state that the use of oral traditions (especially *diboko*) is on the decline. This decline is attributed to urbanisation, industrialisation, and modernisation. The researcher concurs with the claim that clan praises have lost their significance. It is for this reason that this researcher embarked on a study on clan praises – to reawaken interest and to preserve this genre of oral literature which is on the decline.

Tsiu posits that among the Basotho clans and families, patrilineal descent is determined through the male line, and this has implications for a woman's maiden name. The scholar points out that the act of paying *lobola* (in the form of cattle) by the family of the bridegroom to the bride's family means that her maiden surname is absorbed into her husband's. The researcher, however, holds a different view on this issue. She maintains that a surname cannot be absorbed because the woman has blood ties with her ancestors. Therefore, a woman's surname will not change because she is connected to her ancestors who gave her the surname. However, the researcher concurs with Tsiu when she asserts that just like Basotho, patrilineal descent among EmaSwati of Eswatini is determined through the male line.

Tsiu (2001) employed interviews as a method of data collection. The researcher also employed interviews as data collection strategies. This study also has similarities with Tsiu's (2001) study in the sense that he explains in detail the functions of clan praises. In the same manner, the researcher highlights the functions of clan praises.

Kgobe (1994) examined closely the content, form, and technique of traditional and modern praise poetry in Northern Sotho to scrutinize and trace the development of Northern Sotho poetry from the traditional to the modern forms. Regarding praise poetry, Kgobe (1994:10) remarks thus:

This is a poetry that is fading in many parts of Lebowa because of the fast-emerging influence of modern European poetry. As literacy is now spreading throughout the entire world at a rapid rate, oral poetry seems destined, in time, to disappear if it is not collected and stored in accordance...

Kgobe's remarks is a summary of his conclusion pertaining to praise poetry. This researcher fully concurs with Kgobe and acknowledges that praise poetry is vanishing, not only in Lebowa (now part of Limpopo), but also in Eswatini. She supports Kgobe's observation that praise poetry is bound to disappear if it is not preserved. Thus, the current study is a move to avert the decline of oral poetry by keeping a written record of the clan praises which is part of oral poetry.

Kgobe presents the characteristics of praise poetry and focuses more on the praises of kings, heroes, initiates, animals, and lifeless objects. This study focused on clan praises (which are a type of praise poetry) and set out to establish if clan praises transmit heritage.

Ndawo (1939) compiled the clan praises of different clan names of the Amahlubi clan and analysed them. This analysis brings Ndawo's study closer to the current study, which analysed the selected EmaSwati clan praises and paid attention to the historical background of the clan, kinship, genealogy of ancestors, and how the clan divided into sub-clans. The difference between the two studies is that Ndawo does not interpret the clan praises line-by-line, whereas this study intended to do so. The study also aimed to establish if the selected clan praises are distributors of heritage.

According to Ndawo (1939:1), it is a tradition among all Africans that every person be known by his or her clan praises. He emphasises that it is rare for a person of African descent not to have clan praises. Unlike scholars, whose opinions are that clan praises are as old as creation, Ndawo is of the view that clan praises were invented by people because they wanted to distinguish themselves from others. This researcher concurs with Ndawo that there is no evidence that suggest clan praises are as old as creation.

Hadebe (1992) analysed legends, proverbs, praises, songs, and clan praises to reconstruct the history of the Amahlubi tribe. The scholar (Hadebe 1992:46) claims

that clan praises in Africa are becoming extinct. He points out that urbanisation and foreign religions have contributed to the death of clan praises. Hadebe's study found that young people, particularly those who live in townships, have limited knowledge of their clan praises. This researcher concurs in this regard that clan praises are dying, owing to the influence of urbanisation and foreign religions. The researcher also concurs that the youth have a vague understanding of their clan praises. It is common to find young people who can only recite one or two lines of their clan praises. This is the case even in Eswatini where, among other things, broken families owing to pandemic illnesses, industrialisation and urbanisation, contribute to the deterioration of clan praises.

Jadezweni (1999) investigated the changes that have infiltrated the isiXhosa praise poetry during the 1990s. The scholar highlights that "the series of clan names is the list of ancestors in one's genealogy" (Jadezweni 1999:4). He also points out that this genealogy is patrilineal. In the same breath, one of the objectives of this study was to trace the genealogy of the ancestors of the selected clans. The genealogy is traced from the male line.

Jadezweni (1999) emphasises the importance of teaching young children their clan praises. He is of the view that parents, especially fathers, must "teach their young children the list of clan names and praises of their ancestors" (Jadezweni 1994:4). The scholar argues further that clan praises are important because they "are names by which clansmen reaffirm their identity and distinguish themselves from other clans" (Jadezweni 1999:4). In this regard, the researcher supports Jadezweni's claim that clan praises mark the identity of the people of that clan and distinguish them from other clans. The researcher further subscribes to the idea that parents must teach their young children their clan praises. However, this is not always the case, because there are children who grow up without parents. For example, in Eswatini today, children grow up without parents because of pandemic diseases which claimed the lives of the latter. Therefore, a study like this is crucial because it serves as a written record of clan praises which the children may refer to in case they need information about their clan praises. Jadezweni focused on isiXhosa praise poetry and highlighted the importance of clan praises. On the contrary, this study focused mainly on the selected EmaSwati clan praises to establish if they are importers of heritage.

Malungana (1994) examined and analysed Xitsonga praise poetry with the aim of preserving it. He made the following important observation about praise poetry:

Praise poetry usually dies with the composer. If the praise poetry of the composers now dead and often even forgotten were collected and recorded, they would be remembered (Malungana 1994:1).

The researcher shares Malungana's view and posits that even among EmaSwati of Eswatini praise poetry, including clan praises, die with the elders who are more knowledgeable. There is, therefore, a need to collect and record praise poetry before it becomes extinct. Thus, the researcher addresses the need to collect and record praise poetry. The view that clan praises become extinct when the composer dies is supported by Madlala (2000:8), who refers to the African sage, Amadou Hampate Ba's warning that "with the death of every old man in Africa, a library disappears". This statement implies that there is an urgent need to solicit and gather information on African oral traditions from the elders before they go with such to the grave.

There are several approaches to verbal art, which Malungana employs. These include the oral-formulaic, structuralism, functionalism, and diffusionism (the historical-geographical) approaches. This research has employed the functionalism approach (which looks at the cultural purpose of folklore) and the diffusionism approach (which traces the migration routes and areas of origin of folklore). So, this study followed one of the approaches that Malungana employed.

Koopman (2015) traced the movement of the Zulu people across the landscape of the then Natal and Zululand before, during, and after the rule of Shaka and analyses their (Zulu people) clan praises: He observed that:

for many clans crossing a major river formed part of their migration. So vital was the crossing of a river that it was reflected in their clan praises (*izithakazelo*) (Koopman 2015:40).

In other words, Koopman (2015) analyses Zulu clan praises and show how they (clan praises) refer to the crossing of the river. Koopman (2015:40) observes that a clan praise "consists of a number of personal names of individuals important in the history of the clan (progenitor, kings, chiefs, notable heroes)". He also claims that the length of clan praises, just like all oral forms, is not fixed. This means that clan praises exhibit

one of the characteristics of oral literature – namely the fluidity of text. The scholar also asserts that to this day, clan praises still constitute an important element of a clan's identity. Indeed, clan praises are an important element of the clan's identity because they reflect the genealogy of the ancestors, the history, and the origin of the clan.

Koopman's study only focused on clan praises of the Zulu people and how these clan praises allude to the crossing of a river. On the other hand, this researcher conducted a detailed analysis of clan praises and paid attention to the significant historical events of the clan, totems and taboos, genealogy, as well as how the clan divided into sub-clans. Furthermore, the research aimed to assess if the selected clan praises are transporters of the heritage.

Madlala (2000) examined in depth the clan praises of the Madlala people in KwaZulu-Natal at Babanango, Nkandla, Ephathane, Empofana, Emtshezi, and Emfundweni in Dannhauser. She observed, described, analysed, and interpreted the context, text, and performance of Madlala-(Bhengu) clan praises. One of the objectives of her research was to help the Madlala people understand their origin, history, and genealogy. Madlala's study bears similarities with the current study, which sought to examine and analyse the selected EmaSwati clan praises, interpret them, and trace the origins, significant events, as well as the clan's genealogy. To this end, Madlala (2000:78) emphasises that clan praises "are another way of preserving the proud heritage of traditional knowledge and culture."

There is also a point of divergence between Madlala's (2000) study and this study in the sense that Madlala focused on clan praises of the Madlala clan of KwaZulu-Natal, while this researcher sought to analyse the clan praises of 25 clan names, which are found in Eswatini.

Madlala (2000:7) contends in this regard that clan praises "as an oral tradition seems to have lost much of its traditional strength and importance in Zulu society". She emphasises that clan praises are becoming extinct:

It is common today to find a person who cannot recite his *izithakazelo* (praise names) at all or who can recite only a portion of *izithakazelo* (family praises)

(Madlala 2000:7).

This researcher fully affirms Madlala's (2000:7) sentiments. Clan praises are not as popular as they used to be in the former days. It is also true that these days it is common (even in Eswatini) to find people, especially young people, who cannot recite their clan praises at all, or who can recite a line or two. Such cases suggest that clan praises are losing value. It is envisaged that a study such as this will stimulate interest in the clan praises that are becoming extinct and ensure that there is a written record of the clan praises.

Madlala (2000:8) emphasises that clan praises must be preserved for later generations. She is of the view that Christianity, Western influence, and urbanisation have not yet dealt clan praises a final blow; therefore, they can still be resuscitated and preserved. The scholar (Madlala 2000:4) points out that clan praises have received little attention from scholars of traditional literature, an assertion that this researcher supports. Therefore, the researcher posits that in-depth studies on clan praises must be conducted because clan praises contain significant information about the clans.

To this end, Makhambeni (cited by Madlala 2000:12) states that "*izithakazelo* are the pillars of life and are as old as mankind". This view is, however, refuted by Ndawo (1939:1), who is of the view that clan praises are not as old as the creation but were designed by man. The researcher affirms the view that clan praises were invented by man. That is so because there is no evidence that suggests that clan praises were incepted during creation.

Unlike Tsiu (2001), who is of the view that a woman trades her maiden name, which is absorbed into her husband's surname after marriage, Madlala (2000) opines that when a woman is married, her own surname and clan praises are not discarded. This researcher as well asserts that when a woman gets married, she continues to use her clan praises because she is still connected to her ancestors and has some attributes of the clan.

Madlala (2000) employed the onomastic theory (a naming theory) and points out that naming is significant because all things in the world are allocated names, whether

abstract or concrete. This theory is relevant in the study of clan praises because such a study covers, among other aspects, tracing the names of the ancestors and the names of the places of origin of members of the clan. In some clans, children are named after their ancestors.

Buthelezi (2004) examined *izibongo* (personal praises) and *izithakazelo* (clan praises) of the late kings Shaka, Phungashe, and Zwide to resuscitate the histories of the clans that were conquered by amaZulu and incorporated into the Zulu nation. The scholar alludes to the fact that *izibongo* and *izithakazelo* are useful tools of recovering the history of the marginalised clans. This researcher concurs with Buthelezi in this regard. This is because clan praises and personal praises contain information on the history and origin of the clan or individual. Buthelezi's analysis of personal praises and clan praises of Shaka, Phungashe, and Zwide unveils information on the prominent ancestors of the clan, the conquests of the leaders, as well as the areas occupied by the clans. This research has similarities with Buthelezi's study in the sense that it analysed the names of the ancestors of the selected clans and discussed remarkable events in the history of the clans as well as the places of origin of the people of these clans.

Nukuya (1969) analysed the social structure of the Anlo people of Ghana to identify the bilateral elements in the various areas of the social system. He described the idealised patrilineal system and the institutions and practices, which highlight these bilateral elements. He also discussed ways in which the system differs from the better-known patrilineal societies. The scholar highlights that members of a clan have social attributes such as food taboos, and that each clan "has its own totems which are associated with stories about the clan and its own origin or some exploit of the founding ancestor" (Nukuya 1969:188). Nukuya's study has similarities with this study, because one of the objectives of the current study is to determine if EmaSwati clan praises are transporters of heritage (taboos, totems, and the history of the clan).

Nukuya (1969:193) also notes something about married women in Anlo. He explains:

Married women remain members of their father's descent groups and all cult affiliation they had before marriage are not affected by their marital status. Wives are not absorbed into their husband's lineage but they still remain under the protection of their own patrilineal ancestors and lineage cults even after

marriage.

This researcher as well is of the view that a woman cannot be absorbed into her husband's lineage – because she has kinship and blood ties that bind her to her family and ancestors. This view is refuted by Tsiu (2001:155), who maintains, instead, that a woman “enters into marriage and becomes a member of her husband's family...her maiden *seboko* (surname) is ‘absorbed’ by that other husband”. This researcher argues in this regard that even after marriage the woman remains under the protection of her ancestors because she has blood and spiritual ties with them.

The difference between Nukuya's study and this study is that Nukuya analysed the idealised patrilineal system and the institutions and practices that highlight the bilateral elements. On the other hand, this researcher analysed clan praises in detail and sought to establish if clan praises are importers of heritage.

One of the developments in relation to clan praises is the move by Castle Milk Stout to:

challenge Africans to reflect on their origins through clan praises and use music as a platform to drive the importance of clan praises and embrace one's culture and heritage, ([https://sowetourban.co.za/62269/know-clan-praise/\(Revised on September 12, 2019\)](https://sowetourban.co.za/62269/know-clan-praise/(Revised_on_September_12,_2019)))).

The website ([https://sowetourban.co.za/62269/know-clan-praise/\(Revised on September 12, 2019\)](https://sowetourban.co.za/62269/know-clan-praise/(Revised_on_September_12,_2019)))) postulates that clan praises are an important aspect that relates to the origins of Africans and their heritage. So important are clan praises that Castle Milk Stout encourages Africans to use music as a podium to conscientise people about the importance clan praises. Africans are encouraged to strike a balance between the demands of modern life and embracing their Africanness. This website further claims that Castle Milk Stout has “introduced a [one-of-a-kind] musical creation named ‘Clan Beat.’” The aim of Castle Milk Stout is to raise an awareness of the importance of African culture and practices. This is a good move, which is geared towards raising an awareness of the significance of clan praises as part of the African heritage. Similarly, this study aimed to raise an awareness of the importance of clan praises and ensure a written record thereof.

Thwala (2018) conducted a comparative analysis of EmaSwati clan names and clan praises in Khumalo and Msogwaba settlements. His findings can be summarised as follows:

They are collected by various scholars, but no distinctive attention is being given to them. They need a specific collection, categorization, identification, description, interpretation and differentiation (Thwala 2018:2).

The researcher is also of the view that scholars of oral literature have not analysed clan praises exhaustively, hence there is a need for clan praises to be collected, analysed, and interpreted.

Thwala (2018:1) also claims that clan praises are an extension of a clan name. He employed the comparative approach to make a comparative analysis of clan names and clan praises in Khumalo and Msogwaba settlements. His study and the current one have similarities – because both analysed EmaSwati clan praises. Even though Thwala did a study on EmaSwati in South Africa, these EmaSwati are one with EmaSwati of Eswatini.

Thwala and Twala (2019) analysed in this regard, imagery from EmaSwati clan praises – focusing on metaphors and similes that are dominant in clan praises. The scholars (Thwala and Twala 2019:21) also assert that clan praises are “amongst the least researched genres of oral poetry”. Unlike this researcher, who sought to analyse and interpret the selected clan praises as a whole, Thwala and Twala (2019) concentrated on the metaphors and similes found in clan praises. These scholars employed structuralism and anthroponymic approaches while the current study engaged the functionalism and diffusionist approaches.

Kamera (2000) made a collection of clan praises of EmaSwati of Eswatini and compiled explanatory notes about each clan name. He also presented a brief history on the origin of each clan and discussed the attributes of the clan members as well as geographical areas where members of each clan are found. The scholar further described the genealogy of ancestors of the clan and clan’s kinship with other clans. This brings Kamera’s study closer to this study as the current study sought to investigate EmaSwati clan praises to determine if these clan praises are importers of heritage (history, beliefs, attributes, and genealogy of ancestors).

Kamera (2000:280-282) discusses in detail the function of clan praises. He has observed in this regard that clan praises are among the least researched genres of African oral literature. The scholar points out that older people are more knowledgeable about clan praises than the young people, especially those living in towns and cities. Equally, this researcher made the same observation that young people struggle to recite their clan praises while older people are more comfortable doing that. Thus, Kamera (2000) emphasises the need to collect and preserve clan praises.

Ginindza (1992:9) expounded on EmaSwati clan categories and their historical order of incorporation into EmaSwati nation. These clans are broadly categorised into *Bemdzabuko* ("True swazis"), *Emakhandzambili* ("Those found ahead"), *Emafikamuva* ("Late comers"), *Ematalankhosi* ("Bearers of kings"), and clans, which were historically semi-independent. This research, therefore, focused on the four clan categories: namely *Bemdzabuko*, *Emakhandzambili*, *Ematalankhosi*, and *Emafikamuva*.

Ginindza (1992:19) points out that clan praises are loaded with information on the history or episodes of the origin of the group, physical characteristics of the founder, beliefs, as well as customs. The scholar also gives an account of selected clan names and their praises and explicates the meaning of these clan names. She further alludes to the history and origin of the clan names, incidents in the life of the ancestors, national offices occupied by the members of the clans, as well as the clan's association with certain animals. The current study sought to probe further Ginindza's study as it aimed to examine clan praises to determine if these praises are importers of heritage.

Patricks (1999) made a compilation of clan names and clan praises of the clans in Eswatini, in some areas of South Africa, as well as in Mozambique, which were ruled by EmaSwati kings. He states the geographical areas where members of the clans are found, explains how the clans are related, and state their taboos and totems. The scholar (Patricks 1999:4) emphasises that members of one clan are prohibited from marrying those that they have close blood ties with. This research has similarities with

the study conducted by Patrick (1999) in the sense that it also examined EmaSwati clan praises and focused on the taboos and totems of a clan, geographical areas where members of the clan are found and how the clans are related. The only difference is that this research sought to interpret the meaning of clan praises line-by-line and establish if clan praises are importers of heritage.

Vilakati and Msibi (2006:89-92) also made a compilation of clan names and clan praises and analysed what is embedded in the clan praises. Just like Kamera (2000) and Ginindza (1992), these scholars described the genealogy of the ancestors of the clan, places of origin of the clan, and episodes in the life of the founders of the clan. They also explained how clans are related but did not analyse clan praises line-by-line. This research, therefore, sought to close the gap in the literature by analysing the meaning of the clan praises line-by-line and further establish if clan praises are importers of heritage.

Simelane (2014) analysed in detail EmaSwati clan praises by explaining kinship among clans, geographical areas where members of the clan are found, taboos and totems of the clans, as well as the genealogy of the ancestors. Similarly, this researcher unpacked the information embedded in clan praises. This study will go a step further and determine if the selected clan praises are importers of a clan's heritage

2.2 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has established that there are some scholars who have discussed clan praises and indicated that clan praises have received less attention from scholars of oral literature. Other scholars point out that clan praises are on the decline and they need to be preserved to avoid their extinction. The researcher has also noted that there are a few studies that analyse clan praises in depth and holistically. Most studies deal with praise poetry for kings, heroes, animals and objects. In such studies, clan praises are discussed as part of another topic hence they do not receive full attention. There are studies that partially deal with clan praises but an in-depth analysis of clan praises is still needed. A majority of researchers on clan praises compile clan praises but do not interpret what these clan praises mean.

Instead, they deal with certain elements of clan praises like imagery, genealogies, functions, history, taboos, totems or the performance of clan praises. For instance, Thwala and Twala (2019) analysed imagery in EmaSwati clan praises. Patricks (1999) compiled EmaSwati clan praises while Madlala (2000) focused on the context, text and performance of the Madla-(Bhengu) clan praises. In these studies, there is no interpretation of the meaning of clan praises line by line. A comprehensive study that elucidates clan praises in depth was done by Tsiu (2001) on Basotho clan praises.

This study is unique in the sense that it seeks to discuss clan praises in depth and holistically. It interpretes the meaning of clan praises line by line (an aspect that is lacking in many studies on clan praises), traces the place of origin of clan and explains how its people came to settle in the geographical areas they occupy today. The current study fills the gap in the study of clan praises by identifying the features of heritage (history, traditions, beliefs, customs and attributes) and grouping these features into sub-topics. This study also fills the gap by determining if clan praises have heritage and further establishing if clan praises import heritage to the present generation. This is something that is not covered in many studies on clan praises.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design employed in this study. It comprises a detailed explanation of the descriptive survey design and the qualitative approach which informed the study. The case-study methodology and semi-structured interviews are elucidated as methods of data collection. In this chapter, the researcher describes the study population, the sampling method, and the theoretical framework underpinning this study and explains how validity and reliability of the study were ensured. The researcher also explains the justification for selecting the descriptive survey design, the qualitative approach, and the data collection methods.

The study set out to determine if clan praises are importers of heritage. Studies conducted previously on clan praises have revealed that clan praises are becoming extinct, and they are the least researched genre in African Oral poetry. That is attested by Hadebe (1992:46), Thwala and Twala (2019:21) and Kamera (2000:272). The study sought to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Determine if clan praises of EmaSwati are importers of heritage;
2. Determine if clan praises import heritage to the present generation; and
3. Establish if clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini have value.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed the descriptive research design. Bryman and Bell (2011:40) define a research design as “a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question in which the investigator is interested”. In other words, a research design is a conceptual structure or plan used to collect and process the data to answer the research questions. A research design also outlines the research methods, tools for collecting the data, and procedures for analysing the data. According to Chiromo (2009:29-30), there are

three types of research design – namely the descriptive survey design, experimental design, and the action research design. Chiromo (2009:29) describes the descriptive research thus:

Descriptive survey means describing what you are seeing over and beyond the horizon... entails a study of a limited number of cases with a view to drawing up conclusions that cover the generality of the whole group under view.

This study sought to explore clan praises beyond surface meaning and draw conclusions based on the analysed clan praises of the selected clans. The descriptive survey research design was found to be more appropriate for this research since the research focused on the case of EmaSwati clan praises where 25 clan praises were selected. These clan praises were expounded in detail to ensure conclusions are drawn about EmaSwati clan praises.

3.1.1 Research method

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach. Strauss and Corbin (cited in Chiromo 2009:7) describe qualitative research as “that research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantifications”. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:102-103) outline the characteristics of qualitative research and state in this regard that qualitative research is exploratory in nature and seeks to describe and explain a phenomenon under study. This approach uses text-based data and inductive reasoning. It is holistic in nature and uses a small sample. The qualitative approach was found to be suitable for this study because it (the study) was investigative in nature and set out to investigate if clan praises are importers of heritage. The study also sought to depict and elucidate the use of clan praises in Eswatini. Text-based data were collected and conclusions were drawn based on what was gathered from the text rather than statistical measures. The researcher administered the interviews where participants presented their views on their clan praises. A small sample of 50 participants were selected for this study.

3.1.2 Case study methodology

According to Leedy and Ormond (2005:148), there are five qualitative research designs. These are the case study, ethnography, phenomenological study, grounded theory study, and content analysis. This qualitative study was conducted, using the case study methodology. Mafela et al (2016:17) define a case study as:

The collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular participant or small group, frequently including the accounts of the subjects themselves. A case study attempts to shed light on a phenomenon by studying a single case example of the phenomena.

A case study was found to be appropriate for this study since the researcher aimed to collect and present detailed information on EmaSwati clan praises. The case study focused on a single case of Emaswati clan praises. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:149) point out that “in a case study the researcher collects extensive data on individual(s), programme(s) or event(s) on which the investigation is focused”. Thus, this researcher administered semi- structured interviews to collect detailed information on clan praises from individuals in different areas of Eswatini.

3.2 Study Population

The study population consisted of adults between the ages of 50 and 70 (male and female), and the youth between the ages of 21 and 30. Adult participants were chosen because they are more knowledgeable about clan praises and the history of their clans. The youth were included to establish if clan praises import heritage to the present generation. Participants from the adult group were selected, based on their roles in the community. One of the participants was a chief who belongs to that clan name. In cases where the chief was not available, his next of kin would be interviewed. The other respondents were ordinary citizens who are members of the clan and the chief’s headmen or serve as advisors to the chief.

Participants were also selected from the youth group based on their roles in the community. One of the participants was male and the other a female. These participants ought to be leaders of the *Imbali* (“girls’ regiment”), or the *Tingatja* (“boys’ regiment”) in the community. They must be messengers of the chief and be

promoters of cultural activities in the community. In cases where the leaders of these regiments were not accessible, their assistants were nominated. Out of the 25 clan names that were selected, four subjects were chosen from each clan name. Thus, a total of 100 people were selected for the study. The study was conducted in Eswatini under different chiefdoms where each clan has its headquarters. Most clans in Eswatini have designated areas where each clan resides and administrates the area on behalf of the king. This area is regarded as the headquarters of the clan. The study was conducted in the chiefdoms known as *imiphakatsi*.

3.3 Sampling

The study drew its sample systematically. Sampling itself, according to Neuman (1991:201), involves a process of systematically selecting cases for inclusion in a research project. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:214-219), there are eight approaches to sampling. These are simple random sampling, stratified random sampling, proportional stratified sampling, cluster sampling, systematic sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling, and purposive sampling. This study employed systematic sampling. Systematic sampling “involves selecting individuals (or perhaps clusters) according to a predetermined sequence”, (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:16).

Clan names in Eswatini are grouped into categories based on certain criteria. In this regard, Ginindza (1992:9) categorises EmaSwati clans based on their order of incorporation into EmaSwati nation. Based on this criterion, Ginindza identifies four groups of clans namely: *Bemdزابuko*, *Emakhandzambili*, *Ematalankhosi*, and *Emafikamuva*. Six clan names were selected from the group of *Bemdزابuko*, *Ematalankhosi*, and *Emafikamuva*. Seven clan names were selected from *Emafikamuva* because this constitutes a larger group with more clan names. The clan names in each group were written in alphabetical order and every 4th unit of the clan names were selected. Thus, 25 clan names were selected for the study. As mentioned above, a total number of 100 people (four from each clan name) were selected for the study. Out of this population 50 people were interviewed. The interviewees were selected using systematic sampling. Each member of the population was assigned a number from 1-100 and every second subject was

selected.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The researcher employed semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection. An interview “involves the collection of data through direct verbal interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer.” (Chiromo: 2009:26). There are three types of interviews that are discussed by Bryman and Bell (2011:466-467) namely, the structured interview, unstructured interview and semi-structured interview.

The advantage of semi-structured interview is that, unlike in structured interview where diverging from the question is discouraged, in semi-structured interview the interviewee is afforded freedom to respond freely to questions and express his or her comments, views and feelings. These comments, views and feelings are pertinent in this study as one of the objectives of the study is to establish the value of clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini. So through the interviewees' comments, views and feelings the researcher can deduce the attitude, hence the value of clan praises. Another advantage of a semi-structured interview is its flexibility, unlike the structured interview which is inflexible, (Bryman and Bell 2011:467). This flexibility enables the interviewer to digress temporarily from the guide being used and ask follow-up questions to ensure the research questions are answered fully.

Whereas in unstructured interview the researcher uses prompts notes that will direct the interviewee to certain topics, in semi-structured interview, the researcher has a set of specific questions to be covered. These are the questions that influence and direct the interview and enable the researcher to stay focused on the objectives of the research.

One-on-one, semi-structured interviews were conducted among participants in this study and were recorded. The researcher used an interview guide which was divided into Section A and Section B. Section A required personal details of the respondent. This information was recorded to ensure that the researcher consulted participants in cases where she would need clarity on certain issues. Section B consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The interview questions were written in English

and SiSwati to accommodate people who do not understand English. The responses to the interview questions were also recorded. The researcher also wrote down responses to the questions. This was done to ensure the accuracy of the responses and to supplement the audio recordings.

The researcher used two interview guides, one for the elders and the other for the youth. As indicated earlier, the young participants were included to verify the responses of the adult participants on whether clan praises import heritage to the present generation. The researcher used the following interview guide for adult participants:

Section A: Personal Details

Name: _____

Age: _____

Status: _____

Residential area: _____

Contact details: _____

Section B: Interview questions

1. What are the people of this clan popular for?
2. Can you recite your clan praises?
3. Which taboos and totems are mentioned in your clan praises?
4. Which beliefs, customs and rituals are peculiar to this clan?

5. Briefly describe the historical background of this clan.
6. Do your clan praises include the names of the forefathers of this clan?
7. If your answer to 6 is (Yes), please provide us with the names of the forefathers of this clan.
8. Describe the attributes and characteristics which distinguish the people of this clan from other people.
9. How does your youth get to learn about their clan praises?
10. Do you think it is significant for the youth to learn about their clan praises? Can you explain the reasons for this?
11. Do your young people understand and use their clan praises? How important are clan praises among EmaSwati?
12. Do EmaSwati still hold on their clan praises?
13. If your answer to 12 is "Yes" please give reasons why clan praises are valued among EmaSwati?

SiSwati Version of the interview questions for adults

1. Badvume ngani bantfu balesibongo?
2. Ngicela uhaye sinanatelo sakini.
3. Ngutiphi tintfo letitilwako naletihlonishwako letibalwako kulesinanatelo sakini?
4. Ngutiphi tinkholelo, imihambo nemisimeto lebalulekile kubantu balesibongo?
5. Awunikete kafisha umlandvo webantu balesibongo.
6. Ngabe sinanatelo sakini sinawo yini emabito abokhokho balesibongo.
7. Uma ngabe uphendvule watsi yebo ku 6, niketa emabito abokhokho balesibongo.
8. Chaza similo nekwakheka noma kubukeka kwebantu balesibongo lokubenta behluke kulabanye bantu.
9. Labasha benu batifundza njani tinanatelo?
10. Ucabanga kutsi kubalulekile yini kutsi labasha bafundze tinanatelo tabo? Niketa tizatfu talokuchazile.
11. Ngabe labasha bayaticondza yini futsi bayatisebentisa yini tinanatelo tabo? Tibaluleke kangakanani tinanatelo kumaSwati?
12. EmaSwati asebambelele yini etinanatelweni?
13. Nangabe uphendvule watsi yebo ku 12, niketa tizatfu letenta kutsi tinanatelo tibaluleke kumaSwati.

The researcher used the interview guide below for the youth participants:

Section A: Personal Details

Name: _____

Age: _____

Status: _____

Residential area: _____

Contact details: _____

Section B: Questions

1. Have you been taught or have you ever heard about your clan praises?
2. Who is the first person that taught you or told you about your clan praises?
3. Can you recite your clan praises?
4. Are your clan praises significant to you? Please explain.
5. How often do you use your clan praises? (circle one)
 - (a) On a daily basis.
 - (b) Once in a month.
 - (c) On special occasions.
 - (d) Never use them.
6. Describe the attributes and characteristics which distinguish the people of this clan from other people.
7. Briefly describe the historical background of this clan.
8. Which taboos and totems are mentioned in your clan praises?

9. Who are your forefathers that are mentioned in your clan praises?
10. Why is it important to know and understand your clan praises?
11. Do EmaSwati still hold on to their clan praise?
12. What would happen if people were to lose their clan praises?

SiSwati version of the interview questions for youth

1. Uke wafundziswa yini noma weva ngesinanatelo sakini?
2. Ngubani umunftu wekucala lowakutjela noma wakufundzisa ngesinanatelo sakini?
3. Ngicela uhaye sinanatelo sakini.
4. Ngabe sinanatelo sakini simcoka yini? Chaza kutsi usho ngani.
5. Usisebentisa kangakhi sinanatelo sakini? (kipilitelela kunye)
 - (a) Onkhe Malanga
 - (b) Kanye ngenyanga
 - (c) Nakunemicimbi lebalulekile
 - (d) Angike ngisisebentise
6. Chaza similo nekwakheka noma kubukeka kwebantfu balesibongo lokubenta behluke kulabanye bantfu.
7. Chaza kafisha umlandvo webantfu balesibongo.
8. Ngutiphi tintfo letitilwako naletihlonishwako letibalwako kulesinanatelo?

9. Bobani bokhokho lababalwako kulesibongo?
10. Kubaluleke ngani kutsi wati futsi ucondze sinanatelo sakini?
11. Ngabe EmaSwati asebambebele yini etinantelweni?
12. Kungentekani uma bantfu bangalahlekelwa tinanatelo?

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

The data for this study were analysed using deductive thematic method of data analysis. This method of data analysis involves five steps articulated by Leedy and Ormrod (2005:136) namely, organisation of details about the study, categorisation of the data, interpretation of single instances, identification of patterns, synthesis, and generalisations. Following this method, the researcher made a compilation of the clan praises of each clan. Next, the data were categorised into subtopics such as the historical background of the clan, taboos and totems, contrived genealogy of the ancestors, prominent events and what members of the clan are known for, character traits, traditions, kinship, as well as places where members of this clan are found. The clan praises were then interpreted line-by-line under these subtopics. Themes were identified and generalisations were made about clan praises. Conclusions were drawn based on the themes and generalisations.

3.6 Data Presentation

This section presented the 25 clan praises selected for this study. Each of these clan praises were presented line-by-line in SiSwati. An English translation of the clan praises was given thereafter. This formed the basis for analysing the clan praises.

3.7 Theoretical Framework

This section presents and explains in detail a set of theories and approaches that underpin this study. These theories are essential as they play a significant role in the

interpretation and understanding of clan praises. They explain the perspective or point of view from which the clan praises were analysed and interpreted.

The study was informed by the functionalism theory and historic-geographic theory. The historic-geographic theory is known as the diffusionist theory and focuses on the origin and the spread of folklore as well as the analysis of the components that make up a folklore.

According to Okpewho (1992:168), the pioneers of the diffusionist theory were two groups of scholars known as the Indianist and Finnish scholars. Indianist scholars were led by Wilhem Grimm. These scholars collected tales and analysed their linguistic components in order to detect the change that had occurred in these tales from one language area to another. The aim of these scholars was to trace the original place of the tale and reconstruct the original tale. Other Indianist scholars who played a major role in the expansion of the diffusionist theory are Max Muller, Theodor Benfey and Emmanuel Cosquin.

The Finnish scholars also collected tales and songs and focused on the classification of the components of these tales and songs into categories or types. Okpewho (1992:169) points out that Stith Thompson (one of the Finnish scholars) aimed to “reduce all known tales of the world into smaller units of composition.” Thompson pointed out that a tale should be divided into smaller units or components called motifs. Okpewho (1992:169) summarises the diffusionist theory thus:

The scholars set about dividing the world into “cultural areas” or geographic regions inhabited by people who share related social traditions and are therefore bound by a certain psychological unity. In this way the diffusionists hoped to follow narrative units (types and motifs) from one geographical area of the globe to another. In analyzing a tale, therefore, the idea was to list the various tale units that make up the tale and the origins and the routes of diffusion or travel of the units.

The diffusionists theory was found to be relevant in the study of clan praises because the clan praises were analysed and broken into smaller elements following the ideology of the diffusionist of reducing the tales into units or components. These components were grouped into sub-topis like character traits and attributes, historical background, taboos and totems, prominent events and what the members of this clan

are known for and traditions. The study also traced the original place of the people of each clan and explained how they migrated to the geographical places that they occupy today just like the diffusionists who traced the original place of a tale and the diffusion routes of the tale.

The functionalism theory emerged from the field of anthropology. It concerned itself with the study of aspects of culture (for example, customs, art, oral traditions) by observing the functions performed by these aspects in a society. This theory was established by Bronislaw Malinowski and his counterparts Radcliffe-Brown and Franz Boas. Okpewho (1992:173) discusses the functionalism theory as follows:

Functionalism emerged as a method of studying the life and the culture of a society by examining the functions or roles performed by anything practiced in the society (e.g., the tales told by its members) as well as the ways in which these functions help to ensure the survival of the society.

Functionalism focused on the roles of the aspects of culture in a society. These aspects include oral traditions, rituals, norms, values, religion to name but a few. This theory also looked into how the the functions performed by aspects of culture propel continuance of the society. In one of the researches he conducted, Malinowski concluded that tales reflect the customs and traditions of the past, contain sacred information and preserve morals and values.

This theory was found to be appropriate for a study on clan praises because the study analysed clan praises and discussed the aspects of culture (traditions, taboos, totems, rituals, beliefs) that are reflected in clan praises after the functionalism theory which concerns itself with the study of the aspects of culture by observing the functions performed by these aspects in a society. In other words, the research on clan praises of EmaSwati is the study of the life and culture of EmaSwati because it unveils what these people practice, what they believe in, what they avoid and how they interact. The study also looked at functions performed by clan praises and explained the significance of these functions in Eswatini society.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

3.8.1 Validity

According to Bryman and Bell (2011:42), “validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:28) define validity as “the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure”. The researcher ensured validity by using an interview guide, which consisted of open- ended and closed-ended questions. As the researcher is a teacher, she piloted the interview questions among 10 teachers to establish if the questions would yield the intended responses. The researcher recorded participants’ responses and noted them in writing as well to supplement the audio recording.

3.8.2 Reliability

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:99) define reliability of a measurement instrument as “the extent to which it yields consistent results when the characteristic being measured hasn’t changed”. This means that a measuring instrument must yield similar results when the unit that is measured has not changed.

To ensure reliability in this study, the researcher posed the same interview questions to every participant in the same sequence. The researcher also ensured reliability by verifying the responses of the adult participant against the responses of the youth participants. The researcher conducted the interviews in a quiet place and ensured that participants were comfortable.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Bryman and Bell (2011:122) posit that “ethical issues revolve around such concerns as how should we treat the people on whom we conduct the research”. To this end, research participants must be treated in a manner that is ethically acceptable. In this regard, Leedy and Ormrod (2001:107) assert that “most ethical issues fall into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty

with professional colleagues”. For this research to be deemed ethical, the four ethical principles were observed. The researcher sought permission to conduct the study from the Department of Human Science research ethics committee at Unisa. Authorisation to conduct the research in the chiefdoms was also sought from the Ministry of Tinkhundla that regulates the chiefdoms of Eswatini.

The researcher also obtained consent from participants before they were interviewed. The purpose of the study, the procedures for collecting the data, and the length of the interview were explained to participants. Participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary, and that they had the right to withdraw from the study anytime should there be a need to do so. Participants were also assured of confidentiality – that is, their identity will not be divulged when reporting the findings. Participants were also assured that participating in the study did not carry any potential risks or harm. The researcher further assured participants that she would not use any deception to obtain information from them. The true nature of the study was explained to participants, who were assured further that their responses would be recorded truthfully as they are.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter elucidated on the research design and methodology employed in the study. The chapter also outlined the descriptive survey design and the qualitative approach as strategies that informed this study. The case study methodology, methods of data collection and data analysis, namely the semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis were discussed. The chapter also presented information about the sample and method of sampling. Ethical considerations, validity, and reliability of the study were explained, as well as how these were ensured. The chapter also included a discussion on functionalism and diffusionist theories as theories that underpinned the study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses the 25 clan praises selected for this study. The clan praises are presented in SiSwati, followed by English translations. The researcher adopted the deductive thematic method of data analysis. This method entails the organisation of details about the study, the categorisation of the data, the interpretation of single instances, identification of patterns, synthesis, and generalisation. This study is also informed by the functionalism theory and the diffusionist theory. The main aim of the study was to analyse the selected clan praises to determine if clan praises are importers of heritage. This study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

- Do clan praises have information on the history and origin of the clan, taboos and totems, beliefs, customs, rituals, list of the forefathers, traditions, attributes, and characteristics of the members of that clan?
- Are the youth being taught clan praises?
- How valuable are clan praises among EmaSwati of Eswatini?

This chapter, presents the clan praises of the selected surnames (Khumalo, Manyatsi, Maseko, Nsibandze, Mdluli, Ndwandwe, Maseko, Magagula, Mnisi, Gama, Shongwe, Hlophe, Mamba, Simelane, Mndzebele, Fakudze, Dlamini, Nkambule, Matsebula, Tfwala, Hlatjwako, Phakathi, Motsa, Mayisela and Dludlu) to determine if they carry any information that pertains to heritage (the origins of the clan, taboos and totems, contrived genealogy of ancestors, prominent events and what the members of this clan are known for, character traits and attributes, traditions and kinship systems), find out if the youth are taught about their clan praises in their families, and to determine the value of clan praises among EmaSwati. Clan praises are a genre of oral literature – it is, therefore, possible that some clan praises have varieties.

The following section presents the clan praises of the different surnames. It is followed by a section on the discussion and analysis of the patterns identified from the interview data.

4.1 Khumalo Clan Praises

Khumalo
Mntungwa
Zikodze
Kuhlase
Lukhambule
Wena waSiwela
Wena wamafuyanduna
zinomkhaba
Mntungwa loluhlata
lonjengencoshane
Mzilikazi kaMashobane

[Khumalo
Mntungwa
Zikodze
Kuhlase
Lukhambule
Son of Siwela
You who keep headmen with a big
belly
Mntungwa who is green like
evergreen grass
Mzilikazi son of Mashobane]

4.1. 1 Historical background

The Khumalo belong to the clan category known as *Emakhandzambili* (“Those found ahead”). *Emakhandzambili* refers to “all these tribes or clans which Sobhuza I and his followers found in what is now Swaziland” (Matsebula 1988:22). Sobhuza I, also known as Somhlolo, was the king of Eswatini, and was the son of King Ndvungunye. He is known for playing a significant role in building EmaSwati nation. The clans that

Sobhuza I and his followers (from KaTembe) found in the present-day Eswatini were of Sotho, Nguni, Ntungwa, and Tsonga origin.

The Khumalo are also known as *Ematalankhosi* (“Bearers of kings”). *Ematalankhosi* are the clans “from which the queen mothers are chosen” (Ginindza 1992:9). A Khumalo maiden, Sisile married Mswati II and begot a crown prince, Ludvonga II. She was the queen mother of Eswatini during the reign of King Ludvonga II and Dlamini IV (Matsebula 1988:16). Consequently, the Khumalo gained the status of *Ematalankhosi*. It is worth noting that clan praises expand from time to time. This is because with time the clan accomplishes new things that are noteworthy and need to be recorded in their clan praises. For instance, the line “navel of the king” was added to the Nxumalo clan praises after LaYaka, Tsandzile and Lomawa bore Swazi kings. The line *matalankhosi* or *naboNkhosi* has been added to clan names like Mdluli, Mndzebele, Simelane, who have the history of bearing kings.

An informant from the Khumalo clan narrated that the Khumalo tribe originated from Zimbabwe. Their leader at the time was Mzilikazi, son of Mashobane – hence, the praises, “Mzilikazi son of Mashobane”. When the Khumalo tribe left Zimbabwe, they were scattered to other parts of Africa. According to an informant, Mgcoyiza was the leader of the Khumalo tribe who led them to Eswatini. He was from Ngoje in South Africa. Mgcoyiza was given the responsibility to look after the kings’ graves at Zikhotheni.

In Eswatini the kings’ graves are guarded because of the belief that kings do not die, but rest. In general, EmaSwati believe that the departed are not dead but are with the living. They are just “sleeping”. Therefore, guards who watch over kings’ graves do so to honor the “sleeping” kings. The graves are also protected because people might perform witchcraft rituals at the graves and can use the spirit of the “sleeping” kings, or their remains to make *muti*.

4.1.2 Taboos and totems

A green, long grasshopper known as *umgcwigcwi* is a taboo for the Khumalo tribe. It is believed that eating this grasshopper will make them thin.

4.1.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The Khumalo ancestors are Donda, Shobane, Mzilikazi, and Mgcoyiza. Other Khumalo heroes are Kuhlase, Mntungwa, Lukhambule, and Siwela. Lukhambule was the son of Siwela. Some of the names of these ancestors are mentioned in the Khumalo clan praises (for example Donda, Kuhlase, Lukhambule, Mntungwa, and Siwela).

4.1.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

Mgcoyiza Khumalo was the king's headman who was responsible for watching over kings' graves at Zikhotheni. This is articulated in their clan praises: "You who keep headsmen with a big belly". In SiSwati, a man with a big belly is considered to have plenty (including food). Thus, it was believed that the Khumalo tribe had plenty of food because of their big bellies. According to one informant, the Khumalo were also famous blacksmiths who shaped iron into spears.

4.1.5 Character traits and attributes

The Khumalo are said to be dark in complexion – hence their clan praises, "Mntungwa who is green like the evergreen grass". In SiSwati, the word *luhlata* (green) is used to refer to a darker complexion. The same word can be used to mean being rude. It is fitting therefore, that one informant described the Khumalo as very rude, stubborn, and frank people who cannot tolerate nonsense.

4.1.6 Traditions

One of the informants stated that the Khumalo have a role to play during *incwala*. Vilakati and Msibi (2006:132) define *incwala* thus:

Incwala ngumkhosi lomkhulu loyincenye yendzabuko yesive semaSwati logujwanjalo ngenyanga yeNgongoni lokhomba loku lokulandzelako:

(i) kubonga kwephetsa umnyaka, nekucela imvula nenhlalakahle

- emnyakeni lolandzelako emadlotini nakuMvelinchatu.
- (ii) Kungenisa umnyaka lomusha lapho iNkhosi ikhafa khona bese iluma umnyaka lomusha. Loku kutsiwa kuluma. Lokusho kutsi kulapho Silo semaSwati siluma khona, bese – ke sive sonkhe semaSwati sesingacala kudla tilimo nekudla lokusha emnyakeni.

Incwala is a big cultural event which is part of the origins of EmaSwati nation which is celebrated annually in December to show the following:

- (i) Thanking God and the ancestors for completion of the year, asking them for rain and social welfare in the following year.
- (ii) Beginning of the new year where the King spits and then takes the first bite of the new crop. This is called biting. This means it is where the King of EmaSwati nation takes the first bite of the new crop. After that the whole EmaSwati nation can then start eating the new crops of the year].

4.1.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Khumalo are mostly found in Buseleni, Sandleni, Ngudzeni, Mbekelweni, Ekwendzeni, and Manyandeni. They do not intermarry with the Kuhlase, Ndlangamandla, and the Zwane.

4.1.8 Overview from the Khumalo clan praises

The informants emphasised the importance of learning and mastering clan praises. This would help members of the clan to understand relational kinship and avoid intermarriage with clans with whom they have relational kinship. Children born from such intermarriages may have physical and mental disabilities. The grandmother was mentioned as the key person teaching young ones their clan praises. It is alleged that EmaSwati are obsessed with clan praises and that they use them as a form of identity. Equally, the informants mentioned that they use clan praises daily.

4.2 Manyatsi Clan Praises

Manyatsi

Sicandza

Mphumaphi

Mnguni

Mdaka loluhlata lonjengencoshane
Wena udlela enyezini
njengebantfwabenkhosi
Wena wakanhlambeletjeni
Wena waboZwide naboYanga

[Manyatsi (buffalo)
Sicandza (one
who blunts)
Mphumaphi (where are you
coming from)
Mnguni
Mdaka who is green like evergreen grass
You who eat in the moonlight like princes and
princesses
You who baths on the stone
You of Zwide and Yanga]

4.2.1 Historical background

The Manyatsi belong to the clan category called *Emafikamuva* (“the late comers”). *Emafikamuva* are the clans that were incorporated into the EmaSwati nation long after it was founded. The Manyatsi are also part of the Nguni. They are originally from South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal province). They came to the present-day Eswatini to seek refuge after the outbreak of the Mfecane wars. Mhlanga et al. (2007:110) points out that the word “Mfecane” means (“crushing”), while “Difaqane” means (“scattering”), and that this was “a period in history ... also referred to as the ‘time of trouble’”. The Mfecane wars, therefore, refer to the calamitous warfare that took place among African chiefdoms which was accompanied by a massive migration of the people of Southern Africa. According to these scholars, there were three prominent states that were involved in the Mfecane wars, namely the Ndwandwe led by Zwide, the Mthethwa led by Dingiswayo, and the Ngwane led by Sobhuza I. Makhasane led the Manyatsi to Eswatini. They have kingship with the Ndwandwe of Zwide hence,

their clan praises: “you of Zwide son of Yanga”. The name Yanga is taken from the Nguni “kuyeyeza”, which was, and is still used by the Ndwandwe. Kuyeyeza is a “siNguni [term], which is a kind of Zulu-ized Swazi, characterized by the use of “y” in place of “l” ... (Matsebula 1988:25). Yanga was the Ndwandwe ruler and the father of Zwide and Soshangane. The Manyatsi are also praised as “Mnguni”, like the Ndwandwe.

4.2.2 Taboo and totems

There are no taboos and totems for this clan.

4.2.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

According to the informant, Makhasane had four sons, namely Mkhosi, Mhliphizo, Lomadabha, and Bhavu. Other Manyatsi heroes that are mentioned in their clan praises are Sicandza, Mphumaphi, and Mdaka.

4.2.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

One informant narrated that Queen Tsandzile (who was the mother to King Mswati II) assigned Makhasane to go and establish a home for one of the princes at Sigcineni. That is why the Manyatsi are praised as: “you who eat in the moonlight like princes and princess”. Makhasane was given the responsibility to be King Mswati I’s overseer at Sigcineni. His sons were assigned royal duties as well; it is, thus, appropriate to compare the Manyatsi with the princes and princesses.

4.2.5 Character traits and attributes

The Manyatsi are said to be dark in complexion as articulated in the line “Mdaka who is green like evergreen grass”. As highlighted above, in SiSwati the word *luhlata* can refer to someone who is dark in complexion, and someone who is rude.

4.2.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Manyatsi are related to the Shabangu. They are found mainly at Sigcineni.

4.2.7 Overview from the Manyatsi clan praises

Clan praises were deemed important because they provide the historical background of the clan, taboos and totems, character traits, and kinship relations. The youth stated in this regard that they were not formerly taught their clan praises but that they heard adults reciting these daily. The youth also indicated that even though they use their clan praises, they do not understand what they mean. This is because no one explained to them what the clan praises mean. Their elders only mention them in passing. They also confirmed that the grandmother is the leading person in using clan praises. One informant was of the view that EmaSwati no longer uphold their clan praises because some people no longer observe taboos and totems.

4.3 Masuku Clan Praises

Masuku

Nhlane

Mnguni

Mtfondvo welitfusi

Tfundza batfole bafokatana

basemtini

Buhle bakhe bungiphicile

Ngekufana

nelibhubesi

Wena lomuhle

kakhulu

Wena wadla tinkhomo temadvodza

[Masuku

Nhlane

Mnguni
Copper penis
Ejaculate and let commoners
benefit
His beauty amazed me
By being like a lion
You who is so beautiful
You who devoured the cattle of men].

4.3.1 Historical background

The Masuku are called *Emafikamuva* (“The Late comers”). They are originally from South Africa, in the KwaZulu-Natal province. An informant related that the Masuku are part of the Ndwandwe of Zwide. That is why they are praised as: “Mnguni”, like the Ndwandwe. Some of them settled at Makhwane when they first arrived in Eswatini.

4.3.2 Taboos and totems

According to the findings of this study, there is no food prohibition for this clan, and there is no animal or object that they venerate.

4.3.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

Informants mentioned Msipha, Lomangongo, and Loshina as the Masuku ancestors. Other ancestors mentioned in the Masuku clan praises are Masuku and Nhlane.

4.3.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Masuku are known for their beauty. The statements “your beauty amazed me”, and “you who is beautiful”, suggest that their beauty is breathtaking.

4.3.5 Character traits and attributes

According to Kamera (2000:109), “the [Masuku] males are also notorious for taking other people’s wives so they are said to have copper penis. The males are fertile: if a woman sleeps with them once, she conceives”. Such an attribute, as given by Kamera, is recorded in the Masuku clan praises because they are praised as “copper penis” and “ejaculate and let commoners benefit”. It is as if the Masuku males have a unique penis (copper penis) because they seduce other men’s wives and impregnate them. The statement “ejaculate and let commoners benefit” suggests that the Masuku men impregnate other men’s wives and these men are referred to as commoners.

The Masuku are also known for stealing other people’s cattle – hence, the praises, “you who devoured the cattle of men”. During this period, cattle were a man’s valuable possession. According to Mhlanga et al. (2007:93), “cattle were a symbol of power and wealth” for the early Bantu-speaking people. They were a symbol of power because the chiefs and other leaders had more cattle. Products from cattle like meat, milk, horns, hooves, and skin were very useful to the early Bantu-speaking people. Cattle were also used as form of money to pay fines and “lobola” (the bride price). The Masuku are, therefore, considered powerful people because they defeated other men, looted their cattle, and became rich.

4.3.6 Traditions

There is no specific tradition associated with this clan name.

4.3.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Masuku are related to the Zwane and the Ndwandwe. They are found at Lavumisa, Nsingizini, KoNtjingila, Magele, and Emvuma.

4.3.8 Overview from the Masuku clan praises

It has been noted already that clan praises are used daily. One youth informant

narrated that she was not taught the clan praises and, therefore, she has limited knowledge of the clan praises. The youth acknowledged that elderly people are still holding on to their clan praises, unlike the youth, who have limited information about their clan praises. The informant alluded to the fact that a lack of formal education on clan praises and the influence of other cultures have contributed to the declining use of clan praises among the youth.

4.4 Nsibandze Clan Praises

Nsibandze

Goje

Mdlanyoka

Phangela khulu

Mzenge loncama

netitfo takhe

NaboVundl' umvila

Silo sakhala

konakele

Ngcagce

[NsibandzeGoje

Snake eater

Phangela

Who is big

Mzenge who is thin up to the legs

Mother of Vundlumvila

Once the lion roars it signals danger

Ngcagce]

4.4.1 Historical background

The Nsibandze are known as *Emakhandzambili* (“those found ahead”). According to

one informant, when Ngwane III arrived in Zombodze he found the Nsibandze there. Lohhiya was the first Nsibandze chief to arrive in Zombodze. He was from Ngcagce in Thongaland, hence, the clan praises of the Nsibandze mention “Ngcagce”, their place of origin. The statement “once the lion roars it signals danger” refers to a historical allusion that Nsibandze once lived in the forest with animals. When the lion roared then he knew that danger was looming.

4.4.2 Taboos and totems

The Nsibandze do not eat a bird called *sangoli*.

4.4.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

Lohhiya, Masenjana, Silele, and Phuhlaphi were identified as Nsibandze ancestors. Other ancestors who were great leaders are Jozelibovu, Mkhomazi, and Makhosikhosi from kaLombowako area. Mdokwana, Silo, Silwane, and Mdlanyoka were from Mahlalini area. Goje and Mdlanyoka are names of ancestors mentioned in the Nsibandze clan praises.

4.4.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

One informant stated that the Nsibandze were King Ngwane III’s traditional healers. Ngwane was the son of Dlamini III, who succeeded him (Dlamini) as king in 1745. The Nsibandze had medicine for *incwala*. One of the leaders of the Nsibandze tribe, Lohhiya, was a blacksmith. He killed a buck for the king, unlike the Nkonyane, who killed calves for the king. In the process he (Lohhiya) won the king’s heart.

Another informant narrated that Nsibandze was identified by Ngwane III because he was an outstanding and a powerful magician. The informant further related that Lohhiya Nsibandze played a significant role because he went to fetch King Somhlolo from his mother’s place at Nkalaneni. Masenjana Nsibandze was chosen by king Ngwane III to be governor of Zombodze. To this date, the Nsibandze are still royal governors at Zombodze (Matsebula 1988:11).

4.4.5 Character traits and attributes

The Nsibandze are portrayed as slender and short. That is why they are praised as, “Mzenge who is slender even on the legs”.

4.4.6 Traditions

The Nsibandze had their custom that they observed yearly. They would go hunting and would not stop hunting until they caught a type of a snake called *inhlatfu*. Then a celebration was done where they slaughtered a goat and mix its meat with the meat of the snake (*inhlatfu*) and then ate. That is why they are called “the snake eaters”.

4.4.7 Kinship and the places where members of this clan are found

The Nsibandze are found at Zombodze Emuva, Mahlalini and KaLombowako. They are related to the Nkonyane.

4.4.8 Overview from the Nsibandze clan praises

Informants from this clan mentioned that the youth are not formerly taught their clan praises, but that they learn about them as elders recite them daily. Informants said that they have observed that not all EmaSwati still hold on to their clan praises.

4.5 Mdluli Clan Praises

Version 1

Mdluli

Skhandzisa

LaMambane

Dlulakholo

Wena waMshengu kaNdaba

Ntsabalenhle lengakhonjwa ngemuno

lekhonjwa ngesibhakela
Mbokodvo lenhle lesila bulawu bemakhosi
Mkholo lomuhle netinyawo takhe
Wena sibamba nhlitiyo
yaMswati
Kwakungabulawa nkomo
Kwakubulawa inhloko
zamadoda
Mdluli
Skhandzisa

[Mdluli
Sikhandzisa
LaMambane
Dlulakholo
You of Mshengu of Ndaba
Beautiful mountain
that is not pointed at using a finger
but pointed using the fist
Beautiful grinding stone that grinds
the medicine of the king
Mkholo who is beautiful with
his feet
You who won the heart of
Mswati
It was not the cattle that were hacked
It was the heads of men that were hacked
Mdluli
Sikhandzisa].

Version 2

Mdluli
Bhekiswako

Wena wabhekis' inkhosi
elusaseni
Sukuta
Luvuno
Luvuno alunamahloni
Baka Mdluli abayidli inyama
yembuti
Badla yenkonkoni
Phika sinamandla
Mlimi wesindze
Bantfu balim' emafus' aboGembeMlisana
Ndindindi
Matalankhosi
Mdluli

[Mdluli (passerby)
Bhekiswako
You who guided the king to
Elusaseni
Sukuta
Luvuno
Luvuno who is shameless
The Mdluli do not eat the meat of
a goat
They eat the meat of gnu
Powerful shoulder
Cultivator of virgin land
When others cultivate their
old fields
Bearers of kings
Thunderous one
Mdluli]

4.5.1 Historical background

The Mdluli are referred to as *Bemdzabuko* (“True Swazis”). These are the clans that migrated with the Dlamini from Tembeland, and other clans that were conquered and incorporated by the Dlamini during their migration to the present-day Eswatini. They arrived with the Dlamini and settled at Shiselweni region. Their headquarters was initially at Mashobeni and Mbilaneni. One of the Mdluli informants narrated that the first Mdluli leader who arrived in Eswatini was Sokhaya.

The Mdluli clan is divided into two sub-clans: the Mdluli Sikhhandzisa and Mdluli Bhekiswako. The informant related that Skhandzisa and Bhekiswako were sons of one man. Bhekiswako was sent to survey the country in the Northern and Western part since King Ngwane III wanted to migrate that direction from the South. His mission was to establish if there were no enemies along the way and how fertile the land was. Bhekiswako found fertile land in Zombodze Embili and settled there. He did not go back to the king to give a report on the fertile land he had found. A team of men were sent to look for him. When they found him, they asked, *ubese ubhekaphi* (“where did you go”)? He was then named Bhekiswako.

According to Ginindza (1992:48), the king’s fictitious blood brother, called *insila*, comes from the Mdluli Sikhhandzisa, and the late Queen mother, Labotsibeni, comes from the Mdluli Bhekiswako. King Mbandzeni married a Mdluli maiden, Gwamile (known as Labotsibeni), who was the mother of Bhunu. The line “Matalankhosi” (bearers of kings) in the Mdluli Bhekiswako clan praises was added after Labotsibeni bore Bhunu and became the Queen Mother during the reign of Bhunu and a Queen Regent during the tender years of Sobhuza II who lost his father at a very young age.

Labotsibeni is remarkable for her courage, invincible and resolute nature. Matsebula (1988:150) describes Labotsibeni as having “unusual astuteness, diplomacy and ability during her long-term office as the queen”. It is this intelligence and tactfulness that enabled Labotsibeni to deal with white people that flocked to Eswatini during her reign. The invincible nature of Labotsibeni is alluded to in the Mdluli Bhekiswako clan praises. The line “thunderous one” refers to the “indomitable character of Labotsibeni”

Ginindza (1992:50)

Mdluli (2013) makes an in-depth analysis of the praises of Labotsibeni. Concerning Labotsibeni, Mdluli (2013:199-2004) remarks thus:

She is one of the female traditional leaders of Emaswati who left an indelible legacy in her country and beyond. After the death of King Bhunu in 1899, Labotsibeni became the Queen Regent and served until her minor grandson Nkhontfotjeni reached his majority. She was in this position until 1921.... The main challenge Labotsibeni faced in her governance was that of land taken away from Emaswati by white people.

The citation above highlights some of the achievements and challenges that Labotsibeni encountered during her reign. Irrespective of these obstacles, she remained firm and determined, hence she did great exploits for EmaSwati nation. Some of her accomplishments include building the first national school and sending her grandson Nkhontfotjeni to school (Lovedale in South Africa) against the will of the royal family and EmaSwati nation. Her daring nature and resoluteness made her gleam with nobility.

The Mdluli Bhekiswako are praised as: “you who guided the king to Elusaseni”. According to Ginindza (1992:49) “lusasa are the quarters of the young king in the new capital before he is crowned”. Therefore, the statement, “you who guided the king to elusaseni” refers to Queen Labotsibeni who acted as the Queen Regent for King Sobhuza II as well as the Mdluli people who guided the Dlamini to the new land. This is the fertile land that the Mdluli discovered at Zombodze Embili when Ngwane III sent him on an expedition to look for fertile land.

4.5.2 Taboos and totems

The Mdluli do not eat meat of a goat but prefer a brindled gnu. Such a preference is attributed to the courageous nature of the Mdluli which spurs them to take the challenge of hunting for a gnu, other than killing a tamed animal like a goat. The animal prohibition of the Mdluli is articulated in the clan praises of the Mdluli Bhekiswako: “the Mdluli do not eat the meat of a goat, they eat the meat of a gnu”.

4.5.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Mdluli Sikhhandzisa are Sokhaya, Somduba, Malambule, Mbilini, and Senzenjani. The outstanding ancestors of the Mdluli Bhekiswako are Bhekiswako, Mlisana, Gembe, Luvuno, and Sukuta.

4.5.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

Kamera (2000:137) states that the Mdluli were “assigned the duty of providing a certain kind of medicine used by the king during the *incwala* ceremony”. This medicine was ground into powder. The praises of the Mdluli Sikhhandzisa reflect this historical event in the line: “beautiful grinding stone which grinds the medicine of the king”. The Mdluli Sikhhandzisa were also assigned the duty to look after the king’s graves at Makhosini. The statement “beautiful mountain that is not pointed using a finger but a fist” refers to the Mbilaneni mountain at Makhosini, where kings were and are buried. This mountain is sacred because *ifihle emakhosi* (it buries the kings of Eswatini). Such a mountain would not be pointed by a finger because it buries the kings.

4.5.5 Character traits and attributes

The Mdluli are apparently beautiful people, hence they are referred to as “Mkholo who is beautiful even on the feet”. One informant pointed out that the Mdluli are friendly and sociable people. They are described as courageous people who shamelessly and brutally killed many people in battles, hence the word, *luvuno* (“harvest”) and “shameless Luvuno” in the Mdluli Bhekiswako clan praises. Ginindza (1992:49) points out that “the name *luvuno* comes from *kuvuna* (to harvest)”. Ginindza further explains that one of the prominent ancestors of the Mdluli Bhekiswako brutally and shamelessly killed enemies in battles, and that his act is compared to the act of harvesting a field. The attribute of the Mdluli as ruthless people is even mentioned in the Mdluli Sikhhandzisa clan praises in the lines: “it was not the heads of cattle that were hacked, it was the heads of men that were hacked”.

This statement also emphasises that the Mdluli were ruthless killers because they hacked the heads of their enemies. Another statement that emphasises that the Mdluli were powerful and mighty in battle is the statement: “powerful hand”, from the Mdluli Bhekiswako clan praises.

4.5.6 Traditions

The Mdluli were assigned to look after the kings’ graves at Makhosini. They also assigned a man who was a fictitious brother to the king, called *insila yenkhosi*, whose duty is to guard the king.

4.5.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Mdluli are related to the Matsebula, Lukhele, and Maphalala. The Mdluli Sikhandzisa are found at Mashobeni, Mbilaneni, and kaNzama. The Mdluli Bhekiswako are settled at Ngwazini, Buhleni, and kaHhohho, next to Matsamo.

4.5.8 Overview from the Mdluli clan praises

The adults and the youth from the Mdluli clan stated that their clan praises are not taught formerly, but that the youth have a grasp of these clan praises as they are used daily. They further elaborated that the youth does not have an in-depth knowledge of their clan praises. Clan praises were said to be valuable because they explain the roots of members of the clan, and the clans they have kinship ties with. If people were to lose their clan praises, they would lose their historical background.

4.6 Ndwandwe Clan Praises

Nxumalo

Ndwandwe

Mkhatjwa

Wena waseGudunkomo

Mnguni awucali muntu
Ngibona abakucalako
Wena waZwide kaLanga
Bantu bahlatjw'emkhabeni
banjengezinkomo
Nkabanhle
Nkhabayenkhosi

[Nxumalo Ndwandwe
Mkhatjwa
You who is from
Gudunkomo
Mnguni who
provokes no one
It is them that
provoke you
Son of Zwide son of
Langa
People who were speared in the stomach
like cattle
Beautiful navel
Navel of the king]

4.6.1 Historical background

The Ndwandwe are originally from South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal) in a place called Magudu, hence their clan praises: “you who is from Gudunkomo”. According to Kamera (2000:219) the proper name, Gudunkomo “is derived from the infinitive verb “*kuguda*, to milk a cow before the calf sucks”. An informant related that the Ndwandwe reared cattle in the Magudu hills and milked them as well, hence it is said of them, “you who is from Gudunkomo”. The Ndwandwe are one with the Nxumalo and the Mkhatjwa. In fact, the informant said Ndwandwe, Nxumalo and Mkhatjwa are names of the leaders of the Ndwandwe tribe. Shaka shattered the Ndwandwe

kingdom. In this regard, Ginindza (1992:47) points out that “when the Ndwandwe kingdom was scattered by Shaka’s wars, four lineages sought refuge in Swaziland at different times”. These are the Ndwandwe of Bulandzeni, the Ndwandwe of Ezikhotheni, the Ndwandwe of Mawewe and the Ndwandwe of Lwandle who are known as the Mkhathjwa. Thus, the names Nxumalo, Ndwandwe, and Mkhathjwa are used interchangeably to refer to the Ndwandwe people.

The Ndwandwe are known as Bearers of kings. It is alleged that they have a beautiful navel because they bore Swazi kings. Three maidens from the Ndwandwe clan begot Swazi kings. These are LaYaka, who was the mother of Ngwane III, Tsandzile, who was the mother of Mswati II, and Lomawa, who was the mother of Sobhuza II.

4.6.2 Taboos and totems

The Nxumalo do not eat a bird called *indlati*.

4.6.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

Nxumalo, Ndwandwe, Mkhathjwa, Zwide, Lonkhokhela, Ngolotjeni and Langa are the names of the ancestors of the Ndwandwe clan. Zwide was the son of Langa – hence, the clan praises: “Zwide son of Langa”.

4.6.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Ndwandwe waged wars against Shaka and Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa chiefdom. One member of the Ndwandwe, Lonkhokhela, was a hero who pierced people in the stomach hence the clan praises: “people were speared in the stomach like cattle”.

4.6.5. Character traits and attributes

It is said that the Nxumalo are kind people but exhibit temper when provoked, hence the praises: “Mnguni who provokes no one but it is them that provoke you”.

4.6.6 Traditions

The Mkhathjwa of Lwandle plays a significant role during *incwala* ceremony. The Ndwandwe are made to sniff traditional medicine made from a bird called *insingizi* at early childhood.

4.6.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Nxumalo are found at Zikhotheni, Lwandle, Ndiyaneni, and Bulandzeni.

4.6.8 Overview from the Ndwandwe clan praises

It has been highlighted that clan praises help people to understand the history of the clan and attributes of members of the clan. It transpired that Emaswati hold gatherings to celebrate their history as a clan. The mother was said to be the key person who teaches clan praises. The Ndwandwe have their own language known as kuyeyeza. The kuyeyeza language, as defined earlier; replaces the // with /y/. This language is spoken in the eastern part of Eswatini by the Ndwandwe of Bulandzeni and Nkambeni who are the progeny of Madangala, the son of Zwide. It is common to hear EmaSwati say “*Bayayeyeza abeNguni*”, which means the Ndwandwe are speaking their Kuyeyeza language.

4.7 Maseko Clan Praises

Maseko

Ngcamane

Ngcamane

waMafu

Khubonye waNdlovu

Ndlovu tidla ekhaya

Tiswele umelusi

Mnguni waseBuhleni

Mdzandzalukana
NaboSidwabasilutfuli
KaMaseko akuvalwa
ngemivalo
Sekuvalwa ngamakhanda
amadoda
Ngcamane
Khubonye waNdlovu

[Maseko
Ngcamane
Ngcamane son of Mafu
Khubonye son of
Ndlovu (elephant)
Elephants graze at home because there is no
shepherd
Mnguni of Buhleni
Mdzandzalukana
Mother of Sidwabasilutfuli
The Masekos do not close by means of
cross bars
But by means of heads of men
Ngcamane
Khubonye of Ndlovu (elephant)]

4.7.1 Historical background

The Maseko are *Emakhandzambili* (“Those who were found ahead”). The Maseko clan is part of the Simelane clan. That is why they are addressed as “Mnguni of Buhleni”, just like the Simelane. Oral traditions hint that Maseko and Simelane had one father. A dispute ensued between the two, and the Maseko broke away from Simelane and stayed under rocks, hence they were called Maseko (rocks).

4.7.2 Taboos and totems

The Maseko do not eat a bird called *umnguphane*.

4.7.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Maseko are Mgazi, Magedlela, and Buhlungu.

Other Maseko ancestors are mentioned in their clan praises. These are Ngcamane, who was the son of Mafu, and Khubonye, who was the son of Ndlovu.

4.7.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Maseko reared elephants. That is why one of their ancestors is known as Ndlovu (elephant). They were fighting wars such that there was no one to look after their elephants since all their men were engaged in wars. This is articulated in their clan praises: “elephants graze at home because there are no shepherds”. The statement “mdzandzalukana, mother of Sidvwabasilutfuli” refers to a historical event where the Maseko were involved in warfare, hence they moved up and down (*kudzandzaluka*) and their garments were full of dust (*sidvwabasiluftuli*).

4.7.5 Character traits and attributes

The Maseko are brave and brutal people. They waged wars, defeated their enemies, cut their heads and put them on their gates. This is articulated in the clan praises, “the Maseko do not close by means of cross bars but by means of heads of men”.

4.7.6 Traditions

An informant related that the Maseko were initially not buried but that their bodies were cremated. After cremation, the branches of a tree called *umlahlabantfu* were used to hit the ash of the dead person. The ash must turn into a bird (*umnguphane*) to mark a smooth transition of he departed into the other realm. The Maseko are

prohibited to bask on fire made from *umlahlabantfu* firewood.

4.7.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Maseko do not intermarry with the Simelane, Lokotfwako, and Malaza. They are found at Sandleni, Ncabaneni, and Ngwenyameni.

4.7.8 Overview from the Maseko clan praises

The youth participant confirmed that the youth were taught their clan praises informally. The grandmother was mentioned as the key person teaching them clan praises. Adult participants confirmed that the youth are taught clan praises informally by adults who encourage them to use their clan praises every day. It was observed that EmaSwati are still fascinated by their clan praises.

4.8 Magagula clan praises

Magagula

Mtfombeni

Gutjwa agoduke

nemhlambi wakhe

Nkhomtwako

Mnkhonkholoteli loluhlata longavutfwa nasetiko

Wena lowaphekwa nelitje kwavutfwa litje

kwasala wena

Wena wavutfwa ekhatsi njengelihwabha

Sibuyane lesabuya

nematfombeni kaZulu

Sibumbu lesikhulu umcincinini

Singaba sincane safuta

ekhabonina

Sobahlekazi

[Magagula
Mtfombeni
Gutjwa who departs with
his flock
Nkhomtwako
Mnkhonkholoteli who is green
who does not get cooked when cooked
You who was cooked with a stone
and the stone got cooked but you
remained uncooked
You who ripened inside
like a watermelon
Sibuyane who came back
with ematfombeni from Zululand
Big female genitals
If it is small, it is from the mother's
side
You who are beautiful]

4.8.1 Historical background

The Magagula belong to the clan category *Emakhandzambili*. The Dlamini found them already settled in present-day Eswatini. They are also known as Sotho. They are from South Africa; hence they are praised as “Sbuyane who came back with ematfombeni from kaZulu”. EmaTfombeni refers to the Magagula people and Sbuyane is one of the Magagula leaders who led them to Eswatini.

4.8.2 Taboos and totems

A watermelon and a dove are taboos for the Magagula.

4.8.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

Some of the ancestors of the Magagula clan are Mahlangala, Mnjoli, Moya, Mpumpane, and Ngomane. Magagula, Mtfombeni, Gutjwa, Nkhomtwako, and Sibuyane are names of the Magagula ancestors that are mentioned in their clan praises.

4.8.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Magagula are known as good traditional healers who helped Somhlolo establish the Swazi nation. They are also known to have rain making powers.

4.8.5 Character traits and attributes

Members of this clan are known to be very stubborn such that even when you cook them with a stone, the stone gets cooked but the Magagula remain as they are. This is articulated in their clan praises, “you who was cooked with a stone and the stone got cooked but you remained uncooked”. They are also described as “Mkhonkholoteli who is green”. This points to their beautiful, dark complexion as well as their stubbornness (remaining uncooked). Emaswati have a tendency of using the colour green to refer to a person who is dark in complexion. They also play around with the green colour to refer to a person who is stubborn or rude. The females are known to have big genitals, attributed to the fact that they conduct multiple relationships, hence their praises: “big female genitals, if it is small, it is from the mother’s side”. The Magagula avoid confrontation with their enemies. Once they are annoyed, they just leave. This character trait is referred to in their clan praises, in the line that runs: “Gutjwa who departs with his flock”.

4.8.6 Traditions

The Magagula are known as rain makers.

4.8.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

Members of this clan do not intermarry with the Mngometulu. There are many Magagula people at Nyakatfo, Zinyane, KaMavula, Dvokolwako, Bhudla, Madlangempisi, Emzaceni, and KaBhekinkhosi.

4.8.8 Overview from the Magagula clan praises

It was observed that clan praises are significant because they describe the taboos and totems and kinship relationships. The youth participants elucidated that they use their clan praises without clearly understanding their meaning. It was indicated that the mother takes the lead in the teaching of clan praises. The informants asserted that EmaSwati still value their clan praises because they emphasise the observance of taboos and totems. Even the youth use their clan praises – although their knowledge is limited in this regard.

4.9 Mnisi Clan Praises

Mnisi

Mvulane

Mvulane loluhlata

lonjengencoshane

Banemanga bakaShabalala

Batsi umhlongamvula udzilikile kantsi

bayawuhawukela

Mfula kawuwelwa

Uwelwa

tinkonjane

Tona

tiphaph'etu

lu

Manyovu
Manyovu wemvula

[Mnisi
Mvulane (rain maker)
Rain maker who is green like the
evergreen grass
The Shabalala are lying
They say the rain making power is shattered
Yet they are jealous of it.
River that is not crossed
It is crossed by swallows
That fly high
above
Manyovu
(Wasp)
Manyovu of the
rain].

4.9.1 Historical background

The Mnisi are *Emakhandzambili* (“Those found ahead”). King Somhlolo found them at Mdzimba on his arrival. They were originally from Lesotho. The Mnisi can make rain, hence they are admired as “Mnisi” from the infinitive verb, *kunisa* (“to make rain”). They are also referred to as “Mvulane”, from the noun *imvula* (“rain”). Mnisi is originally from the Motsa clan. An informant highlighted that Mnisi stole a rain making rod called *umhlongamvula* from the Motsa people and ran away. In their clan praises there is a line that runs, “the Shabalala are lying, they say the rain making rod is shattered yet they are jealous of it”. This line refers to the rain making rod that Mnisi stole from the Motsa people and the Shabalala envied him for having such a rod.

4.9.2 Taboos and totems

The Mnisi do not drink rain water since they are the rain makers.

4.9.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Mnisi, Ntjintji, LaNcabane, Mantjolo, Malagwane, Mantenga, Mnyamatsi, Manyovu, and Mvulane.

4.9.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Mnisi are known for their rain-making power. A resource person also said that the Mnisi can predict the future.

4.9.5 Character traits and attributes

The Mnisi are dark in complexion, hence they are praised as: “rain maker who is green like the evergreen grass”. Members of this clan are also invincible. In their clan praises they are described as a “river that is not crossed, it is crossed by swallows because they fly above”. This means that it is not everyone, but only very powerful people who can conquer the Mnisi. One of the ancestors of the Mnisi is named after a wasp, an insect with a harmful and painful sting. This attribute of the insect is used to describe the Mnisi as hostile people.

4.9.6 Traditions

The Mnisi make and control rain. They live near the Mantjolo dam where they fetch water which they use to make rain in times of drought.

4.9.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Mnisi do not intermarry with the Motsa, Maphanga and the Shabalala. They are commonly found at Mnyamatsini, Mantjolo, Mdzimba, Sigombeni,

Jubukweni, and Malanti.

4.9.8 Overview of the Mnisi clan praises

It was observed that adults have in-depth knowledge about clan praises than the youth.

4.10 Gama Clan Praises

Mbhokane

Gama

Dluli

Phalala

Thuli

Thuli lwezichwe

nelwezinyamazane

Ngcamane

Ngcamane waMafu

Titfo tingumbhobho

tinjengetendlovu

Mabele ezindala

Laba lihle lelibele ngoba limile

ecubeni

Thuli

Thuli lwezichwe nezinyamazane

[Mbhokane

Gama

Dluli

Phalala

Dust

Dust of dwarfs and wild

animals

Ngcamane

Ngcamane son of Mafu
Legs that are round like those of an elephant
Sorghum that grew in deserted land that is
fertile
The sorghum was beautiful
because it grew in fertile land where there was a cattle byre
Dust
Dust of dwarfs and wild animals]

4.10.1 Historical background

The Gama are known as *Emakhandzambili*. They originate from the Sotho people and are said to be the descendants of the Khoikhoi because they are short. In their clan praises they are referred to as dwarfs in the line: “dust of dwarfs and wild animals”. The Gama are known as *emadlanga* (“people who live by eating meat”).

4.10.2 Taboos and totems

There are no totems discovered for this clan.

4.10.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

A resource person said that Mbhokane was the first Gama leader who arrived in Eswatini. Mbhokane first settled at Ntontozi.

4.10.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

Another resource person from the Gama clan related that Mbhokane arrived in Eswatini driving a buffalo which was running away from him. People saw him passing by and they named him *Dluli* (“passerby”), from the verb *udlulile* (“he passed by”). As he was driving and scuffling with the buffalo, dust was formed. That episode is recorded in the Gama clan praises in the line: “dust of the dwarfs and wild animals”.

4.10.5 Character traits and attributes

The Gama are known as people who are helpful. They are referred to as “*phalala*” from the verb *kuphalala* [“to help”]. The Gama people have beautiful round legs, like those of an elephant as described in the line: “legs that are round like those of an elephant”. The Gama are also portrayed as beautiful, as hinted in the praises: “the sorghum that was beautiful because it grew in fertile land”.

4.10.6 Traditions

The Gama are said to have their own art of making fire known as *luvatsi*.

4.10.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Gama people are found at Dlangeni. There are no clans that the Gama do not intermarry with.

4.10.8 Overview from the Gama clan praises

It was gathered from the interviews that the youth learn clan praises during family events like *bayeni* or *umtsimba*. This is because such events involve addressing the ancestors and the recitation of clan praises.

4.11 Shongwe clan praises

Version 1

Shongwe

Mabhengeta

Mcusi wendlunkhulu

Nyoni tenkhosi tidla tesul’

umlomo

Labatibhodze

Labatibhalabane

Ngwenyama ndvuna
yeMaswati
Malinga loncama

[Shongwe
Mabhengeta
Kind person of the king's place
Birds of the king who eat and wipe their
mouth
Those who are beautiful and light in
complexion
Lion governor of Emaswati
Malinga who is slender]

Version 2

Shongwe
Kunene
Mtimandze
Bhambolunye
Tingaba timbili tafuta
ekhabonyoko
Mageza ngelubisi
emant'akhona
Matsamo kubakaHhohho.

[Shongwe
Mtimandze
Single-Ribbed
Once they are two,
They resemble the mother's side.
You who bath with milk when water is there
Matsamo of those at kaHhohho]

4.11.1 Historical background

The Shongwe belong to the clan category known as *Emakhandzambili*. The Shongwe clan is divided into Shongwe Mtimandze and Shongwe Mabhengeta. An informant explained that Shongwe originated in South Africa, in KwaDukuza, KwaZulu-Natal. Apparently, the Shongwe Mtimandze stayed with Emafonga people next to the Pongola River. They crossed into Eswatini after continuous attacks from the Zulu people. History has it that the Shongwe Mtimandze first settled at eLucolweni in the Shiselweni region.

The Shongwe Mabhengeta are said to be the descendants of Ntsaki. They escaped to Eswatini from the wars waged by Zwide of the Ndwandwe. The Shongwe Mabhengeta are said to have settled in the Shiselweni region and later migrated to the north with Sobhuza I during his expansion mission. Sobhuza I then gave them their own place at KaBhekinkhosi.

4.11.2 Taboos and totems

The Shongwe people do not eat bird meat.

4.11.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Shongwe Mtimandze faction are Shongwe, Mahlangobe, Loziya, Mvilawenyanga, Mkhweli, Mlambo, Matsamo, Matsafeni, Khotsa, and Tikhuni. The ancestors of the Mabhengeta faction are Magodzi, Mphikeleli, and Msoluleki.

4.11.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

According to Maseko (2004:16), one warrior, Matsafeni, from Shongwe Mabhengeta, was king Mswati II's trusted warrior. The king sent him to the Hhohho region to expel his enemies. Matsafeni conquered these enemies, and the king honoured him.

Matsafeni begot Matsamo, after whom the place “Matsamo” is named. Matsafeni’s brother was Maphilingo who was the father to Makhasane. Makhasane bore Metjiso, who was the father to Queen Dzeliwe, who was married to King Sobhuza II. The informant hinted that Queen Dzeliwe was one of the five wives that King Sobhuza II married from the Shongwe family. Unfortunately, the Queen never bore children.

Maseko (2004) further highlights that Shongwe was given the responsibility of looking after the cattle of the royal family, which were kept at Lukwatini. The royal family made members of the Shongwe clan governors of the Lukwatini ranch. This event is hinted in the Shongwe Mabhengeta clan praises which runs: “birds of the king that eat and wipe their mouths” and “lion governor of EmaSwati”. The phrase “birds of the king” means that the Shongwe clan belongs to the king and serve the king. The Shongwe people are described as “lion[s]” because of the courage they demonstrated in the battle. Tikhuni, Mngayi, and Matsafeni are some of the Shongwe daring warriors that were commended for their bravery. It is, therefore, fitting to refer to the Shongwe people as lions.

4.11.5 Character traits and attributes

The Shongwe Mabhengeta are described as *Mcusi*, which is derived from the noun *emacusi* – “someone who is humble and kind”. Not only are they humble but are beautiful as well – light in complexion and slender as articulated in the lines: “those who are beautiful and light in complexion” – “Malinga who is slender”.

The beauty of Shongwe is even emphasised in the Shongwe Mtimandze clan praises. They are eulogised as: “someone who bath with milk when water is there”. That means that members of the Shongwe clan have a beautiful skin, such that one would think that they do not bath in ordinary water but milk.

4.11.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Shongwe Mabhengeta do not intermarry with the Malinga, Manana, and Kunene. They are found at Mdonjane, Endvuma, and Ekudzeni. The Shongwe Mtimandze do not intermarry with the Sikhondze, Ngwenya, Hleta, Kunene, and Gamedze. They are

found in Siyendle, Madlenya, kaMaphilinga, Elucolweni, and Matsamo. The headquarters for the Shongwe Mtimandze is at Matsamo in Hhohho region. That is why they are praised as “Matsamo those at kaHhohho”.

4.11.7 Overview of the Shongwe clan praises

There is no accurate information that explains how and why the Shongwe clan were divided into sub-clans, Shongwe Mabhengeta and Shogwe Mtimandze. Some informants speculated that the clan was divided even before migrating to Eswatini.

4.12 Hlophe Clan Praises

Hlophe Mabhengu

Ndawonde

kaNdaba

Ndaba

kaNgwenyama

KaHlophe akuvalwa

Ngemivalo

Kuvalwa ngamakhanda amadoda

Wena shwila abantu njengezinyamazane.

[Hlophe Mabhengu

Ndawonde son of

Ndaba Ndaba son

of Ngwenyama

The Hlophe do not close

by means of cross bars

but close by means of heads of men

You who strangled people like wild animals].

4.12.1 Historical background

The Hlophe are known as *Emakhandzambili*, (“Those who were found ahead”). The

Hlophe originated from South Africa in a place called Ngogweni between Manyenge and Ntuvane mountains in the vicinity of Piet Retief.

A member from the Hlophe clan highlighted that when the Hlophe arrived in Eswatini, they settled at Kushoba at Godlwako. The Hlophe arrived in Eswatini before King Ngwane III. They showed the king the caves they had discovered.

4.12.2 Taboos and totems

The Hlophe venerate a red bird, known as *jojo*.

4.12.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Hlophe are Tigodvo, Siphocwana, Mahagane, and Sibhebha. Other ancestors are Didiza, Mabuya, Mtjakela, and Mabhengu. The Hlophe clan praises mention Mabhengu Ndawonde, Ndaba, and Ngwenyama as some of the Hlophe ancestors. Ngwenyama begot Ndaba who begot Ndawonde.

4.12.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

A resource person stated that the Hlophe looked after the caves during the wars between EmaSwati and amaZulu and supplied King Ngwane III with traditional medicine. They were also appointed governors of the palace.

4.12.5 Character traits and attributes

The Hlophe are portrayed as cranky people who hate to be provoked. Both men and women of this clan are tall. The Hlophe are also described as brutal. They killed their enemies and cut their heads to display them on their gates. The statements, “the Hlophe do not close by means of cross bars but by means of heads of men”, and “you who strangled people like wild animals” attest to the brutal quality of the Hlophe.

4.12.6 Traditions

According to the findings of Kamera (2000:51), the Hlophe perform certain royal duties during the coronation of the new king.

4.12.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The people of this clan are found at Mantambe, kaLaMgabhi, and Nsongweni. They do not intermarry with members of the Mndzebele and Mkhabela clans. It is said that Hlophe, Mkhabela and Mndzebele were sons of one man. Therefore, they do not intermarry because they are all *emakhonkhosi* (the right-handmen of the king.)

4.12.8 Overview from the Hlophe clan praises

Most informants from this clan were of the view that EmaSwati have deviated from their traditions and that they have now embraced other religions and cultures.

4.13 The Mamba clan praises

Mamba

Nkhosi

Ntfulini waMaloyi

KaMamba akuvalwa

ngemivalo

Kuvalwa ngemakhandza

emadvodza

Mamba lendze

lesensokonsokweni

Mavunguvungu matfwal'

umlomo

Nkhosi.

[Mamba (snake)

Ntfulini (dust) son of Maloyi
The Mamba do not close by means of a cross bar
They close by means of the heads of
men
Long Mamba which is in the depth of
the forest
Storm, you who protrude your mouth
King]

4.13.1 Historical background

The Mamba are the true Swazis, known as *Bemdzabuko*. They are originally from KaTembe in Mozambique and are one with the Dlamini. That is why the Mamba are praised as “Kings”, like the Dlamini. According to a resource person, Hlubi and Dlamini III were sons of Ludvonga I. The two brothers quarreled over kingship and went their separate ways. Then Mamba joined Dlamini III and migrated with him to the present-day Eswatini.

4.13.2 Taboos and totems

There are no taboos and totems identified for this clan.

4.13.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Maloyi, Ntfulini, Magadlela, Mamba, Mbatjane, Maja, and Bhokweni.

4.13.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Mamba have a privilege to dance their own *incwala* and reed dance. History has it that Zwide began to wage war against Somhlolo. While Somhlolo wandered from one place to another, running away from Zwide, Maloyi (a Mamba chief) went to fight against Zwide. When Maloyi returned from war he found that Somhlolo had escaped

to hide from Zwide and his (Somhlolo's) people were scattered. Maloyi gathered Somhlolo's people and went to fetch Somhlolo to come back and be the king. In return for this kind deed, the Mamba were given the privilege to dance their own *incwala* and reed dance and have their own king. To this day, the Mamba have their own state at Ngudzeni where they have their king and perform their reed dance and *incwala*. Matsebula (1988:17) points out that "Swazi political power radiates primarily from the king". The king gives certain people (for instance the princes, chiefs, and governors) some level of power and privileges. Thus, the Mamba king is under the authority of the reigning King Mswati III who has absolute power and gives some level of power to him (the Mamba king).

4.13.5 Character traits and attributes

The Mamba are brave and fierce. When fighting in a war, they did not just kill their adversaries – they also cut their heads and displayed them at their gates to show how notorious they (the Mamba) were. That is why the Mamba clan praises state that, "the Mamba do not close by means of cross bars but close by means of heads of men". The Mamba are hot tempered. The word "storm", and the statement: "you who protrudes your mouth" suggests their dreadful state when angry. The temperament of the Mamba is also emphasised by the comparison of the people of this clan with a mamba, a dreadful and vicious snake as contained in the statement: "long Mamba which is in the depth of the forest".

4.13.6 Traditions

The Mamba celebrate their own *incwala* and perform their own reed dance. They also have their own king as hinted earlier on.

4.13.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Mamba are related to the Dlamini, Mavuso, Ginindza, Mabuza, and Magongo. They are found in Ngudzeni, Sithobelweni, and KaMbhoki.

4.13.8 Overview from the Mamba clan praises

Participants emphasised the role played by the grandmother in teaching clan praises.

4.14 The Simelane Clan Praises

Simelane

Mpembe elikhulu

IkaLokotfwako

Ndlebe zimchewane

Zachewulwa

magundwane

Mnguni

waseBuhleni

Ndlovu tidla ekhaya

ngekweswela belusi

Tiluswa yintfombatane

Demezane

Lubhembedu lolumancondo

abovu

Wena wagicika nesilulu nisuka

eNkalaneni

Matalankhosi

Nine lenatala Somhlolo natala

Sobhuza

NaboNkhosi

NaboNgwane

NaboYaka

Nine ba

Bhozongo

[Simelane

Great Mpembe of

Lokotfwako
Ears which are slit
They were slit by
mice
Mnguni of Buhleni
Slender body with thin legs
Elephants that graze at home because there is no
shepherd.
They are taken care of by Demezane
You who rolled in a grass nest from
Nkalaneni
Bearers of kings
Mother of Nkhosi
Mother of Ngwane and Yaka]
The people of Bhozongo

4.14.1 Historical background

The Simelane are known as *Ematalankhosi* (“bearers of kings”). That is why they are praised as the “bearers of kings”. They are also known as the Ntungwa-Nguni, hence the clan praises: “Mnguni of Buhleni”. They originated from Nkalaneni near Magudu in South Africa. Members of the Simelane clan came and asked to submit under King Sobhuza I (Somhlolo) who was the king of Eswatini from 1815 to 1840 (Mhlanga et al., 2007:117). Maweni was the Simelane chief who came to Eswatini to ask for land where the Simelane would settle. Later, he went back to Nkalaneni and brought the other members of the Simelane clan and his elder brother, Bhozongo. Maweni introduced Bhozongo to Somhlolo as the Simelane chief. That is why the Simelane are referred to as “the people of Bhozongo” in their clan praises. An informant narrated that wherever the Simelane went, they would carry a grass nest, which was like the biblical “ark of the covenant”. This nest kept essential traditional herbs for the unity of the clan. That is why their clan praises state: “you w h o r o l l e d in a grass nest from Nkalaneni”.

4.14.2 Taboos and totems

The Simelane are prohibited to eat a bird known as *umnguphane*. This bird is used in some rituals performed during the burial of the Simelane people. The Simelane are also prohibited to bask in a fire made with *umlahlabantfu* firewood.

4.14.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The Simelane ancestors are Bhozongo, Maweni, Mnguni, Lojiba, and Mabonya.

4.14.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

Maweni Simelane was known for his bravery and championship in war. A Simelane maiden, Somnjalose begot the Swazi king Somhlolo, also known as Sobhuza I or Ngwane IV. Therefore, the Simelane are praised as: “Mother of Ngwane”, and “mother of Nkhosi”. The Simelane spoke a language called Simpembe, hence they are praised as “Mpembe from Lokotfwako”. The Simelane reared elephants. At one stage there was no one to look after the elephants because all men were out in the battlefield. Consequently, the elephants were herded by a girl called Demezane. That is recorded in the Simelane clan praises where it is stated: “cattle that graze at home because there is no shepherd”. They were herded by a girl called Demezane.

4.14.5 Character traits and attributes

The Simelane are slender people with long thin legs. This is articulated in their clan praises in the line: “you tall slender one with thin legs”. Members of this clan are also known to be stubborn, with a hot temper. The Simelane have long ears, which are believed to have been slit by mice. Ginindza (1992:60) points out in this regard that the Simelane “distinguished themselves by small slits in their earlobes”. Therefore, they are praised as “ears which are slit, they were slit by mice”.

4.14.6 Traditions

Initially the Simelane, like the Maseko, were not buried but cremated. After cremation, the branches of the *umlahlabantfu* tree were used to hit the ash of the dead person. The ash must turn into a bird called *umnguphane* to mark a smooth transition of the departed into the other realm. The Simelane pierced their earlobes and made a slit that distinguished them.

4.14.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Simelane do not intermarry with the Lokotfwako, Malaza, and Maseko. Most Simelane people are settled in Kontjingila and Ntjanini.

4.14.8 Overview of the Simelane clan praises

An informant highlighted that there was a Simelane Queen who got angry and offended the king. How she offended the king is not explicitly stated. When King Bhunu died, the royal council met to deliberate on who should succeed him. It is hinted that one of the widows of King Bhunu was LaSimelane, the mother of Mlumbi. Matsebula (1988:170) captures the proposal of Mlumbi as the successor of King Bhunu:

Mlumbi was proposed. This evoked memories of Mbandzeni's queen, LaSimelane, Masumphes's mother who, because of her anger, had made herself unpopular and was passed over when Bhunu was appointed, and who was still alive and had never reconciled herself with the royal family.

It is on this account that members of the royal family do not marry a Simelane woman. To this day, there is no Simelane among *emakhosikati* (king's wives).

4.15 Mndzebele Clan Praises

Mndzebele

Mkhonkhosi

NaboMvulase

NaboNgwane
Mehlwami
Mazalankosi
Nabomtsalatsala
Nabonkhosi
Wena lowabhekisa inkhaba
kubakaKubheka
Khonkhosi lelihle lakaLobamba

[Mndzebele
Mkhonkhosi
Mother of Mvulase
Mother of Ngwane
My eyes
Bearers of kings
Owner of many baskets for
storing food
Mother of Nkhosi
You who directed your navel to those of
Kubheka
Beautiful Khonkhosi (right-hand man) of
Lobamba]

4.15.1 Historical background

A resource person highlighted that the Mndzebele are originally from Engogweni in South Africa. They moved from Engogweni and settled at Mkhitsini, in the present-day Eswatini. The Mndzebele arrived in Eswatini during the reign of Mbandzeni. The Mndzebele clan were led to Mkhitsini by Zulu who became the chief. The Mndzebele are known as Bearers of kings. This is articulated in their clan praises: “bearers of kings”, “mother of king”, and “mother of Ngwane”. A Mndzebele maiden, Lomvula, got married to Ngwane III and begot King Ndvungunye. She became the Queen Mother during the reign of Ndvungunye, and a Queen Regent before King Sobhuza I was coronated.

4.15.2 Taboos and totems

There is no taboo or totem associated with this clan.

4.15.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Mndzebele are Zulu, Nsini, Cetjwako, Mkhonkhosi, and Lomvula (the Queen Regent who begot Ndvungunye).

4.15.4 Prominent events and what the members of this clan are known for

Word has it that the Mndzebele worked closely with the kings of Eswatini who sent them as messengers. They are, therefore, extolled as khonkhosi (the right-hand man).

4.15.5 Character traits and attributes

The Mndzebele are beautiful, hence they are referred to as “beautiful Khonkhosi from Lobamba”. They are also industrious people who cultivated a variety of crops and stored them in many baskets. Therefore, in their clan praises they are addressed as “owner of many baskets for storing food”.

4.15.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Mndzebele do not intermarry with the Mkhabela and the Hlophe. It is said that Mkhabela, Hlophe, and Mndzebele were sons of Mkhonkhosi. The Mndzebele are found at Lobamba lomdzala (hence the praises, “beautiful Khonkhosi of Lobamba”), Mankayane, Luve, Gebeni, and Mkhitsini.

4.15.7 Overview from the Mndzebele clan praises

Western influence has been attributed to the declining use of clan praises among the

youth.

4.16 Fakudze Clan Praises

Fakudze

Mntolo

Mpotholozu

Mayisandzaba enkhosini

Nkhaba leyashona ekhatsi

Sotho, Swati

Ndzaba lomuhle lotifungako

[Fakudze

Mntolo

One who is gentle and
caring

One who report news to
the king

Navel that is sunken

Msutfu Mswati

Beautiful Ndzaba who confirms himself

4.16.1 Historical background

The Fakudze are known as *Bemdzabuko* (“True Swazis”). Their duty is to become royal governors. They report news from the king to the people, and from the people to the king. Their clan praises: “one who report news to the king” confirms their duty as royal governors. Some Fakudze royal governors are Mngayi Fakudze (former Ludzidzini governor) and Lusendvo Fakudze, the current governor of Ludzidzini (the king’s palace)

4.16.2 Taboos and totems

It is a taboo for the Fakudze to eat monkey and baboon meat.

4.16.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The Fakudze ancestors are Mntolo, Mjingi, and Mbovane.

4.16.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Fakude serve as governors for the royal residence of the ruling king.

4.16.5 Character traits and attributes

The Fakudze are known as kind people who, however, exhibit hot temper when provoked. They are also gentle and caring people. The line (Mphotholozzi): “one who is gentle and caring” describes the caring nature of the Fakudze people. The people of this clan are beautiful and confident, hence they are praised as: “beautiful Ndzaba who confirms himself”. They have a recessed navel due to obesity, hence they are praised as “sunken navel”.

4.16.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Fakudze are related to the Mbingo, Matse, Nkambule, and Magagula. They are found at Lobamba Lomdzala, Ngcoseni, Nkhanini, and Macetjeni.

4.16.7 Overview from the Fakudze clan praises

Participants indicated that clan praises are a unifying factor for the people of this clan.

4.17 Dlamini Clan Praises

Nkhosi

Dlamini

Wena wekunene

Hlubi lomuhle

kakhulu

Mlangeni
Wena weluhlanga lwakaNgwane
Wena lowacedza Lubombo
ngekuhlehetela
Wena lowabophela lokuhle
emfuntini
Sidlubuladledle sakaLobamba
Lesitsi sibapha sibe
sibadlubulisa
Samketi Lesinambova
seMalangeni
Wena longayidli imvu
Wesaba umcondvo
nemafinyela
Nkhosi

[King
Dlamini
You of the right
hand
You who is very
beautiful
You of the tribe of kaNgwane
You who wandered along the Lubombo mountain
rushing
You who tied something good in a bundle
You shaker of Lobamba
Though you give them gifts but you shake
them
Samketi of the Malangeni
who has anger
You who do not eat the meat of
a sheep
You fear having tiny legs and

mucus

King]

4.17.1 Historical background

The Dlamini are referred to as *Bemdzabuko* (“True Swazis”). They are the ruling clan of Eswatini as emphasised in the line “king” in their clan praises. The Dlamini originated from Tembeland, also known as Thongaland, in the vicinity of Delagoa Bay. That is why they are called the Thonga. An informant narrated that Dlamini III led the Dlamini clan out of Delagoa Bay to the present day Eswatini. The line, “you of the right hand”, refers to Dlamini’s act of leading the people of his clan to present-day Eswatini. Matsebula (1988:10) comments about the migration of the Dlamini from Tembeland and states:

The last small group which followed much later, was that which was to develop into the Swazi nation, and its leader then was Dlamini III...Dlamini’s ceremonial centre was built where the present Ngwavuma magistrate offices are today and it is known as Mavaneni. The citation above explains how Dlamini III led a group of people who were to be the nucleus of the Swazi nation. Dlamini III was succeeded by his son, Ngwane III. Matsebula (1988:10-12) has this say concerning Ngwane III:

It is he who conceived the policy of absorbing into his tribe those he conquered. King Ngwane III is of special significance in the history as he is the founder of the nation as it is today. It is after him that this nation got its name, KaNgwane (the country of Ngwane), and the people became known as bakaNgwane (the people of Ngwane).

This information is crucial and speaks volumes about the role Ngwane III played as founder of the Swazi nation. His contribution is so noteworthy that the Dlamini in general are praised for his (Ngwane) tremendous deeds. The Dlamini are praised as “you of the tribe of Ngwane”. As highlighted in the citation above, such praises allude to the event where Ngwane III laid a foundation of the Swazi nation and thus, the country and the people of Eswatini were named after him. Ngwane’s ceremonial centre was built in Zombodze (what is now known as Zombodze Emuva) near Nhlanguano. He appointed Masenjana Nsibandze to be the governor of Zombodze.

On their way to Eswatini, the Dlamini people wandered along the Lubombo mountain rushing, afraid that their enemies would follow them. Some informants hinted that the Dlamini people travelled along the Lubombo mountain to confuse their enemies who might want to trace them.

Kamera (2000:30) highlights that “when Dlamini left Dalagubhe, he had a “muti” and he had to guard the stuff and protect it”. This *muti* was carried in a bundle called *umfunti*. The praises, “you who tied something good in a bundle”, refers to the stuff that the Dlamini people carried along with them in a natural bag made of grass. An elder from the Dlamini clan stated that the Dlamini carried this bundle wherever they went, which signaled to them if they should stay in a particular place or move on.

4.17.2 Taboos and totems

The Dlamini do not eat meat of a sheep because of the belief that if they eat the meat of a sheep they will have tiny legs and mucus. This belief is articulated in their clan praises, “you who do not eat the meat of a sheep, you fear having tiny legs and mucus”.

4.17.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of the Dlamini, mentioned in their clan praises are Dlamini, Nkhosi, Hlubi, Mlangeni, and Samketi. Matsebula (1988:8) presents a Swazi dynastical list that reflect the ancestors of the Dlamini. He mentions Mkhulunkhosi, Qomizitha, Sukuta, Madlasomo, Ndlovu, Ngwekati, Kuwawa or Mawawa, Sidvwabasiluftuli, Gebase, Kunene, Nkabingwe, Madlabane, Hhili, Dulunga, Dondobala, Sihuba, Mlangeni, Msimudze, Mbhodlo or Mbhoholo, Tembe, Sikhulumaloyo, Langa, Samuketi, Nkomo, Khabako, Nkosi I, Ngwane I.

4.17.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Dlamini are the ruling clan of Eswatini and are applauded for establishing the Swazi nation. The current King Mswati III is from the Dlamini clan.

4.17.5 Character traits and attributes

The Dlamini are described as beautiful people, hence the praises, “you who is very beautiful”. They are also portrayed as generous and harsh people. Such attributes are articulated in the statements, “shaker of Lobamba, though you give them gifts but you also shake them”. It transpired that the history behind these statements is that one Swazi king gave plenty of food to his subjects. While the people were enjoying the food, the king scolded them and asked them when they were going to work on his fields. The character trait of that king is generalised to all the Dlamini.

4.17.6 Traditions

There is a special custom for burying the Dlamini from the royal family. The bodies of kings and some members of the royal family are wrapped in a skin of a black ox. They are buried in the caves in the early hours of the morning. Only chosen individuals take the body to a cave known only by them.

4.17.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Dlamini are related to the Mamba, Mabuza, Ginindza, Magongo, and Mavuso. They are scattered all over Eswatini in places that include Lobamba, Nkhungwini, Sigombeni, kaMkhweli, Nyakeni, and Macudvulwini, to name but a few.

4.17.8 Overview of the Dlamini clan praises

Participants singled out social media as one of the factors that has contributed to the declining use of clan praises among the youth.

4.18 Nkambule clan praises

Nkambule

Msutfu

Msutfu Mswati

Mlandzelalanga naliyoshona

emancubeni

Ncube lonsundvu netinyawo

takhe

Wena

waMshosho

Wena

waseNgabezwe

ni

Wena wafela ngenhla

kwendlela ulibele

Mtilankhatsa

Ncube

Msutfu

Gasolo

[Nkambule

Sotho, Swati

Follower of the sun when it is going to set at the mountains

Ncube who is dark even on his feet

You, son of Mshosho

You of Ngabezweni

You died above the pathway out of being stupid

Mtilankhatsa (people who venerate a grass bundle)

Ncube

Sotho

Gasolo]

4.18.1 Historical background

The Nkambule people originated from the Sotho people. Hence, they are referred in their clan praises as “Sotho Swati”. The Nkambule are known as *Emakhandzambili* (“Those found ahead”). A resource person highlighted that the Nkambule first settled at Kushoba, Godlwako. They welcomed king Ngwane III when he was coming from Magudu. The Nkambule oversaw the royal residence. They showed king Ngwane the caves, gave him their traditional medicine and surrendered the royal residence to him. The Nkambule are also known as *ematalankhosi* (“kings” bearers”). Tibati Nkambule was married to Mswati II and became the Indlovukati (Queen) of Eswatini during the reign of Dlamini IV, also known as Mbandzeni (Matsebula 1988:16).

4.18.2 Taboos and totems

The Nkambule are prohibited to drink water or eat anything served on a grass bundle called *inkhatsa*. That is why they are referred to as *mtilankhatsa* (“people who venerate a grass bundle”).

4.18.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

Some of the Nkambule ancestors are Ncube and Mshosho.

4.18.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

It is alleged that the Nkambule built a royal residence because they were supposed to be kings but surrendered the kingship to Ngwane III. That is why they are praised as *wena waseNgabezweni* (“you of Ngabezweni”). Ngabezweni is a royal residence that the Nkambule were supposed to occupy as rulers. The Nkambule are also known as traditional healers.

4.18.5 Character traits and attributes

The Nkambule are described as kind people. The males are known to be polygamists. The Nkambule are portrayed as dark in complexion, hence they are praised as, “Ncube who is dark even on his feet”.

4.18.6 Traditions

The Nkambule are said follow their own custom of burying their dead. Members of this clan do not follow the Swazi custom of burying their dead in the early hours of the morning. On the contrary, the Nkambule are buried before sunset as affirmed in the line, *mlandzelalanga naliyoshona emancubeni* (“one who follows the sun when it is going to set at the mountain”). Furthermore, the Nkambule are laid to rest facing the direction of the sunset (west) – unlike many Emaswati, who face the direction of sunrise (east).

4.18.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Nkambule are one with the Ngcamphalala and Mbingo. It is hinted that the Nkambule, Mbingo, and Ngcamphalala were the sons of one man. Conflict ensued among them, hence they were dispersed in different directions. Thus, the Nkambule are found at Mehlabovu and Ngculwini. They do not intermarry with the Ngcamphalala, Mbingo, Mngometulu, Ncube, Nkabindze, Metfula, Mdlalose, and Maphalala.

4.18.8 Overview of the Nkambule clan praises

A suggestion was made to the effect that clan praises should be taught formally from early childhood to preserve them.

4.19 Matsebula clan praises

Matsebula

Mkholo lonsundvu
netinyawo takhe
Ngubo yeNgwenyama
Ngwenyama ndvuna
Cotsa
Wena welugogo lwengwekati
Usindvwa lishoba nawuwela
ematibukweni
Ngoba emacaca awahlali
ndzawonye
Emacaca ayanukelana
Cotsa

[Matsebula
Mkholo who is dark even on
his feet
You who is of the blanket of
the king
Ngwenyama headman
Cotsa
You of the skin of the tigress
You carried a heavy tail head when you crossed
rivers
Because skunks do not stay together
They stink to
each other
Cotsa]

4.19.1 Historical background

The Matsebula are *Bemdزابuko* (“True Swazis”). They are originally from Emjindini, Barberton, in South Africa. It was gathered from the informants that Matsebula and Mavimbela were the sons of one man, Makhubu. Makhubu was a traditional healer who had two wives. He begot the two sons from his two wives. The name Matsebula

is derived from the infinitive verb, *kutsebula* (“to use charm to hypnotize someone”). The Matsebula are highly respected in Eswatini because the king’s first wife comes from this clan. That is why they are praised as, “you who is of the blanket of the king” – “you of the skin of the tigress”. This statement refers to the fact that the Matsebula are a peculiar clan because the king’s first wife comes from this clan. In Eswatini, it is not anybody who can wear an attire made of a skin of a tiger or tigress as the attire is reserved for royalty. Therefore, the association of the Matsebula with the skin of the tigress speaks to their status as a clan from where the king’s significant wife was selected.

A member of the Matsebula clan related that Matsebula and Mavimbela were on a mission to look for a certain herb at Dlomodlomo. They were told that whoever would come back first with the herb would be made king. Mavimbela came back first and he was crowned king. Matsebula decided to stay at Mjindini because he did not want to stay closer to his brother who had assumed kingship. The statements, “because skunks do not stay together”

“They stink to each other” refers to the two brothers who did not want to stay together because of the friction between them. The line, “you carried a heavy tail head when you crossed rivers” refers to the distance travelled by the Matsebula to Dlomodlomo.

4.19.2 Taboos and totems

The Matsebula are prohibited to eat a type of a bird called *likholo*.

4.19.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Matsebula, Mkholo, Nyakenye and Mngayi.

4.19.4 Prominent events and what members this clan are known for

The Matsebula are said to have an in-depth knowledge of the Swazi culture. They are of higher ranking in Eswatini because they work closely with members of the royal

house. The Matsebula are reported to have protected and taken care of the royal family during the time of wars. They made sure that the royal family was safe in the caves and provided them with food. Whenever the royal family migrated, the Matsebula spied the enemy, escorted the royal family and made sure they were safe. The Matsebula also looked for safe crossing areas in the rivers that were crossed by the king, hence their praises, “you who carried a heavy tail head when crossing rivers”.

4.19.5 Character traits and attributes

The Matsebula are described as dark in complexion as stated in the line, “Mkholo who is dark even on the feet”.

4.19.6 Traditions

An informant pointed out that the king’s first wife is chosen from the Matsebula clan. Scholars have also asserted that this wife “performs royal rites during *incwala* ceremony” (Kamera 2000:119).

4.19.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Matsebula do not intermarry with the Makhubu, Mavimbela, Masina, Mangwe, Hlandze and the Tsabedze. Many of them are settled at Mbangweni, Nyakeni and Maphungwane.

4.19.8 Overview from the Matsebula clan praises

It was deduced that EmaSwati who are living in the rural areas are more fascinated about their clan praises than those living in the urban areas.

4.20 Tfwala Clan Praises

Tfwala

Lukhambule
Mnyamandze
Nshivakati
Mshiva
longenamphondvo
Mfuyankhabi
Wena wakaMkhontfo lodvume
njengelitulu
Wena waka LaSiwela
Nine baka
Lundzini
Tfwala

[Tfwala
Lukhambule
Mnyamandze
Hornles cow
The cow with no
horns
You who keeps
an ox
You of spear that thunders like
a storm
You of the mother of Siwela
You of Lundzini
Tfwala]

4.20.1 Historical background

The people of this clan are known as *Bemdzabuko* (“True Swazis”). They are also called *ematalankhosi* (“bearers of kings”). The reigning Queen Mother, Ntfombi Tfwala, gave birth to King Mswati III, the current King of Eswatini. The name *Tfwala* is derived from the verb *kutfwala* (“to carry something”). According to an informant,

Malindzisa and Motsa were the sons of one man. A conflict ensued between the two brothers. Malindzisa decided to carry his belongings and leave his brother, thus he was named Tfwala.

4.20.2 Taboos and totems

Eating the meat of a hornless cow is a taboo for the Tfwala. The praises, “hornless cow” and “a cow without horns” emphasise that the meat of a hornless cow is a taboo for the Tfwala. The Tfwala also do not eat a spleen and cannabis.

4.20.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Nshivakati, Lundzini, Somadlozi, Mvumenzi, and Mfelani who is the father of the current Queen Mother, Ntfombi Tfwala. Other ancestors are Mnyamandze and Lukhambule.

4.20.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The current Queen Mother of Eswatini, Ntfombi, is from the Tfwala clan.

4.20.5 Character traits and attributes

The Tfwala are described as kind people who provoke no one. First, they are referred to as “a hornless cow”. A hornless cow does not hurt anyone since it has no horns. Second, the Tfwala are praised as “the people who keep an ox”. An ox is docile and non-aggressive just like the Tfwala.

4.20.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Tfwala are found at Nyamane, Nyakeni, Maliyaduma, and Lundzini. They do not intermarry with the Lukhambule, Mdziniso, Motsa, Malindzisa, and Mnisi.

4.20.7 Overview of the Tfwala clan praises

The youth expressed a concern about their shallow knowledge of their clan praises. They suggested that clan praises be taught formerly.

4.21 Hlatjwako Clan Praises

Hlatjwako

Ngwanya

Mhayise

Cebisa emakhosi

Mgogodlane

Siyendane

Ngele naboGama

KaHlatjwako akuvalwa

ngemivalo

Kuvalwa ngemakhandza

emadvodza

[Hlatjwako

Ngwanya

Mhayise

Counsellor of kings

Mgogodlane Siyendane

Ngele mother of Gama

The Hlatjwako do not close by means of
cross bars

They close by means of heads of men]

4.21.1 Historical background

The Hlatjwako are known as *Emafikamuva*. They are reported to have originated from

South Africa. A member of this clan highlighted that this clan is a fraction from Emfumbeni royal kraal in the neighborhood of Oshoek. It has been gathered that the Hlatjwako are linked to the Dlamini. Hlatjwako and Langa were the sons of Hlubi who was the son of Ludvonga. A small fraction of the Hlatjwako clan broke away from the original clan and came to settle in present-day Eswatini, at Gege.

4.21.2 Taboos and totems

There are no specific taboos and totems associated with this clan.

4.21.3 Contrived genealogy of ancestors

The ancestors of Hlatjwako are Hlatjwako, Sambekwane, Cebisa, Ngwanya, Mhlaba, Mgogodlane, Siyendzane, Mleshe, Manukuza, Mgezeni, and Bambuhlanga. The names Cebisa, Ngwanya, Mgogodlane, and Siyendzane are mentioned in the Hlatjwako clan praises.

4.21.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Hlatjwako are a fragment of the Dlamini clan.

4.21.5 Character traits and attributes

The Hlatjwako are described as brave people who brutally killed their enemies in battle. They killed so many people and cut their heads and displayed them at their gates or cross bars. The statement, “the Hlatjwako do not close by means of cross bars but close by means of the heads of men” refers to this act of brutally killing people and displaying their heads at the gates.

4.21.6 Traditions

There are no specific traditions for this clan.

4.21.7 Kinship and geographical places where the people of this clan are found

The Hlatjwako are found at Gege and Zombodze Emuva. They are related to the Zikalala.

4.21.8 Overview from the Hlatjwako clan praises

One informant mentioned that she never uses her clan praises because she grew up in her mother's family where her clan praises were not used.

4.22 Phakathi Clan Praises

Mncwango

Mncumbatha

Mpangezitha loluhlata lonjengencoshane

Nine nakhwela emthini wabola phansi nempande
zawo

Nine thebe zinhle zokudlela amakhosi

Nine neqa amagagasi nawaphindelela

Nsiba

Phakathi

Ndaba

Mjaji kaKhalishwayo

Nkophe kazilingani zalingana usuke uzenzela

[Mcwango

Mcumbatha

Mpangezitha who is green like the evergreen grass

You who climbed a tree and it became rotten with
its roots

Your beautiful vessels for serving the kings

You who skipped over sea waves repeatedly.

Nsiba

Phakathi

Ndaba

Mjaji son of Khalishwayo

Eye lashes which are not even,

Once they are even it is the owner who made them even].

4.22.1 Historical background

The Phakathi belong to clan category of *Emafikamuva*. They are originally from Nongoma and Hluhluwe, in South Africa. It was established that the Phakathi are a faction of the Ndwandwe of Zwide. The people of this clan first settled at Ncotjane. They entered Eswatini through the South and spread to Lavumisa and Nsoko. One informant highlighted that some of the Phakathi people use Nyandeni instead of Mncwango in their clan praises. The alternative is attributed to the fact that the clan fragmented from the Ndwandwe in different groups under different leaders.

4.22.2 Taboos and totems

Cannabis, a bird called *lihloko hloko*, aloe vera and a fruit called *tjwala benyoni* are all taboos for the Phakathi.

4.22.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The Phakathi ancestors are Mncwango, Nsiba, Mutsha, Mjaji, Phakathi, Maqayi, Mzingeli, Mfekaye, and Mpangezitha.

4.22.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

There is no specific event associated with this clan.

4.22.5 Character traits and attributes

The clan praises of the Phakathi suggest that the Phakathi are dark in complexion. They are “green like the evergreen grass”. Their clan praises hint that they are beautiful, as articulated in the line, “beautiful vessels for serving the kings”. The Phakathi apparently have uneven eye lashes, as described in the line, “eye lashes that are not even, once they are even it is the owner who made them even”. They are also described as courageous people who have skipped sea waves many times.

4.22.6 Kinship and geographical areas where the people of this clan are found

The Phakathi are related to the Nzima, Shabangu and Nyandeni. They are found in Nsoko, Lavumisa, and Mgazini in Mankayane.

4.22.7 Overview from the Phakathi clan praises

It was gathered from informants that it is not uncommon these days to find young people who have no idea of who they are. That is, they do not know their clan praises.

4.23 Motsa Clan Praises

Motsa

Mvulane

Siwela (Khathide)

Ndlebenkhomo

Mvulane loluhlata lonjencoshane

Wena lowahamba ngemvula ematibukweni

[Motsa

Mvulane (rain)

Siwela (Khathide)

Ear of a cow

Mvulane who is green like the ever-green grass
You who travelled on the rain crossing rivers].

4.23.1 Historical background

The Motsa are known as Emakhandzambili. They are originally from Pongola. Upon their arrival in Eswatini, they settled at Lushikishini and dispersed to other areas.

4.23.2 Taboos and totems

The Motsa are prohibited from eating an ear of a cow. That is attested by the mention of, “ear of a cow in their clan praises”

4.23.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Motsa, Mvulane, Siwela, and Khatsidze

4.23.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

An informant stated that the Motsa have rain making powers, hence the reference to “rain” in their clan praises. The statement, “you who travelled in the rain crossing rivers” refers to the fact that wherever the Motsa travelled, rain would fall because they have rain making powers. This statement also refers to the historical event where the Motsa travelled from Pongola to Eswatini and crossed many rivers. One of King Mswati III’s queens is from the Motsa clan.

4.23.5 Character traits and attributes

The people of this clan have big ears like those of a cow, hence they are referred to

as “ears of a cow”. They are also dark and beautiful like the evergreen grass. This is reflected in their clan praises, “Mvulane who is green like the evergreen grass”.

4.23.6 Traditions

The Motsa clan is highly esteemed among EmaSwati. This is because another queen who performs royal rites during the *incwala* ceremony comes from this clan.

4.23.7 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

Many people from the Motsa clan have settled at Lushikishini, Ngwenyameni, and Nkhungwini. They do not intermarry with the Mbhele, Tfwala, and Mnisi. They are also related to the Khathide. Some of the Motsa people mention Khathide instead of Siwela in their clan praises.

4.23.8 Overview from the Motsa clan praises

One elder emphasised the function of clan praises, that of connecting the living and the dead (the ancestors).

4.24 Mayisela Clan Praises

Mayisela

Gasolo

Silima

Siphukuphuku

Sifohtmlanga

sakaNdzaba

Msutfu, Mgugu

Sichawukati

[Mayisela

Gasolo

Fool

Imbecile

Penetrator of the reed of

Ndzaba

Sotho, big pride

Great hero]

4.24.1 Historical background

According to an elder from this clan, the Mayisela are Sotho-Pedi. Their clan praises refer to the ethnic origin of the people of this clan in the line, “Sotho, big pride”. The people of this clan are a remnant of the clans that were expelled by the Dlamini when they arrived in Eswatini. They are originally from Pongola. They reared livestock and lived in mountains. They came to Eswatini looking for greener pastures for their livestock.

4.24.2 Taboos and totems

There is no taboo or totem associated with this clan.

4.24.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The ancestors of this clan are Gasolo and Mgugu.

4.24.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Mayisela reared livestock and lived in mountains.

4.24.5 Character traits and attributes

The Mayisela are described as humble, such that people called them fools or imbeciles. This is confirmed by the words, “fool” and “imbecile” in their clan praises. They are also friendly and sociable. They are considered persistent and courageous

people. The lines, “penetrator of the reed of Ndaba”; “you great hero” describe the persistence and courage of the Mayisela.

4.24.6 Kinship and geographical areas where members of this clan are found

The Mayisela do not intermarry with the Nkambule, Magagula, and Mngometulu. They are settled at Mabona, Mahamba, Mhlosheni, Mbabala, Mankayane, and Gebeni.

4.24.7 Overview from the Mayisela clan praises

Some of the elders of this clan mentioned that they were reluctant to teach their youth clan praises because of the offensive words, “fool” and “imbecile”, mentioned in their clan praises.

4.25 Dlundlu Clan Praises

Dlundlu

Mtima

Mzomba

Hlangotsi

Masibekela

Wena lowasibekela inkhosi

Ematima nakaya ebandla

ayakhetsana

Kwesuka Mzomba kwahlala

Nkalakatsa.

[Dlundlu

Mtima

Mzomba Hlangotsi

Masibekela (you who clouds)

You who clouded the king with dust

The Matima choose one another
when going to kraal meeting
Mzomba moved away and
The next one was Nkalakatsa]

4.25.1 Historical background

The Dlundu are known as *Emafikamuva* (“The late comers”) or immigrants. They are from KwaZulu-Natal. They are one of the clans who came to seek refuge in present-day Eswatini after the Mfecane wars had intensified.

4.25.2 Taboos and totems

The Dlundu do not eat *bubendze* (Swazi food prepared by cooking blood and fats of a slaughtered animal).

4.25.3 Contrived genealogy of the ancestors

The Dlundu ancestors are Mtima, Mzomba, Hlangotsi, and Dlundu. The names of these heroes are mentioned in the Dlundu clan praises.

4.25.4 Prominent events and what members of this clan are known for

The Dlundu are known for their courage and determination to protect the king during a war. The lines, “one who covers”, and “one who covered the king in the dust” refers to a n instance in the past when the Dlundu ensured that there was some dust that enveloped the king so that the enemies could not recognise him.

4.25.5 Character traits and attributes

The Dlundu are described as brave and persistent people. They would be at the forefront, leading warriors and determined to protect the king in times of war. The

Dludlu are portrayed as united. During meetings they would group themselves and huddled together. This act is reflected in the line, “the Matima choose one another when going to a meeting”. The line, “Mzomba moved away and the next one was Nkalakatsa” refers to the Dludlu leaders who succeeded each other in power.

4.25.6 Traditions

There are no traditions associated with this clan.

4.25.7 Kinship and places where members of this clan are found

The Dludlu do not intermarry with the Ndzinisa, Tsela, and Dube. Many of them are settled at Ngololweni.

4.25.8 Overview from the Dludlu clan praises

One informant confirmed that EmaSwati still hold on to their clan praises because they recite them during family gatherings. Some even make printouts of their clan praises on their T-shirts and form groups on social media, based on their clan names.

4.26 Conclusion

The clan praises presented in this chapter have features of heritage. This is evidenced by the fact that the clan praises articulate the historical background, taboos and totems, contrived genealogy of the ancestors, prominent events, character traits and attributes, traditions and kinship systems of the selected clan praises. The resonant and profound information presented in the clan praises is overwhelming. It is clear from participants’ responses that EmaSwati treasure their clan praises because they (clan praises) define their roots as a people. Even though EmaSwati esteem their clan praises, the youth appear to lack comprehensive knowledge of their clan praises. This deficiency is attributed to the lack of formal teaching of clan praises, urbanisation as well as the influence of social media, other cultures and religions. Participants mentioned that the grandmother has a key role to play in

teaching the young people their clan praises. In a nutshell, this genre of oral literature epitomises immense, profound and comprehensive information about clans, hence it is worth studying and documenting.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined and analysed the selected EmaSwati clan praises to establish if clan praises are importers of heritage. It also sought to determine if clan praises are of value among EmaSwati of Eswatini and how much people stand to lose if they do not embrace their clan praises?

Scholars of oral literature have observed that clan praises are the least researched genre of folklore and that they are becoming extinct. The decline in the use of clan praises is attributed to urbanisation, industrialisation, modernisation as well as foreign religions. Such a concern has been expressed by scholars such as Hadebe (1992), Thwala (2018), Tsiu (2001), Thwala and Twala (2019), Kamera (2000) and Rycroft (1976).

The decline in the use of clan praises as highlighted by the scholars mentioned above is a cause for concern. The questions that propelled the researcher to undertake this study is, “Do clan praises have heritage?”, and if so, “Is this heritage passed on to the present generation”, and “How much would people lose if their clan praises become extinct”?

To accomplish these goals, the researcher employed the qualitative approach to collect and analyse the data and adopted the functionalism and the diffusionist theories as theories underpinning the study. Twenty-five clan names were selected for the study, using systematic sampling. The data were collected from chiefdoms through interviews. A total of 50 respondents were interviewed for this study.

The study explored the selected EmaSwati clan praises and unpacked the comprehensive information embedded in them. The study further alluded to the numerous social and religious functions of clan praises. This research has demonstrated that EmaSwati cherish and treasure clan praises as their heritage. Clan praises are not only used daily among EmaSwati of Eswatini but are used

throughout the life of an individual. In this regard, clan praises serve to connect the living and the dead. Therefore, the researcher argues that profound and comprehensive information is embedded in clan praises. She proposes, therefore, that clan praises be preserved at any cost.

The study provided insights into EmaSwati clan praises by presenting and analysing the historical background of each clan, taboos and totems, prominent events, character traits, traditions, kinship ties and the geographical areas where the people of that clan are found. These are the features of heritage. Therefore, it is concluded that clan praises have heritage.

It transpired in this study that most of the youth possess the knowledge about their clan praises. However, these young people demonstrated a shallow knowledge about their clan praises. Although the youth lack detailed knowledge about their clan praises, they have a clue about these praises. Not only do they have a clue but they are also gratified by their clan praises which they revere. Most of these young people confirmed that they use their clan praises. There were cases of young people who were fluent and proved to be knowledgeable about their clan praises. It is, thus, concluded, based on the interviews that clan praises import heritage to the present generation. It is also evident that the use of clan praises is declining. There is, therefore, an urgent need to empower the youth with information on their clan praises before they lose the little knowledge that they have.

FINDINGS

Based on the findings of the study, there is evidence that clan praises are encumbered with far-reaching and sacred information. This is reflected by the rich historical background, traditions, taboos, totems and names of the ancestors of the clan. This fundamental knowledge enables members of the clan to perceive who they are, where they came from, who their ancestors and kinsmen are, what their attributes are, how they should behave and what they must avoid. It is evident, therefore, that clan praises are the nucleus of one's life. If people lose their clan praises they lose their history and identity.

It was confirmed that EmaSwati of Eswatini still cherish and uphold their clan praises. EmaSwati living in the rural areas are keener to learn about their clan praises than

EmaSwati living in the urban areas. Clan praises are used daily among EmaSwati of Eswatini. Among other things, clan praises are used to show gratitude, to appease, to calm a fretting child, to express an apology, as a form of greeting, or when communicating with the ancestors. Clan praises also define the roots of the people and give them a sense of belonging. Hearing their clan praises being recited provides a fascinating experience to EmaSwati of Eswatini including the youth. The study also established that elders are more knowledgeable in clan praises as compared to the youth who appeared to have limited knowledge of their clan praises. Grandmothers were acknowledged as leading in the teaching of clan praises.

A remarkable significance of this study is that each clan name was assigned its clan category. The clan categories were based on those of Ginindza (1992:9) who grouped EmaSwati clans into four categories, namely *Emakhandzambili* ("Those found ahead"), *Bemdzabuko* ("True Swazis"), *Emafikamuva* ("Late comers"), and *Ematalankhosi* ("Bearers of kings"). This study, therefore, has made it possible for the people from these selected clans to recite and interpret their clan praises. Not only will they recite and interpret their clan praises but will also know the clan category to which they belong.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The study has revealed a gap in knowledge among the youth who lack in-depth knowledge of their clan praises. This gap can be bridged by the government, who can introduce clan praises as part of the school curriculum. It must, therefore, be mandatory for all learners to be able to recite, analyse and interpret their clan praises when they graduate from senior secondary school. This will greatly help instill the love of clan praises in the youth during their formative years and enable them to develop an awareness of their heritage.

Writing competitions can also be instrumental in improving the youth's knowledge of their clan praises. In Eswatini, writing competitions in schools are organised by publishing companies and non-government organisations. So the government, through the Ministry of Education and National Curriculum Centre can incorporate clan praises into some of the writing competitions to allow learners to conduct

research and write about their clan praises.

The findings of this study also corroborate the findings of previous studies that clan praises are becoming extinct. It will be prudent, to this end, for the government to run campaigns on clan praises through the Ministry of Sports and Culture. These campaigns can be run during sports and cultural events as well as in the different constituencies to include people living in the rural and urban areas. The campaigns should aim at stressing the importance of clan praises and raising awareness of the declining use of clan praises. Such campaigns will inspire both the elderly and the youth to use clan praises and make efforts to preserve their respective clan praises.

EmaSwati as well should make conscious efforts to teach clan praises in their homesteads as well as during family gatherings. EmaSwati usually assemble or come together during certain ceremonies like *umtsimba*, *lobola*, or *kuteka*. The elders in the family can elucidate on the meaning of the clan praises during such events and lead their recitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should be conducted to explore other strategies of promoting and preserving clan praises. Another area that needs to be explored in relation to clan praises is how and why clans were divided into factions. Interpreting clan praises line-by-line is a challenge for most people. Therefore, this area should be explored as well.

The significance of clan praises among EmaSwati, their massive social and religious functions, the role they play throughout the life cycle of each person and the extensive knowledge embedded in clan praises need not be over emphasised. In view of the value and substance of this genre of oral literature, it is suggested that more research be done on EmaSwati clan praises. Such research will propel the documentation, hence the preservation of this rich heritage. The research will also enable scholars to collect information from the elders who are more knowledgeable in clan praises and document it, lest these elders die with this inheritance which could benefit generations to come.

It is envisaged that the study will rekindle interest in clan praises and raise an

awareness of the declining use of clan praises and the need to resuscitate them. It is also hoped that the study will contribute to collecting and preserving clan praises. It is also anticipated that the study will inspire EmaSwati scholars of oral literature to consider in- depth research on clan praises. Further, the study will offer an opportunity for EmaSwati to trace their origin, their migration into present-day Eswatini and how some clans formed fractions. In this way, they will have a comprehensive understanding of their roots. This study will also benefit young people who grow up with no one to teach them their clan praises. These young people will refer to this research should they want to understand their clan praises. However, only those whose clan praises are among the 25 selected clan names can benefit from this research where they will find their clan praises interpreted and analysed.

In conclusion, the study first highlighted the functions of clan praises and the purpose for which African people, including EmaSwati of Eswatini, use them. Such highlights show that clan praises are a valuable heritage. The literature reviewed revealed that clan praises are a neglected genre of oral literature. The study has also revealed that clan praises serve numerous functions and are treasured by EmaSwati of Eswatini as their priceless heritage. It is perceptible that clan praises are the nucleus of one's life and losing one's clan praises is tantamount to losing one's life. Finally, the study has shown that clan praises are the carriers of heritage and that they import this heritage to the present generation.

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APPENDIX

Interview questions for adults

1. What are the people of this clan popular for?
2. Can you recite your clan praises?
3. Which taboos and totems are mentioned in your clan praises?
4. Which beliefs, customs and rituals are peculiar to this clan?
5. Briefly describe the historical background of this clan.
6. Do your clan praises include the names of the forefathers of this clan?
7. If your answer to 6 is (Yes), please provide us with the names of the forefathers of this clan.
8. Describe the attributes and characteristics which distinguish the people of this clan from other people.
9. How does your youth get to learn about their clan praises?
10. Do you think it is significant for the youth to learn about their clan praises? Can you explain the reasons for this?
11. Do your young people understand and use their clan praises? How important are clan praises among EmaSwati?
12. Do EmaSwati still hold on their clan praises?
13. If your answer to 12 is “Yes” please give reasons why clan praises are valued among EmaSwati?

SiSwati Version of the interview questions for adults

1. Badvume ngani bantfu balesibongo?
2. Ngicela uhayе sinanatelo sakini.
3. Ngutiphi tintfo letitilwako naletihlonishwako letibalwako kulesinanatelo sakini?

4. Ngutiphi tinkholelo, imihambo nemisimeto lebalulekile kubanfu balesibongo?
5. Awunikete kafisha umlandvo webantfu balesibongo.
6. Ngabe sinanatelo sakini sinawo yini emabito abokhokho balesibongo.
7. Uma ngabe uphendvule watsi yebo ku 6, niketa emabito abokhokho balesibongo.
8. Chaza similo nekwakheka noma kubukeka kwebantfu balesibongo lokubenta behluke kulabanye bantfu.
9. Labasha benu batifundza njani tinanatelo?
10. Ucabanga kutsi kubalulekile yini kutsi labasha bafundze tinanatelo tabo? Niketa tizatfu talokuchazile.
11. Ngabe labasha bayaticondza yini futsi bayatisebentisa yini tinanatelo tabo? Tibaluleke kangakanani tinanatelo kumaSwati?
12. EmaSwati asebambelele yini etinanatelweni?
13. Nangabe uphendvule watsi yebo ku 12, niketa tizatfu letenta kutsi tinanatelo tibaluleke kumaSwati.

Interview questions for youth

1. Have you been taught or heard about your clan praises?
2. Who is the first person who taught you or told you about your clan praises?
3. Can you recite your clan praises?
4. Are your clan praises significant to you? Please explain.
5. How often do you use your clan praises? (Choose one)
 - (a) On a daily basis.
 - (b) Once in a month.

- (c) On special occasions.
 - (d) Never use them.
6. Describe the attributes and characteristics which distinguish the people of this clan from other people.
 7. Briefly describe the historical background of this clan.
 8. Which taboos and totems are mentioned in your clan praises?
 9. Who are your forefathers that are mentioned in your clan praises?
 10. Why is it important to know and understand your clan praises?
 11. Do EmaSwati still hold on to their clan praise?
 12. What would happen if people were to lose their clan praises?

SiSwati version of the interview questions for youth

1. Uke wafundziswa yini noma weva ngesinanatelo sakini?
2. Ngubani umunftu wekucala lowakutjela noma wakufundzisa ngesinanatelo sakini?
3. Ngicela uhaye sinanatelo sakini.
4. Ngabe sinanatelo sakini simcoka yini? Chaza kutsi usho ngani.
5. Usisebentisa kangakhi sinanatelo sakini? (kipilitelela kunye)
 - (a) Onkhe Malanga
 - (b) Kanye ngenyanga
 - (c) Nakunemicimbi lebalulekile
 - (d) Angike ngisisebentise
6. Chaza similo nekwakheka noma kubukeka kwebantfu balesibongo lokubenta behluke kulabanye bantfu.
7. Chaza kafisha umlandvo webantfu balesibongo.
8. Nguyitiphi tintfo letitilwako naletihlonishwako letibalwako

kulesinanatelo?

9. Bobani bokhokho lababalwako kulesibongo?
10. Kubaluleke ngani kutsi wati futsi ucondze sinanatelo sakini?
11. Ngabe EmaSwati asebambelele yini etinantelweni?
12. Kungentekani uma bantfu bangalahlekelwa tinanatelo?