

An Analysis of Implicit and Explicit Imagery in Selected Swazi Clan Praises: An Anthroponymic Approach

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Abstract - *The objectives of this research work are to encapsulate, broadly define and structurally analyze imagery from the extracted clan praises. A specific focus is on metaphor and simile that are dominant in clan praises. Their poetic techniques in words, phrases and clauses need to be displayed. Clan praises comprise the names of prominent ancestors, spatial, temporal, cultural and historical settings, association with animals and plants, physical characteristics of clan members as well as references to other clans. The extracted examples are usually common in the particular clan and static in form. The structural and anthroponymic approaches will support the implicit and explicit imagery for synthesis and comprehension.*

Keywords: *Anthroponymic Approach, Clan praises, Implicit and explicit imagery, Poetic techniques and Structural analysis.*

I. Introduction

The Swazi clan name or surname is distinguished into *sibongo* (core clan name) and *sinanatelo* (clan praise). The word, *sinanatelo* is derived from the verb, *nanatela* (add or extend). Clan praises are extensions or development of the meaning of a clan name. They include the contrived genealogies that highlight the names of the founders and pioneers of the clans or lineages. From the verb, *nanatela*, comes the noun *sinanatelo* (clan praise), with the plural *tinanatelo*. The clan praise is, indeed, used as an address form. However, its far wider function in Swazi nation can be deduced from several meanings of the verb, *nanatela*, to welcome, greet on arrival, adulate praise flatteringly and congratulate. Each Swazi clan name or surname has a 'main' or 'primary' *sinanatelo*, which is used as a common address form. These may be used by acquaintances when meeting people from various places. In addition to the 'main' clan praise, each Swazi clan name has a number of 'secondary' praise names, which when added to a string of praise phrases, become a clan praise poem. Clan praises in their full form, as when recited at ceremonial occasions, show marked similarities to the oral praises of rulers. For example, they have poetic features that can be considered to be bridging the form between naming and poetry. They are rich in imagery and filled with historical narratives. Furthermore, they serve a number of social functions and play a significant role in ceremonies. The full use of clan praises and their complex interrelationship with clan names need exploration. Clan praises are amongst the richest and least researched genres of African oral poetry. Mzolo (1989) points out the following on clan praises:

Have largely escaped the attention of scholars of traditional oral literature. Only one collection of such praises is available, from the Cape Hlubi... Consequently, clan praises scarcely figure in intensive studies of praise poetry.

It is further noted that African oral literature makes only a single word reference to clan praises in a sentence, although they are normally addressed to distinguished human beings. Praise poems can be concerned with almost anything abstract, concrete, physical or human phenomena. However, there has been little added to the studies on clan praises among the Nguni-speaking peoples.

It is not easy to understand clan praises without a full background of the clan, which touches polygynous, patrilocal, the process of expansion and extended families. It is, however, noted that form and function of Swazi clan praises are not explored by various scholars. The terms that are given an operational definition are the following:

Clan - is a group of families that descend from one ancestor and have the same clan name or surname, often named after a symbolic figure. Some clans are related through the female lineage, that is, matrilineal, while others are patrilineal (related through the male line). Although they may live far apart, members of a clan have a

strong and binding close relationship. Clans are thoroughly looked at in relation to lineages, heirs, successor, off springs and issues.

Society - is defined as the sum of human activities and conditions that are regarded as a whole. In this study, it refers to a group of related people joined together for a common purpose. These are human beings living together as a group. Society is, however, the organized aggregate of individuals who follow a specific way of life.

Tribe - is a group of people united by culture, traditions and customs under the same leaders.

II. The Research Methodology And Theoretical Approach

This approach is mainly concerned with a focus on relations of agreement or disagreement, of harmony and conflict between parts of the text and the whole text. In other words, a literary text is viewed entirely as a whole which consists of parts which perform a complete function of the framework that holds the literary work together. According to Swanepoel (1990:16), structuralism started in European countries, particularly in France, during the 1960s. It developed from the Folklorist studies of Vladimir Propp and the anthropological research of Claude Levi-Strauss. The concept structure refers to the totality of relations between the parts, units or elements of a text. Structuralism is the theory and method of examining these relations.

Hawkes (1977: 17) states the following about structuralism:

It is essential to think about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perception and description structures. It regards language as a system of signs which is used to express particular thoughts. The elements or system of communication become meaningful when they are brought into a relationship with each other. These various structural units cannot be studied in isolation.

Structuralism emphasizes the significances of units, elements or structures. Every entity in the study of the theory of literature contributes some meaning when viewed in totality and taking into account the significance of form and content.

III. Imagery in clan praises

Imagery is the use of words that bring pictures to the mind of the recipient and appeal to any of the other senses of sound, touch, taste, smell or hearing. The sender very often makes his statements and conveys his ideas by comparing one thing with another. This results in finding likeness in differences and difference in likeness. Heese and Lawton (1979: 62) have the following views about imagery:

The words employed by a poet need to be different in themselves from ordinary words used in straight forward prose or everyday speech, but in the context of a poem, they may acquire that extension of meaning which stimulates and delights the imagination. His use of language here is straightforward, because it is non-literal. He is creating with words what we call an image.

On imagery, Abrams (1971:76) postulates the following:

Imagery is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other works of literature, whether by literal description, by allusions, or in the analogous (the vehicle) used in similes and metaphors.

Lutrin and Pincus (2009:99) advance the following views:

Imagery, often involves sense, conjures up word picture. It achieves this through a combination of literal and figurative language. These affect us emotionally and intellectually.

The existences and significances of imagery as a literary communicative device has long been an acknowledged fact. According to Heese and Lawton (1979: 69 – 63) imagery should be understood to mean the part of literary work of art which calls for poetic meaning and appreciation.

Scheffler (2015: 167) advocates that imagery is viewed as follows:

The language for objects, feelings, thoughts, actions or any sensory experiences or abstraction. Many images are conveyed by figurative language. It is used to heighten the audience's awareness.

Swazi clan praises draw their images from the constructed world of Swazi culture and society, as well as the natural world of plants, trees, wild animals, natural features, such as rivers and mountains.

IV. Imagery based on cattle as their references

Gumbi clan: *Mehlwenkhomo* (Eyes of a cattle). Ginindza clan: *Tinkhomo letadla eceleni ngekweswela* umelusi (Cattle that grazed in the field through lack of a herdman). Mbokazi clan: *Wemvila njengenkomo* (You of the path like a cow). Mtjali clan: *Nkhomo tiyawudla tiyawuhlakulela*. (Cattle which eat mealies and take out weeds) Nhlebelala clan: *Mabiya ngenkhomo lamanye emadvodza abiya ngemahlaha* (You who use cattle as a fence while other men fence with branches).

V. Imagery based on nature, wildlife, birds and animals

The lion and the elephant are featured in Swazi clan praises. The praises of the Gule clan show how the elephant and the lion can be brought together: *Magwabane wendlovu-Malambule wengwenyama, Indlovu ayisitsi, ibonakala ngemashoba ekukhanya, lapho ihamba khona. Tindlebe letinhle totimbili* (Magwabane of the elephant Malambule of the lion. The elephant does not hide it. It is seen by the bright tail, when it moves. Its two ears are beautiful).

Less extensive are the elephant references in the praises of the Hlandze clan: *Mkhulandze wetindlovu* (Mkhulandze of the elephants). Maseko clan: *Khubonye wendlovu* (Khubonye of the elephant)

The hippopotamus and the crocodile are fearsome animals which live in rivers. The hippopotamus features in the praises of Mvubu clan: *Imvubu abayidli abashaywa ngiyo...Mvubu lendze kubakaGutjwako* (A hippopotamus is not eaten by those who are struck by it. The long hippopotamus of Gutjwako).

The crocodile appears in the praises of the next two clans: Ndlangamandla clan: *Wena lowawela ngalelincane lizibuko kulelikhulu wesaba tingwenya* (You who crossed at the shallow ford, where it is deep you are afraid of the crocodiles). Maphanga clan: *Ngwenya yenkhosi* (crocodile of the chief). Makhubu clan: *NaboMamba ayihlokomi laph'ihambe khona ngayitolo* (Mother of the mamba that does not applause where it moved the other day).

Smaller creatures include birds and fish, as in the following. Mabhengu clan: *Wena waMabhengu wenyoni lebovu* (You of Mabhengu of the red bird). Malangwane clan: *Nhlanti lencane letalela emfuleni* (Small fish which breeds in the river). The references to plants and vegetations are few, but we can note from the praises of the Mbebe clan the following metaphor: *Mbali chakata emini, ngoba ntsambama uyabuna* (The flower that blossom during the day because in the evening it withers).

References to rainfall can be found throughout the African naming system, in the personal names of individuals as well as in the praise names of clans. Drizzling rain is the central image in the following. Masilela clan: *Wena wemvula lencane emikhemetweni* (You of the little rain amongst the drizzles). An image of drizzling rain is extolled in Matfonsi clan praises as follows:

*Badla bendlula batintsandzane,
Vulane imkhemetelwane
Lingatsi khemekheme selenele
(You eat while passing on as an orphan,
Across the drizzling rain
Once it drizzles then it is enough)*

A comment on the weather can be seen from the praises of the Mhlanga clan: *Zulu kalibongwa, libongwa bolomalima* (rain that is not praised, it is solely praised by farmers).

The next example of a clan praise which refers to the weather is rather enigmatic. Magangane clan: *Zulu ladvuma ngayitolo kwasa ngakusasa lita netikhukhula* (The sky which thundered on the previous day, on the following day it comes with floods). In contrast to rainy weather, comes this image of the sun, from the praises of the Msutfu clan: *Mlandzelalanga liyoshona endleleni* (You who followed the sun until it set in the path).

Finally, the praises of the Mtsetfwa clan refer to topographical features: *Mnguni wasoNdi wasoThukela*: (Mnguni of Ulundi Mountains and of Thukela River).

VI. Imagery manifested as metaphor

Orwell (2005: 101) perceives a metaphor as an implied comparison, as follows:

Using one thing to describe another thing with similar qualities (for example, education is the key to success). It involves direct comparisons, for example, when we say that someone is a snake in the grass, meaning that he is not trusted because he or she behaves like a snake. Sometimes a writer uses a metaphor to create a long comparison call an extended or sustained metaphor, for example he's a real snake in the grass: he tricks people and poisons their minds before he slides back into his hole. In this example, the metaphor of the snake is extended throughout the description.

Scheffler (2015: 168) views a metaphor as follows: a figure of speech in which a writer says that one thing is another or has the qualities of another. The writer may say this directly or by implication, without the use of 'like' or 'as'. It is the basic figure used in poetry and is used as a compact vehicle of associated meaning.

Fugard(2016:141) views a metaphor as follows:

A direct comparison between two unlike things that share one or two characteristics.

It is an implicit and indirect comparison of things. A figure of speech in which a word, phrase or clause depicts a connotative meaning.

The metaphor is most clearly expressed in those few praises where 'wena' ('you') is used as in the praises of Sibisi: *Wena sigodvo...* (You, log...).

Usually, the metaphor simply starts a line without 'wena', as in the following examples: From the praises of the Ndlela clan: *Mamba lendze lesensokonsokweni* (Long mamba which resides at Nsokonsokweni). Ndwandwe clan: *Langa lelibalele* (The sun that shined). Metfula clan: *Indlovu kayitseli layihambe khona* (Elephant which does not pay where it travels). Mdluli clan: *Mbokodvo lenhle legaya bulawu bemakhosi* (Beautiful grinding stone which grind beer for the chiefs).

A metaphor is extended or developed further as in the praises of the Sibanda clan: *Mvila kawulandzelwa lokulandzelako uyatibambelela* (The path that is never followed, whoever tries to follow it is wasting his time). The praises of the Shiba clan: *Zembe wagawula waze wadzineka solo uhlahlela tinhloko temadvodza* (Axe, you cut until you are tired of smashing the heads of men).

Clan/ Surname	Metaphor
Zwane (One who understand)	<i>Indlovu yehla nyova neNtendeka yesaba emanceba kutsi atawuba ngemuva</i> (The elephant descended backwards with the Ntendeka it was afraid that wounds might be at the back).
Zikalala (The throbbing is abated)	<i>Nyamatanane ledliwako</i> (The buck that is eaten)
Tsabetse (Be comforted)	<i>Livondvo lidl' umhlanga lacat' ematfumba</i> (The cane rat that ate reeds and peeled the intestines)
Tfwala (To carry)	<i>Shiva longenatimphondvo lonetimphondvo watitsatsa ekhabonina</i> (A hornless cattle, the cattle with horns got them from their maternal place)
Singwane (One who looks searchingly at)	<i>Nkhomo temabheka teswel' umelusi</i> (Bridal price cattle that are without a shephard)
Simelane (One who stands for)	<i>Tindlovu tadla ekhaya ngekweswela belusi</i> (Elephants which graze at home because there were no shepherds)

Imagery manifested as simile

A simile is a rhetoric device that compares two things or objects which look alike in characteristics.

Scheffler (2015: 174) defines a simile as follows: A figure of speech in which two completely different things are compared. The words 'as' or 'like' are used to make the comparison. It clarifies and or reinforces the image.

Walter (2015:170) defines a simile in a functional manner, as follows: The comparison indicates what features in one thing are similar, or like certain associations or feature of another thing.

Plaatjie (2015:155) regards a simile as a comparison which shows that certain features in one thing are similar to the features of another, by using words such a "like" and "as".

Tucker and Young (2013: 181) express their views on the simile as follows:

A comparison between two unlike things, which have one characteristic in common. The words, "as" or "like" are used.

Imagery is be a word phrase or poetic statement that connects together the encoder and decodes through a message.

A simile usually uses the formatives *njenga-* ('just like '), *nganga-* ('as big as'), *kwa-* (in the manner of), and various other comparative forms. It is summarily noted that imagery uses figurative and descriptive language in a text to create, a picture of a scene, concept or object that appeals to the feelings and senses of the readers.

Clan/Surname	Simile
Lulane (to be lighter)	<i>Titfo timbhobho tinjengetendlovu</i> (You who have rounded legs resembling those of an elephant)
Madzinane (a tiresome)	<i>Wena lowadzina bantfu njengetinyamatane</i> (You who annoyed people like the buck)
Magongo (a somersaulter)	<i>Ngalo timhlophe njengemant' elwandle</i> (Your nails are as white as sea water)
Manana (a reciprocator)	<i>Wena loluhlata lonjengencoshane</i> (you, who are as green as the cyperus.)
Mango (ascending road)	<i>Wena loluhlata njengencoshane</i> (You, who are as green as the cyperus)
Masango (gates)	<i>Mivila uphambene njengewetincangosi</i> (Paths that cross each other like those of ants)
Masilela (one who is left behind)	<i>Bhudla tiboya njengetsenetja emehlo abovu njengeligwalagwala</i> (You who are full hairs like a red hare, with red eyes, resembling the plumes of the red lourie)
Masina (a type of sheep)	<i>Mavutfwelekhatsi njengelihwabha</i> (You, who gets ripe inside like a water melon)
Mbuli (opener)	<i>Wemvila njengenkomo</i> (You, of the path, like a cow)
Mtjali (Sower, planter)	Magalelagase <i>njengengwenya</i> (The beater who beats like a crocodile)
Ngcamphalala (one who is running ahead for rescue)	Wetama kwenyuka <i>njengelilanga</i> (You tried to climb like the sun)
Tfwala (to carry)	<i>Mkhonto lodvume njengelitulu</i> . (A spear that thunders like a storm.)
Tsabetse (be comforted)	<i>Ntsaba ufuts' emafu njengelitulu</i> (A mountain that carries away clouds like a storm)
Zikalala (the throbbing abated)	<i>Mashiyamahle njengenyamatane</i> . (Beautiful eyelashes like those of a buck)

VII. Results

Clan praises reflect names that are patriarchal in nature. It is articulated that patriarchy is an ideological construct of a system that encompasses ideologies, beliefs, values and practices underpinning the organization as well as the structure of society which result in unequal power relations between woman and men. According to Jones (2006: 27), men appear to be special prized commodities and there is no clear consensus on the type of qualities they exhibit besides being physically different from women. On the other hand, it is asserted that the subjugation and subordination of woman in most spheres of life within the family is impacted upon by patriarchal attitudes. It is a historical phenomenon, which is continuously reinforced by social practices and institutions, including religion, culture, and the media that has come to be seen as nature.

Where the parent clan holds a high social status in the clan hierarchy, sub-clans have retained the name of the most important ancestor, not only to maintain a kinship link, but more significantly, to justify the territory rights. Fission in the Dlamini clan took place at different times and there are at presently several Dlamini sub-clans who all begin their clan name with *Nkhosi* (king or chief), which they share with the Dlamini.

The genealogies only include clan ancestors renowned for their illustrious deeds and achievements. Heroes were always eager for military activities, wherein there were opportunities to prove prowess. Upward social mobility in the new Swazi state was to a large extent, highly competitive and based on achievement through the military tradition and its related activities, hunting and raiding cattle. Ancestral names in the clan praises serve as a permanent link between the ancestral world and the living, as well as the past and the present. These illustrious

ancestors present ideal social personalities and define values and standards to be striven for by living members of their groups. Descendants of a hero in a battle field, boasted of his heroic exploits, so that they too could be remembered in the family history.

The fact that clan heroes represent social personalities is substantiated in clan names and praises. The heroic deeds of ancestors of the Shiba, Ginindza, Mtfombeni and Mabhengu in battle fields are recounted in their clan names, as “you who do not shut with cross bars, but shut with heads of men.” Clan praises can be heard in all situations of social interaction. In ritual and ceremonial occasions, they are often performed within the context of other genres of oral literature, such as traditional dance, music and praise poems.

Ginindza (1977:19) comments about clan praises as follows: The subject matter of clan-praises ranges from a history or episodes in the origin of the group, physical characteristics of the founder, beliefs and customs, as well as marked emphasis on achievement or heroic deeds. Clan praises are a distinct genre of oral poetry that exhibit the structural form and content that is similar to that of praise poems. Any historical facts recorded in them, tend to be metaphoric due to poetic style, idealized beliefs, traditions and customs. An interpretation and literary appreciation of clan praises require an understanding of their total social and genealogical contexts which necessitate various approaches from other perspectives such as history and social anthropology.

Examples of plants, animals and actions are given as follows: Shongwe – a shrub or tree. *lishongwe* or *mitzeeri* also called *bridelia micrantha*, is a tall bare stem deciduous tree which is habitable in swamp forest edges and streams. Its leaves and bark are eaten by the black rhino, bush bucks and grey duikers. Its fruits are edible and very popular with many of fruit-eating birds such as African pigeons, starlings, louries and crested barbets. *Sive sakaShongwe* (Shongwe’s clan, lineage or nation). *KaShongwe* (Shongwe’s place, village, homestead). Shongwe is a surname and *lishongwe*, a totem (a shrub or tree) of shongwe’s nation

An example of a clan name based on animals is Dvube. *Lidvube* (a zebra). *Sive sakaDvube* (Dvube’s clan). *KaDvube* (Dvube’s place, village or homestead). Dvube is a surname and *lidvube* is a totem (a zebra) of Dvube’s nation

An example of a clan name based on actions is Mnisi. *Mnisi* (rain maker). *Yina* (to rain). *Sive sakaMnisi* Mnisi’s clan, lineage or nation. *KaMnisi* (Mnisi’s place, village, homestead). Mnisi is a surname and *imvula* (rain) is a totem. of Mnisi’s nation.

Clan names can be further classified as follows:

Big wild animals

- Indlovu (elephant) – Ndlovu
- Imvubu (hippopotamus) – Mvubu

Nature

- Lwandle (sea) – Lwandle
- Lilanga (sun) – Langa

Domestic animals

- Inkhomo (cow) – Nkhomo
- Linkhonyane (calf) – Nkhonyane

Prefix Ma

- Linga (try) – Malinga (one who tries)
- Bila (boil) – Mabila (one who boils)
- Vundla (cut across) – Mavundla (one who cuts across)

Prefix M-/Mu

- khonta (pay allegiance) – Mkhonta (one who pays allegiance)
- tjala (plough) – Mtjali (one who ploughs)

VIII. Discussion

Historical background of Swazi nation

Bemdزابuko (True original Swazi) refers to the descendants of Dlamini III who migrated from kaTembe (place of Tembe) in the southern coastal area of Mozambique, east of the Lubombo Mountain. *Bemdزابuko* (fission) further suggests that Dlamini or his ancestors broke away from an earlier group. Dlamini III left the coastal area (around 1600-1700), accompanied by retainers and followers from other clans and journeyed south. From Nkayani, which was near the Magudu hills, the Dlamini turned back to settle on the northern side of Lumphongolo river around about 1750’s and 1800’s. People from other clans such as Matsebula, Hlophe and Tfwala were incorporated (Ginindza:1977).

Emakhandzambili (those found ahead)

The category of *emakhandzambili* includes people from all the clans who inhabited the area north of eShiselweni before the advent of Dlamini and their followers. The term, *emakhandzambili* is compounded from *khandza* (find); *embili* (ahead).

Emafikamuva (Late comers)

The term, *emafikamuva* is derived from *fika* (arrive) *muva* (late, after) and means ‘Late comers’ and refers to immigrants, also known as *tikhonti* (voluntary servants or vassals). Most immigrants were incorporated into the Swazi nation during the reign of King Mswati II (1840 – 1865). These were mostly refugees from the Shakan, wars, which disrupted African kingdoms and chiefdoms, such as the Ndwandwe of Zwile and the Mthethwa of Dingiswayo. More clan names were also added to the nation from other parts of Africa. Some were also accepted through *kukhonta* (allegiance), others by registration and naturalization.

Cultural dimensions of clan praises

Culture is an essential concept in intercultural communication which is viewed as shared language, values and beliefs. Singer (1987:34) views the cultural patterns of thought, meaning and perception by giving this definition:

The total of the inherited ideas, ideal, beliefs, values and knowledge, which constitute the bases of social action.

Martin and Nakayama (2013:88) define culture as follows:

Learned patterns of behaviour and attitudes shared by a group of people.

Verderber and Verderber (2001) express that mainly African and Eastern cultures have a different set of values regarding self-concept. They look at family, not individual, as the fundamental social unit. They emphasize socialization towards interdependency and high-esteem when perceived to be self-effacing, thoughtful and cooperative.

Steinberg (2011:258) postulates that cultural transmission is an education tool of mass communication that essentially creates a bond among members of society. All the cited scholars share learned patterns, values, language and society. Clan praises are made up of evocative images which stir emotions, thoughts and imagination. Furthermore, clan praises share similar characteristics with poetry, especially in creating a particular rhythm and rhyme. They are however, extolled using repetition techniques that depict logical, coherent and eloquent skills.

IX. Conclusion

Clan praises are classified as folk poetry, oral literature and cultural aspects that are not distinctively given attention by researchers. The coverage of this work is based on imagery, especially metaphor and simile, as vital figures of speech in clan praises. It is reflected that they are benedictory formulae, expression of gratitude and ceremonial utterances. Similarity, in clan praises shows that each clan contains a number of lineages in which direct descents can be genealogically traced over a number of generations. Clan praises are also aspects of clan histories seen in relation to the history of the ruling group. Their content points to the history of clan migrations and the formation of the Swazi state. There is also a focus on the vital roles of subordinated groups within the monarchical system. Underlying the roles and functions, are motivations to achieve deeds and an implicit competition to gain and maintain social and political recognition.

X. Recommendations

It is recommended that further research be undertaken on clan praises and focus on the following:

- collecting and categorizing the clan praises according to the structural grammatical and literature rules
- Investigating about the origin and history of the clan praises.
- Identifying and outlining the similarities and differences of clan praises which are evident in their form and structure.
- Demonstrating and explaining their functions at various settings using the grammatical and literature approaches.

The researcher focused to two figures of speech, namely simile and metaphor that are used for comparisons. Further research on sound devices, contractions, exaggerations and understatements is needed.

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