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THE ROLE PLAYED BY IDIOMS, PROVERBS, PROVERBIAL PHRASES AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN SOME SELECTED XITSONGA POETRY BOOKS

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **Maxangu Amos Khosa,** declare that the thesis, **The role played by idioms, proverbs, proverbial phrases and idiomatic expressions in some selected Xitsonga poetry books,** hereby submitted to the University of Venda, for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Xitsonga,** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature

Date

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DEDICATIONS

- This study is dedicated to my late grandmother, Mdlayi Maria N'wa-Nkatini Khosa, who worked tirelessly to see me through my education regardless of her financial status.
- To my parents, Mzamani Simion, Khubani Tsatsawani, Saina Mjaji and Mamaila Nwa-Hasani Khosa for supporting me all the way.
- My two wives, Hlengelani Lizzy and Tintswalo Ellerine.
- My children, Tshepo, Nsuku, Pearl, Ntwanano, Ntiyiso and Nkateko.
- The whole Khosa clan.
- My colleagues and learners, at Nkatini High, this is your work. Pride yourself with it.

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ABSTRACT

The essence of idioms and proverbs in spoken and written language cannot be overemphasised. African idioms and proverbs reflect both the past and present, and are as relevant to contemporary society as they were to traditional society. They have both practical and philosophical relevance. Most of them are short and succinct, enabling hearers or readers to memorise and repeat them easily. They also demonstrate universal or cultural truth that is familiar to the hearers or readers.

Proverbs and idioms on the other hand, are used to describe human nature and behaviour abounds in the language of the African continent. Sometimes they are used to caution people against certain forms of behaviour; at other times idioms and proverbs are used as an encouragement. African proverbs are used as a means of moral instruction at all levels of society and to educate the youth about the importance of respect and reverence for elders. They play a vital role in the education and instruction of members of society. It is this heritage coupled by oral poetry that first attracted western writers to study African languages and literature.

Lysere as cited by Stewart (2005:6) states that the modern African writer is to his indigenous oral tradition as a snail is to its shell. Even in a foreign habitat, a snail never leaves its shell behind. The Kaonde (Zambia) proverb, "kwenda kwa kolokofwa ne nzubo yanji" which can be loosely translated as 'the journey of a snail and its house' expresses the sentiment that wherever a wise man travels, he takes his wisdom with him, like a snail that travels with its house, which is its shell.

In the same way, contemporary African writers are aware of the heritage contained in the communal wisdom of their people. This communal wisdom is realised in the language use in their literary works which are full of imagery and rich, vibrant and profound in the use of figurative language which is bound in the use of proverbs, riddles and idioms.

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This is an indication that it is not a coincidence that we find the use of idioms and proverbs in African poetry as an important literary device. African poets, Xitsonga poets included, cannot divorce their writings from this inherited wisdom, which to them is like a tribal meeting place, which was the play-ground where skills in language use were learned, practiced and polished; where elders would proudly express themselves in figurative language which was a demonstration of their powerful command of language.

Therefore it is in literature, precisely in poetry, where idioms and proverbs, which are valuable language heritage, can be found and are still recognised. It is against this background that the study of the role played by idioms and proverbs in Xitsonga poetry is conducted; to show their role in poetry where they are used to bring out the theme of the poem, which is in turn bring out their vital role in society, both of which are irreplaceable.

Thus, the primary aim of this study is to indicate to contemporary language and literature students and readers that the role played by idioms and proverbs in Xitsonga literature is of utmost importance. As a result, it should not be allowed to be overridden by any social, technological and curriculum changes, but be preserved and allowed to flourish and be continuously popular as they used to be in the past.

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NKOMISO

Swivulavulelo na swivuriso, leswi vumbaka xiphemu xa nkoka xa ririmi ra Xitsonga na tin'wana tindzimi ta tikonkulu ra Afrika, swi tsariwile no hlengeletiwa etibukwini laha swi hlayisiweke kona. Leri i goza lerikulu eku hlayiseni ndzhaka leyi ya risima ya ririmi. Hambi swi ri tano a swi ringanangi tani hileswi swi nga swi kotiki ku titirhisa kumbe ku tihlaya. Swivuriso na switlhokovetselo i vutlhari lebyi kumekaka eka ririmi lebyi lavaka ku tshama byi ri karhi byi tirhisiwa ku endlela leswaku byi tikomba.

Swivuriso na swivulavulelo i nhlengelo wa ntokoto wa rixaka, lowu wun'wana wa wona wu nga hlengeletiwa hi ndlela yo vava. Ntokoto lowu wo hlawuleka no va wu suka eka rixaka rin'wana ku yisa eka leri landzelaka, wu hundzisiwa wa ha ri wuntshwa naswona wu ri ntiyiso. I ndlela ya nkoka eku dyondzeni ka vutomi bya vanhu. Swi kombisa hilaha vanhu va nga na vuxiyaxiya hakona; vutomi kumbe mahanyelo ya swiharhi na swinyenyani, na fambelo ra ntumbuluko hi ku angarhela na swona a swi hundzi swi nga xiyaxiyiwangi. Swi paluxa hi xiviri leswi vanhu va swi rhandzaka, na leswi va swi vengaka. Swi kombisa leswi vanhu va vonisaka xiswona vutomi, naswona swi nyika swixoperi swa mahanyelo ya vanhu leswi vanhu va nga xiswona. Leswi swi endla leswaku swi va switirho swa nkoka leswi nga tirhisiwaka eka vutlhokovetseri. Hikokwalaho ke, ndlela ya kahle yo hlayisa swivuriso na swivulavulelo, i vutlhokovetseri.

Ndzavisiso lowu wu kotile ku kombisa leswaku swivuriso na swivulavulelo swi tirhisiwa hi xitalo eka vutlhokovetseri ku humelerisa xikongomelonkulu xa mutlhokovetseri eka vutsari bya yena, leswi ku nga ku tsundzuxa, ku dyondzisa, ku tshinya kumbe ku ahlula xiphiqo xo karhi erixakeni leswi vanhu va faneleke ku hundziseriwa swona. Swivuriso na swivulavulelo i swikombiso swa vutlhari byo enta hi ririmi leri mutlhokovetseri a ri tirhisaka. Mutlhokovetseri u tirhisa swivuriso na switlhokovetselo ku nyanyula vayingiseri va yena loko a ri karhi a va byela hi swiyimo leswi va hlanganaka na swona eka vutomi bya vona bya siku na siku leswaku va hungateka va rivala hi tinxanixeko leti, ku nga leti va rhwexiwaka tona hi vutomi. Swivuriso na swivulavulelo swi pfuneta mutlhokovetseri ku tiyisisa leswaku u hundzisela hungu ra yena eka vahlayi va yena handle ko tikeriwa.

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Swikhavisaririmi leswi swi pfuneta mutlhokovetseri ku hundzisa hungu ra yena hi ku olova hikuva swivuriso na swivulavulelo i swikhavisaririmi leswi tivekaka swinene eka ririmi naswona swi fumbarherile ntiyiso wa vutomi lowu nga tsekatsekiki. Swa olova swinene ku hundzisa dyondzo ya mahanyelo hi ku tirhisa xivuriso kumbe xivulavulelo ku tlula hi ndlela yihi kumbe yihi. Leswi hi swona swi endlaka leswaku vatlhokovetseri va ririmi ra Xitsonga va tala ku tirhisa swivuriso na swivulavulelo tani hi xitirhisiwa xa nkoka swinene eka switlhokovetselo swa vona, leswi endlaka leswaku swi va switirho leswi fanelaka ku gongiwa.

Ndzavisiso lowu wu andlarile hi ku tsongola ndlela leyi vatlhokovetseri va tirhisaka hakona swivuriso na swivulavulelo eka matsalwa ya vona. Mhaka ya leswaku swivuriso na swivulavulelo i switirhisiwa swa nkoka ku humelerisa hungu ra mutsari hi ndlela ya risima no xonga loko swi tirhisiwa eka vutlhokovetseri, swi tihumelerisa hi ku olova eka switlhokovetselo leswi tshahiweke eka ndzavisiso lowu.

Hikokwalaho ke i swa nkoka swinene leswaku ndzavisiso wo tani hi lowu wu endliwa laha swidyondzi swa matsalwa swi lemukisiwaka leswaku va fanele ku hoxa xandla ku sivela ku mbombomela ka swivuriso na swivulavulelo eka ririmi ra Xitsonga. Ku na xilaveko xa laha vaphati na vatlhokovetseri va nga kotaka ku lemukisiwa hi ntirho wa risima lowu va wu endlaka erixakeni wa ku hlayisa ndzhaka ya mfuwo wa rixaka wa ririmi ra hina ra Xitsonga.

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SUMMARY

Idioms and proverbs, which form part of Xitsonga and other African languages, have been assembled and written into books where they are permanently stored. This is a great achievement as far as the preservation of these valuable language commodities is concerned. However this is not sufficient, as they may not use or read themselves. Idioms and proverbs are language wisdom which needs to be used regularly for their purpose to be realised.

Idioms and proverbs are a collection of the experiences of a people, some of which have been learned the hard way. Those experiences in this special manner, and from generation to generation, are passed on, ever fresh and ever true. They are a useful means of studying a people. They show how observant people are; so the habits of birds and animals, and the behaviour of nature in general, do not go unobserved. They reveal what it is that the people adore, and what they despise. They reveal what the people's outlook on life is, and provide the student of human nature an idea of the character of a people. This makes them a perfect tool to be used in poetry. So the best way of conserving idioms and proverbs is through poetry.

This study has shown that proverbs and idioms are often used in poetry to show the poet's intention for writing his/her poem, which is to advise, educate, warn or pass judgement about a social problem which people need to take note of. Idioms are symbols of the poet's extra knowledge about the language he or she uses. The poet uses idioms and proverbs to appease his/her listeners about daily situations they encounter; so that they may forget about these harsh realities of life. Idioms and proverbs assist the poet in making sure that the message they are conveying to their readership is understood with little difficulty.

These expressions assist the poet to convey his/her message with ease because idioms and proverbs are well-known expressions and contain universal truth. It is easy to give a lesson of life through an idiom or a proverb than any other means. This is why Xitsonga poets use idioms and proverbs as an important instrument in most of their poems, making it a perfect tool to conserve them.

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The study provided a brief overview of how poets use idioms and proverbs in their writings. The fact that idioms and proverbs are important literary devices which can pass messages with much aesthetic and beauty when used in poetry could be deduced from the examples given in the study.

It is therefore necessary for a study of this nature to be conducted where students of literature are made aware that they need to prevent the demise of idioms and proverbs in Xitsonga language. There was a need for a platform where poets will be made aware that they are playing a vital role in preserving our most precious language heritage.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Poetry has occupied a central place in the life of both traditional African and contemporary societies. Praise singers, drummers, priests, hunters, masquerades, all had to recite and invent poetry. Family rites connected to birth, marriage or death, the installations of chiefs or religious festivals alike, are all occasions suited for the recitation of poetry. Equally important is perhaps the poetry of everyday life. Man cannot survive without poetry.

As poetry plays a vital role in human race, so do idioms and proverbs. Without this acquired heritage, a nation is destined to fail its social responsibility of raising a wise and responsible future generation. Idioms and proverbs can be used as an important instrument for bringing out the main themes of poems, which are valuable lessons in everyday life situations.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Proverbs and idioms are some of the most important aspects of African culture, and, for the purpose of this study, the Xitsonga culture. There is a decrease in the use of proverbs and idioms in conversations among the speakers of Xitsonga. This is evident in classrooms when learners are often asked to provide the types of figurative language used in a particular poem. This is supposed to be an easy task, as idioms and proverbs are easily identifiable. The learners' main problem is failure to identify idioms and proverbs used in different poems, which consequently means failure in understanding the theme of the whole poem. This is an indication that learners are not familiar with idioms and proverbs and their

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usage. This suggests that learners are not taught the different proverbs and idioms as it used to be done.

There are various reasons for this; main one being technological advancement in people's lives. Children spend most of their time watching television, where they are mostly exposed to languages which are not their own. They get used to these languages more than their own. They then have little contact with their own languages. The status given to Xitsonga language in our society also creates a problem, where it is regarded as an inferior language. The problem created therefore is that children are no longer proud of their own language and are not interested in studying it. As a result, the most valuable language assets are disappearing.

The current trend in families is that children are no longer living with their grandparents but are raised in small families constituted only by their parents, sometimes a single parent. Children are no longer exposed to the language of their grandparents. In the olden days, grandparents were regarded as custodians of language treasures capped in their figurative language use. These days they are left alone or taken to old-age homes. When they die, they are buried with their inherited knowledge and wisdom which was supposed to be passed on to their grandchildren who are the future generations.

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Elders also, due to illiteracy, tend to part ways with their own language and adopt the language of the youth. This makes Xitsonga to be left behind, becoming a ghost language whose speakers are part-time visitors of their own mother tongue.

In schools, the use of vernacular languages is also discouraged. English is often used as the medium of instruction as well as the language of learning. African languages are treated with little respect. Bursaries are awarded to those learners who excel in other subjects excluding home languages. This makes the use of

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African languages unpopular. This will eventually result in the death of indigenous wisdom and heritance. All these contribute to the disappearance of Xitsonga idioms and proverbs, which are the cream of oral literature inheritance. This is what makes this study worth conducting. Therefore, the study will enlighten researchers about the value of oral wisdom in indigenous languages, particularly in literature.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions which this study seeks to answer are the following: What makes Xitsonga writers use mostly idioms and proverbs in their literature, poetry in particular? Do idioms and proverbs play a role in bringing out the theme of the poem, which in turn is a means of educating and guiding the younger generation? Other questions to be addressed in this study will be the following:

1.3.1 What other roles do proverbs and idioms play in Xitsonga poetry?

1.3.2 Do idioms and proverbs still have value in the society?

1.3.3 How can a poet use these assets of language heritage effectively?

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim of the research

The aim of this study is to highlight the fact that poetry uses idioms and proverbs to bring out its underlying message. It also aims to investigate the role played by idioms and proverbs in bringing out the different themes in poetry. The study also seeks to show that poetry can be used as an important instrument for communicating some new experiences, provide fresh understanding, or to express something which has been experienced. Poetry enlarges people's consciousness or refines their sensibility. It also takes care of their vitality and pulsating life.

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1.4.2 Specific objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To highlight the fact that idioms and proverbs can be used to bring out the meaning of a poem.
- To make poets aware that by using idioms and proverbs in their writing they make it easy for readers to understand their poems.
- To provide a brief overview of how poets use idioms and proverbs in their writings to enhance their themes.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will unravel the fact that themes in poetry can easily be brought out by the use of idioms and proverbs. The study will alert writers, poets in particular, of the value of idioms and proverbs as an inherited wisdom of our forefathers.

1.6 DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following key terms will be frequently used in this study. It is of utmost importance to understand their meanings so as to understand their relationship and relevance in this study:

1.6.1 Literature

The concept literature is difficult to define. Therefore, finding a suitable definition for it is not easy. Literature can be defined in different ways, depending on whether the speaker or writer is for or against a certain work to be considered as literature. Therefore, attempts by many scholars to provide a clear definition of this term have proved to be a mammoth task. This is evident in the definition given by Cuddon (1977:545) where he states that:

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> Literature is a vague term which usually denotes works which belong to the major genres: epic, drama, lyric, novel, short story, and ode. If we describe something as 'literature', as opposed to anything else, the term carries with it qualitative connotations which imply that the work in question has superior qualities; that it is well above the ordinary run of written works.

The word 'vague' literary means that the term can be used to mean different things. In other words, the word can have many unrelated meanings. In this definition it is apparent that Cuddon is against the idea that the word literature be limited to refer to those writings which belong to a specific genre. These concerns are also voiced by Fowler (1987:134) where he defines literature as:

> ... the body of writings in a language, artistic or not; and particularly, the study of such a corpus of written materials.

Fowler (1987:134) is of the opinion that anything which is written can be referred to as literature. Although this seems to be a more reasonable argument, it would not be possible to refer to anything which is written down as literature. It is therefore important to have a clearer definition. *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1978:611) defines literature as "... written works which are of artistic value". This definition clearly indicates that literature refers to those pieces of writing wherein artistic skills have been applied.

The matter of artistic value is also highlighted by Beckson and Ganz (1990:145) who defines literature as:

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> Such genres as the novel, the short story, the epic poem, the lyric, and the play clearly fall within the boundaries of literature; as embodiments of some of man's feelings and thoughts, they are experiences shaped into aesthetic forms.

A similar view is expressed by Ruse and Hopton (1992:168) who define it as written works, including novels, essays, drama, verse, and biographies, especially those considered to be of high standard. Literature can also refer to works from a particular area or in a particular language or for a particular subject, for example, African Literature. Baldick (1990:156) provides the following definition of literature:

> ... a body of written works related by subject-matter (e.g. the literature of computing), by language or place of origin; or by prevailing cultural standards of merit. ... Literature is taken to include oral dramatic and broadcast compositions that may not have been published in written form but which have been preserved.

He also states the following in addition to his definition, which includes the fact that literature should be something that is valuable and needs to be preserved, also as that body of works which for whatever reason, deserves to be preserved as part of the current reproduction of meanings within a given culture.

The last definition gives a clear explanation of the fact that even if the work of art is not written down, if it has some significant role in a culture, and warrants to be preserved, it can also be regarded as literature. Literature is, therefore, anything which is of artistic value, which is preserved, whether it is passed from one generation to another orally or preserved in written codes, which can be used by

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a certain culture to preserve its human life experiences. That is why Njabulo Ndebele, when asked what role he believes literature should play in the country in the "*Future in Exchanges: South African Writing in Transition*" by Brown and Van Dyk (1991:56), he answered by saying the following:

> The role of literature will be to make us conscious of the multiplicity and complexity of human experience. It is unlike other art forms. In music, when you like a story, you experience a sense of well-being which you cannot easily articulate. But in literature the attempt is made to bring out everything explicitly. We are therefore made more conscious through language of the way we can interact with one another. I think that is the function of literature.

It is in this response that one begins to understand that literature to Ndebele, is not just words which are written down, but also those that can be used to relate the experiences of human nature, which includes those experiences narrated in oral literature, what has come to be known as oratory. Dikobe wa Mogale, when asked the very same question, replied by saying that:

> Literature is a story of knowledge, and source of light and serious reading material, will always, in my view, play an important role in the future of South Africa.

It is against this background that one can conclude that literature is any human composition either written down or orally presented which records human experiences through the passage of time in oral or written form. In this respect, it is also important to define what oral literature is.

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1.6.2 Oral literature

Oral literature is as old as the origin of human beings. From time immemorial, man has struggled to understand his own environment and the skills and knowledge acquired through this endeavour has been passed on from one generation to another through the word of mouth, which is called oral literature. Human society relies on the experience of its older members as the foundation on which to build what is new. Since the birth of the human race, our unique ability to pass on our knowledge of the world, our experience in life and our achievements to our offspring has enabled our species not only to survive but to prosper. Milubi (1997:05) states the following in this regard:

> African oral tradition has always been part and parcel of the traditional man. It was composed of the following established formal ingredients: myths, fables, legends, folk-tales, riddles, proverbs and praise poetry.

Ruse and Hopton (1992:205-206) describe oral literature as follows:

> ... is spoken and not written down. It developed before literature and was being passed from one community to another by travelling peddlers, singers and reciters, or passed down from one generation to the next. Obviously, each story, poem or song went through many changes since there was no fixed form and the imagination and skill of the actor or singer had an enormous influence on the script.

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The issue of using the mouth to pass messages from one generation to another is further stressed by Milubi (1997:01) who states that, it is important to show that traditional poetry was handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth, and that it took the form of praise poetry. He further emphasises this by saying:

> In Venda oral tradition, as in any African oral tradition, there has never been a compartmentalization of poetry as a genre distinct from other genres. Myths, legends, folk-tales, proverbs, riddles, children's rhymes and lullabies, as well as songs, formed a coherent part of Venda oral tradition. Most of the children's rhymes, songs and lullabies make use of myths, legends, folk-tales, riddles and proverbs as their point of departure. This is also the case with praise poetry, where use is made of forms such as proverbs.

Vail and White (1991:132) citing Axtell James, from the "*Study of European Relations with Native Americans in the Colonial Era*", state that:

> An oral culture is intensely communal... knowledge and truth are not an individual matter so much as a corporate possession. Accordingly, oral man psychologically faces outward, toward community from which he derives the meaning and veracity of his thoughts: to break with social values is to feel the shame of popular disapproval.

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They also emphasise that oral literature is owned by the whole society or community, not by an individual. Oral literature is therefore literature which is narrated orally with the aim of passing accumulated communal wisdom which has to be stored and learned by future generations for their meaningful survival. It has so much vitality. Therefore, not only does it survive in ritual or traditional social contexts, but it also finds itself new motives and new functions. Because poetry occupies a central point in oral literature, one will have to define it before one can define any other oral form.

1.6.3 Poetry

Poetry is a literary genre which identifies itself by its structure, which is in verse form and mostly composed by condensed sentences of rhythmic and rhyming nature. Shipley (1960:312) defines poetry as:

> Any composition in verse (and none that is not) is always called, whether good or bad, a poem, by all who have no favourite hypothesis to maintain.

Pei and Gaynor (1954:171) also define poetry as: "A composition in rhythmical and metrical form, with or without rhymes". In their definition, it is clear that it is not the issue of meter and rhyme alone, which qualifies any written piece to be poetry; rather, it is the aim of their use, which is to excite the reader's imagination, which is brought about by the writer's use of figurative language. This fact is also supported by Jones (1991:155) who states that:

> Poetry has the ability to communicate "some new experience, or some fresh understanding of the familiar, or the expression of something we have experienced but have no words, which enlarges our

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> consciousness or refines our sensibility, takes care of its vitality and pulsating life.

Poetry is therefore a literary composition that uses metrical form and communicates strong emotions in an imaginative way, often with the arrangement of vocabulary in line with special patterns. It is a work of art which is filled with imagery and a range of figures of speech, with vocabulary selected for rhythm and connotation, which serves to affect the reader's imagination, with sincere personal expression, with the aim of entertaining and enlightening those who are down. As indicated above, poetry uses figurative language which is rich in proverbs, idioms, riddles, rhyme, rhythm and imagery. It is, therefore, imperative to give a clear definition of proverbs and idioms.

1.6.4 Proverbs

Proverbs are an African oral tradition that has always been part of the traditional man. Ruse and Hopton (1991:238) define proverbs as follows:

> A short saying that expresses concisely a general truth or observation about life; it cannot usually be attributed to a particular author having been passed down into the language from oral tradition. Proverbs usually give advice, hope or a warning, and are often characterized by alliteration or internal rhymes.

Cuddon (1977:725) provides the following definition of a proverb:

> ... a short pithy saying which embodies a general truth. It is related in form and content to the maxim and the aphorism. Common to most nations and

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> peoples, it is a form of expression of great antiquity. Many writers have made use of them.

This is also supported by Shipley (1960:327-328) who states that:

> ... is a gnomic form of folk literature, a short pregnant criticism of life, based upon common experience, e.g. (Bible) the Book of Proverbs. Quite generally the product of the popular mind, it was important as reflecting prevalent attitudes. In Greek, and Rome, it often served as a vehicle of literature and dramatic criticism. In longer works it brought vividness, colour, by compression and boldness of imagery.

The issue of gnomic form, which means a kind of fairy in a shape of a little old man in a pointed hat, comes along because it is not known who first came up with the proverb. It is something which is as old as mankind.

Guma (1967:02) quotes the definition given in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, which defines a proverb as a short pithy saying in general use. Proverbs are distilled words of wisdom in which the accumulated experience of the ages is perpetually enshrined. The structure of a proverb is described by the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1978:834) as: "A short well-known, supposedly wise, saying usually in simple language". This is true about of proverbs. It is short and usually in simple language for anybody to understand. This is because a proverb is coined to advise, educate and teach.

A proverb is a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. It serves to express "some homely truth" or moral lesson in such an appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words could have been used to describe the particular situation. According to Guma (1967:02), various proverbs apply to various

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situations, and are an embodiment of the distilled and collective experience of the community on such situations. Individually and as a group, they have certain basic characteristics that run through them all. These may be listed as follows:

(a) They all have fixed and rigid form to which they adhere at all times and which is not changeable.

(b) Some are didactic and teach a lesson by expressing a moral or moral ideal which is not particularly difficult in attainment but which is rather a summing up of everyday experience in getting on in the world as it is.

(c) Others are practical in significance, and suggest a course of action to be followed in a given situation. In some cases, they may be said to pass a judgement on a particular situation.

(d) They are figurative; employ various structural forms such as contrast and parallelism, rhythm and alliteration, as well as balance.

(e) For them to be firmly established in any language, they must have general acceptance by the community whose collective wit and wisdom they represent.

In their range and scope, proverbs cover a wide field. They extend over all the areas of the community's activities and daily pursuits. They reflect its attitude to other people, as well as their sense of justice, their physical environment, as well as their plants and animals, including their characteristics. They also reflect the relations between members of a single household and extend from there to cover the tribe as a whole. They mirror the relations between the chief and the tribe,

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and vice versa, and bring out the traditional role of cattle in marriage, and the upbringing of children. The striking thing here, as in riddles, is that they are all concerned with those things that the people know in their daily lives, and not with things that fall outside the scope of their experience.

Proverbs on the other hand, are based on a noun in primary function or on a subject concord. In view of this, idioms never have a regular subject of their own; they may be used with all types of subjects, depending on what the speaker wants to say.

1.6.5 Idioms

Idioms are characteristic indigenous expressions whose meanings cannot be ordinarily deduced or inferred from knowledge of the individual words that make them up. They are native to a language, and have the stylistic effect of giving it a typical native ring that is characteristic of its mode of expression. Baldick (1990:106) defines an idiom as:

> A phrase or grammatical construction that cannot be translated literally into another language because its meaning is not equivalent to that of its component words. By extension, the term is sometimes applied more loosely to any style or manner of writing that is characteristic of a particular group or movement.

Trask (1997:109) defines an idiom as: "... an expression whose meaning cannot be straight-forwardly guessed from the meanings of the words in it". *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1978:517) defines an idiom as: "... a phrase which means something different from the meaning of the separate words from which it is formed". Ruse and Hopton (1992:145) provide the following as a definition of an idiom:

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> ... an expression with a meaning that is different from the meanings of the individual words. The meaning of an idiom has to be learned as a set of words. The usage of a language that is correct and natural to people who speak it as their first language.

Pei and Gaynor, (1954:95) define an idiom as any expression peculiar to a language conveying a distinct meaning and occasionally even contrary to the general accepted grammatical rules. Ntsan'wisi, (1968:xi) states that idioms have long been recognised as constructions peculiar to a language, which cannot be literally translated into another, and the meanings of which cannot be gathered from their component parts. These expressions are vigorous, graphic and natural, and they add beauty and effect to both the spoken and written forms of language. He further added that writing which is almost destitute of idioms very often gives an impression of flatness. Guma (1967:66) describes the structure of idioms as follows:

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> Unlike proverbs, idioms do not have a fixed and regular form to which they adhere at all times. They are changeable and are seldom, if ever, used in their basic form. They are based on a predicate, which is built on a particular verb stem and which may be found associated with a large number of idioms.

Guma indicates that the main difference between an idiom and a proverb lies in their functions. He further indicates that idioms are never didactic, and never teach any moral lesson. Neither do they ever express any fundamental truth or wisdom with a general bearing on life. Rather, they are witty and humorous expressions which are connected with a particular phrase, but which are not as staid and dignified as proverbs. Some proverbs are a bare statement of fact, and

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thus call a spade a spade. What Guma (ibid) says is supported by Rikhotso (1996:104) who only indicates that idioms are used by the young and old in their conversation. He does not provide their functions, except to say that they are used in conversations. Rikhotso (1996:104) states that:

> Ntirho wa swivulavulelo wa yelana ni wa swivuriso. Vakokwa wa hina va tirhisile swirho swa miri, swiharhi ni swiendlo swa vanhu ku tshula swivulavulelo. Swivulavulelo swi tirhisiwa hi lavantshwa ni lavankulu loko va vulavula.

Rikhotso states that the functions of idioms are nearly the same as those of proverbs. Our forefathers used body parts, animals, and bodily actions to construct idioms. Idioms are used by the young and old when they talk to each other. An idiomatic expression or an idiom is an expression which has a distinct, specific meaning of its own, often incompatible with or even contrary to the individual meanings of the words which compose it.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

An essential step in any research project is the literature review. The function of literature review is to provide background information on the research question, and to identify what others have said and/ or discovered about the question. This view is supported by Simpson J.A. (1989:114) in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, where he defines research, by saying:

> Research is 'study and investigation, esp. to discover new facts', 'to search into (a matter or subject) to investigate or study closely aimed at discovery and interpretation of new facts' and "to search again".

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For a research to be acceptable there must be searching or investigation again on the same work or a close study of it again. This is what this research is all about. The issue of culture, poetry, idioms and proverbs has been researched many years ago. Many studies have been conducted in these topics but a search again as mentioned by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989:114) is vital in order for one to discover and interpret new facts about it.

Another aim of literature review is to identify if there exists a gap on the studies done before which have been left through lack of interest or information, which may assist scholars in the said study. This view is in line with the aim of this research. This study seeks to close the gap left out by prior studies on the use of idioms and proverbs in literature, particularly in poetry.

The following scholars did some research. In the research idioms, proverbs and proverbial phrases were discussed in one way or another:

1.7.1 Khuba, A.E. 1985: The Proverbs as a Mirror of the Vhavenda Culture and Philosophy

The scope of her dissertation revolves around the Luvenda proverbs, emphasising their practical lessons of life which was gained through experience. Her main aim was to see how far the Luvenda proverbs act as guidance towards good living and a deterrent towards deviant behaviour, which is punishable. This is one of the major roles played by proverbs in the Venda society.

It also showed the medicinal matrix of the Vhavenda, through some of the proverbs, as well as the harmonious relationship between the doctor and members of the family. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the moral character of the Luvenda proverbs contributes to the well-ordered society. She also divided proverbs into categories of advisory proverbs that cater for the moral side of the

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Vhavenda's way of life; proverbs that depict bravery and industriousness amongst the Vhavenda as a tribe; proverbs used in the administrative and family life; and proverbs relating human nature.

Khuba's study also delved into the proverbial value of the Luvenda proverbs, which does not only lie in what it reveals about the thoughts of the past, but in the fact that it is also a model of compressed or forceful language. It includes the fact that in the Vhavenda culture, a feeling for language, imagery and expression of abstract ideas comes out in proverbs through compressed and allusive phraseology.

The objective of the research also included the discerning of generalisations about animals implying a command on human affairs, as well as the bringing out of literary significance of proverbs in Luvenda by their close relationship to other forms of oral literature.

The difference between this study and the one conducted by Khuba is that the later dwelled much on the role of idioms in the Vhavenda society, whereas the present study will focus on the role of idioms in literature, Xitsonga poetry in particular. Although the role played by idioms in society will be discussed, the study's point of departure will be poetry, where their role will be discussed through their value in bringing out a particular theme of a poem, which will be a lesson in real life situations.

1.7.2 Selokela, M.R. 2003: Treatment of Idioms and Proverbial Expressions in the Northern Sotho Dictionaries: An Exploratory Study

The study showed how idiomatic and proverbial expressions could be lemmatised in a special Northern Sotho monolingual dictionary. It focused on how idioms and proverbs could be presented as independent macro-structural

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elements in a dictionary, where special attention was given to the accessibility of semantic information regarding these fixed expressions. This study will vary from the one done by Selokela in the fact that it will focus on idioms and proverbs in poetry not in a dictionary.

1.7.3 Ntsan'wisi, H.W.E. 1965: The Idiom in Tsonga – A Descriptive Study

The study concerns itself with idioms as a particular class of expressions found in Tsonga, a Bantu Language of the South-Eastern Zone, spoken in the Republic of South Africa and Mozambique, by a community of two million people. Most of the expressions in this study, however, are those used by the Tsonga people who inhabit the North and Eastern Transvaal (Limpopo and Mpumalanga) areas in the Republic of South Africa.

The aim of the study was to define and identify the idioms in Tsonga. It also aimed at explaining the origin of Tsonga Idioms. Another role was to discuss the incidence of figures of speech and to describe the different patterns of idioms formation. It also sought to outline the content of Tsonga idioms and to provide students of Xitsonga with a systematic list of idioms in general use together with their meanings.

The study conducted by Ntsan'wisi focused on the collection of idioms and proverbs. This study will use Ntsan'wisi's collection to show how idioms and proverbs are used in Xitsonga poetry as a vehicle to bring out the intended themes of a poem.

1.7.4 Chauke, O.R. 2004: The Xitsonga Songs: A Sociolinguistic Study

In this study Chauke examined the structure of Xitsonga songs and the way different parts of the Xitsonga songs are fitted together to form a whole. He indicated that there are two types of structures in the song, viz, external structure

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that deals with the external shape of the material that a poet uses such as stanza division, repetition, rhyme, rhythm, linking and elision, and internal structure that deals with irony, euphemism, hyperbole, simile, idioms and proverbs.

Chauke's study differs from the present study in the sense that Chauke dealt mainly with songs. Idioms and proverbs were only mentioned as they are also used in traditional songs. Songs and poetry are very much alike as a result by studying songs, one also comes across idioms and proverbs as they used in those songs like in poetry.

1.7.5 Mathumba, I. 1979: Form and Content of the Proverb in Tsonga

Mathumba indicated that the study of proverbs can be approached from various angles. One may engage in an investigation of the philosophy of proverbs, or the style and kinds of proverbs, or proverbs in folklore and other lore's, or the use and function of proverbs, or any of the many different facets.

In his study he attempted to explore those two facets of the proverb in Xitsonga; namely, its form and content. He did not undertake an in-depth study of the two facets as this was not possible, given the nature of the article. He also referred to the use of proverbs in so far as this was to help to shed light on the form or content of this genre of oral literature. In his discussion he also endeavoured to show why proverbs assumed the form they have in Xitsonga, and also analysed their content to determine how far and in what way they reflect the philosophy of life of the Xitsonga people.

Another study conducted by Mathumba focused on the structure of proverbs, but not in their role in poetry. Therefore, it does not include their role in poetry. This study has left a gap in the sense that it only deals with the form not in their role. This is where the current study comes in, to add the role played by proverbs in society through their utilisation in literature, poetry in particular.

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1.7.6 Maja, M.D. 1984: The Classification of Northern Sotho Proverbs According to their Didactic Value

This study was based on the collection which he found in Northern Sotho books and partly on proverbs which he collected himself through verbal transmission with elderly people and the young ones as well. The main aim of this research was to try and classify the Northern Sotho proverbs, not in alphabetical order, but according to their didactic value. The didactic value also embraced the situation in which they are employed.

The present study will take a different direction to the one taken by Maja in the sense that it will not only focus on the role of proverbs, but also idioms. The study was a collection of proverbs, which differs greatly to the present one, which focuses on idioms and proverbs as used in poems by different poets to bring out the theme of their poems.

1.7.7 Mashabela, K.C. 1984: The Influence of Folklore on Northern Sotho Literature

The study is about the influence of traditional folklore on Northern Sotho literature. It is concerned with the way in which folklore impacts structure, themes and characterisation in Northern Sotho literature. The study does not address itself to literature on a continental level, but addresses itself to only one facet, that is Northern Sotho literature. The nature of folklore is examined to show their correlation as far as structure, theme, form, content, function and technique are concerned.

These two studies are different in the sense that Mashabela's study is based on folklore whereas the present study will focus on poetry. Idioms and proverbs will be studied as they are used in poems.

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1.7.8 Milubi, N.A. 1997: Aspects of Venda Poetry

In his research, Milubi highlighted the fact that traditional poetry was handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth, and that it took the form of praise poetry. The study is about Venda oral poetry which is the foundation of poetry in Venda. He also indicated that traditional oral literature includes most of the children's rhymes and lullabies, as well as songs, and formed a coherent part of Venda oral tradition. Most of the children's rhymes, songs and lullabies make use of myths, legends, folk-tales, riddles and proverbs as their point of departure. He also indicated that praise poetry also uses forms such as proverbs.

Riddles and proverbs also formed part of African oral tradition. Proverbs have a moral purpose while riddles are meant to encourage mental alertness. Myths, fables, legends, folktales, riddles and proverbs make up a veritable treasure of African oral tradition and form a coherent entity comprising the whole of Venda life and its world view. These aspects of oral tradition form a tangible background to poetry.

Milubi's study is different to the present one in the sense that its point of departure is the importance of oral tradition in oral poetry, whereas this study will focus on idioms and proverbs as a genre of oral tradition.

1.7.9 Makhado, A.S. 1988: The Venda Idioms - A Descriptive Study

In his study, Makhado dealt with the definition, origin and classification of idioms. He indicated the fact that Venda idioms have been recognised and used orally by Venda speaking people for a long time. Some Venda collectors of idioms have provided lists of idioms and their meanings. The aim of the study was to show the cultural value of Venda idioms.

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Both these studies deal with idioms but from different perspectives. They differ in the sense that Makhado's study focused on classification of idioms whereas the present study will deal with their role in Xitsonga poetry.

1.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.8.1 Research Methodology

Research methods precisely refer to the research techniques or tools used to gather data. These are a range of approaches used in research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction. Methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data-gathering. Methodology means the philosophy of the research process. This includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research and the standards or criteria the researcher uses for interpreting data and reaching conclusions.

Qualitative researchers try to achieve an insider's view by talking to subjects or observing their behaviour in a subjective way. They believe that first-hand experience of the object under investigation produces the best data. Qualitative researchers work with the dynamic and changeable nature of reality. They make use of a holistic approach, that is, they collect a wide array of data, in the form of documents, record, photos etc.

In this study, the researcher wants to describe a given setting which is the utilisation of proverbs and idioms in literature, in poetry to be precise. Therefore, qualitative research method is the most appropriate method of data gathering in this study as qualitative research seeks primarily to describe a situation as it is, without formal testing of a hypothesis. The information which will be used by the researcher as supportive ideas and examples will be regarded as the sole truth without any formal testing of their reliability or any form of formal validity. This

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study as a social research attempts to make sense of our social life. A social research is used for the purpose of understanding social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the action which they take within that reality, and requires no statistical proof. The qualitative method of data collection and gathering will therefore be applied.

This research will be conducted through textual data collection, where examples of the role played by idioms, proverbs, idiomatic expressions and proverbial phrases in poetry will be extracted from various Xitsonga Poetry books. These literary works will form part of the primary sources, which are provided by the Xitsonga poets who are the custodians of the Xitsonga language and culture. Secondary sources, such as dissertations, journals and newspaper articles, will also be used where necessary. Literary criticism as a style of literature analysis will be conducted.

The utilisation of idioms and proverbs in poetry will be analysed to provide sufficient detail for the results to be taken as true, correct, complete and believable reports experiences. Because of this, there will be no need to test the validity and reliability of the data or information gathered. This is the main reason why qualitative research method will be the main method to be used in this research. This research will try to expand on what other authorities or researchers have already done. However it will form the foundation of other studies to be conducted on idioms and proverbs in literature.

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1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.9.1 Study Design

A research design is a plan to be followed to realise the research objectives or hypotheses. It represents the master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the required information. The study is based primarily on Xitsonga poems, how the poets use proverbs and idioms in their writing. Each poem will be scrutinised using the textual, contextual, biographical and generic approaches, bringing out the various themes of these poems.

The aim is to assess each poem to motivate the fact that idioms and proverbs are mostly used in poetry writing and reading as a tool to bring out the theme of the poem with ease and without any difficulty. Poems will be systematically analysed so that the messages can be brought out for the reader to realise and understand the subject and context within which the poetry is back-grounded. Furthermore, these poems will be analysed within the framework of existing literary theory. Critical texts procured in academic and public libraries will be consulted as important sources of critical information.

1.9.2 Sampling and Sampling Methods

1.9.2.1 Data Collection Strategies

Data will be collected from primary sources: *Mbita ya Nsuku*- Nxumalo W.S and Maluleke N.J; *Vutomi byi Hundzulerile* - Malungana S.J. and Babane M.T.; *Dyanani, Ndzhaku i marhambu* - Mkhari G.O; *Mkon'wana wa fika* - Marolen D.P.P.; *Ntswamba ni Vulombe* - Malungana M. and Ngobeni R; *Xikolokolo nguvu ya Pitori* - Magaisa M.J.; *Ndzumba wa Afrika 2* - Malungana S.J. and *Switshongo swa Vatsonga* - Baloyi M.J.; which are the eight books selected for analysis, and

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secondary sources, which are other books which are relevant to this study. Other sources will include unpublished and published materials such as journals, honours papers, dissertations and theses.

1.9.2.2 Data Analysis

Every poem will be intensively analysed so that readers can easily understand the theme and subject matter. Idioms and proverbs used in these poems will be extracted and analysed as examples of how they are used in Xitsonga poetry. Their role will also be discussed in relation to the poem's theme and their role in society.

1.9.2.3 Ethical Considerations

The ethical, legality and privacy of the sources used in the study will be taken into account and will be treated with the respect they deserve. Any material which will be used will be acknowledged.

1.10 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

1.10.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one, will look at the aim and motivation of the study. An explanation of key concepts to be used in the study will also be provided. A review of literature by other scholars in the field will also be dealt with, as well as the methodology and research design which will be employed in undertaking the study.

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1.10.2 Chapter 2: Identification of proverbs, Idioms, Proverbial phrases and idiomatic expressions in eight selected poetry books

Chapter two will deal with the different poems in which idioms, proverbs and proverbial phrases have been used. Idioms and proverbs will be highlighted, showing the different meaning they bring into the poem and the role they play in bringing out the intended meaning and lessons of life. Poems from the following books will be analysed:

1. *Mbita ya Nsuku* - Nxumalo W.S and Maluleke N.J.
2. *Vutomi byi Hundzulerile* - Malungana S.J and Babane M.T.
3. *Dyanani, Ndzhaku i marhambu* - Mkhari G.O.
4. *Mkon'wana wa fika* - Marolen D.P.P.
5. *Ntswamba ni Vulombe* - Malungana M. and Ngobeni R.
6. *Xikolokolo nguvu ya Pitori* - Magaisa M.J.
7. *Ndzumba wa Afrika 2* - Malungana S.J.
8. *Switshongo swa Vatsonga* - Baloyi M.J.

1.10.3 Chapter 3: Analysis of proverbs, idioms, proverbial phrases and idiomatic expressions in Xitsonga poems

Chapter three provides the uses of idioms and proverbs found in the selected poetry in society; namely that they are didactic and teach lessons of life by expressing a moral or moral ideal which is not particularly difficult to attain, but which is rather a summing up of everyday experience in getting on in the world as it is.Others are practical in significance, and suggest a course of action to be followed in a given situation. In some cases, they may be said to pass a judgement on a particular situation. These will be analysed. Proverbs, idioms, proverbial phrases and idiomatic expressions used in bringing out the themes of poems

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1.10.4 Chapter 4: Proverbs, idioms, proverbial phrases and idiomatic expressions used in bringing out the themes of poems

Chapter four will deal with the role played by the use of idioms and proverbs in Xitsonga poetry. It will highlight the fact that Xitsonga poetry uses idioms and proverbs to bring out the theme of the poem which would have been evident in the analysis of poems from the anthologies mentioned in chapter two and which would have been done in chapter three.

1.10.3 Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

Chapter five will provide the conclusion, where all the research findings will be summarised and recommendations for further research will be indicated.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Poetry forms part of the Xitsonga and other African languages because they have been recited, assembled and written into books where they are permanently stored. Idioms and proverbs are language wisdom which needs to be used regularly for their purpose to be realised. They are an important literary device used in poetry. Their value lies in the fact that they are used by poets to bring out their poem's intended message and theme with ease.

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It is through their everyday usage in which their role in the society can be realised. Poetry provides a platform where poets play a vital role in preserving these most precious language heritance and to encourage them to keep their good work. The study provides a brief overview of how poets use idioms and proverbs in their writings to bring out the themes of their poetry. It is a study where the general Xitsonga speaking community will be made aware of the didactical value of idioms and proverbs which is realised through their use in poetry.

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CHAPTER TWO

2. IDENTIFICATION OF PROVERBS, IDIOMS, PROVERBIAL PHRASES AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN EIGHT SELECTED POETRY BOOKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional African societies have always had their professional poets, of course nothing is absolutely fixed, or determined, and everybody was free to add new lines to known songs and poems to suit his/her own circumstances. However, they are not set apart from the community in the way the modern European poet is. They have not lived in isolation, composing for only a handful of people. Their creations became common property immediately. Others take them up, change and modify them but nobody claims authorship.

Poets, Xitsonga poets included, use idioms and proverbs as an important instrument in their poems to convey the message they want to pass to hearers or readers of their poems. Idioms and proverbs are important literary devices which can pass messages with much aesthetics and beauty when used in poetry, idioms and proverbs assist the poet in making sure that the message they intend to pass to the readership is understood with little difficulty as they are well-known sayings within a given language.

The use of idioms and proverbs in literature, poetry in particular, is not by coincidence but by design. For a poem to be regarded as a good poem, it has to convey a particular lesson of life. Proverbs are effective instruments in passing these lessons as they convey general truths about life lessons learned by a nation through the passage of time. It is because of this that we find most poems in the Xitsonga language contain many proverbs. This is why literature, poetry to

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be precise, can be regarded as the most effective tool through which idioms and proverbs can be preserved.

2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF IDIOMS AND PROVERBS IN SELECTED XITSONGA POEMS

The following are some of the selected poems in Xitsonga literary work which can be used as evidence that most poetry uses idioms, idiomatic expressions, proverbs and proverbial phrases to convey their intended message and lessons of life.

(a) Nxumalo W.S. and Maluleke N.J. - *Mbita ya Nsuku*

1. Kuwa ro tshwuka - Chauke, M.O.

1. Lowu wu hundza na vito nkuwa,
2. Un'wana na un'wana wa ri lava,
3. Vanhu ku ri vona va wela.
4. Hambi wo tikhoma ra ku koka leswaku u ri kha,
5. Hambi u nga ri lavi u ta ri kha,
6. **Kambe kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni.**

7. Loko wo ri ncakunya swi boha u ri mita,
8. Loko wo ri khoma u ta kokeka rinoko.
9. Ku ri kha ntsena u ta ri dya,
10. Ri kombe meno u ta halaka hinkwaswo.
11. Hambi lolo ra khandziya nsinya ku ya ri kha,
12. **Mpingu va ringetela emakatleni.**

13. Phela loko u ri vona a wu nga xi voni xivungu,

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14. Phela ri ta ku hundzula phuphula.
15. Ku nandziha ka rona swa chavisa,
16. Kambe kuwa ro tshwuka i rimpfana,
17. U ta tisola u sayinile ekhoto,
18. U ta tisola u ri khojetile.

This poem is a warning to all men to be careful of promiscous women who, because of their external beauty, attract every man around but only to use them. They suck all their belongings and when they are left with nothing, they dump them for other men. The poet gave this poem the topic "kuwa ro tshwuka", which is a phrase from the proverb "kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni", which literaly translates to "A ripe fig contains a worm", because he compares these women to a fig which because of its yellow to red colour and its sweetness, attracts all sort of animals, birds and egg laying insects.

Because of this attractive colour, people tend to forget that inside these figs one might find worms. Generally it is those ripe figs which often have worms. Likewise, it is these very beautiful, light skinned women who attract most men but they are also the most likely to be promiscous.

The poet again used proverbs in lines 6 and 12. In line 6 he says: "Kambe kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni". Which translates to: "A ripe fig has a worm inside" which means that a beautiful woman is full of trouble. When one marries a beautiful woman, one must know that one is inviting trouble for oneself. In line 12 he says: "Mpingu va ringetela emakatleni." This proverb, when translated, means one cannot tell if one will fail or not until one tries it.

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Creating Future Leaders

2. *16 June 1976 - Ndobe, M.D.*

1. Nhenha ya jaha ra ku ya eka 16 wa malembe;
2. **Jaha leri pfimbeke nhloko** hi ta vutomi;
3. A a ri ntsongo kambe a a boxekile mahlo;
4. A a twile a tlhela a xiyisisisa hi ta tiko.

5. Dyambu ri tsuvukile swa masiku,
6. Kambe eka tintlhari ta tiko, a swi nga ri swona,
7. A va hetile ta vona.
8. Kambe ku ta ba mani folosi?
9. Namuntlha swilo jiki!
10. Nhenha ya xivindzi yi kwihi?
11. Va-Hitler va nga ha vuya?
12. I tiko ra xiswathe.

13. Ra ha tifambela kahle,
14. Hungu a ri lo duu!
15. Mulungu u fana ni mhuti.
16. Hambi a a tshwetiwile hi mani.
17. A tlula na Stalin hi matlhari.

18. Va ka Ntimeni swisiwana swa Hosi;
19. **A va hlomile hi mbhayimbhayi**,
20. Xitlhangu I dikizele,
21. Xi duvula, xi hupa,
22. Ra vumbirhi xi tshwa nyameni ya wajaha.

23. Mpfumawulo wa xigitsi wu haha emoyeni,
24. Rifu ra wajaha ri susa vanhu misisi,
25. **Vaka Ntimeni va swarha** ku tlurisa,

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26. Ndzilo wu va xitshembiso xa vumbirhi, ku ku huu!

27. Nhenha yi twala Nigeria,
28. Xiviko xa musi a xi vonaka:
29. Xi mbuluvuka xi kongoma etikweni ra Sathana-
30. Kaya ra Vantima va Afrika-Dzonga.

31. Xana xivangelo a ku ri yini?
32. N'wana-ntsongo u fele yini?
33. Swona muendli u ri yini?
34. Hosi, katekisa Vantima va Afrika-Dzonga.

This poem is about the heroic death of a young black or African boy who was shot and killed by the apartheid security forces in Soweto on 16 June 1976 when school learners were revolting against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instructions.

The poet used an idiom in line 2, where he says: "Leri pfimbeke nhloko", which comes from the idiom "Ku pfimba nhloko", which means to be knowledgable about a lot of things, where he refers to the fact that the boy, who was the first person to be killed in the 1976 march, was a very intelligent and politically-active person.

In line 19, the poet says, "A va hlomile hi mbhayimbhayi", which is an idiom meaning that they were not adequately armed but faced with a challenge of fighting white security forces who were heavily armed with guns and hand-granades, while the pupils had mere dustbin lids and stones.

In line 25, he says "Va swarha", which comes from an idiom, "ku swarha", means to be ugly. He is referring to the fact that when more people were killed by the

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security forces, blacks became angrier, wanting to fight back for the sake of the dead. They had to fight with more power and without any retreat.

3. *Nandzu i wa mani? - Malungana, M.*

1. Siku a nga ndzi koka rinoko hi xiluva lexi,
2. A ndzi yiveke dzano,
3. Ndzi boxe ta le xifuveni,
4. Nhwana a amukela xikombelo xanga.

5. Vakhale a va vurisile,
6. Loko va ku: **Hambi wo famba enkoveni lundha ri ta vonaka**,
7. Ndzi te ndzi nga ehleketangi.
8. A ndzi byela leswaku **u bihile emirini**,
9. Ndzi tinwaya nhloko,
10. Nhloko yi tika onge ndzi lo rhwala dyiribye.
11. A ndzi tshama **ndzi dya marhambu ya nhloko**.

12. Siku rin'wana nimpundzu,
13. Dyambu a ri sungula ku humesa nhompfu,
14. Manana a gongondza elawini ranga,
15. Loko ndzi huma,
16. Ndzi kume vavasati vambirhi,
17. Ku kandzela hi xiluva xanga,
18. Mbilu yanga yi tlurile yi ta tshama enkolweni.
19. Ndzi tlimbeka moya,
20. Ndzi twa onge misava yi ngo pfuleka yi ndzi mita.

21. A ri ndzi xele kambirhi,
22. Loko ndzi tshama ehansi,
23. Ndzi vonile tatana a fika,

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24. Hiloko vavasati **va boxa tshumba**,
25. Ndzi vone tatana a wa ni xitulu,
26. A sungula ku khavaxela mihloti bya xihlangi,
27. **A nela hi mpfula** ku ri hava mapapa,
28. A hetelela a ahlamisa nomu.
29. "I vana va mina hi vambirhi,
30. I va ngati ya mina,"
31. **Mati ya halakile**,
32. Nandzu i wa mani?

This poem is about a young man who is faced with a situation where he fell in love with his own half-sister, impregnated her, only to discover when she was taken to his family that she is his father's secret illegitimate daughter.

In line 6 the poet uses a proverb which says: "Hambi wo famba enkoveni lundza ri ta vonaka", which means that there is no way in which a secret can remain hidden forever. Every secret has a way to come out, one day it will come out and be known by everybody. In this poem he is referring to the fact that although the relationship between this boy and his lover was a secret, the secret comes out when she falls pregnant.

In line 8, he used an idiom which says, "U bihile emirini", which is from the idiom "Ku biha emirini", which means to be pregnant, where he indicates that the boy's lover became pregnant. In line 11 he used an idiom, "Ndzi dya marhambu ya nhloko", which means to think deeply, indicating that after hearing the news that the lady was pregnant, he had to think hard about it, trying to get a solution to his problem and how to break the news to his parents.

In line 24 he says "va boxa tshumba", which comes from an idiom, "ku boxa tshumba", to drain a boil, which means to reveal a secret. It shows that their secret came out when the delegated women announced the purpose of their

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visit. In line 27, he says "A nela hi mpfula", which is also from an idiom "Ku nela hi mpfula" meaning to be ashamed of something.

He says "Mati ya halakile", in line 31, which means things are bad. This is derived from a proverb which says that "when water is spilled one cannot gather it again and be able to put it back in a container. What this man has done and the relationship between his two children cannot be reversed; they have to live with it.

4. Patu ra N1 hi 24 N'wendzamhala – Malungana, M.

1. U kuma timovha ti khuluka kunene,
2. Ti njirimuka ti ri karhi ti nenga onge i tikhomba,
3. Tin'wana ti bebule nhundzu ya matsemanhlana,
4. U kuma vachayeri va ximbilwambilwana **va pfimbe machelele**.
5. U kuma vahlayisi va patu **va dye viriviri**,
6. Xihoxo xintsongo u tlula ni thikithi,
7. U kuma timovha tin'wana ti lumanile,
8. Ku va mpfendzempfendze ntsena,
9. Lava siku ri nga fika **va funya buwa**.
10. Vahlayisi va nawu va nyanya ku bava va khalakhasa.
11. Tin'wana timovha ti hambukisiwa epatwini,
12. Vachayeri va tona va hlahluviwa xihoko,
13. Van'wana va nghenisiwa eka khwelamahala,
14. Vahlayisi va patu va tikisa voko ra nawu.
15. Timovha leti khohlolaka ti humesiwa epatwini.
16. Ta vuya egondzeni,
17. Timovha ti manyane bya ntungu wa xigon'wana,
18. Ku copeta tihlo i ku endla mhangu ,
19. Vachayeri va tshama **va khome timbilu**,
20. Vachayeri va tithekisi va tshwa etimbilwini,

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21. Phela ku nenga i xiyila eka vona
22. Kambe va to yini?

23. Va boheka ku hundzuka tikhomba,
24. Phela nawu wa boha
25. Wavupfa nkunku hi siku leri,
26. Vachayeri **va humesa mahlo** swi nyawula
27. **N'wana u an'wa hi tsheve** hi siku leri.

This poem is about the situation faced by drivers on the N1 national road when they are coming home for the Christmas on December 24.The road is congested and the traffic is slow. Trafic officials are everywhere, keeping an eye on every wrong move on the side of the drivers. The drivers are frustrated by this hectic situation but are compelled to obey all the rules and regulations of the road.

In this poem the poet used an idiom in line 4, where he says "va pfimbe machelele", from an idiom "ku pfimba celele" which means to be angry. Drivers on the N1-road on this particular day are angry because of the long and slow traffic lines and stoppages created by the traffic cops who want to check the roadworthiness of all the vehicles on the road. They are angered by the fact that they are in a hurry to see their families whom they have not seen for many months.The poet also emphasises this in line 5, where he says "va dye viriviri", which also means they are angry.

In line 9, he says "va funya buwa", which is also an idiom meaning they are dead. Many people die on the roads during this period because accidents increase due to lack of patience, where some drivers overtake even in areas they are not supposed to overtake. In line 19 he says "va khome timbilu", from the idiom "ku khoma mbilu" meaning to be very much afraid or to be scared of something. Drivers are scared of this situation because the situation is so tense

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that one is not sure whether one will reach one's destination safe or will be involved in an accident.

In line 26 he says "va humesa mahlo", meaning that they are very watchful as they do not want to make any mistake on the road and want to arrive home safely. In line 27 he says "N'wana a an'wa hi tsheve", meaning things are hectic on this day. Everybody wants to arrive home on time but the traffic congestion makes it very difficult and frustrating for everyone.

5. *Dzinga-muti –Ngobeni, J.*

1. Hi chava na ku bula xitswatsi loko u ri kona,
2. Hi chava **ku ku dlaya tindleve**,
3. Hi ta tikhoma ku fikela rini?
4. U ta vutiwa rini?
5. Loko swi nga ritano, u ta helela kwihi?

6. **Ku chachamisa van'wana** loko ri xile,
7. U tsakela swona,
8. Wo nyenyiwa ke?
9. Vamatlhari a va ku voni xana?
10. Kasi u lo yini wena?

11. Tintangha ti fambeterile bi!
12. Ku sele wena,
13. Kho, ku jika na masana na mindzhuti!
14. A wu na xo xi endla,
15. Matsalwa ma tsandzile.

16. Ku vuriwa mhani ke?
17. A wu swi lavi?

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18. U ehleketa yini loko ri xile?
19. Ringeta ku tianakanya,
20. U yimela timhaka ta wena.

The poem is about a mature lady who does not want to be married, who is advised to get married before it is too late. This lady moves around gossiping about other people's marriage problems. She is advised to have her own marriage to keep herself occupied and stop gossiping.

In line 2, the poet uses an idiom where he says "Ku ku dlaya tindleve", meaning to say something which is above one's cognitive level, making it difficult for one to understand its meaning. The poet complains that she makes it difficult for her age group to talk about marriage issues, as it will be difficult for her to be part of the discussions as she knows nothing about marriage life.

To refer to the role played by this person, the poet again uses another idiom in line 6 where he says "Ku chachamisa van'wana" which literaly means to fry someone but idiomatically means to gossip about someone or to talk bad about someone. This lady, although not married herself, enjoys gossiping about other people's marital affairs and problems. She goes around telling people about other people's affairs.

6. *Dzovo ra mhisi –Marhanele, M.*

1. Mi nga twi ku xewee!
2. Loko dyambu ri ku hlwaa!
3. Lawa I mano ya nhlomi,
4. Wa ha fukamela vukati,
5. Loko a ta **ku teka u swi twa!**
6. U ta ku komba ni n'wehla wa huku.
7. Minkarhi hinkwayo loko vurhonga byi huma,

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8. Marito ya yena ma tsokombela bya sindzu wa swiluva,
9. Swiluva swa xidengani ni swa chochela-mandleni,
10. Kambe loko ri ya ku ri ntlhaa!
11. U hundzuka mukhandziyi wa timhisi,
12. **U koka no posa tibomo** ta vuloyi a nga wisi.
13. Hi nkarhi wolowo Buku ya Ntima yi n'wi hlambisa timbilu.
14. Ni vukorhoki bya yena laha mutini byi vungurile.

This poem is about a person who, during the day, potrays himself/herself as kind and humble but during the night goes around bewitching people without any mercy. During the act he/she also forgets his/her friends and relatives and does not have mercy on anyone.

To show her lack of mercy and generosity, the poet uses an idiomatic expression when he says "Loko a ta ku teka u swi twa", meaning to hit someone very hard, which is an indication that when you are with him/her you cannot believe that he/she can do such cruel things until he/she does it to you.To emphasise this, he uses another idiom in line 12, where he says "u koka no posa tibomo ta vuloyi" meaning that he/she throws 'bombs of whithcraft' meaning that he/she bewitches everybody without any consideration.

7. *Kasi ku humelela yini? – Mongwe, S.*

1. Lavantshwa **va tikhomise nyarhi hi timhondzo**,
2. Xana ku humelela yini hi vona?
3. Xana va ta huma kwihi varhangeri va mundzuku?
4. Xana va ta hi rhangela njhani va ri karhi va titsandzeka?
5. Hikuva swilo swi sungula **ku phohla hi makhwati.**
6. Lavantshwa **va ba milawu** eka lavakulu ka vona,
7. Exikolweni va ya dyambu ri rhengile,

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8. Phela a va ha chavisiwi, **va to yima hi nenge**.
9. Loko swo tshuka swi va pfukile vo tifambela hi ku rhula,
10. Loko lembe ri hela **ti haka rimintsu** hi xitalo.

11. Lavantshwa va ri va dya "future" va xeva hi "nice time"
12. Tipulani to phanga ia swakudya swa masiku hinkwawo.
13. Va rivala leswaku va pulanela vutomi bya vona swo biha,
14. Va tshembe vatswari va vona **va nga yima kahle,**
15. **Va swi ba hi makatla** leswaku **vukosi i mberha**.

16. Lavantshwa rhandzani tibuku mi hambana na swa hava,
17. Tsundzukani ku kombela ku pfuniwa hi Yena.
18. Nhlonipho lowuyani wa tolo na tolweni wu kwihi?
19. Xihlawuhlawu a xi bihile kambe a xi hlawula milawu,
20. Ntshunxeko wu kahle kambe wu ntshuxe milawu hinkwayo.

21. Xana vatswari mi tshikela yini lavantshwa va lova?
22. Kumbe **ku veleka i ku huma moya** ke?
23. Loko ku ri ku huma moya n'wina a mi ta va mi ri kwihi?
24. Loko va nga khomangi swi tiya,
25. **Songani rigogo ra ha tsakama** mi tlhela mi va khongelela.

This poem is a concern about life changes in the behaviour of the young generation where the youth no longer care about their future. They do not attend classes and they are disrespectful of their elders. They are advised to be serious about life and attend school.

In this poem we find many idioms and proverbs. In line 1 the poet says "va tikhomise nyarhi hi timhondzo", from an idiom "ku khoma nyarhi hi timhondzo" literally translates to "to hold the buffalo by its horns" meaning to be in deep trouble. Here he says that the youth have invited trouble for themselves by not

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wanting to go to school, not respecting their elders and not caring about their future and wellbeing.

In line 5, he again uses an idiom, "ku phohla hi makhwati", meaning not to have self-respect or not taking control of a situation. By this, he refers to the fact that the youth can no longer take good care of themselves. They do things which are detrimental to their health, like taking drugs and alcohol. They are supposed to be future leaders, but the way, they are destroying their lives, is an indication that they cannot. Their lives are without a direction and they cannot be good future leaders.

In line 6, he says "va ba milawu", which is an idiomatic expression derived from the idiom, "ku ba milawu" meaning to put down rules and regulations. Traditionally, this is the role played by adults for the young ones.However, in this situation it is the youths who lay down rules and regulations for their parents. This is an indication that things are not orderly. In line 8, he says "va to yima hi nenge" from an idiom "ku yima hi nenge", which means to go on strike or to march, which is also known as "toyi-toyi". It refers to demonstrations by the youths when they demand something and do not get it. They go on strike to force their parents or teachers to give in to their demands.

In line 10, he says "ti haka rimintsu" from the idiom "ku haka rimintsu", which means things are difficult or not possible, which means they fail their examinations at the end of the year, as they do not want to study and skip classes. In line 14, he says "va nga yima kahle", which comes from "ku yima kahle" which means to be well-off or rich. He means these kids do not want to learn because they know that their parents are wealthy, and they will inherit parents' wealth when they pass on. They do not want to work for their own wealth.

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In line 15, he says "va swi ba hi makatla" from "ku swi ba hi makatla" meaning to ignore something. He also says "vukosi i mberha", which is a proverb meaning that prosperity is like dew, which disappears when the sun rises, wealth also disappears or comes to an end. He means that although they know that wealth sometimes comes to an end or one can sometimes be hard up and poor again, they tend to forget it or they simply ignore it, believing that their parents' wealth will last forever.

In line 22, he uses the proverb "ku veleka i ku huma moya", which means to give birth is sometimes in vain, which implies that children do not always do as their parents do or do not follow the lead of their parents. Children usually live their lives as they wish, without caring whether what they do please their parents or not.

In line 25, he says "songani rigogo ra ha tsakama" from an idiom "ku songa rigogo ra ha tsakama", which means to do something in time not to wait for time to run out. He means that parents must try to guide their children when they are still at their tender or prime age and not to wait until they are old and can no longer be guided.

8. *Polokwane –Malungana, M.*

1. Hoyohoyo vito rintshwa,
2. Vito ra Xi-Afrika,
3. Ra ku tshama
4. Swi ku bee!
5. I mani a ta tshemba xana,
6. Leswaku vito ra Pietersburg ri ta yimberiwa?
7. Hakunene **tiko a xi etleri**.
8. Tihofisi-nkulu gee!
9. U ntsindza wa Limpopo,

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10. U xivindzi xa Limpopo,
11. U xitikisi xa Limpopo,
12. U xolwe ra doroba.

13. Miako ya mfumo gee!
14. **Ku chukiwa kona tinjhovo**,
15. **Ku pepwerhiwa** kona timhaka,
16. Ti vondziwa kona timhakati vupfa,
17. Ku tirhisiwa kona rihlelo-nthabani.

18. U nghala ya N'walungu,
19. Nyavilala wa doroba,
20. U ba madoroba yo tala,
21. Ivi ya losa eka wena.

22. Tinghumendlhana ta tipolitiki gee!
23. Ti **thya kona ncuva** wa xipolitiki,
24. Ma ha n'wi tsundzuka qgweta Ngwako Ramatlhodi,
25. **A dzuka kona nyuku** eka doroba leri,
26. **A chachamisa kona timhaka** ta xifundzhankulu.
27. Polokwane u fuwile tinyimpfu,
28. U fuwile ni swivatlankombe,
29. U fuwile tinxaka hinkwato ta vanhu,
30. U nhenha ya doroba,
31. Bonga nghala ya N'walungu.

This is a praise poem where the poet praises the city of Polokwane, formerly known as Pietersburg, which has now acquired a brand new name. Polokwane is the capital city of the Limpopo Province and is the house of all the political activities of the province.

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In this poem, the poet used an idiom in line 7 where he says "tiko a xi etleri", which in full is "tiko a xi etleri ku etlela fusi mangumani", which means that a country is always full of activities and news. By this he refers to the fact that things have changed from the apartheid era, where nobody believed that things would change from being westernised to African culture and beliefs. Presently, Polokwane, which was formerlly known as Pietersburg, has been given an African name.

In line 14, he says "Ku chukiwa kona tinjhovo", from an idiom "ku chuka njhovo", meaning to discuss issues or matters. Polokwane is where the governance of the province resides and all the matters of the province are discussed. He adds by saying "Ku peperhiwa kona timhaka", meaning that it is where the provincial matters are carefully looked at and concluded, in line 15. In line 23, he says "Ti thya kona nchuva", and in line 26, says "A chachamisa kona timhaka". These idioms mean it is where the matters of the province are discussed.

9. *Tshengwe ra lerhisa –Marhanele, M.M.*

1. Loko u nga wu voni mumu;
2. U kokiwa hi ngati ya manyunyu,
3. Yo rhwala tshengwe u ri fumba emutini,
4. **U ta twa u nga twi!**
5. Tshengwe a hi rona ro **weriwa xitafu**,
6. A a ri lunghele nguva ya tolo ya swikhafu,
7. Nkarhi lowu swirin'wa a swi ri matutu,
8. Ndyangu hinkwawo a wu dya wu ku ndanguu!

9. Eka nkarhi lowu ku vunga tshengwe,
10. I ku tshama ehenhla ka mpukutu wa miseve,
11. Leyi nga ta ku rhengula mindzuku leyi hinkwayo,

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12. U hundzuka xihlekiso xa misava hinkwayo.

13. Tshengwe ri ve ni wa rona nkarhi,
14. Nkarhi wo bomba hi swipereta,
15. Wanuna a ri karhi **a ba xinari**,
16. Kambe sweswi ku lo sala ku hlambanyisa.

17. Hi nkano ya marahani,
18. Tshengwe ri lerhise ni tinkanyamba;
19. Ti hundzuka vamabongela-tshuka,
20. Hikuva loko to nqwaa, ni tshengwe, mahlo kovee!

21. Hi ri muti wa tshengwe i tlakula-va-xurhe,
22. Tshengwe ri fuwe vukwele ni rivengo,
23. Vavasati va lowu nkarhi,
24. A hi vona **vo orha ndzilo wa xitiko xin'we.**

This poem is about polygamy, where men are cautioned about marrying more than one wife. The poet indicates that polygamy had its times, where men were heads of families. The poet says nowadays, with the advent of women's rights and high food prices; it is not advisable for a man to have more than one wife unless he is inviting trouble for himself.

In line 4 "u ta twa u nga twi", meaning to be in great pain or be in great danger, the poet states that marrying more than one wife is a great risk, as one will always be solving problems. This is a situation which is not desirable because one will have to live in constant pain.

In line 5, the poet says "ro weriwa xitafu" from the idiom "ku wela xitafu", meaning to take things for granted. He wants to indicate that polygamy is not child's play; it needs someone with a strong character because is not an easy task.

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In line 15, he says "a ba xinari" from the idiomatic expression saying, "ku ba xinari", to play the guitar, meaning to be in charge or to take control of the situation. By this he means that in the olden days a man was the real head of the family, and was in full control of the household. It was easy for a man to have more than one wife as there was no one to oppose him. The wives were only supposed to listen to whatever the man said without a word, which is the complete opposite of the current situation, where there is a 50/50 control of the household. A woman's voice is also heard; so a man can no longer do as he pleases.

In line 24, the poet says "... vo orha ndzilo wa xitiko xin'we" from an idiom "ku orha xitiko xin'we" meaning to be friends or relatives or to live harmoniously, the poet is emphasising that modern women cannot live together or cannot be married to one man and live together in harmony sharing their belongings and food. Every woman wants to have her own husband, where she will be the head of the family and not be a secondary wife.

10. *U yimele yini? - Ngope, T.A.*

1. U yimele yini we' muntshwa:
2. Ku pfuka ka vafi xana?
3. Kumbe ku vuya ka Kriste?
4. Nkarhi wa ku siya.

5. Nkarhi wu koka tin'hweti,
6. **Ti pandza mananga ya sala ya hlanganile**,
7. Malembe ya dyiwa bi!
8. Hi manana ntumbuluko.

9. Wona ya furhekiwile edulwini ra nyangwa wa nsimbi,

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10. Rero i khele ro pfumala vuhumo,
11. Ri rindziwile hi tintsumi ta yena Lonkulu,
12. Ndzi vula yena Mumbi.

13. Ndzi pfumelele ndzi **ku luma ndleve**:
14. Wanuna **u ta dya swa nyuku wa yena**.
15. Xiya vutomi bya vusokoti,
16. **Yi humeu ya juluka**.

17. U nga **tikhomi rihlaya**; swa yila.
18. U nga **songi mandla**; ya tirhise.
19. **Tsevukela;** u nga lolohi.
20. Yalawo i mahungu ya nimpundzu.

This poem is about a young man who does not want to work. He is advised to go out and look for a job before it is too late, because he is growing old and time is running out.

In line 6, the poet says "ti pandza mananga ya sala ya hlanganile", which is an idiomatic expression from an idiom "ku pandza mananga ya sala ya hlangana' meaning to run as fast as possible without a trace. Here he refers to the fact that time is running fast for this young man. In order for him to conform he has to use the available time and work because time wasted is never regained and procrastination is the thief of time.

In line 13, he uses another idiom, "ku luma ndleve", which means to advise someone, to mean that he wants to afford him an opportunity. He is advising him on the realities of life before it is too late. In line 14 he says "u ta dya swa nyuku wa wena", which is a biblical idiomatic expression meaning that every man must first work before he can get something.

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In line 16, he adds "yi hume u ya juluka" meaning that he has to go and look for a job to earn a living. In 17th line he says: "U nga tikhomi rihlaya" from an idiom "Ku tikhoma rihlaya", meaning to pity oneself. In this poem he means that this young man must not just sit and pity himself and expect people and God to provide for him.

He adds another idiom in line 18, where he says "u nga songi mandla", from "ku songa mandla", meaning to sit and fold your arms, which is an indication that you are doing nothing. The poet tells this person to start working instead of just sitting around without doing anything. He further says that this person must hurry up because time is not waiting for him. The poet uses the word, "tsevukela" in line 19 to emphasise that he must not waste any time but jump straight to work.

11. *Vukati i mbilu – Magayisa, J.M.*

1. Gezani **xiporo xi tsemekile;**
2. Swikwembu swakwe swi yila Valungu,
3. Loko ri xile ntirho i **ku byi chucha**,
4. Nsati ni vana **va hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza,**
5. **Va ambala tatana va hlova hi manana**.

6. Nsati u hundzukile rikavakava,
7. Vana va hundzana ntsena hi masiku,
8. Lomu mathumbanini migiva yi nemba hi magume,
9. Milenge ya N'wa-Risenga i thayere;
10. Maxangu eka yena i mukhuhlwana.

11. Gezani u hundzukile xiphongo xa mahlanga,
12. Lomu ri n'wi pelelaka kona hi le kaya,
13. Lomu vanhwini u famba bya xifufunhunu,

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14. Xiburukwana i tinjhovo,
15. Loko a famba wo byambula.

16. Swihlangi i marhambu ntsena,
17. Swikhwidyana swa swona i tinchindha:
18. Swivokwana ni swinengana i tinhi,
19. Ku i vanhu wo vo hi mahlo,
20. Swi dzuvurile bya mbhongolo hi ku sewula ka timpfula.

21. Miri ya swona i magegetsu,
22. Min'wala yi rimarimile swimidyana swa swona,
23. Loko ri perile swo kufumetana,
24. Xinkwa ni kofi i xiyila,
25. Vaakelani mano ya swona se va ma lemukile.

26. N'wana wa muakelani u rhwale ximarha,
27. Ku swi phemela swi fanele ku n'wi bebula,
28. Swimovhana swa tata wakwe u korwile,
29. Yena phela **u dya a khigela,**
30. Vusiwana eka yena i n'wendzi wa malolo.

31. Ndlala yi nga ndlala;
32. Vana va swihlangi munhu nkulu phi!
33. "Hi phemele phela"
34. Xi phema xi cukumeta xi hleka,
35. Vana va nghohe ya –Abraham va hundzukile timbhongolo.

36. Sweswi mpfula yi nile,
37. N'wa-Risenga swilemu u hava,
38. Ku jekula u ta byala nkami?
39. Le nhoveni nsimu i majani,

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40. Gezani u tsendzeleka ni matsima.

41. Kaya ra Gezani **ku handza n'hwari**.
42. U hlangana ni vamuti hi vurhongo,
43. Ndlala yi dyondzisa vana xikolo **xa ritiho,**
44. N'wa-Risenga ku tlhelela kaya wa chava,
45. Risenga Cuma a nga celelanga.

46. Loko o tshuka a ri vekile u ta vuya hi xibububu,
47. Risenga **u bava a khalakhasa**,
48. "Tiyisela N'wananga, **vukati i mbilu"**
49. Vana i vukwera hi ku basuluka,

50. Sweswi xihangalasi u swi kotile,
51. Vana va dyile hi aredzi,
52. Vana va nghohe ya Adam na Evha;
53. Swa nyumisa ku vona vukwembu byi kurha,
54. Vulolo a va puti va puta vusiwana.

In this poem, the poet has used many proverbs and idiomatic expressions. The title of the poem is a proverb, "vukati i mbilu", which means that marriage is full of hiccups and marital problems, so it needs someone with a strong heart, who can withstand all these. In line 1, he says "xiporo xi tsemekile" meaning that he no longer wants to work, from the fact that in order to reach Johannesburg one had to use a train. When the railway line is broken one cannot go there. It means that this man cannot go there to look for a job because the line is broken.

In line 3, he says, "Loko ri xile i ku byi chuncha" from an idiom "ku byi chuncha" meaning to drink excessively. He means that instead of going to work this man goes on a drinking spree from morning until late in the afternoon on a daily basis. In line 4, he says "va hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza", which means they are starving

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because they do not have food as their father is jobless and not providing anything for them. To get food they have to carry children from wealthy families around on their backs. In return, these children give them food. So they live only on crumbs.

In line 5, he says "va ambala tatana va hlova hi manana", which means that they do not have clothes to wear as there is nobody to buy them clothes. In line 29, "u dya a khigela" which means to be extremely rich to refer to the child of the rich who give these poor children food after when they have carried him/her. In line 41, he says "ku handza n'hwari" which means that there is nobody at home. The father has gone on a drinking spree, while the mother has gone in search of work for her kids to eat and the children are busy hunting for food.

In line 43, he says "va dyondzisa vana xikolo xa ritiho" from an idiom "ku va na ritiho", which means to be a thief. He means that these children are forced to learn to steal because of hunger. Their neighbours no longer give them food because they are tired of doing so and they become thieves. In line 47, he says "u bava a khalakhasa" which means that he does not want to hear anything; he is very angry. He does not want to hear anything because he no longer has the dowry to refund the husband, so, does not want her to come back home. In line 48, he uses the proverb, "Vukati i mbilu", which means that you have to possess a strong heart to withstand the hardships of married life.

12. *Ra Dzindza – Ngobeni, B*

1. Mindyangu ya namuntlha yi **khome hi ritukulu**,
2. Yi **orha switiko swa khombo**,
3. Ndlati ya mandzolonga ya baleka,
4. Xipululu xi tshikele mandza ya xona emindyangwini,
5. Mindyangu **yo khoma timbilu** loko ri dzindza ri hatima.

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6. Tinxangu ta mindyangu ti khomisa nsululwana,
7. Namuntlha emindyangwini **ku handza n'hwari**,
8. Matsune ni nkati a yi vhikeki,
9. Yiminya **ku minya,**
10. Ku sala switlakati swa swiketi ni maburuku.

11. Mahlo yanga ya phutsela hi riphimela,
12. Ku vona mintsumbu ya ndyangu yi lo nhavululu!
13. Bombo ra namuntlha ra nuha,
14. I bombo muni ro bomba hi xikhohlola-rifu,
15. Tinhlampfu ta xona ti dlidlimbetela vukati emasirheni.

16. I nkuzi muni yo loko ti gomolana,
17. Yi yayarhela ntlhambi hinkwawo bii!
18. Ni mugulugudela wa marhole wo hava xisandzu wu kukuriwa,
19. Ku sala xivala na migoqo ya tingana,
20. Hakunene mapapa ya fuwe mpfula na ndlati.

21. Mindyangu i mpfurhampfurha,
22. Wun'wana u ri **xa n'hwari loko un'wana a ku xa nkengere**,
23. Tinghumendhlana ta tiko tshovani swiphundla mi timela nhova,
24. Layani tinhloko ta mindyangu ti ta kota ku vohla vukarhi,

25. Hikuva minete yin'wana na yin'wana xigitsi xi hlanta rifu emindyangwini,
26. Vatshiveri na swiciwana **va dyela enghinghiyeni**,
27. **Swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala**,
28. Phela mpfula ya xihangu yi siya maphokolo emindyangwini.

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This poem is about family violence which is currently rife in South Africa, in which men, especially policemen, shoot themselves after shooting and wiping out their entire families.The poem tries to address this problem by cautioning men to address family crises in a more peaceful and amicable way.

In this poem the poet uses many idiomatic expressions. In line 1, he says "Yi khome hi ritukulu", which means to be shaking when something is not stable. By this idiom the poet means that families are no longer stable. There is fear from both the parents and children that every misunderstanding in the family could lead to killings. In line 2, he says "yi orha switiko swa khombo", meaning to be dangerous or to be in great danger. He means that households are no longer safe places where children were raised and taught good morals but an area where one expects death at any time.

In the fifth line, he uses the idiom "ku khoma timbilu", meaning to be scared". In many families everyone lives in fear because they know they are no longer safe with their husbands. They know that it is just a matter of time before a quarrel starts, which could turn bad and end up in suicides and killings. In line 7, he says "ku handza nhwari", which means that there is nobody at home. All the inhibitants have been killed. In line 9, he says "Yi minya ku minya" from an idiom "ku minya" meaning that a fight or battle has started. He means that when a quarrel starts it ends in death.

In line 22, he says "u ri xa nhwari loko un'wana a ku xa kengere", which is a proverb meaning to disagree due to lack of respect. This is the situation which promotes these killings. This is because nowadays women no longer have respect for their husbands and they know that the law will rule in their favour against the men. In the event of a divorce the man will end up losing a lot, in fact all his belongings are given to the wife. To avoid all the embarrassment, men choose to end their lives together with those of the wives. They kill the children to

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avoid a situation where they are left being orphans with nobody to take good care of them.

In line 26, he says "va dyela enghinghiyeni" from the idiom "ku dyela cheleleni", meaning to be in trouble or to lack peace.These people are no longer at peace within their families. This is the state of affairs in most families, where the husband has access to a gun, whether it is a service pistol or his personal gun.

In line 27, he says "Swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", meaning each household has its own problems. There is no family without a problem. One should not allow a family misunderstanding or dispute to lead him to killing himself or his family. Wherever there are people, a quarrel or disagreement should be there. It should not mean the end of someone's life.

13. *Xinkwa xa hosi – Malungana, S.J.*

1. Vukungundzwana byi tinyike matimba,
2. Xin'wana na xin'wana xa dizeriwa.
3. Xin'wana na xin'wana **xi beriwa mati.**
4. Loko u nga endli tano u ta **dya ku vona.**
5. Entsindza u famba na xinkwa xa hosi.
6. **Hi le mahlweni ka nghala,**
7. **U fanele ku ya ni xisana**,
8. Leswaku swa wena swi ta ku fambela.
9. Swi tano na le magondzweni,
10. Ti namuneti hi xava hi xavile,
11. Hi ku chava ku tlhaviwa mathikithi,
12. **Hi bela swipitikopo mati.**

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13. Hi to yini, hi **hlenga vutomi**.
14. Hambi emaphoriseni ha diza,
15. Leswaku dokete yi ta **mila milenge.**
16. Mumangali u ta gidela a gidelini,
17. Nandzu a wu nge pfuki wu tengiwile.
18. Dokete **yi bile magoza yo nyawula**.
19. Emitirhweni na kona swa fana.
20. Xava nyimpfu swi ta ku lunghela.
21. U ta tlakusiwa hi ku copeta ka tihlo,
22. Nhlokohliso wa swivutiso **wo pfala mahlo**.
23. Se hi hanya ku vava.

In this poem the poet challenges life in the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, where corruption is the order of the day. To get help anywhere one has to pay a bribe. In this poem idiomatic expressions are in a few lines. In line 3, he says "xi beriwa mati". The author has used an idiomatic expression meaning that for everything, you should bribe someone.

In line 4, he says "U ta dya ku vona" meaning that if one does not bribe one will not get assistance from anyone. The proverb in line 6-7, says "Hi le mahlweni ka nghala u fanele ku ya na xisana", meaning wherever one seeks assistance one must have a bribe or one will not be assisted. In line 12, he says "hi bela swipitikopo mati", meaning that whenever a driver is stopped by a traffic cop on duty or off duty, he/she must give him or her something to avoid road fines. In line 13, he says "hi hlenga vutomi" meaning that people are forced to pay a bribe because if one does not comply, one could end up being charged for an offence that one could have avoided, by paying a bribe.

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In line 15, he says "yi ta mila milenge" which is from the idiom "ku mila milenge" meaning to be stolen or disappear. He is referring to the fact that when one pays a bribe when one is arrested, the docket is stolen or disappears. In line 18, the poet says "yi bile magoza yo nyawula", from the idiom "ku ba goza", which means to run away". He means after paying a bribe, the docket disappears without a trace. In line 22, the poet says "Nhlokohliso wa swivutiso wo pfala mahlo", where he uses the idiom "ku pfala mahlo", meaning to blind a person or to deceive someone. Here he means an interview is conducted, just to give the impression that the one who has been hired went through the whole interview process and was fairly appointed.

14. *I mhangu – Marhanele, M.M.*

1. Vo tala hi vurile,
2. Va tolo va vurile
3. **Murhi wa tindleve hi tshwetile**,
4. **Ndleve yona u lumiwile**
5. U tsundzuxiwile leswo tshengwe ra luma,
6. Yena a nga swi tekelanga hlokweni,
7. Loko yena n'wini a tiphata a a ku:
8. "Ndzi dyela Afrika ndzi phema na Asia"
9. Namuntlha ngoma hundzu!
10. Ngula ya maxangu mpfalakaxa!
11. Phela u tlhotlhorile mulambya wa vanhu,
12. Ntshengwe bamfee!
13. Ntshanga leriyani ho hlambanyisa
14. Manuku **ku dyiwa tinhwala** mutini,
15. Leswo hi le ndhuneni swi lo sala non'weni,
16. Ku cangayiwa ku voniwa na hi mbyana.

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17. Tolo a ri ngwenya namuntlha i mbyana,
18. Xiyimo lexo tani xa vava,
19. Mavhengele wona ya wile,
20. Loko swi ri swikweleti swa ha hanya,
21. Mavana ya tate "dyimuti"
22. Vanyini ku zuliwe naro'
23. Nkuku wa hletela swikukwana- ke?
24. Loko a nga voni a nga langha rhavi.

25. Aredzi ye n'wini,
26. Loko **a pfale tindleve** i swa yena,
27. Sweswi wanuna u **koka ku tika**
28. Leyi **mhangu ku tilavela**!

The poem is about a rich person who has become broke because of his lifestyle. Because of his wealth, he has married many wives, had many children but now is suffering because his wealth is gone, his wives are gone and he is left with many children, without a mother.

In this poem, idioms and proverbs are used in lines 3; 4; 14; 26; 27 and 28. In line 3, he says "murhi wa tindleve hi tshwetile" from the idiom "ku tshweta murhi wa tindleve", meaning that the man was warned but he did not listen. In line 4, he says "ndleve yona u lumiwile" from "ku luma ndleve" meaning to be alerted, meaning that he was alerted about the dangers of marrying many wives. In line 14, he says "ku dyiwa tinhwala" meaning that they are poor; they have nothing to eat. In line 26, he says "a pfale tindleve", meaning to block one's ears so that one does not listen to the advices he is given. In line 27, he says "u koka ku tika" meaning that he is now facing hardships. The situation he is in is unbearable. In line 28, he says "mhangu ku tilavela", meaning that he has brought all the pains to himself.

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15. *Nawu wa ntumbuluko - Marhanele, M.M.*

1. Ndzi lava **ku ba bembele,**
2. Vhele ndzo mi tsundzuxa,
3. Mi nga **tihlanganisi tinhloko**,
4. Ngopfu-ngopfu n'we va fole,
5. Mi nga hembeli xikhalabyana,
6. Mi nga lumbeti xidemokrasi

7. Nawu wa ntumbuluko a wu ncici,
8. Dyambu ra ha pela evupeladyambu,
9. Wanuna wa ha ri sweswa khale,
10. Wansati wa ha tekiwa tanihi tolo,
11. Vuhosi byona byo tswaleriwa,
12. Vufambisi i jinga ku bodziwa.

13. Xigwevo lexi nga fanela hi ntambhu.

14. Nawu wa ntumbuluko-
15. Wa alela munhu ku hundzula xifuwo nhlomisa,
16. Tshikani timbuti titekana toxe.
17. Sodoma na Gomora ri tshwele rero!
18. Mi nga hi hloleli hina!
19. Mi nga thaji nawu, nawu wantumbuluko.

20. N'wina "tigay" mi hi **dlamula timbilu**,
21. Mi nga **yimisi tiko hi milenge**,
22. Wanuna na wansati va tekana, "full stop!"
23. Nawu i wa ntumbuluko,
24. Xipululu, gwavava na nkolobyana i swikokovi

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25. Loko belengu yo kokova, tiko ri herile!

26. Mbuti i xixevo,
27. Mbuti i ya ntwaso,
28. Swoswo swa mbuti a swi ndlhali!
29. Kumbexana ku yi fuwela dzovo,
30. Lero gangana na mbuti yi te whi!

This poet is complaining about what gay people are doing. He says what they are doing is against the will of God and nature. Some people are committing crime because of bestiality which is not God's design.

In this poem, idioms and proverbs have been used in lines 1; 3; 20 and 21. In line 1, he says "Ndzi lava ku ba bembele", from the idiom "ku ba bembele" which means to warn people about the wrongdoings. He says that he wants to warn people about what some people or men are doing, which is molesting animals, goats in particular. In line 3, he says "Mi nga tihlanganisi tinhloko" from the idiom, "ku hlangana nhloko", meaning to be mentally challenged or mad. He says those who are victims of this criminal action act as if they are not normal whereas they are normal enough to differentiate between good and bad. They are well aware of their activities.

In line 20, he says "n'wina ti-Gay mi hi dlamula timbilu" from the idiom "ku dlamula timbilu", meaning to induce vomiting. He says what is being done by people of the same gender marriages is disgusting and is a disgrace to human nature. In line 21 he says "mi nga yimisi tiko hi milenge' from the idiom "ku yima hi nenge", meaning to be restless. He says what is being done by gay people brings bad luck to the nation and is unacceptable.

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(b) *Malungana, M. and Ngobeni, R - Ntswamba ni Vulombe*

1. Mpfula ya 2000 – Malungana, M

1. Ndhambi ya mangatsila,
2. Yi vuya ndhambi xiheri,
3. Yi chululana yi chululanile,
4. A hi tsakile hi ku i lembe ra ndzalo,
5. Kasi a ri ri lembe ra ku getsela ka meno.

6. Milambu khapaa!
7. Mabiloho tlhii!
8. Tindlu hodloo!
9. Swimbyarimbyari pfhaa!
10. Tintshava ti ku mapatu khubvu!
11. Ntumbuluko a wu hlundzukile swinene.

12. Vanhu a va **dyela enghangheni,**
13. Mpfula yi vange makhombo ni mahlomulo,
14. Van'wana a va ri **hava ko hoxa nhloko,**
15. Van,wana a va **lata rimbambu** etikerekeni,
16. Van'wana a va **lata rivambu** eswikolweni,
17. Van'wana a va **lata rimbambu** etiholweni,
18. Makaya a ya hundzuke marhumbi-xidzi.

19. Swipandza-mananga a swi **khome xivixivi,**
20. A swo bodlhomela kunene lomu misaveni,
21. Ku chovha a ku ri swakudya swa kona,
22. Vanhu a va tsemeke nhlana

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23. A va ku kumbe i ndhambi ya Noa
24. A va nga ha tivi ta vona,
25. Mpfula a yi sewula onge Xikwembu a xi lahlekele hi makhiya yo pfala mpula.

26. Mfumo wu ringetile ku hletela vaaki.
27. Wu humesile **swo miyeta nyoka**,
28. Hikuva van'wana a va sungule **ku hlaya tinyeleti**.
29. Mfumo wu dzimile tindlu ta RDP,
30. Hikuva van'wana a va ri hava ko **fihla nhloko,**
31. Mfula leyi yi hlamarise ni lava nga velekiwa hi malembe ya makwangala ni xigon'wana.

32. Mfula leyi a **yi tsema nhlana**,
33. Tindlu tin'wana ti khinsamile,
34. Mfula ya 2000 yi onhile ma swi twa xana?
35. Mapatu a ya hundzuke mabudula manene.
36. Mfula ya 2000 yi tselekiwile ematin'wini.
37. Ntumbuluko wu hi kombile vukarhi bya wona.

The poem is about the floods of the year 2000, where many people lost their lives and many houses were destroyed. Roads and infrastructure were also destroyed. In this poem, idioms and proverbs have been used in lines 12; 14; 15-17; 19; 27; 28; 30 and 32. In line 12, he says "Vanhu a va dyela enghangheni", from the idiom "ku dyela echeleleni" meaning to be uncomfortable. This refers to a situation where people are no longer comfortable due to the rains which were pouring down uncontrollably. People were not sure if they would live to see the next day.

In line 14, the poet says "a va ri hava ko hoxa nhloko", from an idiom "ku hoxa nhloko" or "ko fihla nhloko" meaning to have a roof over one's head or to have a home or house for shelter. In this poem he means that people's houses were

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destroyed by the floods. In line 15, the poet says "a va lata rimbambu etikerekeni' from an idiom "Ku lata rimbambu", meaning to sleep, which also means people were left with no roofs over their heads.

In line 19, the poet says "Swi khome xivixivi", an idiom meaning to be in danger or trouble. He means driving motor cars or vehicles was not easy because roads were slippery and muddy, making it difficult for them to move. In line 27, the poet says "Mfumo wu ringetile ku humesa swo miyeta nyoka" from an idiom "Swo miyeta nyoka", meaning food or to have something to eat. The government tried to assist people with food, but it was not enough as the damage was substantial.

In line 28, the poet says "...a va sungurile ku hlaya tinyeleti" from the idiom "Ku hlaya tinyeleti", meaning to go to bed on a hungry stomach. The poet says people did not have food to eat as their foodstuffs were destroyed by rain. In line 30, the poet repeats the fact that people no longer had houses to sleep in, by saying "...a va ri hava ko fihla nhloko", from the idiom "ku fihla nhloko" meaning to hide one's head or a place to sleep. In line 32, he adds "Mpfula leyi a yi tsema nhlana" from the idiom "Ku tsema nhlana", meaning to be scary. He is referring to the flood or rainfall which happened in the year 2000 which was horrible. People were scared for their lives.

2. Rirhandzu - Malungana, M.

1. Rirhandzu i xihundla,
2. Rirhandzu i xihlovo xa swihefemuri,
3. Mina na wena hi hanya hi ri namarherile,
4. Hirona ri nga aka tiko,
5. Hi rona ri nga aka miti.

6. Rirhandzu-xidzi ra kala,
7. Lava va nga na rona a va tati xandla,

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8. Ku tele rirhandzu ra nomu,
9. Rirhandzu ra ntiyiso ri kala bya guxe ehotela.

10. Rirhandzu ra le mitini yo tala i switlakati,
11. Phela **swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala**
12. Rirhandzu-xiviri ri le mbilwini ya munhu,
13. Ri etlele kona ri ku hwii!

14. Misava **yi yime hi nenge wun'we** namuntlha,
15. Hikuva mihizo ya rirhandzu ya nyekanyeka,
16. Ku tele rirhandzu-vito,
17. Rirhandzu i ngula ya ntsako,
18. Rirhandzu i xisaka xa vulombe,
19. Rirhandzu i xihundla xa munhu.
20. Belela leswi enhlokweni
21. Munhu a nga **ku xevisa hi ririmi ra mbhongolo**,
22. Munhu a nga **ku mamisa tintiho**.

This poem is about love, where the poet is warning people about love. He says it is rare to find true love, but in most cases people are made to believe that they are in love when they are not.

In line 11, he says "swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", meaning that in every household there are some hidden secrets and many marital problems are concealed. There is no single household which is free of problems and quarrels. In line 14, he says "misava yi yime hi nenge wun'we", meaning people are restless because people are no longer experiencing true love. Instead there is only deceit and lack of heartfelt love and tranquillity. In line 21, he says "munhu a nga ku xevisa hi ririmi ra mbhongolo", meaning that you should not trust somebody because he or she is capable of making empty promises. Peope are no longer trustworthy. They are full of lies and deceit. In line 22, he says "Munhu

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a nga ku mamisa tintiho", from the idiom "Ku mamisa rintiho" meaning to make a fool of someone, meaning a person can put on a smiling face, whereas deep inside he/she is full of hatred. People are not what they usually display outside.

3. Ndzo rheta - Malungana, M.

1. **Ndzi tlhontlhe mimpfi** emutini,
2. Mina ni nghamu **hi nuhana makhehele**,
3. Ndzi **boxe swinon'wana** ehandle,
4. Kambe mutshiveri **u dya ndzilo**,
5. **A nga lavi ku swi vona hi mahlo**,
6. Hambiloko ndzi **khotsa ncila**,
7. Tindleve ta mina ti kala ti pandza.

8. Yoo! Vana va mina **va phahliwa eswigodweni**,
9. Egandzelweni wo khalakhasa,
10. Phela **va toviwa hi va le hansi**,
11. Va lava ku vikiwa ni ku thyiwa mavito,
12. Namuntlha **swikwembu a swi etlelanga,**
13. Hi vana lava nga lo moo, enhoveni.
14. Laha kaya i hasahasa.

15. Ndzi ku yini?
16. Hikuva Nwa-Hlundzuka a nga wu khomi michini,
17. Hambi ndzo khuvanganyisa vakhomi va gandzelo,
18. Wo va tsangalaxa,
19. Va ku mpfhee!

20. Phela ndzi **pfuxe swikwembu**,
21. Hambiloko ndzi **chela fole** ko fana ni kwala,
22. Swi lava mavondlo yanga ya ta vikiwa,

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23. Swi ri a swi ma voni laha kaya,
24. **Ku rheta** ka hina vavanuna **ku hi humesa moya**,
25. I mpfendze-mpfendze laha kaya.

This poem is about a man who has committed adultery, whose end-result is a child. This has brought divisions within his family because the wife does not want anything to do with the child. He is also worried because the ancestors are also angry with him because they want this child to be brought home where they will be able to protect him/her.

In line 1, the poet says "Ndzi tlhontlhe mimpfi", which is an idiom "ku tlhontlha mimpfi", to stir a wasps' nest, meaning to start a quarrel or battle. In this poem the poet says that he has started a fight. He means by having a child outside of wedlock he has started a fight with his legal wife because she does not approve of this child. He goes further by saying "Hi nuhana makhehele" meaning that they are quarrelling.

In line 3, he says "ndzi boxe swinon'wana ehandle", which is from the idiom "ku boxa swinon'wana", meaning he has children outside of wedlock. In line 4, he adds "mutshiveri u dya ndzilo", meaning that the wife is extremely angry about his husband's extra-marital affairs. She does not even want to see it. In line 5, he says "A nga lavi ku swi vona hi mahlo".

In line 6, he says "Hambiloko ndzi khotsa ncila", from an idiom "ku khotsa ncila" meaning to humble oneself. He says even when he humbles himself she does not want to hear anything about it. She does not want to forgive him and accept the child. In line 8, he says "va phahliwa eswigodweni", from the idiom "ku phahliwa eswigodweni", meaning that instead of their rituals being performed in the family shrine, they are sacrificed outside in a dry tree, meaning that they are not welcome. Even the ancestors do not know them.

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In line 10, he says "va toviwa hi va le hansi", from an idiom "ku toviwa" meaning that they are always sick. They have to perform sacrificial rituals for them so that their ancestors can watch over them and protect them from evil spirits. In line 12, he says "swikwembu a swi etlelanga" meaning that the ancestors are not happy about the situation because some of their grandchildren are not under one roof where they can protect them. In line 20, he says "ndzi pfuxe swikwembu", meaning that the ancestors are restless, meaning there is no peace in the family.

In line 21, he says "ndzi chela fole" from the idiom "ku chela fole" meaning to perform sacrificial rituals to appease the ancestors in order to make peace with one's ancestors by doing a sacrifie or ritual. In line 24 he says "ku rheta ka hina vavanuna", from an idiom "ku rheta", meaning to make a mistake. He says men are no longer respectful because of their careless mistakes. He says this by stating that "... ku hi humesa moya" meaning that it spoiled him. He is no longer a respectable father and husband.

4. Xiyila - Malungana, M.

1. Xi phutsele rifu,
2. Ku xi papalata i ku tundza vutomi,
3. Ku xi honisa i ku tindziwilitela egojini,
4. **Matwe ma hanyisa, mavona ya dlaya,**
5. Xi buriwile hi vatolo,
6. A vo chava **ku mhoo**!
7. Hikuva a va **pfumala timhondzo**,
8. Swi pfuna yini ku va Thomas makholwa hi ku vona.

9. Aredzi! Wena n'waninginingi makala tindleve,
10. U pfotla hi nhova ndlela yi khuleriwile,
11. **U tiomisa nhloko** gondzo ri khuleriwile,
12. U nge hlali ni ku hlala, wena makala tindleve

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13. U **ta hlangana na xa ncila wa bulubulu**,
14. Ku xiyila xi yila yini u ta swi tiva u ri ekhwirini ra misava,
15. Ka mbumburhekiwa hi **ku komba xiyila xikosi**,
16. Hi xona a xi tiyisa swihlungwana swa mindyangu eka mababutsa,
17. Xi andzisa ni rixaka.

With this poem the poet advises people to respect and honour traditional taboos, instead of taking them for granted and start doing things which are traditionally and culturally not permissible. The poet indicates that lack of respect for these taboos is the main cause of early or immature death and misfortunes. He further indicates that honouring and respecting traditional rules and regulations is what makes people live longer and is the backbone of a strong nation.

In line 4, he says "matwe ma hanyisa, mavona ya dlaya", meaning it is better to believe what one is told, not by seeing it for oneself. Do not want to learn by experiencing but try to learn from other peoples' misfortunes. In line 6, he uses the idiom "ku mhoo!" meaning to directly call a spade a spade without beating about the bush. He refers to the fact that there is no need for a person to be told directly, instead of just accepting what one is told. In line 7, he uses another idiom "ku pfumala timhondzo" from the proverb, "Mangwa yi pfumali timhondzo hi ku rhumisa" meaning they cannot say things directly for the sake of those who do not want to reason the real meaning of what is said. This is because they do not have horns and are like a cow, meaning that they can not speak directly.

In line 11, he says "u tiomisa nhloko" from "ku tiomisa nhloko" meaning to be a hard nut to crack or to be sturborn, and take time to understand the real meaning of what one is told. In line 13, he says "u ta hlangana na xa ncila wa bulubulu", meaning to be in great danger. In line 15, he uses the idiom "ku komba xiyila xikosi", meaning one does not want to follow traditional taboos, beliefs and culture.

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5. Mubya - Ngobeni, R.

1. **Mubya wu nyukisa xitiko xa ndyangu**,
2. Wu tiyisa khokholo ra muti ri ku tsetserhele!
3. Wu **dzima timintsu** ta vukati ti tiya,
4. Wu **dikida ndyangu**,
5. Phela **tshanga ra tihomu ri tiya hi ra marhole**.
6. Loko mubya wu dewula emutini,
7. **Ku cinamisiwa meno,**
8. Hikuva gayisa ri lo ga!
9. Manana u le ku hamuteni,
10. **Nhlungu ya vele yi boxiwa**,
11. Malerhi ya nemba ku nemba,
12. **Ku dyiwa rihojahoja.**
13. Mubya wu kurisa xivongo,
14. Minkulungwana ni swivuvutana swa swikoxa swo khapa,
15. **Ku nga boxiwa xinon'wana ka!**
16. Mithuso yi lulamisiwa hi vutswatsi.
17. Ku wa ni mbuti ya xidzwele.
18. Ntswedyana i xikombiso xa leswaku **xuma**
19. **a xi boheleriwanga enengeni wa mpfuvu.**

This poem is about children in families. The poet is indicating that for a marriage to be strong and successful there must be a child. The child will bring joy and happiness to the parents, grandparents and the community at large.

In line 1, the poet uses the proverb "Mubya wu nyukisa xitiko xa ndyangu" meaning that if there is a child in a family, that family will be full of joy and happiness. In line 3, he says "wu dzima timintsu", which is an idiom meaning, to

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be settled. This means when a woman bears a child, especially a first child, her marriage is strengthened. In line 4, he states "wu dikida ndyangu" from an idiom "ku dikida" meaning to please someone. The poet means having a child in the family makes the family to be happy.

In line 5, he uses the proverb "... tshanga ra tihomu ri tiya hi ra marhole", meaning for a marriage to be strong, there must be children. In line 7, he says 'ku cinamisiwa meno" which means to show one's teeth, which is a sign of happiness, meaning when a child is born everybody is pleased within the family. In line 10, the poet says "nhlungu ya vele yi boxiwa" meaning that by getting the firstborn child, the woman's teats are opened as the child starts suckling. This is a joyful experience for the mother who breastfeeds her child, and to the family as a whole.

In line 12, the poet states that "ku dyiwa rihojahoja" which is an idiom from the traditional ritual ceremony performed for a child when he/she first gets out of the house for the first time. This ritual is performed by children who are given cooked corn which they have to eat whilst dancing around the house, hitting the child with those corns. In line 15, the poet says "ku nga boxiwa xinon'wana ka!" which is from the idiom "ku boxa nomu", meaning to give birth. He means the whole family is in jubiliation because a child is born in the family. In lines 18-19 he says "xuma a xi boheleriwanga enengeni wa mpfuvu", which is from the proverb, "ku bohelela ncuma enengeni wa mpfuvu", meaning to lose all your wealth in a silly or stupid way. He means that by giving birth to a child, the woman is showing her worth in the family. It means that their lobola money has not been in vain.

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6. Kasi u dyohe yini wena Afrika? - Ngobeni, R.

1. Kasi wena Afrika u dyohe yini?
2. Vona, vana va wena **va tshama hi rhanga ro hisa**,
3. Vana va wena **va yime hi swinkunwana**,
4. Ntungu wa ndlala wu ku namarherile,
5. Onge u lo phahliwa hi wona.

6. Ta le Rwanda ta ririsa,
7. U kuma Vanhu **va sale misiha ya nhloko,**
8. Va larile bya nsuna ya vuxika.
9. Tinyimpi i ntungu eAfrika.
10. **Ngati yi halaka siku na siku.**
11. I ndhasundhasu a swi nyawuli eAfrika,
12. Kasi u lo dyoha yini wena Afrika?
13. U momeriwe hi ndlala na tinyimpi.
14. Matiko yo tala ya hlakarile hi tinyimpi.

15. Matiko yo tala ya **hanya hi rikoko ra xilondzo**,
16. Languta endzhandzheni wa malwandle,
17. I madyelo ya rihlaza,
18. Swi ala kwihi eka wena?
19. **U khome nyarhi hi timhondzo** wena Afrika.
20. Vana va wena vo tala **va etlela va hlaya tinyeleti,**
21. Va xihambano xo tshuka **va vambe ngoma,**
22. Ku phalala wena tiko-nkulu ra madambi,
23. Ta Somalia na Ethopia a **ti tsema nhlana,**
24. Ta Angola a ha ha vuli,
25. Ta DRC ta tika.
26. Ta Burundi a **ti tsema nhlana.**
27. Mozambiki u kale a hundzuka xidziva xa tihele

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28. Yehovha Xikwembu,
29. **Khoma Afrika xikatla**,
30. Makhombo ya Afrika a ya **kumi ndzhuti ya wisa,**
31. Ha khongela Yehovha.

In this poem the poet laments the bad things which are happening in the African continent: wars, diseases, floods and famines are tearing the continent apart. People are dying like flies day and night. He is pleading with our beloved Lord to turn his face towards Africa and try to rescue this poor continent from these raging wars and natural disasters.

This poem is full of idioms and proverbs. In line 2, the poet says "va tshama hi rhanga ro hisa" from an idiom "ku tshama hi rhanga ro hisa" meaning to be suffering. He means Africans are suffering due to many things which are happening in this continent. There is no peace and Africa is characterised by wars, diseases and natural disasters. In line 3, he says "va yime hi swikun'wana" which is also an idiom meaning to be uncomfortable. The poet means that in Africa there is no time to relax because there is always unrest. There is no peace. Everybody is running for dear life. People are migrating from one country to another due to civil wars, starvation and natural disasters.

In line 7, he says "Va sale misiha ya nhloko" which is an idiom meaning to be skinny or to be lean. People are just skeletons because they are starving. Children are dying of malnutrition because their parents died of wars, malaria and other diseases like Ebola and HIV (AIDS) daily. In line 10, he says "ngati yi halaka siku na siku" which means people are dying daily. There are brutal killings and civil wars and people are dying literally everyday and in great numbers.
In line 15, the poet says "ya hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza", meaning in many African countries people are suffering. There is hunger and starvation. In line 19, the poet says "u khome nyarhi hi timhondzo" which is an idiom, meaning to be in great danger or having many problems. People are fighting each other for power.

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Some are dying of starvation, and in some countries brutal killings propelled by tribal conflicts, religious wars and ritual murders, are rife.

In line 20, the poet says "va etlela va hlaya tinyeleti" from the idiom "ku etlela u hlaya tinyeleti", which means to be hungry. He means that a lot of people are dying of hunger due to lack of food in their countries, for example, like Somalia and Rwanda, where people, especially young children, are dying of starvation. In line 21, he uses the proverb "va vambe ngoma", meaning to be ready for any action. He means because it is wellknown that Africa is restless, the Red Cross Foundation is always ready and prepared to come and help Africa. There is no time when Africa will be free of disasters.

In line 23 and 26, the poet says "ti tsema nhlana", meaning what is happening in Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Somalia is dreadful and painful. People are dying like flies due to starvation, natural disasters and genocides which are taking place in these African countries. In lines 28 and 29, he says "Yehovha Xikwembu khoma Afrika xikatla", which is an idiom meaning to help or to give a helping hand to someone who is grieving. The poet says that God should help Africa in her sufferings and make her a happy and peaceful continent. In line 30, he says "Makhombo ya Afrika a ya kumi ndzhuti ya wisa", meaning that all the troubles and sufferings experienced by Africans must come to an end. God must intervene by stopping Africa's wars, hunger, droughts and floods.

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(c) S.J. Malungana and M.T. Babane - Vutomi byi hundzulerile

1. Nkuwa – Babane M.T.

1. I ntiyiso a wu cheletiwa, u kurile,
2. A swi mbamberiwi leswaku u ondliwile.
3. I ntiyiso u tirheriwile, va tikarhatile.
4. Namuntlha va humurile kumbe va hume va ya pheta ke?

5. Xana mbuyelo wa kona hi wihi ke?
6. Mihandzu yaku ya nyanganya ke?
7. Xilungu i xilungu, Kambe xintima u xi an'wile.
8. U lo nyupe, exidziveni xa vutomi bya switsutsu.

9. Mubyari u **n'wi kombile xikosi.**
10. Mucheleti yena u **n'wi lahlele mandla**.
11. **Nyuku wa vona wu hundzuke wa mbyana.**
12. Mawaku lava tswaleke swi va khata.

13. Namuntlha switshongop wo tshwatsa wexe.
14. Xilungu xi ku nghene xi tlhela xi ku lunga.
15. Kambe tsundzuka mubyari ni mucheleti waku.
16. **Swi ku ondlile, swi ondli-vu!**

This poem is about a child who is advised to take good care of his/her parents now that he is working, as he/her became what he/she is today because of them. Now that he is educated, living a joyful and sophisticated life he/she no longer cares about his/her parents, so he/she is advised against this.

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In line 9, the poet states that "u n'wi kombile xikosi" from the idiom "ku komba xikosi" meaning to neglect something. He means the young man has forsaken his parents. In line 10, he says "u nwi lahlele mandla" from the idiom "ku lahlela mandla", meaning to neglect someone not wanting to help somebody. The poet means this young man does not want to help his parents.

In line 11, the poet says "Nyuku wa vona wu hundzuke wa mbyana" which is from the proverb "nyuku wa mbyana wu helela voyeni", translated, it means "the sweat of the dog which ends in its fur" meaning that after a hard chase after an animal, and a dog does not gain anything except for a meatless bone. In the poem it means that after all these parents have done for this young man, they get nothing in return.

In line 16, the poet says "swi ku ondlile, swi ondli-vu!" which is a proverb "xi ondli xi ta ku ondlavu", meaning as his/her parents have fend for him he/she should return the favour. It is now his/her turn to take good care of them.

(d) *Ndzumba wa Afrika*: Malungana, S.J.

1. Tshamani ehansi – Hlungwani, M.C.

1. **Mi nga heli mbilu,**
2. **Ndlopfu a yi fi hi rimbambu rin'we,**
3. Hambi mi hluriwile mi nga **lahleli thawula**,
4. Tshamani ehansi mi xiyisisa,
5. **Timhaka ti vulavuriwa ehubyeni**
6. Huvo yi endleriwe sweswo.

7. Tshamani ehansi
8. Mi tilangutisisa swinene,

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9. Mi lulamisa swihoxo swa tolo
10. Mi khulela gondzo,
11. Mi susa mahlwehlwe ni swikundzu,
12. Mi kongoma eka 1999.

13. Swa vava ndza mi twisisa,
14. Mhaka leyi a yi toloveleki,
15. Ku rima u nga tshoveli swi heta ntamu,
16. Kambe lemuka.
17. Murimi wo va munhu-ntsena,
18. A hi yena munisi wa mpfula.
19. Hambiloko a lahlekeriwa u ta tshovela ka siku rin'wana,
20. Hikokwalaho ndzi nge tshamani ehansi.

21. Vanhu va mi rhandza ngopfu,
22. Ku tsandzeka ka n'wina i xikombiso,
23. Xikombiso xa swin'wana va nga swi rhandzeki,
24. Swin'wana swa maendlelo,
25. Hikokwalaho ndzi ngo tshamani ehansi'
26. Mi vulavurisana.
27. Mi ta vona swi ta nyoxa.

In this poem the poet tries to encourage and advise whites to accept their defeat. He urges them to accept it, sit around the table and identify their mistakes and correct them so that they may contest the next elections again.

In this poem, idioms and proverbs were used in lines 1; 2; 3 and 5. In line 1, the poet says "mi nga heli mbilu" from the idiom "ku hela mbilu", meaning to be impatient. The poet refers to people or political parties which have lost in the elections that they must not give up. They have to sit down, look at their mistakes

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and correct them because their party might win the next elections. The fact is that they have to establish what made people not to vote for them, but the opposition.

In the second line, he uses the proverb "ndlopfu a yi fi hi rimbambu rin'we", meaning that a powerful person should not be give up because of one unfortunate misfortune. What he/she should do is to learn from his/her mistakes. In line 3, he says "mi nga lahleli thawula" from an idiom "ku lahla thawula" meaning to give up a fight. He means they must not give up, even though they have lost the elections. They must try again in the forthcoming election.

In line 5, the poet says "Timhaka ti vulavuriwa ehubyeni", from the proverb "njhovo yi chukiwa ehubyeni", meaning crucial issues are discussed in the tribal house or royal house. This means if there is any issue which needs to be discussed; politicians must sit around the table and discuss them, instead of just blaming each other at the expense of their voters who are ordinary people.

2. Ha ha avanile – Hlungwani, M.C.

1. Ha ha avanile laha Afrika-Dzonga
2. Va-dya-nhlampfi na vanhu **i kondlo ni ximanga**.
3. A va **dyisani ro vupfa** emintirhweni.
4. **Va tovelane munyu**.

5. A va lavi ku rhangeriwa hi munhu.
6. Ve swi fanele vona.
7. Vona va lava **ku dyela ehenhla**.
8. Va hi **vonela ebodhleleni**.

9. Emadorobeni man'wana,
10. Ka ha xaviwa hi mafasitere.
11. Emapurasini man'wana

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12. Va hi vita swikangalafula.

13. Xihlawuhlawu xi nge **songi masangu**.
14. Ko va mihahamu ntsena.
15. Xa gogonyana.
16. Ha ha avanile.

17. **Ku bananiwa hi rhambu ra mfenhe**.
18. Mhaka leyi a **yi na nhloko na ncila**.
19. Hambi mi tokote ku fana,
20. Mimpandzwa a yi ringani.

21. Hi vhotele ntshunxeko kumbe ntshikelelo?
22. Xana a hi vhotela vusiwana ke?
23. Mi hi tlangile xitumbelelana
24. Mi hi **mamisile tintiho** swi ringene!

In this poem, the poet complains about persistence of apartheid practices in our new democratic South Africa, where blacks and whites are not treated equally. In some cities blacks are still treated as third class citizens. They buy through windows and on farms black farmworkers are treated as useless human beings. At work stations, whites still get first preference. They earn higher salaries and get into higher positions.

In line 2, the poet says "va-dya-nhlampfi na vanhu i kondlo na ximanga" from the idiom "ku va kondlo na ximanga" meaning to be great rivals or natural enemies. He means that whites and black people do not get along. They hate each other instead of living together as a rainbow nation. Whites still live alone in their own areas. Blacks are still packed in rural areas. Even black children are not allowed into white schools.

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In line 3, he continues by saying "a va dyisani ro vupfa" meaning they still trouble each other. Whites still see blacks as animals which deserve to be treated as criminal, not people. Blacks still see whites as oppressors who deserve to be killed or to be chased out of the country. The two groups still hate each other. In line 4, he says "va tovelane munyu" meaning they still hate each other.

In line 7, the poet says "vona va lava ku dyela ehenhla" from the idiom "ku dyela ehenhla", meaning to be superior or to be wealthy. He says whites see themselves as being superior to blacks. Whites see themselves as the right people who should benefit from the wealth of the country at the expense of Blacks. They think a black person is inferior and must always be poor, and dependent on them. In line 8, he says "va hi vonela ebodhleleni", meaning they undermine those who are less fortunate. They see Blacks as less human than them because of their financial status. In line 13, the poet says "xi nge songi masangu" from the idiom "ku songa masangu", meaning to retire. He means that apartheid is not yet over because Blacks are still undermined by Whites. In line 17, he says "ku bananiwa hi rhambu ra mfenhe" meaning, there is nepotism and favouritism.

In line 18, the poet says "mhaka leyi a yi na nhloko na ncila' from the idiom "ku va na nhloko na ncila" meaning it is not easy to understand. He says it is not easy to understand why, a white person gets a more senior position than a Black person and he/she earns a higher salary when they are doing the same job.

In line 24, he says "mi hi mamisile tintiho swi ringene", from the idiom "ku mamisa rintiho", meaning to take advantage of others. Whites are still using their skin colour to gain advantage over their Black counterparts. He says he had enough of this situation and needs the situation to change, where Blacks and Whites will be treated with equality.

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(e) *Dyanani, Ndzhaku i Marhambu* – Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Makwangala - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Khale kaloko a ndzi nge ku rivali.
2. Ndzi navela onge tolo a nga vuya.
3. **Kambe va te "a nga ha vuyi".**
4. Hi rona lembe ra ngoma ya timbyana.

5. Ku ambala tinjhovo a wu ri ntsako.
6. Tinjhovo leti a ti hi tshuna.
7. Hi ku giya a wu ta tikhoma xilebvu;
8. A wu ta ku tinyonga ti chucheke swikurufu.

9. Lavatsongo a va hi hlonipha:
10. Kambe sweswi a swi vuleki.
11. **Va tswala miri, ku nga ri mbilu**.
12. Vana va sweswi i switsandza-valayi.

13. Swiyila a swi ri kona.
14. A hi nga bi noti vusiku.
15. A hi chava ku homboloka milomu;
16. Kambe namuntlha.

The poem is a complaint, where the poet complains about the way things in life have changed from being enjoyable and respectable to the opposite, where young people no longer have respect for the elders and cultural beliefs.

In line 3, the poet says "a nga ha vuyi", from the proverb "tolo a nga ha vuyi", meaning that the past cannot be brought back. He means if it was possible to bring back the past; he would do so, when the youths used to respect adults. He

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says the present situation is not good because the youths no longer have respect for adults.

In line 11, the poet says "va tswala miri, ku nga ri mbilu" which is a proverb meaning children do listen to their parents. They do not live according to the wishes of their parents, because what these young people are doing is not something which was taught by their parents. They do just as they please without considering the consequences of their actions.

2. Rivalela - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Hambileswi a onheke Khegwani;
2. Ndzi ta n'wi rivalela eka mpingu
3. Lowu a a ta wu rhwala hi nkanu.
4. Hi **ta phahlelana mariyeta.**

5. Hambileswi a dlayeke homu ya mina,
6. Ndzi ta n'wi rivalela.
7. **Xihoxo xi tshama evanhwini**.
8. A nga endlangi ha vomu.

9. Hambileswi a yiveke timpahla ta mina.
10. Ndza ha ri na mali.
11. Ndzi ta xava tin'wana.
12. **Swandla a swi mili byanyi.**

13. Hambileswi a yiveke minkumba.
14. A swi na nchumu.
15. Ndzi ta funengela masaka.
16. Ntsendze loko ndzi dya.

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This poem is about forgiveness, where as people we are taught to be forgiving for whatever wrongs people do to us. In this poem, the poet uses some idioms and proverbs in line 4, 7 and 12, for emphasis. In line 4, he says "Hi ta phahlelana mariyeta", from the idiom "ku phahlelana mariyeta", meaning to forgive one another. He says as people we must forgive each other.

In line 7, he says "Xihoxo xi tshama evanhwini", which is a proverb, meaning as people or human beings we are not free from making mistakes. In English they say "To err is human, to forgive is divine", which means there is no one who does not make a mistake. In line 12, he says "Swandla a swi mili byanyi", a proverb meaning when a person is still alive, no matter what situation he/she may encounter, he/she will rise again. Nothing can make a human being lose hope in life. No matter how hard the situation is, a man always finds a way out.

3. Mhangele - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Cecerrr; cecerrr; cecerrr.
2. Yi twala kona evurila-nhlalala.
3. Yi rhwele xilo xin'wana.
4. I rimhondzo hi xivumbeko.

5. Mbyana yi vonile mhangele,
6. Yi landza hi risema,
7. Na yona **humba va landza hi rihlakahla**.
8. **Yi tseme yi ri vona** loko yi te kelu! Yi yi vona.

9. Mbyana yi kwala ndzhaku.
10. Mhangele yi komba vuswikoti bya yona.
11. Loko se yi karhele, swa yi olovela.
12. Swa yona i thatha! Yi haha.

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13. Emafusini u ta yi kuma.
14. Yi dya mavele, swidzotele na tindluwa.
15. Lahaya rigoda ri phasile yin'wana.
16. A ri huhi rigoda, vona! Yi lo nciki!

This is a praise poem of a guinea-fowl, where the poet praises the successful and wonderful life it lives but which is too short due to lack of alertness. In this poem, the poet uses proverb and idiom in lines 7 and 8. In line 7, he says "Humba va landza hi rihlakahla", meaning to catch a thief one must follow its trail. There is no way one can catch a thief unless he studies the tracks left by the thief at the crime scene. Likewise, a dog follows the scent left by the guinea fowl to catch it. And the idiom in line 8, the poet says "yi tseme yi ri vona", meaning to run away. The poet means after seeing that it is being chased by dogs, the guinea fowl simply flies away to avoid being caught.

4. Vo chembula - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Bya maxikwa va kwele hansi mugodini.
2. Vutomi bya kona **va byi khomile hi swandla**.
3. **Timbilu ta vona ti tluntlamile enkolweni.**
4. **Mali i Sathana.**

5. Va wa va pfuka,
6. Bunu ri kwala ndzhaku.
7. Va thumana bya tintshwa.
8. Va lava nsuku.
9. Vasiboyi u kwala ndzhaku!

10. Vo tala **va rahile mabakiti**.
11. Mali a yi heli.
12. Ku hela vutomi kwalaho,

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13. Ku sala mali.
14. Kasi n'hweti yi ta hela rini?
15. "Lo vasboy ka wena u ya sebenza"
16. N'hweti xi herile.
17. Yi chayile!
18. Va kangatela mali hi swihuku.
19. Van'wana hi tifaka.
20. Kasi van'wana hi masaka na swisakana.
21. Hey! U tshovela leswi u swi byaleke.

22. Ri tsanile jaha.
23. Ri ta swi byela mani?
24. **Byela tsolo**.
25. Tsolo ri ta tumbeta swihundla swaku.

This poem is about a young man who, despite the hardships he has encountered in the mines, tries to make a living by working in the mines. His salary is too little, to the extent that he cannot make a decent living out of it.

In this poem, idioms and proverbs are used in lines 2; 3; 4; 10 and 24. In line 2, the poet says "Va byi khomile hi swandla", from the idiom "ku khoma vutomi hi mandla", meaning their lives are hanging in the balance, which is an indication that they are in constant danger. When they are working underground, the mine can collapse and bury them at anytime. They are not safe at all. In line 3, the poet says "timbilu ti tlutlamile enkolweni", meaning that they are not at ease because they are afraid of the situation they are working in. They are in constant fear for their lives. The area they are working in poses a threat to their wellbeing.

In line 4, the poet says "Mali i sathani", meaning one will do anything, good or bad, for money. These people are forced to go underground and risk their lives because they need money. In line 10, he says "va rahile mabakiti", from the idiom

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"ku raha bakiti" which means to die. He means many mine workers have died on duty, but more and more people still go to work there regardless of the danger. In line 24, the poet uses another idiom, "Byela tsolo", meaning to have nobody to confide in, even when things are difficult. He means that this young man, who is working hard, trying to save money for himself and his parents, does not have anybody to confide in and complain that the wages do not cover his expenses. He has to survive with the little he gets.

5. Va himetela mina - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Mina ndzi fana na mbhongolo.
2. Un'wana na un'wana wo ba mina.
3. Kasi ndzi mi dyohele yini?
4. Hambi ndzo kombela ndzivalelo.
5. A mi ndzi rivaleli.

6. Nhlekanhi mi ba mina.
7. Kumbe ndzi xiphunta xa n'wina xana?
8. **U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta**
9. **Ta micele ta ku vona.**
10. Ndzi be na wena u ta biwa.

11. Nimadyambu mi himetela mina.
12. Ndzi ta ka ndzi lwa,
13. Ndzi ta tirihiseta.
14. Phela a ndzi mbhongolo ya n'wina!
15. Mi ndzi himisa hi swivanhwana swa n'wina.

16. A ndzi mi arisangi ku titirhela;
17. **Ku hluvuka swi huma evusiwaneni.**
18. Tirhani hi mandla mambirhi,

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19. Na n'wina mi ta va switsutsu.
20. Xana mo ndzi himela swa mina ke?
21. Na mina a ndzi xanisekisa sweswo.
22. **Mavondzo a ya hakeri.**

This poem is about a person who, because of his or her hard-earned wealth, is hated by jealous people who do not want to work but go around hurting other people through witchcraft. The poet is saying they must stop harassing him and concentrate on their own affairs, which will make them as successful as he is.

In line 8 and 9 the poet uses the proverb "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta micele ta ku vona", which means that whenever one does bad things to another person, one must know that the same will be done to him/her: What goes around comes around. Here he means that whatever things they do to him, they must know that the day will come when the same will be done to them. In line 17, he says "Ku hluvuka swi huma evusiwaneni", which is also a proverb, meaning hardwork pays or for one to be successful in life one must sacrifice. Through hard work even the poorest of them all can become rich.

In line 22, he concludes by using another proverb, "Mavondzo a ya hakeri", meaning that jealousy does not pay. One cannot get anything by just being jealous of other people who are successful. One needs to work for one's own success and stop hating others.

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6. Kokwana va xisati - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Miri wu karhele naswona wa nembuka.
2. Tinyama ti khanyanile.
3. Nhloko yi basile bya nkuma wa mondzo.
4. Mbilu yi lo paa!
5. Ku rhandza vatukulu be!
6. Lexi a xi dyaka,
7. Na yena ntukulu wa xi dya-vu!
8. Na vona **vana va munhu va tsemelana**
9. **Nhloko ya njiya.**

10. Laha a nga kona,
11. Ximanga na xona a xi kali.
12. Ximanga u xi vula ntukulu wakwe.
13. U xi rhandza ku fana na n'wana.

14. N'wana wa rila;
15. Kokwana u n'wi tumbeta ehansi ka magume.
16. N'wana a miyela.
17. Kokwana i xirhandza-vatukulu.

18. Nimadyambu wa hi hungasa.
19. "Garingani-wa-garingani', se wa garingeta.
20. "Tshayii"! Se wa tshayita.
21. Vana va lo gabaa! Leswa milomo.
22. Tindleve ti lo parii!

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This is a praise poem.The poet praises her grandmother for the active part she has played in the upbringing of her grandchildren at home. Despite her age, she is the provider in the family. She is the shelter and comforter for the young ones. In the evening she narrates stories to them, which makes her the most resourceful person in the family.

In this poem, only one proverb has been used. In lines 8 and 9 "Vana va munhu va tsemelana nhloko ya njiya", meaning siblings share whatever they have, no matter how big or small. This proverb is used because whatever thing the old lady has, she shares with her grandchildren. She never eats alone because she has a natural obligation of taking good care of her grandchildren.

7. Ndleve - Mkhari, *G.O.*

1. Leswinene swi twa hi ndleve.
2. Leswo biha swi twa hi yona.
3. Mhaka ya xihundla yi tiva hi yona.
4. Na to ka ti nga ri ta xihundla hi yona.

5. Yi tshama yi lo pari!
6. Ya ma amukela mahungu ya tindzimi timbe.
7. Yi rhwala hinkwaswo.
8. **A yi hlawuli ndluwa yi siya hove**.

9. Ta rivala ti twiwa hi yona.
10. Nomu i munghana wa ndleve.
11. Ndleve ya yingisela.
12. Kasi nomu wu humesa leswi tweke hi ndleve.

13. Loko yi ri ndleve yi amukela ntiyiso,
14. Hambi ya ri mavunwa ya ma amukela.

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15. **Amba ku nona, ku fa ka yona hi ku twile.**
16. Va ku twile hi yona ndleve.

The poem is about the ear. The poet praises the ear for the good work that it does to the human body. It is a small organ in the human body but it works wonders. The ear hears everything, good or bad, and the mouth acts as the transporter of this news.

In line 8, a proverb is used, where the poet says "A yi hlawuli ndluwa yi siya hove", meaning the ear is not selective. It listens to everything, good or bad. In line 15, the poet says "amba ku nona, ku fa ka yona hi ku twile", which is a proverb meaning provide or give detailed information because we know a little already of what happened. The poet says the ear hears everything.

(f) ***M'kon'wana wa Fika*** **– Marolen, D.P.P.**

1. Ku laya ka mukhegulu - Marolen, D.P.P.

1. Yingisani, n'wina va ka hina;
2. Ndzi huma ekule ka M'khegulu:
3. Ndzi ni milawu ya ku saseka:
4. U ndzi rhume ku mi laya, a ku

5. **"Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela**
6. **Ye n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena."**
7. **"Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni;**
8. **Loko u ri ehandle swa yila."**

9. **"U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta:**
10. **Ta le minceleni ta ku vona."**

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11. Va ri: "Ku nyika I ku hayeka;
12. U ta tlhela kambe u hawula."

13. "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye:
14. N'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti."
15. "A ri swi koti ku nusa hove-
16. "Ritiho rin'we a ri swi koti!"

This poem is built mainly of idioms and proverbs. Line 5 and 6 "Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela ye n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena,7 and 8 "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni, loko u ri ehandle swa yila, 9 and 10 "u nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta le minceleni ta ku vona", 11 and 12 "Ku nyika i ku hayeka, u ta tlhela kambe u hawula, 13 and 14 "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye n'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti", and 15 and 16 "A ri swi koti ku nusa hove - Ritiho rin'we a ri swi koti".

In line 5 and 6, the poet uses a proverb "Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela ye n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena" meaning that a child usually has the characteristics of his/her parents. Children usually do what their parents do. In lines 7 and 8 the poet says "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni; Loko u ri ehandle swa yila" which is a proverb meaning it is not wise for a person to hate or ridicule a handicapped person because one does not know what might happen to one in life. Accidents do happen and as long as a person lives anything can happen to him/her. One must not laugh when another is in trouble.

In lines 9 and 10 he says "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta: Ta le minceleni ta ku vona" which is a proverb, meaning whenever one does bad things to another person, he/she must know that the same will be done to one. Here the poet means that whatever they do to him/her they must know that the day will come when the same will be done to them and it will be painful.

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In lines 11 and 12 he says "Ku nyika i ku hayeka; U ta tlhela kambe u hawula", which means "blessed is the hand that giveth", because when one is generous to other people, other people will also be generous to one.

In lines 13 and 14 the poet says "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye: N'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti" it means if a person asks for food, that person must be hungry. One must offer that person some food. He will eat and be satisfied, but not someone who steals out of greed. In lines 15 and 16, the poet says "A ri swi koti ku nusa hove - Ritiho rin'we a ri swi koti!", which is from the proverb, "rintiho rin'we a ri nusi hove", literaly meaning that one finger alone cannot be able to pick a thing, no matter how small it is. This means that one cannot survive without the assistance of others.

2. Masasani u fele enhoveni - Marolen, D.P.P.

1. Wa ku ondla, u kula swinene:
2. Lok'u kurile, wo n'wi rivala;
3. Wa' ku dyondzisa, se u va nene:
4. Ndzhaku ka swona, se swi herile!
5. Hambi a nga k'endla vunene;
6. Hambi a ku nyika leswo tala;
7. Hamb'a nga ku pfunisa ku yini:
8. U to swi ringene: se n'wi rivala…
    a. *Hambi Yesu, N'wana wa Xikwembu,*
    b. *Va n'wi vambile; va n'wi dlayile…*
    c. Hi tano, he vanhu va misava;
    d. Nawu wa hina i wa misava;
    e. **"Masasan'u fele nhoveni".**
    f. *Kasi hakelo yi le Tilweni.*

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This poem is about a person who was well-brought up by his parents only to be ungreatful when he/she grows up. Now that this person is working he/she has abandoned his/her parents. He/she no longer does or gives them anything, which means their hard labour was in vain.

The title of the poem is "masasani u fele nhoveni", which is repeated in line 8e, which is a proverb meaning the one who helps does not receive the honour he or she deserves. In this instance it is a person who does not have the decency to thank and honour his/her parents for the role they played in his/her life.

2.4. Conclusion

Idioms and proverbs are important literary devices which can pass message with a lot of aesthetic and beauty when used in poetry. Idioms and proverbs assist the poet in making sure that the message they intend to pass to their readership is understood with little difficulty.

From the examples given, it is clear that poetry uses many idioms and proverbs. These idiomatic and proverbial expressions assist the poet to convey his/her message with ease. This is because idioms and proverbs are powerful, well-known powerful expresssions which contain universal truths. It is easy to teach a lesson of life through an idiom or a proverb. Xitsonga poets use idioms and proverbs as an important instrument in many of their poems.

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CHAPTER THREE

3. ANALYSIS OF PROVERBS, IDIOMS, PROVERBIAL PHRASES AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN XITSONGA POEMS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Idioms and proverbs are didactical in nature and teach lessons of life by expressing a moral or a moral ideal which is not particularly difficult to attain but which is rather a summing up of everyday experience.They are practical in significance, and suggest a course of action to be followed in a given situation. In some cases, they may be said to pass judgement on a particular situation. This is the reason why they were often used in traditional tribal courts.

For the purposes of this study, these uses of idioms and proverbs will be revealed by looking at some of the poems analysed in the previous chapter. This will help us understand their vital role in society and help us understand the need for them to be preserved, which is the main aim of this study.

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3.2. THE ROLE OF IDIOMS AND PROVERBS IN POETRY

3.2.1 Mbita ya Nsuku - Nxumalo W.S. and Maluleke N.J.

3.2.1.1 Kuwa ro tshwuka – Chauke, M.O.

This poem is a warning to all men to be careful of promiscuous women who because of their physical beauty attract every man around, only to use them. These women suck all the men's belongings and when they are left with nothing, they dump them for other men. The title of this poem, "kuwa ro tshwuka", is a proverbial phrase from the proverb "kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni", which literally translates to "A ripe fig is full of worms". The poet compares beautiful women to a fig which, because of its yellow to red colour and sweetness, attracts all sort of insects, animals, birds and people.

Because of their attractive colour, people tend to forget that inside these very succulent, ripe figs there might be worms. The poet warns people that it is these beautiful, light-in-complexion women who attract most men, but they are also the most likely to have multiple partners.

The poet used proverbs in conveying the lesson that a beautiful woman might be full of trouble. When one marries a beautiful woman one must know that one might be inviting trouble for oneself. The proverb "Mpingu va ringetela emakatleni" teach people that one will not know if one will fail or not until one tries doing it. It is only when a person stands up to do something that one realises whether the task before him/her is difficult or not.

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3.2.1.2 16 June 1976 - Ndobe, M.D.

This poem is a summary of everyday experience. It is about the heroic death of a young black or African boy who was shot and killed by the apartheid security forces in Soweto in June 16, 1976 when school learners were revolting against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction.

The poet used an idiomatic expression "Leri pfimbeke nhloko", which comes from the idiom "Ku pfimba nhloko" which means to have a swollen head, meaning to be knowledgable about many things. The poet refers to the fact that the boy was a very intelligent and politically active person. This is an idiom, and according to Guma (1967:66), an idiom sometimes does not have a lesson to teach but is a sign of wisdom.

The idiom used "vantima a va hlome hi mbhayimbhayi", meaning Blacks were not armed but were faced with the challenge of fighting White security forces who were armed with guns and hand-grenades. Blacks, on the other hand, were armed with mere dustbin lids and stones. This teaches us that in life one has to suffer and struggle in order to achieve whatever goal one intends achieving. This is also supported by the line which says "Va swarha", which comes from an idiom, "ku swarha", which means to be ugly. He is referring to the fact that when more people were killed by the security forces, blacks became angrier, wanting to fight back for the sake of the dead. They had to fight with more power and without any retreat. Blacks had to endure very harsh situations to attain their freedom, rights and dignity.

3.2.1.3 Nandzu i wa mani? - Malungana, M.

This poem is about a young man who is faced with a situation where he fell in love with his half-sister, impregnated her, only to discover that she was his father's secret illegitimate daughter. The proverb "Hambi wo famba enkoveni

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lundza ri ta vonaka", teaches us that there is no way in which a secret can remain hidden forever. Every secret has a way of coming out. One day it will come out and be known by everybody. This is supported by the idiom "ku boxa tshumba", to drain a boil, which means to reveal a secret. It means that once a person has a boil, there is no way it can disappear except being pierced and drained. This teaches us that a secret cannot be kept forever.

The idiomatic expression "Mati ya halakile", means things have gone bad. This is derived from a proverb which says that "when water is spilled one cannot gather it again and be able to put it back into the container. This is a crucial lesson in people's lives. People must learn that everything they do cannot be undone; one has to face the consequences.

3.2.1.4 Patu ra N1 hi 24 N'wendzamhala - Malungana, M.

This poem is about the situation faced by North-bound drivers on the N1 national road during the Christmas vacation, when the road is congested and traffic is slow. Traffic officials are everywhere, keeping an eye on every wrong move on the side of the drivers. Drivers are frustrated by this hectic situation. However, they are compelled to obey all the rules and regulations of the road. People are warned by this poem that no matter how difficult a situation is, one must learn to be patient.

In this poem an idiom is used in line 4, where the poet says "va pfimbe machelele", from an idiom "ku pfimba chelele", which means to be angry. Drivers using the N1 road during this particular period are angry because of the large traffic volume and stoppages created by the traffic cops who want to check the roadworthiness of all the vehicles on the road. The motorists are angered by the fact that they are in a hurry to see their loved ones whom they have not seen for many months. The lesson here is that there is no need for one to panic because

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in so doing one will just hurt oneself, like a chicken which, when its crop is full and swollen, feels the pain.

The phrase "va funya buwa" is also an idiom, meaning they die. Surprisingly, it is used humorously to mean that most people lose their lives on the roads during the holiday periods because accidents increase due to impatience on the roads, where you find drivers overtaking even in areas they are not supposed to overtake. This teaches us to be patient during hectic times and situations. If we are not, we could pay with our lives. This is emphasised by "va khome timbilu", from the proverb "ku khoma mbilu", meaning to be much afraid or to be scared of something. Drivers are scared of this situation because it is very tense and one is not sure whether one will reach one's destination safely or not.

The idiomatic expression "va humesa mahlo", meaning that they are very watchful, teaches us to be extra careful whilst driving, because they do not want to make any mistake on the road as they want to arrive home safely. Everybody wants to arrive home on time but the traffic congestion makes it very difficult and it frustrates everyone. The poem teaches us that we must learn to be patient in every situation until we are sure of what we want to do.

3.2.1.5 Dzinga-muti - Ngobeni, J.

The poem is about a mature lady who does not want to get married. She is advised to get married before it is too late. This lady goes around gossiping about other people's marriage problems. She is advised to get married to keep herself occupied and stop gossiping.

The use of the idiom "Ku ku dlaya tindleve" means to say something which is above one's cognitive level, making it difficult for one to understand the meaning. Its purpose is to educate people that when one is interested in other peoples' secrets or matters, one ends up losing one's sense of hearing. The poem seeks

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to discourage people from doing so. The poet advises the lady who does not want to get married that she is setting a bad example for her peers. He says she is making it difficult for her to be part of the discussions as she knows nothing about marriage. A person should hang around her peers.

In reference to the role played by this person, the poet again uses another idiom in line 6 where he says, "Ku chachamisa van'wani", which literally means to fry someone. Idiomatically, it means to gossip about someone or to talk badly about someone. This lady, although not married herself, enjoys gossiping about other people's marital issues and problems. She goes around telling people about other people's issues.The lesson here is that it is not good for one to go around gossiping about other people's lives and love affairs. People must learn to focus on their own affairs.

3.2.1.6 Dzovo ra mhisi - Marhanele, M.M.

This poem is about a person who, during the day potrays himself/herself as a kind and humble person but at night goes around bewitching other people mercilessly. During the act he/she forgets even his/her friends and relatives and does not have mercy on anyone.

To show his/her lack of mercy and generosity, the poet uses an idiomatic expression "Loko a ta ku teka u swi twa", meaning to hit someone very hard. This is an indication that when you are with him/her you will not believe that he/she can do such cruel things until he/she does them to you.

To emphasise this, the poet uses another idiom, "u koka no posa tibomo ta vuloyi", meaning that he/she throws 'bombs of whithcraft' meaning he/she bewitches everybody without any consideration, just like a bomb. The lesson we learn here is that we must not judge a book by its cover. Likewise, it is not wise to trust persons by their physical appearances or the way they behave around us,

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without knowing what they are capable of doing when no one is around or looking.

3.2.1.7 Kasi ku humelela yini? - Mongwe, S.

This poem is a concern about life changes in the behaviour of the young generation, where the youths no longer care about their future. They do not go to school and they are disrespectful to the elders. They are advised to be serious about life and attend school.

The idiom "ku khoma nyarhi hi timhondzo", meaning to be in deep trouble, teaches us a valuable lesson of life. It says when one invites trouble to oneself; it is like holding a buffalo by its horns. When you let go of those horns you are dead and it is not possible to hold them forever, meaning trouble is unavoidable. The youths have invited trouble for themselves by not wanting to attend school, not respecting their elders and not caring about their future and well-being. They have to face the consequences of their actions.

The idiom "ku phohla hi makhwati", means not to be in good order or not taking control of a situation. The poet wants to teach us that is not good for one to not take good care of one's things because there will be problems. By this the poet refers to the fact that the youth can no longer take good care of themselves. They do things which are detrimental to their health, like taking drugs and alcohol. They are supposed to be the future leaders but they are destroying their lives. The poem is a concern that they cannot run this country. Their lives are ruined.

The phrase "va ba milawu" is an idiomatic expression derived from the idiom "ku ba milawu", meaning to lay down the rules and regulations. Traditionally, this is the role played by adults for the young ones. However, in this situation it is the youths who are laying down the rules and regulations for their parents. This is an

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indication that things are not in order. This idiom teaches us that the adults must not shift their responsibility to the youths to lead them but they have to lead the children through their experience and actions.

The idiom "ku yima hi nenge" means to go on strike or to march. In the struggle terminology, it is known as to "toyi-toyi", which refers to what the youth do when they demand something and they do not get it. They go on strike hoping it will force their parents or teachers to give in to their demands. The poet is saying that it is not wise to try and get things by force. This does not show any sense of responsibility because wise people sit down whenever there is a problem.

The idiom "ti haka rimintsu" is from the idiom "ku haka rimintsu", which means things are difficult or not possible. The poet means that the children fail their examinations at the end of the year as they do not want to study because they skip classes. The poet advises people that hard work pays, but laziness produces nothing but hunger. The idiom "va nga yima kahle", comes from "ku yima kahle", which means to be well-off or rich. It teaches us that a person must fend for oneself and not depend on their parents' wealth because wealth does not last forever.

The poet emphasises this with the idiom "va swi ba hi makatla" meaning to ignore. He uses the proverb "vukosi i mberha", to mean that like dew which disappears when the sun rises, wealth also disappears or comes to an end. The poet says although the children know that wealth does not last forever, they tend to conveniently forget it or simply ignore it, believing that their parents' wealth will last forever.

The proverb "ku veleka i ku huma moya", which means giving birth is sometimes futile or undesirable, which implies that children do not always do as their parents want or do not follow the lead of their parents. Children usually live their lives as

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they wish, without any care. The poet teaches us to obey our parents' orders and follow their lead for a happy and long life.

The idiom "ku songa rigogo ra ha tsakama" means to do something timeously and not wait for the last moment, teaches us that parents must try to guide their children when they are still young and not to wait until they are old and can no longer be taught anything. One must use time at one's disposal and not wait until it is gone, and then start crying when it is too late for one to do anything.

3.2.1.8 Polokwane – Malungana, M.

This is a praise poem where the poet praises the city of Polokwane, formely known as Pietersburg, which has now acquired a new democratic name. Polokwane is the capital city of Limpopo Province and it is the house of all the political activities of the province.

The idiom "tiko a xi etleri", which in full is "tiko a xi etleri ku etlela fusi mangumani", means that a country is always full of activities and news never stands still. By this the poet refers to the fact that things keep changing, from the apartheid era, where nobody believed that things would change from being westernised to being Africanised. Polokwane, which was formerly known as Pietersburg, a Western name, has been given an African name. People must learn that every new day comes with new possibilities and challenges. As a result, a person must learn to accept and adapt to changes and live with them.

The phrase "Ku chukiwa kona tinjhovo", from the idiom "ku chuka njhovo", meaning to discuss issues or matters, derived from the proverb "njhovo yi chukiwa ehubyeni", indicating that in Polokwane it is where the governance of the province is located and all the matters of the province are discussed. Although the poem does not teach us any lesson, it shows the wit of the poet and his/her command of the language. He adds by saying "Ku peperhiwa kona timhaka", "Ti

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thya kona nchuva", and "A chachamisa kona timhaka" which are also idioms meaning Polokwane is where the matters of the province are discussed.

3.2.1.9 Tshengwe ra lerhisa - Marhanele, M.M.

This poem is about polygamy where men are cautioned about having more than one wife. The poet states that polygamy had its times, where men were heads of the families The poet argues that nowadays with women's rights and the high food prices, it is not advisable for a man to have more than one wife because doing so would be inviting trouble for oneself.

The idiom "u ta twa u nga twi" meaning to be in great pain or be in great danger, teaches us that marrying more than one wife is a difficult task in which one will always be solving problems. The poet states that it is a situation which is not desirable because one will have to live in constant pain. The idiom "ku wela xitafu" meaning to take things for granted teaches us that polygamy is not child's play; it needs someone with a strong character because it is not an easy task.

The idiom "ku ba xinari" (to play a guitar), meaning to be in charge or to take control of the situation, teaches us that unlike in the olden days where a man was the real head of the family, these days it is not advisable to do so. In the olden days the wife was only supposed to listen to whatever the man said without saying a word. However, currently things are completely different: women are in full control of the family. Therefore it is not advisable for one to have more than one wife. The woman's voice is also heard, so a man can no longer do as he pleases.

By using the idiomatic expression "... vo orha ndzilo wa xitiko xin'we" from the idiom "ku orha xitiko xin'we" meaning to be friends or relatives or to live harmoniously, the poet teaches us that it is no longer possible for modern women to live together or to be married to one man and live together in harmony, whilst

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sharing a husband. Every woman wants to have her own husband and family, where she will be the head of the family, not a secondary wife.

3.2.1.10 U yimele yini? - Ngope, T.A.

This poem is about a young man who does not want to work who is advised to go out and look for a job before it is too late. The poet says the man is growing old and time is running out. This poem is an advice to all those people who do not want to work, thinking that they still have plenty of time at their disposal. They are advised that time waits for nobody, so young men have to act as soon as possible.

The expression "ti pandza mananga ya sala ya hlanganile", is an idiomatic expression from the idiom "ku pandza mananga ya sala ya hlangana" meaning to run to a faraway place without leaving a trace. He means that time is moving so fast for this young man to stay idle. In order for him to conform, the young man has to grab the available opportunity and work when time is still on his side because time wasted is never regained and procrastination is the thief of time. It is true that in life one must make good use of all the available opportunities.

The use of the idiom "ku luma ndleve" which means to advise someone, supports the fact that he wants to advise him about the realities of life before it is too late. This is also applicable to anybody who reads this poem. They are advised about the reality of life, that is, for one to achieve whatever one needs in life, one has to work for it while time permits. The expression "u ta dya swa nyuku wa wena" is a biblical idiomatic expression which teaches us that everyone must first work before he or she can get something.

The idiomatic expression "yi hume u ya juluka" meaning that one has to go and look for a job to earn a good living teaches us that one must sweat for one to get what one wants in life; there are no short cuts. This is supported by the

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expression "U nga tikhomi rihlaya" from the idiom "Ku tikhoma rihlaya" meaning to pity oneself. The poet means the young man must not just sit around and pity himself and expect people and God to provide for him; rather, he must stand on his feet and work. This is what any person should do, go out there and find a job and work instead of having self-pity.

Using another idiom, he adds "u nga songi mandla" from "ku songa mandla" meaning to sit and fold ones arms, which is an indication that one is doing nothing. The poet teaches us that a person must work instead of just sitting back, not doing anything. He further says that a person must hurry because time waits for no one, by saying that one must make sure that one wakes up as early as possible to go to work. The poet adds, "tsevukela", which means that a person has to work for himself when there is still time because nobody lives forever. These are all lessons of life.

3.2.1.11 Vukati i mbilu - Magayisa, J.M.

In this poem the poet uses many proverbs and idiomatic expressions. The title of the poem is a proverb, "vukati i mbilu", which means marriage is full of hiccups and therefore needs someone with a strong heart, who can endure some problems sometimes. The idioms used in this poem are not didactic, and do not teach any moral lesson except to express a fundamental truth about life. These are some witty and humorous expressions in the poem, which are connected to a particular phrase. Some proverbs are bare statements of facts.

The idiom "Loko ri xile i ku byi chuncha" from the idiom "ku byi chuncha" meaning to drink excessively, means instead of going to work, this man goes on a drinking spree from morning until late in the afternoon on a daily basis. "Va hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza" means children are starving because they do not have food as their father is jobless and not providing anything for them. In order to get food, they have to carry children from wealthy families on their backs. They feed off

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scraps. These are true facts of life. Some children are forced to do menial jobs for some little food due to poverty.

The idiom "va ambala tatana va hlova hi manana" means they do not have any clothes to wear as there is nobody to buy them. Another idiom says "u dya a khigela" which means he is extremely rich to refer to the rich child who gives these poor children some food after they have carried him on their backs.

The poet used the idiom "ku handza n'hwari" which means that there is nobody home to indicate that the father has gone on a drinking spree, whilst the wife has gone to look for work to support her children, and the children are looking for some food also; so there is nobody home.

The expression "ndlala yi dyondzisa vana xikolo xa ritiho" from the idiom "ku va na ritiho" which means to be a thief has been used humorously to mean these children are forced to steal because of hunger; their neighbours no longer give them food because they are tired of feeding them daily. They therefore become thieves due to hunger. The idiom "u bava a khalakhasa" means he does not want to hear anything; he is very angry. He does not want to hear anything because he can no longer refund the lobola.The woman's father does not want her to come back home because he has used the man's lobola. This is stated in a humorous manner.

The proverb "Vukati i mbilu" teaches us that one has to have a strong heart to be able to withstand the hardships of married life. Marriage is characterised by many hiccups; so one has to be able to endure them.

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3.2.1.12 Ra Dzindza - Ngobeni, B.

This poem is about family violence which is currently rife in South Africa, where men, especially policemen, commit suicide after killing the whole family.The poem is trying to address this problem by cautioning men to address family crises in a peaceful and amicable way.

In this poem the poet has used idiomatic expressions. The expression "Yi khome hi rintukulu" which means to be shaking or when not stable shows that families are no longer stable and there is fear from both the parents and children that every misunderstanding in the family could lead to killings. This is also expressed by the idiom "yi orha switiko swa khombo" meaning to be in great danger. The poet indicates that households are no longer safe places where children were raised and taught good morals but an area where one can expect death at any time.

The idiom "ku khoma timbilu" meaning to be scared" indicates that in many families everyone lives with fear because they know they are no longer safe with their husbands around. They know that it is just a matter of time before a quarrel starts, which could lead to suicide and killings. This is emphasised by another idiom "ku handza n'hwari" which means nobody is home. All the inhabitants have been killed. This is the real situation. One finds a family which looked happy the previous day and dead the following day.

The expression "Yi minya ku minya" from an idiom "ku minya" meaning that a very big fight has started reveals that when a quarrel starts it ends up in a big fight where the husband and wife fight fiercely resulting in death.

The expression "u ri xa nhwari loko un'wana a ku xa kengere" is a proverb meaning to disagree due to lack of respect. This is the situation which promotes these killings because women nowadays no longer have respect for their

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husbands and they know that if she reports the matter to the police the law will rule in favour of the woman. In the event of a divorce the man will lose all his belongings, which will be given to the wife. The man, therefore, believes that to avoid all the embarassment it is better to end his life together with that of the wife who is the cause. He also wants to kill the children to avoid a situation where they would be orphans with nobody to take care of. This is a valuable lesson of life. People must learn to respect others' opinions and wives must be submissive to their husbands for the sake of peace within families.

The expression "va dyela enghinghiyeni" from an idiom "ku dyela cheleleni", means to be in trouble or to lack peace.These people are no longer living in peace within their families. This is the state of affairs in most families where the husbands have access to guns, whether it is service pistols or personal rifles. This is because they know that one day he can turn against them. This is an indication that things are no longer peaceful and something should be done about this painful situation. Men need to learn to love their wives and women must stay faithful to their husbands.

The proverb "Swihlungwani swi fihle swo tala" means that each household has its own problems. It expresses that there is no family without a problem. One should not allow a family misunderstanding or debate to lead one to killing oneself or one's family because wherever there are people, there is a quarrel or disagreement. However, these should not mean the end of someone's life.

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3.2.1.13 Xinkwa xa hosi - Malungana, S.J.

In this poem the poet challenges life in the new democratic dispensation in South Africa where corruption is the order of the day. In order to get help anywhere, one is expected to pay a bribe. One must always give something in return.

The idiomatic expressions "xi beriwa mati", has been used to mean that for everything you can bribe someone. If you want to get anything in life you have to put money down before you can get it. This is supported by the idiomatic expression "U ta dya ku vona" meaning that if you do not have a bribe you will not get assistance in any form from anyone and "Hi le mahlweni ka nghala u fanele ku ya na xisana" meaning that wherever you go for assistance you must be in a possession of a bribe because if you do not, you will not be assisted.
The poet also used the idiomatic expression "hi bela swipitikopo mati" meaning whenever a driver comes across a traffic cop on duty or off duty, one must give him or her something to avoid traffic fines. He also adds "hi hlenga vutomi", meaning that people are forced to pay a bribe because if they do not comply, they could end up being charged for an offence that they could have avoided.

The phrase "yi ta mila milenge" which is from the idiom "ku mila milenge" means to be stolen or to disappear. It refers to the fact that when one pays a bribe after being arrested, the docket is stolen or disappears. This is supported by the phrase "yi bile magoza yo nyawula" from the idiom "ku ba goza" meaning to run away. In this case, it means that after paying a bribe, the docket disappears without a trace.

The phrase "Nhlokohliso wa swivutiso wo pfala mahlo" which is from the idiom "ku pfala mahlo" meaning to make a person blind or to deceive someone is used to illustrate that an interview is just conducted to let people think a successful candidate did so fairly.

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3.2.1.14 I mhangu - Marhanele, M.M.

The poem is about a rich person, who is now broke because of his lifestyle. As a result of his wealth, he married many wives, had many children but is now suffering because all his wealth is gone. His wives are also gone and he is left with many children without their mothers, where he is forced to fend for them.

The expression "murhi wa tindleve hi tshwetile" from the idiom "ku tshweta murhi wa tindleve" means the man had been warned but he did not listen. Because of his ignorance he is now suffering. This is supported by the expression "ndleve yona u lumiwile" from the idiom "ku luma ndleve" meaning to alert someone as he has been warned about the dangers of having many wives.

The poet used the idiomatic expression "ku dyiwa tinhwala" meaning that they are very poor, to indicate that they have nothing to eat. The food cannot satisfy them because they are too many. The idiom "a pfale tindleve", meaning to block one's ears so that one does not hear means he did not open his ears or listen when he was advised. He will therefore have to face the consequences.

The phrase "u koka ku tika" from the idiom "ku koka ku tika" means to be in a difficult situation. It means he is now facing hardships. The situation he is in now is unbearable. The fact that he brought this upon himself is expressed by the expression "mhangu ku tilavela" meaning that he has brought all this to himself; no one caused it but himself.

3.2.1.15 Nawu wa ntumbuluko - Marhanele, M.M.

Marhanele complains in this poem. He is not happy about what gay people are doing. He says what they are doing is against the will of God. Some people are committing a crime of bestiality, which is not God's design. The expression "Ndzi lava ku ba bembele" from the idiom "ku ba bembele" which means to warn

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people about the wrongs being done, indicates that the poet wants to warn people about what some people or men are doing: bestiality, in particular that what they are doing is not good and should not be done because it is immoral and a disgrace to human life.

The expression "Mi nga tihlanganisi nhloko" from an idiom "ku hlangana nhloko" meaning to be mentally encapacitated or mad indicates that those who are carrying out these criminal acts, act as if they are not normal but they are normal enough to differentiate between good and bad. They are well aware of their activities; it is only that they choose to commit this criminal conduct.

To indicate that the poet is not impressed by what gay people are doing, he says "n'wina ti-Gay mi hi dlamula timbilu" from the idiom "ku dlamula timbilu" meaning to induce vomiting. He says that what is being done by people of same gender marriages is disgusting and is a disgrace to human nature. The expression "mi nga yimisi tiko hi milenge' from the idiom "ku yima hi nenge" meaning to be restless, means that what is done by gay people brings bad luck to the nation and is unacceptable.

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3.2.2 Ntswamba ni Vulombe - Malungana, M and Ngobeni, R.

3.2.2.1 Mpfula ya 2000 - Malungana, M.

The poem is about the floods of the year 2000, where many people lost their lives and many houses were destroyed. Roads and infrastructure were also destroyed. The expression "Vanhu a va dyela enghangheni", from the idiom "ku dyela echeleleni", meaning to be uncomfortable refers to the situation where people were no longer comfortable due to the heavy rains. People were no longer sure whether they would live to see the next day.

The phrase "a va ri hava ko hoxa nhloko", from the idiom "ku hoxa nhloko" or "ko fihla nhloko", means to have a roof over one's head or to have a home or house for shelter. In this poem he means that people's houses were destroyed by the floods, so most people were left homeless. The expression "a va lata rimbambu etikerekeni' from the idiom "Ku lata rimbambu", meaning to sleep, also shows that people were left homeless and were compelled to sleep in churches and schools.

The expression "Swi khome xivixivi", an idiom meaning to be in danger or trouble shows that motor cars or vehicles were in trouble because roads were slippery and muddy making it difficult for them to move. The phrase "Mfumo wu ringetile ku humesa swo miyeta nyoka" from the idiom "Swo miyeta nyoka", meaning food or to have something to eat indicates that the government tried to assist people with food, but it was not enough as the damage was great.

The expression "...a va sungurile ku hlaya tinyeleti" from the idiom "Ku hlaya tinyeleti", means to go to bed on a hungry stomach. The poet says people do not have food to eat as everything was destroyed by the rains. The poet repeats the fact that people were homeless by saying "...a va ri hava ko fihla nhloko", from the idiom "ku fihla nhloko" meaning to hide one's head or a place to sleep.

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People were left stranded as they had no place to sleep after their houses were destroyed by the heavy rains.

To indicate that the rain was intense the poet adds by saying "Mpfula leyi a yi tsema nhlana" from the idiom "Ku tsema nhlana" meaning to be terrified or to be scary. He means the floods or heavy rains were devastating and people were scared for their lives. As indicated that idioms do not have any didactical use, the poet used them to help the reader understand the state of affairs during that period.

3.2.2.2 Rirhandzu - Malungana, M.

This poem is about love. The poet is warning people about love and that it is very rare to find true love. In most cases people are made to believe that they are in love when they are not. The proverb "swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", means in every household there are some secrets and problems concealed in the inhabitants' hearts. This educates us that there is no single household which is free from problems and quarrels.

The idiom "misava yi yime hi nenge un'we" means that people are restless because they are no longer experiencing true love. Instead there is only deceit and lack of heartfelt love. The poet states that lack of true love in many families is the cause of feuds in the community. The idiom "munhu a nga ku xevisa hi ririmi ra mbhongolo", teaches us that you should not trust a person because he or she is capable of making empty promises. People are no longer trustworthy. They are full of lies and deceit. The expression "Munhu a nga ku mamisa tintiho", from the idiom "Ku mamisa rintiho" meaning to make a fool of someone teaches us that a person is capable of putting a smiling face, whereas deep inside the heart he or she is full of hatred. People are not what they usually seem. That is, looks deceive. Therefore one should not judge a book by its cover.

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3.2.2.3 Ndzo rheta - Malungana, M.

This poem is about a man who has committed adultery and had an extra-marital affair which resulted in the birth of a child. This has brought division within his family because his wife wants nothing to do with the child. He is also worried because the ancestors will be angry with him because they want this child to be brought up in a home where he/she will be protected.

The expression "Ndzi tlhontlhe mimpfi" from the idiom "ku tlhontlha mimpfi", (to stir a wasps' nest), means to start a quarrel, which means that by having a child outside his marriage this man has landed into trouble. This idiom is derived from the fact that a wasp is a poisonous and dangerous insect. If it bites you, you will feel a stinging pain. It is not wise for a person to bother wasps when they are in their nest. The idiom "Hi nuhana makhehele", means they are quarrelling. It is a skilful use of language and is used to hide the true meaning of the phrase from people who are not native speakers of Xitsonga language.

The expression "ndzi boxe swinon'wana ehandle", which is from the idiom "ku boxa swinon'wana", means that a person has borne children. It teaches us that a parent must take good care of his/her children because he or she is the one who brought these children to the earth, so he or she has to feed them. The saying "mutshiveri u dya ndzilo" means the wife is extremely angry about his husband's extra-marital affairs. It helps us understand that extra marital affairs are not good for our families.

The fact that she does not even want to see the child is shown by the idiomatic expression "A nga lavi ku swi vona hi mahlo", which indicates that she hates them whole-heartedly. This is also supported by the expression "Hambiloko ndzi khotsa ncila", from the idiom "ku khotsa ncila", meaning to humble oneself, meaning that even when he humbles himself, she does not want to hear anything about those children. She also does not want to forgive him and accept the

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children. In line 8, he says "va phahliwa eswigodweni", from the idiom "ku phahliwa eswigodweni", meaning that instead of their rituals being performed in the family shrine, they are sacrificed outside on a dry stump of a dead tree, meaning that they are not welcomed. Even the ancestors do not know them.

The expression "va toviwa hi va le hansi", from the idiom "ku toviwa", means they are always sick. Therefore sacrificial rituals have to be performed for them so that the ancestors can watch over them and protect them from evil spirits, "swikwembu a swi etlelangi" means the ancestors are not happy about the situation because some of their grandchildren are not in the household, where they can be protected and "ndzi pfuxe swikwembu", meaning that the ancestors are restless. This is an indication that there is no peace in the family. The idiom teaches men to respect and honour their wives and children and to be faithful.

The phrase "ndzi chela fole" from the idiom "ku chela fole" means to perform sacrificial rituals to appease the ancestors in order to make peace with one's ancestors. The poet says even when he performs rituals for the gods; they do not listen because he has done something wrong. The expression "ku rheta ka hina vavanuna" from the idiom "ku rheta", meaning to make a mistake, shows that men are no longer respected. He adds to this by stating that "... ku hi humesa moya" meaning that it spoiled him. He is no longer a respectable father and husband. This gives us a moral lesson to take responsibility for our actions. Before we involves ourselves in any activity we have to check if what we are doing will yield good results or bad ones. We must check whether it will make us gain respect or will make us lose it.

3.2.2.4 Xiyila - Malungana, M

In this poem the poet advises people to respect and honour traditional taboos instead of undermining them. The poet states that lack of respect for these taboos is the main cause of misfortunes and early death. He further indicates that

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honouring and respecting traditional culture is what makes people live longer and is the backbone of a strong nation.

The expression "matwe ma hanyisa, mavona ya dlaya", teaches people that it is better to take advice rather than experience misfortunes first before doing so. The poet is saying people need to learn from other peoples' experiences and mistakes. The idiom "ku mhoo!" meaning to say something without beating about the bush, means a person needs to accept what he/she is told. People cannot be forced to say things directly for the sake of someone who does not want to examine the real meaning of what is said.

The idiom "ku pfumala timhondzo" from proverb "Mangwa yi pfumale timhondzo hi ku rhumisa", meaning that a zebra has no horns because, instead of going to pick up its horns, it sent someone else to do so, and ended up not getting them to this day.This is a great lesson of life because if one wants things to be done correctly and faultlessly, one must do them personally. The expression "u tiomisa nhloko" from the idiom "ku tiomisa nhloko" meaning to be stubborn, and take time to act on what one is told, indicates to us that it is not wise to be stubborn because one day one will find oneself in danger, when taking advice would have avoided the danger. This is supported by the expression "u ta hlangana na xa ncila wa bulubulu", meaning to be in great danger.

The idiom "ku komba xiyila xikosi" means one does not want to observe traditional taboos, beliefs and culture. The poem teaches us that one must not abandon one's own cultural beliefs due to others' religious beliefs because one's culture is of great value in one's life and wellbeing.

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3.2.2.5 Mubya - Ngobeni, R.

This poem is about children in families. The poet is saying that for a marriage to be strong and successful there must be a child. The child will bring joy and happiness to the parents, grandparents and the community at large.

The proverb "Mubya wu nyukisa xitiko xa ndyangu" means that in a family if there is a child, the family will be full of joy and happiness. The poem teaches us that for a marriage to be successful there must be children within it. Many men prefer women who give them children to make their clan grow. This is supported by the expression "wu dzima timintsu", which is an idiom, meaning to be settled. It explains that if a woman bears a child, especially a first child, her marriage is strengthened.

To show that having a child in the family brings joy to the family, he states "wu dikida ndyangu" from the idiom "ku dikida", meaning to please someone. This is supported by the proverb "... tshanga ra tihomu ri tiya hi ra marhole" meaning that for a marriage to be strong, children must be there. The idiom 'ku cinamisiwa meno" which means to show one's teeth, is a sign of happiness. It means that when a child is born everybody is happy within the family.

The idiom "nhlungu ya vele yi boxiwa" means by getting the firstborn child, the woman's teats are opened for the first time as the child starts suckling. This is a joyful experience for the mother who breastfeeds her child, and to the family as a whole. This poem teaches us that a child is a mother-pleaser.The idiom "ku dyiwa rihojahoja" is an idiom from the traditional ritual ceremony performed for a child when he/she is taken out of the house for the first time. This ritual is performed by children who are given cooked corn which they have to eat whilst dancing around the house, hitting the child with those corns. This is a helpful activity which is a cultural performance. This is followed by "ku nga boxiwa

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xinon'wana ka!" which is from the idiom "ku boxa nomu" meaning to give birth. He means the whole family is in jubiliation because a child is born in the family.

The expression "xuma a xi boheleriwanga enengeni wa mpfuvu", from the proverb "ku bohelela cuma enengeni wa mpfuvu" literally means to lose all your wealth in a silly or stupid way. In this instance means that by giving birth to a child, the woman is showing her worth to the family. Thus, their lobola money has not been paid for a useless person, who cannot add any value to the family name. In this we learn that one must always get value for one's money. It is not wise for a person to squander their hard-earned cash.

3.2.2.6 Kasi u dyohe yini wena Afrika? - Ngobeni, R.

In this poem the poet is lamenting the bad things which are happening on the African continent, where wars, diseases, floods and famine are tearing the continent apart. People are dying like flies daily. The poet is pleading with our beloved Lord to turn his face towards Africa and rescue the poor continent from the raging wars and natural disasters.

This poem is full of idioms which have been used to emphasise what is happening in Africa. Although not educational, the idioms are strong signs of the poet's command over the Xitsonga language. The phrases "va tshama hi rhanga ro hisa" from the idiom "ku tshama hi rhanga ro hisa", means to be suffering. It means that Africans are suffering due to the many problems which beset the continent. There is no peace as the continent is characterised by wars, diseases and natural disasters. The idiom "va yime hi swikun'wana" means to be uncomfortable, where the poet says in Africa there is no time to relax because of unrest. There is no peace. Everybody is running for dear life. People are migrating from one country to another due to civil wars, starvation and natural disasters. These are all examples of witful language use.

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The expression "Va sale misiha ya nhlokwa", which is an idiom meaning to be thin or to be lean, indicates that people are "just skeletons" because they are starving. Children are dying of malnutrition because their parents were killed by wars, malaria, Ibola and HIV (AIDS). In line 10 he says "ngati yi halaka siku na siku", which means people are dying daily. There are brutal killings and civil wars. People are dying in great numbers.

The idiom "ya hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza", means in many African countries people are suffering. There is hunger and starvation and "u khome nyarhi hi timhondzo" an idiom meaning to be in great danger or having a lot of problems refers to the fact that Africa is full of troubles. People are always fighting for power. Some are dying of starvation; in some countries there are brutal killings propelled by tribal conflicts, religious quarrels and ritual murders.

The expression "va etlela va hlaya tinyeleti" from the idiom "ku etlela u hlaya tinyeleti" means to be hungry. It indicates that a lot of people are dying of hunger due to lack of food in their countries. The poet is referring to countries such as Somalia and Rwanda, where people, especially young children, are dying of starvation. The proverb "va vambe ngoma" meaning to be ready for any action means agencies such as the Red Cross Foundation are always ready and prepared to come in and help the victims because there is always something happening in Africa. Africa is never free of disasters. These expressions are an indication that the poet is proficient in the language.

The idiomatic expression "ti tsema nhlana" means what is happening in Angola, Burundi, Somalia, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is dreadful and painful. People are dying like flies due to starvation, natural disasters and genocides which are taking place in these African countries. The expressions "Yehovha Xikwembu khoma Afrika xikatla", is an idiom meaning to help or to give a helping hand to someone and "Makhombo ya Afrika a ya kumi ndzhuti ya wisa", meaning Africa's troubles and sufferings must come to an end.

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This means God should make Africa a happy and peaceful continent. He must also stop Africa's wars, hunger, drought and floods.

3.2.3 *Vutomi byi hundzulerile* S.J. Malungana and M.T. Babane

3.2.3.1 Nkuwa – Babane M.T.

This poem is about a child who is advised to take good care of his/her parents now that he is working and he is what he is today because of their good care. Now that he is educated, living a joyful and sophisticated life, he no longer cares about his parents. He/she is advised not to make that mistake because he is what he/she is today because of his/her parents' hard labour.

The expression "u n'wi kombile xikosi" from the idiom "ku komba xikosi", means to neglect something. It is a warning to young men that it is not good for one to forget one's parents. It is supported by "u n'wi lahlele mandla" from the idiom "ku lahlela mandla", meaning to neglect someone and not wanting to help anybody. Parents as our bearers must be treated with the respect they deserve and be taken good care of.

The expression "Nyuku wa vona wu hundzuke wa mbyana" which is from the proverb "nyuku wa mbyana wu helela voyeni" refers to the sweat of a dog which ends in its fur, meaning following a hard chase after an animal, the dog is not rewarded except for some meatless hard bones. It teaches us that the good work done by our parents must not be in vain but must be rewarded with care and honour. The phrase "swi ku ondlile, swi ondli-vu!" which is a proverb "xi ondli xi ta ku ondla vu" means as parents have fended for him, he should return the favour. It is his turn to take good care of them. The proverb teaches us that after what the parents have done to us, we must return the favour by taking good care of them in our adulthood.

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3.2.4 *Ndzumba wa Afrika*: Malungana, S.J.

3.2.4.1 Tshamani ehansi – Hlungwani, M.C.

In this poem, the poet tries to encourage and advise Whites or politicians of any party which did not win the elections to accept their defeat sit around the table and identify their mistakes, correct them so that they may contest again stronger in the forthcoming elections. The poet uses the expression "mi nga heli mbilu", from the idiom "ku hela mbilu", meaning to be impatient. This is an important lesson of life. For one to live a stress-free life, one must not be impatient. Doing things hurriedly will make one regret one's actions. One must be able to be calm, whatever the situation is.

The proverb "ndlopfu a yi fi hi rimbambu rin'we", meaning that a powerful person cannot be let down by one unfortunate accident, is a very important life lesson. It teaches us that a person must not give up because of one misfortune. Instead, he/she must learn from his/her mistakes and move forward. This is emphasised by the idiomatic expression, "mi nga lahleli thawula" from the idiom "ku lahla thawula", meaning to give up a fight.

The proverb "Timhaka ti vulavuriwa ehubyeni" from the proverb "njhovo yi chukiwa ehubyeni" means crucial issues are discussed in the tribal house or royal house. The proverb plays an important role in educating the nation. It teaches that if there is any issue which has to be discussed, politicians have to sit around the table and discuss it instead of just blaming each other at the expense of the voters who are ordinary people who become victims of the politicians'unnecessary battles.

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3.2.4.2 Ha ha avanile - Hlungwani, M.C.

In this poem the poet is complaining about the continuing existence of signs of apartheid in the new democratic South Africa, where Blacks and Whites are not treated equally. In some places Blacks are still treated as third-class, citizens. They buy through windows and on farms Black farm-workers are treated like animals. At work stations, Whites are given preference compared to their Black counterparts. They earn higher salaries and are given higher positions.

The phrase "va-dya-nhlampfi na vanhu i kondlo na ximanga" from the idiom "ku va kondlo na ximanga" meaning to be great rivals or natural enemies, means that whites and black people do not get along. They hate each other instead of living together as a rainbow nation as we are now living in a democratic country. Whites still live alone in their own areas. Blacks are still confined to rural areas. Black children are not welcome in white schools. The poet is saying people must sit down and discuss their problems and forgive each other.

The idiom "a va dyisani ro vupfa", meaning that they still trouble each other, helps us understand that Whites still see Blacks as animals, who deserve to be treated as criminals, not people. Blacks still see Whites as oppressors who deserve to be killed or to be chased out of the country. The fact that they still hate each other is emphasised by the poet in the idiom, "va tovelane munyu", which means they still hate each other.

The expression "vona va lava ku dyela ehenhla" from the idiom "ku dyela ehenhla" means to be superior or to be wealthy. It helps us understand that whites see themselves as superior to Blacks. Whites see themselves as the right people to benefit from the wealth of the country at the expense of Blacks. They think a Black person is inferior and must remain poor, and dependent on them.

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He further expresses this through the idiomatic expression "va hi vonela ebodhleleni" meaning they undermine those who are less fortunate. They see Blacks as lesser humans than them because of their financial status. The expression "xi nge songi masangu", from the idiom "ku songa masangu" meaning to retire, means apartheid is not yet over because Blacks are still undermined by Whites. This helps us understand that apartheid is still rife in South Africa, although people have voted for its abolition.

The idiom "ku bananiwa hi rhambu ra mfenhe, means nepotism is rife in filling up vacant posts, and so Black people will not stop suffering. The poet is saying people must be treated with equality, whether they are Black or White because they are all human.The expression "mhaka leyi a yi na nhloko na ncila" from the idiom "ku va na nhloko na ncila", means it is not easy to understand the logic of all this. He says that it is not easy to understand why even when one is equally qualified, a White person still gets a more senior position than a Black person and earns a higher salary although still doing the same job. The poet is arguing that people must be treated equally.

The expression "mi hi mamisile tintiho swi ringene" from idiom "ku mamisa rintiho", meaning to take advantage of others teaches us that it is not wise to take advantage of others because any person has to be treated with respect and be regarded as an equal. He says he has had enough of this situation and wants the situation to change for the better, where Blacks and Whites will be treated equally.

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3.2.5 Dyanani, Ndzhaku i Marhambu - Mkhari G.O.

3.2.5.1 Makwangala - *Mkhari G.O.*

The poem is a complaint where the poet is complaining about the way things have changed from the enjoyable and respectable they used to be to the modern one, where young people no longer have respect for their elders and no longer have any respect for traditions and cultural beliefs.

The expression "... a nga ha vuyi" from the proverb "tolo a nga ha vuyi", means the past cannot be brought back. He means if it were possible to bring back the past he would go back to the good old days, where the youths used to respect the adults. The poet believes the present situation is not good because the youths no longer have respect for the adults. This teaches us as a nation to accept the fact that life is changing. What people used to do in the olden days is now disappearing; a new generation is emerging, with its own life-style.

The proverb "va tswala miri, ku nga ri mbilu" means children do not take after their parents. They do not live according to the desires of their parents, because what these young people are doing is contrary to what they have been taught by their parents. They do as they please, without considering the consequences of their actions. In this poem, we learn that parents must not expect their children to live life as they wish but should allow them to live their own lives as they are not the parents but different human beings.

3.2.5.2 Rivalela - *Mkhari G.O.*

This poem is about forgiveness, where people are taught to be forgiving for whatever wrong things done to them. The idiom "ku phahlelana mariyeta", meaning to forgive one another, teaches us that as people we must forgive one

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another. The proverb "Xihoxo xi tshama evanhwini" teaches us that as people or human beings we are not free of blemishes. We sometimes make some mistakes and offend others; so we must learn to forgive others so that we may also be forgiven. In English they say "To err is human, to forgive is divine", which means there is no one who is perfect.

The proverb "Swandla a swi mili byanyi", teaches us as people that we must not give up on whatever good work we do because as long as one is still alive no matter what situation one may encounter, one will rise again from any misfortune. The poet says nothing in life should cause a human being to lose hope in life. No matter how hard the situation is, one will always find a way out.

3.2.5.3 Mhangele - *Mkhari G.O.*

This is a praise poem for a guineafowl. The poet is praising the successful and wonderful life it lives but which is so short due to its lack of watchfulness. The proverbs used in this poem teach us important lessons of life.

The proverb "Humba va landza hi rihlakahla" meaning to catch a thief one must follow his/her trail. This teaches us that the only way to catch a thief is by studying clues left behind by the thief. Likewise, a dog follows the scent left behind by the guinea fowl to catch it. The idiomatic expression "yi tsema yi ri vona", meaning to run away, means after realising that it is being chased by dogs, the guinea fowl simply flies away to avoid danger. This teaches us that to avoid danger we have to walk away or avoid it.

3.2.5.4 Vo chembula - *Mkhari G.O.*

This poem is about a young man, who despite the hardships encountered, tries to make a living by working in the mines. However, to his dismay the salary is very little to such an extent that he barely makes ends meet.

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The idiomatic expression means that their lives are hanging in the balance, which is an indication that they are in constant fear and danger. As they are working underground, the mine can collapse and bury them alive at anytime. They are not safe at all. The idiomatic expression "timbilu ti tlutlamile enkolweni", shows that they are not at ease because they are afraid of the situation they are working under. They are in constant fear for their lives. The area they are working in poses a threat to their wellbeing.

The proverb "Mali i sathani" is a lesson that money can make one do anything, good or bad. People are forced to go underground, risking their lives, because they need money. Some kill their own children and wives for the sake of money. The idiom "ku raha bakiti" which means to die, has no didactical meaning but is a wit of language. The idiomatic expression "Byela tsolo", meaning to have nobody to confide in, teaches us that someone's secrets are safest when they are not told to anybody.

3.2.5.5 Va himetela mina - *Mkhari G.O.*

This poem is about a person who because of his or her hard-earned wealth is hated by jealous people who do not want to work but go around hurting other people with witchcraft. The poet is telling these people that they must stop harassing him and mind their own businesses, which could make them as successful as he is.

The proverb "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta mincele ta ku vona", meaning whenever one does bad things to others, one must know that the same could be done to them later. The proverb "Ku hluvuka swi huma evusiwaneni", meaning that hardwork pays, teach us that for one to be successful in life, one must make sacrifices. By hard work even the poorest can become successful.

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The proverb, "Mavondzo a ya hakeri", meaning that jealousy does not pay, teaches us that one cannot get anything by just being jealous of other people's achievements. One needs to work on one's own success and stop hating others who have made it in life. Only hard work pays nothing else.

3.2.5.6 Kokwana va xisati - *Mkhari G.O.*

This is a praise poem where the poet praises his grandmother for the active part she played in the upbringing of children at home. Despite her age, she is the provider for the family. She is the shelter and comforter for the young ones. In the evening she narrates stories to them, which makes her the most resourceful person in the family.

In this poem, only one proverb has been used, "Vana va munhu va tsemelana nhloko ya njiya" meaning that siblings share whatever they have, no matter how small it is. This proverb is used because whatever things the old lady has she shares with her grandchildren. She never eats alone because she has a natural obligation of taking good care of her grandchildren for the sake of her children, their mothers/fathers.

This is an important life lesson. People must learn to share what they have. This is a vital lesson because it teaches people to be generous instead of being greedy.

3.2.5.7 Ndleve - *Mkhari G.O.*

The poem is about the ear. The poet is praising the ear for the good work that it does for the human body. It is a small organ in the human body but it works wonders. The ear hears everything, good or bad. The mouth acts as the transporter for the news.

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The proverb "A yi hlawuli ndluwa yi siya hove" teaches us to treat one another fairly. The expression, "amba ku nona, ku fa ka yona hi ku twile" is a proverb meaning to give detailed information because one has heard a little about it. The listeners want to hear the details. This teaches us that when one relates news one has to do it in detail because a little information can lead to misundestandings.

3.2.6 *M'kon'wana wa Fika* - Marolen, D.P.P.

3.2.6.1 Ku laya ka mukhegulu - Marolen, D.P.P.

The whole poem is made up of idioms and proverbs. The proverbs selected for this poem are all lessons about life expriences. It is entitled "ku laya ka mukhegulu", which means the advice given by an old lady. Elderly people are regarded as the pillars of society because of their knowledge and experience about various life situations. Their advices are reliable because of this.

The proverb "Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena" means a child usually takes after his/her parents. Children usually do what their parents do. This teaches us that if one does bad things, one's children will copy these bad deeds. If one does good, one's children will also copy those. The proverb "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni; Loko u ri ehandle swa yila", teaches us that it is not wise for one to hate or ridicule a handicapped person because one does not know what the future holds. Accidents do happen and as long as a person is living anything can happen to him/her. By extension, one must not laugh at another's misfortunes.

The proverb "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta: Ta le minceleni ta ku vona." is a lesson which says whenever one does bad things to another person, one might suffer the same fate. Equivalent metaphors in English are, for every action there must be a reaction and what goes around comes around.

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The idiom "Ku nyika i ku hayeka, u ta tlhela kambe u hawula", teaches people that giving is a noble idea because when one is generous other people will also be generous to him/her but if one does not give others, nobody will give one anything. Assistance is given to those who offer it to others.

The idiom "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye: N'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti.", meaning that if a person asks for food it means he/she is hungry just give it to him because he will eat and be satisfied; but the one who steals does not do so because of hunger, but greed. This poem teaches us to be generous to other people. It is a good thing to help others because one will be blessed. The proverb "rintiho rin'we a ri nusi hove" literally meaning that one finger alone cannot pick a bean seed, no matter how small it is. This means that one cannot survive without the assistance of others. One needs others to succeed in life.

3.2.6.2 Masasani u fele enhoveni - Marolen, D.P.P.

This poem is about a person who was brought up well by his/her parents, only to be ungreatful when he/she grows up. This poem is a crucial lesson of life. It teaches people to love and cherish their parents for the good work they have done in their lives by bringing them to life and taking good care of them.

The idiom "masasana u fele nhoveni", teaches us that when one helps someone, one must not necessarily expect to get the same from that person. There are people who do not appreciate the help they get from others. However, it is important for one to learn to say thank you when one is assisted.

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3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that proverbs are usually used in poetry to show the poet's intention for writing his/her poem, which is to advise, educate, warn or pass judgement about a social problem which people need to take note of. Idioms are symbols of the poet's extra knowledge about the language he or she uses. He or she uses them to appease his/her listeners about the situations he/she finds himself/herself in, so that he/she may forget about these harsh realities of life.

Idioms and proverbs are used to convey the poet's intentions in a more aesthetic and witful manner, in order to teach us the lessons of life which are acquired through experience and age. The role of literature is to make us conscious of the multiplicity and complexity of human experience and figurative language attempts to bring out everything explicitly.

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CHAPTER FOUR

4. PROVERBS, IDIOMS, PROVERBIAL PHRASES AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS USED IN BRINGING OUT THE THEMES OF POEMS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

It is crucial to deal with the numerical data to determine the frequency of use of idioms and proverbs in poetry. This is because the aim of this study is to indicate that poetry uses idioms and proverbs to bring out the themes of poems, which makes them an important aspect of language, Xitsonga language in particular. To illustrate how many idioms and proverbs are used in poetry, this chapter will indicate the number of idioms and proverbs used in each quoted poem and the way the poet utilised them in bringing out the theme of the poem.

In addition to indicating the number of idioms used in the poems cited in this research, the researcher will closely analyse the poems, looking at the role played by idioms, proverbs and proverbial phrases in bringing out the themes and morals of the poems.

Therefore the themes of all the quoted poems will be provided.This is done to show their worth in the writing of poetry, as they express the poet's intentions easily and precisely. This is also done to underline the fact that idioms and proverbs tell a long story and lessons of life in very few words but in a vivid form and manner, thus underlining their value in society and the worth in preserving them.

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4.2 THE NUMBER OF IDIOMS AND PROVERBS USED IN THE SELECTED POEMS

4.2.1 Kuwa ro tshwuka – Chauke, M.O.

In the poem, "kuwa ro tshwuka", the poet has used two proverbs, "kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni" and "Mpingu va ringetela emakatleni". Although only two idioms have been used, these idioms bring out the whole intended message of this poem, which is to make men aware of the danger of running after beautiful women who are nothing but trouble makers.The first one says this in greater detail. Even literally, when one sees a very ripe, brightly coloured fig, one should know that it might have a worm inside; one must not eat it greedily as one will eat the worm too. This is true of real life situations. When one sees a very beautiful woman, one must understand that not everything is beautiful about her. She may not be as beautiful as she looks inside.

The second idiom "mpingu va ringetela emakatleni", is widely used to encourage people who are too lazy to perform a particular job that they must not give up before they try something. It is said that failure is one who fails to try. This is also a valuable life lesson, although here it was used to discourage those who like to experience instead of simply taking advice. In this poem it is used to caution those who feel they have to marry beautiful women. It cautions the men against doing so.This is an indication that a proverb or an idiom, when used can act as a warning or lesson, to teach people of the realities of life in few words.

4.2.2 16 June 1976 - Ndobe, M.D.

In this poem, three idiomatic expressions are used. "Leri pfimbeke nhloko", "A va hlomile hi mbhayimbhayi" and "Va swarha ku tlurisa". These three idioms played an important role of conveying the message that, Hector Peterson, was the first

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person to be killed by the apartheid police force on 16th June 1976 during the Soweto students' march against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Hector was an active member of the political struggle even though he was still young.

This poem is an epic, which shows us the heroic act potrayed by this small child who showed his bravery even during those most difficult times in Black history in South Africa. The determination of the Blacks to fight their rivals is shown by the idiom "a va hlomile hi mbhayimbhayi", which shows the readers that they had little armaments but fought with great determination.Their anger is represented by the idiom "vantima va swarha ku tlurisa", which means Blacks became uglier as some of them were killed by the white security forces disguised as policemen. Although there is little to be learnt here, the idioms' usage plays a vital role in making readers understand the state of the country during this era and how Blacks had to sacrifice their own children to attain the freedom which we are enjoying today.

4.2.3 Nandzu i wa mani? - Malungana, M.

The poem potraiys a real life situation and a lesson that there is no single secret which can remain in a closet forever. As they say, secrets have a tendency of revealing themselves and they do that when one least expects it. In this poem the poet used two proverbs and four idioms "Hambi wo famba enkoveni lundza ri ta vonaka", "U bihile emirini", "Ndzi dya marhambu ya nhloko", "Va boxa tshumba", "A nela hi mpfula ku ri hava mapapa" an d "Mati ya halakile", to express the danger of secrecy within families. The proverb "Hambi wo famba enkoveni lundza ri ta vonaka".The latter teaches us that, whatever one does in private will one day come out in the open. It brings out the sentiment that there is no secrecy in this world.

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The proverb "loko mati ma halakile ma halakile a ma ha oleleki", teaches us to be careful in life because sometimes once things has been done there is no reversal, there is no way one can undo it. People have to be very careful with whatever major decisions they make because they might have to face the consequences for the rest of their lives.

The four idioms, "U bihile emirini", "Ndzi dya marhambu ya nhloko", "Va boxa tshumba" and "A nela hi mpfula ku ri hava mapapa" help the reader understand what the poet wants his audience or readers to know. As indicated before by Guma (1967:66), idioms are never didactic, and never teach any moral lesson. Neither do they ever express any fundamental truth or wisdom with a general bearing on life. Rather, they are witty and humorous expressions which are connected with a particular phrase, but which are not as staid and dignified as proverbs. Some proverbs are a bare statement of fact, and they call a spade a spade.

4.2.4 Patu ra Nl hi 24 N'wendzamhala - Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet used five idioms and one proverb "Va pfimbe machelele", "Va dye viriviri", "Va funya buwa", "Va khome timbilu", "Va humesa mahlo" and "N'wana u an'wa hi tsheve". All these idioms were used to indicate how desperate the drivers were as they were all in a hurry to reach their homes but could not do so because of the traffic congestion on the N1 road during the festive season, on Christmas Eve.

Although it is an idiom "va pfimbe chelele" teaches us that when one is angry, one will suffer like a chicken which when its crop is full becomes blonted. The poet states that it is advisable for one to remain calm whatever the situation one is in. The other idioms tell us how tense the situation is but in a vivid form, which makes it easy for anyone to understand the situation.

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4.2.5 Dzinga-muti - Ngobeni, J.

In this poem, the poet has used two idioms "Ku dlaya tindleve", and "Ku chachamisa van'wana", to state that it is not good for a lady to marry late as the delay can make her an enemy to her own married friends and family. The idiom "ku dlaya tindleve", meaning to say something which is above one's cognition, means to make someone deaf, which is not a good thing. Therefore, for one to avoid this situation, one should make decisions which will make one belong in the group.

The idiom "ku chachamisa van'wana" means to say something bad about other people, which literally mean to fry someone, which is also not good. In order to avoid this terrifying situation, one has to get married and avoid gossiping from others.

4.2.6 Dzovo ra mhisi - Marhanele, M.M.

In this poem, the poet used five idioms "Ku teka u swi twa", "Ku ri ntlhaa", "U koka no posa tibomo","Yi n'wi hlambisa timbilu" and "Byi vungurile", to warn people about people who pretend to be good but do evil things privately. They bewitch people without any mercy but during the day they act like angels.

4.2.7 Kasi ku humelela yini? – Mongwe, S.

In this poem, we find a lot of idioms and proverbs.The poet has used ten idioms and two proverbs "Va tikhomise nyarhi hi timhondzo", "Ku phohla hi makhwati", "Va ba milawu","Dyambu ri rhengile", "Ku yima hi nenge", "Ti haka rimintsu", "Va nga yima kahle", "Va swi ba hi makatla", "Vukosi i mberha", "Ku veleka i ku huma moya", "Ku huma moya", "Khomani swi tiya" and "Songani rigogo ra ha tsakama", to illustrate how the youths have neglected their responsibilities of looking after themselves, going to school and showing respect to their elders.

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They are no longer interested in their future but busy destroying it. The poet is warning them against these evil deeds and cautions their parents for allowing them to do as they please.

4.2.8 Polokwane – Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet has used six idioms and one proverb "Tiko a xi etleri", "Ku chukiwa kona tinjhovo", "Ku peperhiwa", "Ti thya kona ncuva", "A dzuka kona nyuku" and "A chachamisa kona timhaka", to praise Polokwane, which has now been given a new African name instead of the old Pietersburg name which was an apartheid name.

4.2.9 Tshengwe ra lerhisa – Marhanele, M.M.

In this poem, the poet has used four idioms "U ta twa u nga twi", "Ku weriwa xitafu", "Kuba xinari" and "Ku orha ndzilo wa xitiko xin'we", to caution men against polygamy. The poet used idioms and proverbs to show these men how difficult things are for those who are in this situation and to warn them not to get themselves in the same situation.

4.2.10 U yimele yini? - Ngope, T.A.

In this poem, only idioms were used. The poet has used ten of them: "Ti pandza mananga ya sala ya hlanganile", "Ku luma ndleve", "U ta dya swa nyuku wa yena", "Yi hume", "Ku ya juluka", "Ku tikhomi rihlaya", "Ku yila", "U nga songi mandla" and "Tsevukela", to advise young men who are loafing around doing nothing while their peers are busy preparing for their future. They are advised to do something for the sake of their future before the time is gone because time does not wait for anyone.

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4.2.11 Vukati i mbilu - Magayisa, J.M.

In this poem, the poet has used many proverbs and idiomatic expressions "Xiporo xi tsemekile", "Ku byi chucha", "Ku hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza", "Va ambala tatana va hlova hi manana", "U dya a khigela", "Ku handza n'hwari", "Ritiho", "U bava a khalakhasa" and "Vukati i mbilu" to express the difficulty of marriage.

The poet potrays a married life: When a woman is not working but depending on her husband, if the husband cannot provide for them, life will be unbearable for her and for her children. Children will be forced to live a miserable life and be forced to do crime to survive. The heading of the poem, "vukati i mbilu" suggest that to survive this marriage, the woman must endure and turn a blind eye on all what her husband is doing and work hard for the survival of the family.

4.2.12 Ra Dzindza - Ngobeni, B.

In this poem, the poet has used proverbs and idiomatic expressions. He has used six idioms and two proverbs "Yi khome hi ritukulu", "Yi orha switiko swa khombo", "Ku khoma timbilu", "Ku handza nhwari", "Ku minya", "Wun'wana u ri xa nhwari loko un'wana a ku xa nkengere", "Va dyela enghinghiyeni" and "Swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", to highlight the plight of contemporary families wherein all quarrels or disagreements are solved by killings and suicide.

Families are left with horrible memories of family members who have massacred the entire family, including themselves. The poet tries to calm this situation by telling those who are of the same opinion by saying that, it is really wrong because there is no family without a misunderstanding. Problems are solved amicably through dialogue.

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4.2.13 Xinkwa xa hosi - Malungana, S.J

In this poem, the poet has used seven idioms and one proverb "Xi beriwa mati", "Ku dya ku vona", "Hi le mahlweni ka nghala, u fanele ku ya ni xisana", "Hi bela swipitikopo mati", "Ku hlenga vutomi", "Ku mila milenge", "Yi bile magoza yo nyawula" and "Wo pfala mahlo", to show that nowadays it is difficult for people to help others as people expect bribes for every service rendered. There is no single person who is willing to assist others without getting something in return. Even government officials cannot render the expected service without demanding a bribe. Those who get tenders in government are those who pay the largest bribes.

4.2.14 I mhangu - Marhanele, M.M.

In this poem, six idioms have been used "Murhi wa tindleve hi tshwetile", "Ndleve yona u lumiwile", "Ku dyiwa tin'wala", "Ku pfale tindleve", "Ku koka ku tika" and "I mhangu ku tilavela", to a warning against polygamy. The poet is warning men against polygamy, as it is not an easy form of marriage. The consequences are painful and one will also make innocent children suffer.

4.2.15 Nawu wa ntumbuluko – Marhanele, M.M.

In this poem, four idioms have been used "Ku ba bembele", "Ku tihlanganisa tinhloko", "Mi hi dlamula timbilu" and "Mi nga yimisi tiko hi milenge", to warn those who are involved in unnatural acts, such as bestiality and homosexuality. The poet says the practice is against God's will and must be stopped as a matter of urgency. The poet argues that these acts are not good for the future of South Africa and the world at large.

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4.2.16 Mpfula ya 2000 – Malungana, M.

In this poem, nine idioms were used "Ku dyela enghangheni", "Ko hoxa nhloko", "Ku lata rimbambu","Van'wana a va lata rivambu", "A swi khome xivixivi", "Swo miyeta nyoka", "Ku hlaya tinyeleti", "A va ri hava ko fihla nhloko" and "A yi tsema nhlana", to explain the dire situation encountered in South Africa in 2000 after the storm caused by tropical cyclone Irene, where people were left homeless and forced to depend on government grants and donations.

4.2.17 Rirhandzu – Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet has used three idioms and one proverb "Swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", "Yi yime hi nenge wun'we", "Ku xevisa hi ririmi ra mbhongolo", "Ku mamisa tintiho", to describe the reality of love, where people can say and promise anything so they can fall in love and can also do many bad things in the name of love. The poet is alerting people to be careful and to take good care of themselves to avoid being victims of love games.

4.2.18 Ndzo rheta – Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet has used eleven idioms "Ndzi tlhontlhe mimpfi", "Hi nuhana makhehele", "Ndzi boxe swinon'wana", "U dya ndzilo", "Ku swi vona hi mahlo", "Ku khotsa ncila", "Va phahliwa eswigodweni", "Va toviwa hi va le hansi", "Swikwembu a swi etlelanga", "Ndzi pfuxe swikwembu", "Ndzi chela fole","Ku rheta" and "Ku hi humesa moya", to describe situations encountered by unfaithful men who go around having illegitimate children. These men are forced to live in fear. They also worry that these children are not well-looked after and there is nothing they themselves can do as they do not want to offend their wives.

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4.2.19 Xiyila – Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet has used six idioms and one proverb "Matwe ma hanyisa, mavona ya dlaya", "Ku mhoo", "Ku pfumala timhondzo", "U tiomisa nhloko", "Gondzo ri khuleriwile", "U ta hlangana na xa ncila wa bulubulu" and "Ku komba xiyila xikosi", to warn the youths of today to live responsible life: to look after themselves, avoid doing things which are considered "taboo". The poet argues that ignoring these traditional prohibitions is what makes the youth die at a young age.

4.2.20 Mubya – Ngobeni, R.

In this poem, the poet has used eight idioms and one proverb "Mubya wu nyukisa xitiko xa ndyangu", "Wu dzima timintsu", "Wu dikida ndyangu", "Tshanga ra tihomu ri tiya hi ra marhole", "Ku cinamisiwa meno", "Nhlungu ya vele yi boxiwa", "Ku dyiwa rihojahoja", "Ku nga boxiwa xinon'wana ka", "A a xi boheleriwanga enengeni wa mpfuvu", to describe the joy brought by the birth of children at home. He considers it to be a celebration of womanhood. The birth of a child strengthens marriage and affirms the fact that a real woman has been married to the family and the family name will be carried forward.

4.2.21 Kasi u dyohe yini wena Afrika? – Ngobeni, R.

This poem is full of idioms and proverbs "Ku tshama hi rhanga ro hisa", "Va yime hi swinkunwana", "Va sale misiha ya nhloko", "Ngati yi halaka siku na siku", "Ya hanya hi rikoko ra xilondzo", "U khome nyarhi hi timhondzo", "Va etlela va hlaya tinyeleti", "Va vambe ngoma", "Ti tsema nhlana", "Khoma Afrika xikatla" and "A ya kumi ndzhuti ya wisa". The poet has used eleven idioms but only one proverb, to lament his beloved continent, Africa, which is in turmoil. Things are not well in Africa. Civil wars, droughts, floods, famine and diseases are tearing the continent

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apart and its citizens are in great pain. The poet is pleading with God to save this continent and make it a better place to live.

4.2.22 Nkuwa – Babane M.T.

In this poem, two idioms and two proverbs have been used "U n'wi kombile xikosi", "U n'wi lahlele mandla", "Nyuku wa vona wu hundzuke wa mbyana" and "Swi ku ondlile, swi ondli-vu", to show how ungreatful children sometimes can be after their parents have struggled for a long time to raise them. The poet is reminding these children that the sole aim of having children is to ensure that someone will look after the parents when they can no longer take care of themselves.

4.2.23 Tshamani ehansi - Hlungwani, M.C.

In this poem, the poet has used two idioms and two proverbs "Mi nga heli mbilu", "Ndlopfu a yi fi hi rimbambu rin'we", "Mi nga lahleli thawula" and "Timhaka ti vulavuriwa ehubyeni", to advise people that defeat is not the end of everything and war is not a solution. When one has been defeated, one must accept it, gather more strength and try again, one day he/she will succed. This is also true of political parties. If one party wins the elections, it is not the end of the world for losers/losing party. They must not take up arms and fight but re-group. The poet is warning that war is not a solution, but dialogue is.

4.2.24 Ha ha avanile - Hlungwani, M.C.

In this poem, the poet has used nine proverbs "I kondlo ni ximanga", "A va dyisani ro vupfa", "Va tovelane munyu", "Ku dyela ehenhla", "Va hi vonela ebodhleleni", "Xi nge songi masangu", "Ku bananiwa hi rhambu ra mfenhe", "A yi na nhloko na ncila" and "Mi hi mamisile tintiho", to indicate that although on paper, South Africa is a democratic country and home to all who live in it,

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apartheid is still in existence. The poet believes Blacks are still dominated by Whites in work situations and Blacks are still inferior to their White counterparts. Even among Blacks themselves, the poet believes there are tribes which still dominate others and those who regard other ethnic groups as less human than them.

4.2.25 Makwangala - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, the poet has used two proverbial phrases "a nga ha vuyi" and "Va tswala miri, ku nga ri mbilu", to show people that the "good old days" are gone along with its traditions, leaving behind a life which is not attractive. The poet believes people no longer enjoy themselves as they used to, as the modern world has brought with it dreadful diseases and harmful lifestyles, where children no longer do as their parents want but do as they please.

4.2.26 Rivalela - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, the poet used one idiom and two proverbs "Hi ta phahlelana mariyeta", "Xihoxo xi tshama evanhwini" and "Swandla a swi mili byanyi", to teach people the value of forgiving because in life no man is an island. As a result they will sometimes wrong each other, so they must not lose patience and forget the need to forgive others.

The proverb "swandla a swi mili byanyi" is also a very important lesson to those who have lost their fortunes, who are hopeless and do not believe they will ever regain whatever they have lost. They are encouraged to work and accumulate whatever they have lost.

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4.2.27 Mhangele - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, the poet has used a proverb and an idiom "Humba va landza hi rihlakahla" and "Yi tseme yi ri vona" respectively, to describe the happy life of a guineafowl, which because it can fly, it is difficult for dogs to can catch it but is eventually trapped and eaten. This is a valuable lesson for people who think they are cleverer than others. The poet warns that one day things will go wrong and they will find themselves in an unpleasant situation.

4.2.28 Vo chembula - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, the poet used four idioms and one proverb "Va byi khomile hi swandla", "Timbilu ta vona ti tluntlamile enkolweni", "Mali i Sathana", "Va wa va pfuka", "Va rahile mabakiti" and "Byela tsolo", to illustrate the painful situation encountered by mine workers. The miners need money to take care of their beloved ones back home. After going through such difficult and painful hardships, their salaries are so little that it adds to their suffering instead of bringing joy to their hearts.

4.2.29 Va himetela mina - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, only proverbs have been used. The poet has used three proverbs: "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta micele ta ku vona", "Ku hluvuka swi huma evusiwaneni" and "Mavondzo a ya hakeri". These proverbs are all lessons of life, which are: When one is rich one must not ill-treat the less fortunate because one day one would find oneself in a situation which requires one to be assisted. The second lesson is jealousy does not pay. The poet believes if one is jealous of other people's successes, one is blocking one's own blessings.

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4.2.30 Kokwana va xisati - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, only one proverb has been used "Vana va munhu va tsemelana nhloko ya njiya", to express the fact that people should take good care of others. They must learn to share the little they have. The poet stresses that it is not wise for a person to be selfish because that does not benefit others and the whole nation will perish. He asserts that people must live together; share everything they have for their survival.

4.2.31 Ndleve - Mkhari G.O.

In this poem, two idioms have been used "A yi hlawuli ndluwa yi siya hove" and "Amba ku nona, ku fa ka yona hi ku twile", to show the importance of the ear as an organ, its value and its shortfalls. The ear can lend one into trouble but can also help one to avoid getting into trouble.

4.2.32 Ku laya ka mukhegulu - Marholen, D.P.P.

The whole of this poem is made up of proverbs. "Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela ye n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena". "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni, loko u ri ehandle swa yila", "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta ta le minceleni ta ku vona", "Ku nyika i ku hayeka, u ta tlhela kambe u hawula", "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye n'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti" and "A ri swi koti ku nusa hove, ritiho rin'we a ri swi koti". These proverbs are lessons of life. For example, when one is rich, one must not ill-treat those who are less fortunate. People must learn to share the little they have. He believes that way God will bless them. Another valuable lesson is that, children look up to their parents. Whatever good or bad a parent does, the child will also do.

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4.2.33 Masasani u fele enhoveni - Marholen, D.P.P.

In this poem, one proverb has been used as the title of the poem and in line 8, "Masasan' u fele nhoveni", which literally means the one who helps does not find a helper in times of need.The poet uses this proverb in the place of many. He could have indicated the fact that nowadays helping another is no longer popular as people tend to be ungrateful after being helped. Many people have met their deaths trying to help others. People are hijacked and stripped of their possessions trying to help others. People are no longer grateful when helped.

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4.3 THEMES AND THE ROLE PLAYED BY IDIOMS AND PROVERBS IN THE SAMPLED POEMS

Idioms, idiomatic expressions, proverbs and proverbial phrases convey lessons of life by expressing various themes. A single poem can have many themes, depending on the lessons which the poet needs to convey to his/her readers. In order to do this, poets uses either idioms or proverbs. However, proverbs are more common, as it is rare for an idiom to convey a lesson of life.

4.3.1 Kuwa ro tshwuka- Chauke, M.O

The poet uses proverbs to bring out the theme of deceit in love due to facial beauty. The poem itself is about being in love with a beautiful wife. Everybody wants to have a beautiful wife. It is this beauty which attracts men to beautiful women only that later it invites trouble for these men.

According to Jones (1995:354), a proverb is a short sentence, whose concise form is fixed by a tradition of oral transmission, which encapsulates some warning, advice, empirical observation or philosophical comment on life. This is true of this proverb, as it is an advice to men that they must be careful of what they might encounter when looking for only beautiful ladies to marry.

The theme of dishonesty and deceit among beautiful women is brought out by the proverb "Kambe kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni", which means that physical beauty has a down side. Men are made to see only one side of it, which is a woman's beauty and forget about all the other qualities that make a woman good. Qualities such as faithfulness, respect, loyalty and honesty are clouded by beauty, to such an extent that a man becomes aware of lack of these after marrying her.

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The proverb "Mpingu va ringetela emakatleni", brings out the theme of patience and endurance. In order for a man to survive the hardships he encounters after marrying a beautiful wife, he has to be patient. A beautiful woman does not beg for love and she always find a new man with ease. This makes her vulnarable to undermining her husband, knowing that she can get another man with ease. The husband must be submissive to her and allow her to do as she pleases for fear of being left alone.

4.3.2 16 June 1976 - Ndobe, M.D.

The theme of this poem is bravery and heroism. It shows the bravery displayed by Black South Africans during their struggle against the apartheid government in 1976. The poet uses an idiom "Leri pfimbeke nhloko", which comes from the idiom "Ku pfimba nhloko", to refer to the boy who was the first person to be killed in the 1976 riots. The boy was very intelligent and politically active. The poet praises the bravery of Hector Peterson for standing against the apartheid government.

The poet also uses an idiom, "A va hlomile hi mbhayimbhayi", meaning that they were not adequately armed, but faced with a challenge of fighting white security forces who were armed with guns and hand-grenades. The marchers were armed with dustbin lids and stones. These two weapons are used to portray the blacks as brave, as they had to fight against a well-armed security force constituted by police and soldiers.

The theme of determination is expressed by the idiom "Va swarha ku tlurisa", which comes from an idiom, "ku swarha", which means to be ugly. He is referring to the fact that as more rioters were killed by the security forces, blacks became angrier and more determined to fight back for the sake of the dead. They fought with more determination, instead.

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4.3.3 Nandzu i wa mani? - Malungana, M.

This poem brings out the theme of secrecy and deceit in relationships.The poet uses the proverb, "Hambi wo famba enkoveni lundza ri ta vonaka", which means that secrets do not remain so for a long time. The secrets are revealed by the idiomatic expression "va boxa tshumba", which comes from an idiom, "ku boxa tshumba". This means to reveal a secret, to indicate that their secret has come out when the delegated women announce the purpose of their visit. The shamefulness of secrets is revealed by the expression "A nela hi mpfula", which is from the idiom "Ku nela hi mpfula", meaning to be ashamed of something.

The theme of acceptance is revealed by the expression, "Mati ya halakile", which means things have gone bad. It is derived from the proverb "when water is spilled, one cannot gather it again. What this man has done and the relationship between his two children cannot be reversed. They have to live with it and they are bound to accept it.

4.3.4 Patu ra Nl hi 24 N'wendzamhala - Malungana, M.

In this poem, the poet used an idiom "va pfimbe machelele", from the idiom "ku pfimba celele", which means to be angry, to bring out the theme of the importance of patience and tolerance during hectic situations and the disadvantage of the lack thereof. Drivers driving along the N1-road are angry because of the traffic jams and stoppages created by the traffic cops who want to check the roadworthiness of all the vehicles on the road. They are angry because they are in a hurry to see their beloved, whom they have not seen for a long time.The poet emphasises this through the idiom "va dye viriviri", which means, they are angry.

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The theme of fear is expressed by the proverb "ku khoma mbilu", meaning to be very much afraid or to be scared of something. Drivers are scared of this situation because the situation is so tense that one is not sure whether one will reach one's d estination safely or not. Another proverb, "va humesa mahlo", meaning that they are very watchful as the drivers do not want to make any mistake on the road as they want to arrive home safely, is used to emphasise this.

In order for these drivers to arrive home safely, they have to be patient to avoid this hectic situation, as indicated by the idiom "N'wana a an'wa hi tsheve", meaning things are hectic on this day. Everybody wants to arrive home on time but traffic conjestion is making it very difficult and it frustrates everyone.

4.3.5 Dzinga-muti – Ngobeni, J.

The poem brings out the theme of the importance of marriage in one's life. The poet used the idiom "Ku ku dlaya tindleve", meaning to say something which is above one's cognitive level, making it difficult for one to understand its meaning. The idiom is used to show how passionate this people are about love and marriage. They always talk about it wherever they are. In the poem the poet describes a lady who does not want to get married. He argues that she is making it difficult for women her age to talk about marriage issues because she will not be able to participate, as a spinster.

This theme is also captured in the poet's use of another idiom "Ku chachamisa van'wani", which literally means to fry someone. Idiomatically, the poet means to gossip or to talk bad about someone. This lady, although not married, enjoys gossiping about other people's marital affairs. She goes around telling people about other people's secrets.

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4.3.6 Dzovo ra mhisi – Marhanele, M.M.

The theme of this poem is deception within families where one acts innocent amongst people but has hidden activities when no one is watching. To show her lack of mercy and hatred, the poet uses an idiomatic expression when he says "Loko a ta ku teka u swi twa", meaning to hit someone very hard. This is an indication that when you are with a bad person you would not believe that he/she can do cruel things until he/she does so.To emphasise this he uses another idiom "u koka no posa tibomo ta vuloyi", meaning that he/she throws bombs of witchcraft. This means that he/she bewitches everybody without any forethought.

4.3.7 Kasi ku humelela yini? – Mongwe, S.

In this poem, the poet brought out the theme of the importance of taking responsibility in one's actions as the youth are advised to take charge of their own future when the time is still right. His aim is to instill a sense of responsibility to our youth who are not serious about their future. They often get into trouble, as described by the idiom "va tikhomise nyarhi hi timhondzo", from the idiom, "ku khoma nyarhi hi timhondzo". It literally translates to, "to catch the buffalo by its horns", meaning to be in deep trouble. Here the poet says the youth have invited trouble for themselves by not attending school, not respecting the elders and not caring about their future and their wellbeing.

The poet uses another idiom, "ku phohla hi makhwati", meaning to be disorderly, or unable to take control of a situation. By this, he refers to the fact that the youth can no longer take good care of themselves. They do things which are detrimental to their health like taking drugs and alcohol. They are supposed to be future leaders but they are destroying their lives. This is an indication that they cannot run this country as their lives are disorderly and they cannot be good future leaders. It is a sign of being irresponsible.

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The phrase "va ba milawu" is an idiomatic expression derived from the idiom, "ku ba milawu", meaning to put down rules and regulations. Traditionally this is the role played by adults for the young. However, in this situation it is the youths who lay down the rules and regulation for their parents. This is an indication that things are not in order.

It is also apparent where the poet says, "ti haka rimintsu", from the idiom "ku haka rimintsu", which means when things are difficult or impossible. The poet means the learners fail their school examinations as they do not want to study and they play truancy, which is a sign of being irresponsible. He states that these children do not want to learn because they think that their parents are wealthy and they will inherit this wealth. They do not want to earn for their own wealth.

The poet uses the idiom "va swi ba hi makatla" from "Ku swi ba hi makatla", meaning to ignore and "vukosi i mberha", which is a proverb meaning, like dew, which disappears when the sun rises, wealth also disappears or ends. He means that although they know that wealth sometimes comes to an end or one can sometimes be poor again, people tend to forget it or simply ignore it, believing that their parents' wealth will last forever. This shows a lack of sense of responsibility.

The poet uses the proverb "ku veleka i ku huma moya", which means to give birth is sometimes futile, which implies that children do not always do as their parents want them to, or do not follow the lead of their parents. Children usually live their lives as they wish, without caring whether what they do please their parents or not.

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The poet concludes by using the phrase "songani rigogo ra ha tsakama", from the idiom, "ku songa rigogo ra ha tsakama", which means to do something in time not to wait for time to run out. The poet means that parents must guide their children when they are still at a tender or prime age and not to wait until they are too old and can no longer be guided.

Here, proverbial wisdom as a powerful social weapon has been used to impose discipline and conformity on individuals acting outside the accepted behaviour patterns and also as a means of self-control. It has served to reinforce the traditional values and beliefs of the group to the youth and to provide an advice for individual dilemmas.

4.3.8 Polokwane – Malungana, M.

This poem brings about the theme of jubilation brought out by the political change within South Africa as African towns and cities are now given back their original African names. The idiom "tiko a xi etleri", which in full is "tiko a xi etleri ku etlela fusi mangumani", means that a country is always full of news and activities. By this, he refers to the fact that things have changed from the apartheid days, where nobody believed that things would change from being too westernised to being African. Polokwane, which was formerly known as Pietersburg, a foreign name, has been given an African name. This has brought joy and happiness to the people of the Limpopo Province.

4.3.9 Tshengwe ra lerhisa – Marhanele, M.M.

This poem is about hardship and jealousy in polygamous marriages. To bring out this theme, the poet has used the idiomatic expression "u ta twa u nga twi", meaning to be in great pain or in great danger. The poet cautions that marrying more than one wife is not a good idea because one will always be solving

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problems relating to polygamy. It is a situation which is not desirable and one will have to live in constant pain.

This supports the fact that many proverbs deal with interpersonal relationships, between masters and servants, parents and children, neighbours and friends. By far, the largest such area however is that of husbands and wives, specifically: or men and women in general. Since marriage and procreation are the central preoccupation of any society and since the distinctions between sex-roles is usually sharp, especially in primitive societies, this is hardly suprising. This idea is supported by the expression "ro weriwa xitafu", from tha idiom "ku wela xitafu", meaning to take things for granted, which indicates that polygamy is not child's play. It needs someone with a strong character because it is not easy.

The hardship in polygamy is aggrevated by the fact that in the new dispensation in South Africa, women are afforded more human rights than before, and are in charge of family matters too. To state this, the poet says "a ba xinari", from the idiomatic expression, "ku ba xinari", meaning to be in charge or to take control of a situation. By this, he refers to the fact that in the olden days, where a man was the head of the family, he was in full control of the household. Therefore, it was simple for a man to have more than one wife as his word was final. The wife was supposed to accept whatever decision the man made without a word. It was a complete opposite of the current situation, where there is equality of spouses. The woman's voice is equally significant, so a man can no longer do as he pleases.

Jealousy in polygamous marriages is shown by the poet using the phrase "... vo orha ndzilo wa xitiko xin'we", from the idiom, "ku orha xitiko xin'we", meaning to be friends or relatives or to live harmoniously. In this poem he points out the fact that the modern woman cannot harmoniously or peacefully with another woman or co-wife, share belongings and food with her; every woman wants her own husband and family where, she will head the family, not a secondary wife.

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4.3.10 U yimele yini?- Ngope, T.A.

Since indirectness is valued as politeness in many cultures, proverbs often function as an effective and elegant means of expressing an opinion, of giving advice on a subject, without commenting upon it directly. The theme of this poem is a reminder that we should take responsibility for our actions. The poet uses the expression, "ti pandza mananga ya sala ya hlanganile", which is from the idiom "ku pandza mananga ya sala ya hlangana', meaning to run as fast as possible without a trace. This indicates that time is going by too fast for this young man to stay without doing anything. For that reason, he must grab every available opportunity and work hard whilst he can because wasted time cannot be regained and procrastination is the thief of time.

The poet is advising young people to take responsibility for their actions in their lives. He uses the idiom, "ku luma ndleve", which means to advise someone, to mean that he wants this young man to let him advise him about the realities of life before it is too late. He reminds everyone that everybody has to be responsible and work hard, by saying "u ta dya swa nyuku wa yena" which is a biblical idiomatic expression meaning that every one must earn their own resources in life.

The poet is reminding everybody that they must work for themselves by saying, "yi hume u ya juluka", meaning that one has to go and seek employment to earn a living, by saying "U nga tikhomi rihlaya", from the idiom "Ku tikhoma rihlaya", meaning to pity oneself. The poet means this young man must not be idle and expect others to provide for him. He adds another idiom, "u nga songi mandla", from "ku songa mandla", meaning to idle. The poet tells the person he is addressing to find employment.

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4.3.11 Vukati i mbilu – Magayisa, J.M.

The theme of this poem is hardships within marriage and the role of men in families. This poem supports the fact that many proverbs deal with interpersonal relationships and by far the largest such area however, is that of husbands and wives; specifically, men and women in general. Marriage and procreation are the central preoccupation of any society since the distinction between sex-roles is usually sharp, especially in primitive societies.

This theme is revealed by a number of idioms and proverbs.The expression, "Loko ri xile i ku byi chuncha", from the idiom, "ku byi chuncha", means to drink excessively. The poet is lamenting what the man is doing: that instead of going to work this man goes on drinking daily. It is also described by the idiomatic expression that "va hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza", which means they barely have anything to eat as their father is jobless and not providing for them. To get something to eat, they have to carry other children from wealthy families on their backs. They live on crumbs.

It is also apparent where the poet says, "va ambala tatana va hlova hi manana", which means that they do not have clothes to wear as there is nobody to buy them clothes. To indicate the contrasting situation to the one experienced in the lazy man's household, the poet says "u dya a khigela", which means to be extremely rich, to refer to the children from wealthy families who give the poor children food in return for being carried on the poor children's backs.

To indicate the irresponsibility potrayed by men to their families, he says "ku handza n'hwari", which means that nobody is home; the father has gone on a drinking spree, and the wife has gone to look for work and the children are looking for food too.

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The consequences of these men's behaviour, is brought out in the expression "va dyondzisa vana xikolo xa ritiho" from the idiom "ku va na ritiho", which means to be a thief. What he is getting across is that these children are forced to steal because of hunger; their neighbours no longer give them food because they are tired of doing so daily. They therefore become thieves.

To show the hardship under which the woman has to live, the poet says "u bava a khalakhasa", which means that he does not want to listen to anyone because he is very angry. He does not want to hear anything because he cannot refund the lobola money. For that reason, the father does not want her to go back home because the husband would need his lobola back.

He concludes by using a proverb "Vukati i mbilu", which means that one needs a strong heart to overcome the hardships of married life, to indicate the hardship women have to endure in marriage. Marriage is chacterised by many hiccups. Therefore, in order for one to succeed, one has to be able to endure the obstacles.

4.3.12 Ra Dzindza – Ngobeni, B.

This poem is about domestic violence and its dire consequences in contemporary society. The theme of domestic violence is conveyed by the idiom "Yi khome hi ritukulu", which means to be shaking like an old man's hand in old age or when something is not stable. By this idiom the poet means that families are no longer stable. There is fear from both the parents and children that every misunderstanding in the family will result in violence.

This is also expressed by the idiomatic expression, "yi orha switiko swa khombo", meaning to be in great danger. What he is trying to get across is that households are no longer safe places where children can be raised but a place where death can strike at any time. The poet also uses the idiom "ku khoma timbilu", meaning

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to be scared", to express the same sentiments. In many families everyone lives in fear because they know they are no longer safe with their husbands. They know that a quarrel could have a violent ending.

To portray the consequences of this violence, the poet says "ku handza nhwari", which means that nobody is home. All the family members have been killed, which is a very painful situation. To indicate how violent the situation is, he says "Yi minya ku minya" from the idiom, "ku minya" meaning that a battle has started. This means when a quarrel starts it ends up violently which could result in killings.

The causes of family conflicts are captured by the expression "u ri xa nhwari loko un'wana a ku xa kengere", which is a proverb meaning disagreement due to lack of respect. This is the situation which leads to these killings because nowadays women are no longer respectful. They know that they can report their husbands to the police at the slightest of provocation and the law will rule in favour of the woman. In the event of a divorce, the man will end up losing all their belongings to the wife. This is why the husband chooses to avoid the 'embarassment' by killing the family. The children are also killed so that they do not become a burden to anyone when their parents have killed themselves.

This violent behaviour results in a situation which the poet describes as follows: "va dyela enghinghiyeni" from the idiom "ku dyela cheleleni", meaning to be in trouble or to lack peace. There is no peace within their families. This is the state of affairs in most families where the husband has access to a gun. This is because they know that one day he can use it against his family and himself.. This is an indication that things are no longer harmonious. The poet believes something should be done about this painful situation.

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The solution to this problem is captured in the proverb "Swihlungwana swi fihle swo tala", meaning each household has its own problems.Therefore one should not allow a family misunderstanding to deteriorate into family violence because wherever there are people, a quarrel or disagreement will also be there.

4.3.13 Xinkwa xa hosi – Malungana, S.J.

This poem brings out the theme of corruption and bribery within various sectors of life as experienced in this democratic dispensation. These themes are captured by the idiomatic expressions. "xi beriwa mati", meaning that for everything you should pay someone a bribe. This is emphasised by the expression "U ta dya ku vona", meaning that if you do not pay a bribe you will not get assistance from anyone.

The poet uses the proverb "Hi le mahlweni ka nghala; u fanele ku ya na xisana", meaning when you confront a lion, you must be armed, which implies that wherever you go for assistance, you must be in a possession of a bribe. He says "hi bela swipitikopo mati", meaning that when a driver is stopped by a traffic cop, one must give him or her something to avoid a traffic fine.

To support this, the poet uses the idiom "hi hlenga vutomi", implying that people are forced to pay a bribe because if they do not, they could end up being charged for an offence they could have avoided. Police dockets can also vanish if the culprit can bribe someone in the justice department. This is expressed in the idiom "yi ta mila milenge", from the idiom "ku mila milenge", meaning to be stolen or to disappear. The poet also says "yi bile magoza yo nyawula", from the idiom "ku ba goza", meaning to run away. He means that after paying a bribe, the docket disappears without a trace.

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Even in job applications, those who pay bribes get employed. This is expressed by the expression "Nhlokohliso wa swivutiso wo pfala mahlo", which is from the idiom "ku pfala mahlo", meaning to deceive someone. The interview is conducted just to give the impression that the hiring was fair.

4.3.14 Mhangu – Marhanele, M.M.

This poem is about the consequences of stubbornness. It also depicts the themes of lack of managerial skills, the dire consequences of polygamy and the importance of personal financial management.

The theme of stubbornness is brought out by the idiomatic expression "murhi wa tindleve hi tshwetile" from the idiom "ku tshweta murhi wa tindleve", meaning the man was warned but he did not listen. The expression "ndleve yona u lumiwile" from "ku luma ndleve", meaning to be warned, was used to imply that he has been alerted about the dangers of polygamy.

The bad consequences of polygamy are indicated by the idiom "ku dyiwa tinhwala", meaning that they are poor, they have nothing to eat because of failure to take advice, this is also indicated in the expression "a pfale tindleve", meaning to block one's ears so that one cannot listen to what others are saying, meaning failure to heed advice.

This is also captured out by the idiom "u koka ku tika", meaning to struggle. The situation he is in is unbearable. The poet explains that the man has no one to blame but himself. The idiom "mhangu ku tilavela" meaning that he has brought all pains to himself, captures this.

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4.3.15 Nawu wa ntumbuluko – Marhanele, M.M.

This poem is a lamentation. The poet is irked by homosexuality and bestiality. To express his anger the poet says "Ndzi lava ku ba bembele" from the idiom, "ku ba bembele", which means to warn people about the wrong doings being done. He says that he wants to warn people about what others are doing such as molesting animals, goats in particular.

He also says "Mi nga tihlanganisi tinhloko", from the idiom "ku hlangana nhloko", meaning to be mentally challenged or mad. He says those who are victims of bestiality are not normal. The poet argues that these people are well aware of their activities but are intent on committing this criminal act.

He further expresses his anger by saying "n'wina ti-Gay mi hi dlamula timbilu", from the idiom "ku dlamula timbilu", meaning to induce vomiting or disgusting. He says that what is being done by gay people is disgusting and is a disgrace to human nature. He also adds "mi nga yimisi tiko hi milenge", from the idiom "ku yima hi nenge", meaning to be restless. He says that what is being done by gay people brings bad luck to the nation and is unacceptable.

4.3.16 Mpfula ya 2000 - Malungana, M.

The poem presents the theme of pity and compassion for people who were affected by the floods in 2002, where everybody lost their belongings, including homes and lives. To describe this horrible situation, the poet uses the expression "Vanhu a va dyela enghangheni", from the idiom "ku dyela echeleleni", meaning to be uncomfortable. He refers to the situation where people were no longer comfortable due to the rains which were pouring down uncontrollably. People were no longer sure whether they would live to see the next day.

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The poet says "a va ri hava ko hoxa nhloko", from the idiom "ku hoxa nhloko" or "ko fihla nhloko", meaning to have a roof over one's head or to have a home or house for shelter. In this poem the author bemourns the fact that people's houses were destroyed by the floods. As a result, most people were left homeless. He adds "a va lata rimbambu etikerekeni' from the idiom "Ku lata rimbambu", meaning to sleep. This means that people were left with no roofs over their heads.

To describe the horror faced by people during these floods, the poet says "Swi khome xivixivi", an idiom meaning to be in danger or trouble. He means drivers were inconvenienced because roads were slippery and muddy, making it difficult for cars to move. The pity shown by people towards the victims is described by "Mfumo wu ringetile ku humesa swo miyeta nyoka" from the idiom "Swo miyeta nyoka", meaning food or to have something to eat. The government tried to assist people with food, but it was not enough.

The degree of suffering is described by "...a va sungurile ku hlaya tinyeleti" from the idiom "Ku hlaya tinyeleti", meaning to go to bed on a hungry stomach. The poet says people did not have food to eat as their food stuffs were destroyed by the flooding. The poet repeats the fact that people no longer had houses to sleep in by saying "...a va ri hava ko fihla nhloko", from the idiom "ku fihla nhloko"meaning to hide one's head or a place to sleep. He adds by saying "Mpfula leyi a yi tsema nhlana" from the idiom "Ku tsema nhlana" meaning to be devastating or scary. He means that the floods of 2000 were devastating and people were scared for their lives.

4.3.17 Rirhandzu - Malungana, M.

This poem is about love and marriage, its ups and downs.To bring out the theme of secrecy in marriage and families, the poet uses the proverb "swihlungwana swi

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fihle swo tala", meaning that every house-hold has its own secrets and its marital problems concealed in the residents' hearts.

The theme of love and its highs and lows are depicted by the idiomatic expression "misava yi yime hi nenge wun'we" meaning that people are restless because they are no longer experiencing true love. Instead, there is only deceit and lack of heartfelt love and tranquillity. The theme of lies and deceit is captured by the expression "munhu a nga ku xevisa hi ririmi ra mbhongolo", meaning that one should not trust others because a person is capable of making empty promises. Peope are no longer trustworthy.

It is also expressed in the expression "Munhu a nga ku mamisa tintiho", from the idiom "Ku mamisa rintiho" meaning to make a fool of someone. The poet is saying pretence is prevalent among humans nowadays. People are not what they usually display outside. For example, they can pretend to be deeply in love when they are actually not.

4.3.18 Ndzo rheta - Malungana, M.

This poem is about faithfulness in marriage, love, honesty and deception. In this poem, deceit is brought out by the expression "Ndzi tlhontlhe mimpfi" (disturb a wasps' nest), which is an idiom "ku tlhontlha mimpfi", meaning to start a quarrel. In this poem the poet says that he has started a fight by having a child outside of wedlock; he has deceived his wife hence the start of a fight with his legal wife. He adds "Hi nuhana makhehele", meaning that they are quarrelling.

Lack of faithfulness in marriage is expressed by "ndzi boxe swinon'wana ehandle", which is from the idiom "ku boxa swinon'wana", meaning he has children outside of marriage and this has angered his wife. This is illustrated by the idiom "mutshiveri u dya ndzilo", meaning that the wife is extremely angry

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about her husband's extra-marital affairs. He adds "A nga lavi ku swi vona hi mahlo" meaning she hates it with her whole heart. She extremely hates it.

Even though he humbles himself, the wife will not forgive him, hence he says "Hambiloko ndzi khotsa ncila", from the idiom "ku khotsa ncila" meaning to humble oneself. She does not want to forgive him or accept the children. Becauce he was not faithful and honest to his wife, the ancestors are also angry with him and want nothing to do with these children. This is shown by the expression "va phahliwa eswigodweni", from the idiom "ku phahliwa eswigodweni" meaning that instead of their rituals being performed in the family shrine, they are performed on a dry tree, meaning that they are not welcome. Even the ancestors do not know them.

This is also expressed by "va toviwa hi va le hansi", from the idiom "ku toviwa" meaning that they are always sick. They have to perform sacrificial rituals so that the ancestors can watch over them and protect them from evil spirits and "swikwembu a swi etlelanga" meaning that the ancestors are not happy about the situation because some of their grandchildren are not under one roof. The anger of the gods which he has brought upon himself is expressed by the idiom "ndzi pfuxe swikwembu", meaning that the ancestors are restless. This means there is no peace in the household. The poet adds "ndzi chela fole" from the idiom "ku chela fole" meaning to perform a sacrificial ritual to appease the ancestors. The theme of unfaithfulness is again brought out by the expression "ku rheta ka hina vavanuna' from the idiom "ku rheta" meaning to make a mistake. He says men are no longer respectful. The poet admits these acts by stating that "... ku hi humesa moya" meaning that the actions give us a bad name. He is no longer a respectable father and husband.

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4.3.19 Xiyila - Malungana, M.

The theme of this poem is the value of culture, tradition and culture to bring out the value and essence of Ubuntu, which entails living as a big community and brotherhood in society. This poem reflects what is described by Beckson (1990:234) where he defines a proverb as a short popular saying, generally an observation or a piece of advice.

This poem is full of advisory phrases in the form of proverbs and idiomatic expressions. The poet says "matwe ma hanyisa, mavona ya dlaya", meaning one should take good advice and avoid unpleasant consequences. Do not learn from experience but rather from other peoples'mistakes.

He uses the idiom "ku mhoo!" meaning to be frank, to refer to the fact that one should take advice without any hesitation. He uses another idiom "ku pfumala timhondzo" from the proverb "Mangwa yi pfumale timhondzo hi ku rhumisa" meaning some things cannot be stated directly. Therefore, one needs to heed good advice.

The theme of obedience is brought out by the expression "u tiomisa nhloko" from "ku tiomisa nhloko" meaning to be a hard nut to crack or to be stubborn. The poet is also advising these types of people that if they do not want to believe what they are told they will suffer the consequences. He uses the idiomatic expression "u ta hlangana na xa ncila wa bulubulu", to indicate that they will face unpleasant consequences.

To warn those who have abandoned traditional ways and resorted to modern ways of living, the poet uses the idiom "ku komba xiyila xikosi" as a way of persuading them to respect their tradition and culture. This is why Stewart (2005:09), indicates that African proverbs are used for moral instruction at all levels of society, and to show the importance of respect and reverence for elders.

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4.3.20 Mubya – Ngobeni, R.

The theme of this poem is the value of child bearing and children in families and the community at large. The poet uses the proverb "Mubya wu nyukisa xitiko xa ndyangu" meaning a child, in the family will bring joy and happiness. He also says "wu dziima timintsu" which is an idiom meaning to be settled, to emphasise the fact that when a woman has a child, especially the first child, her marriage is strengthened. To describe the jubiliation which is brought about by the birth of a child in a family, the poet says "wu dikida ndyangu" from the idiom "ku dikida" meaning to please someone. The poet suggests having a child in the family makes the family happy.

To indicate the value of the child the poet says "... tshanga ra tihomu ri tiya hi ra marhole" meaning that for a marriage to be strong, there must be children in the household. He also says "ku cinamisiwa meno" which means to show one's teeth as a sign of happiness, meaning that when a child is born everybody is happy within the family. This is also apparent where the poet says "nhlungu ya vele yi boxiwa" meaning that by getting a first born child, the woman's teats are opened as the child starts suckling. This is a joyful experience for the mother who breastfeeds her child, and to the family as a whole.

The importance of the child is also reflected where the poet states that "ku dyiwa rihojahoja" which is an idiom from the traditional ritual ceremony performed for a child when he/she is taken out of the house for the first time. This ritual is performed by children. They are given cooked corn which they have to eat whilst dancing around the house, and throwing the kernels at the child, which is a sign of the joy the child has brought to the family and the community at large. The poet further describes this joy by saying "ku nga boxiwa xinon'wana ka!" which is from the idiom "ku boxa nomu" meaning to give birth. The poet states that the whole family is celebrating because a child has been born in the family.

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The value of the child is described by the line "xuma a xi boheleriwanga enengeni wa mpfuvu" which is from the proverb "ku bohelela ncuma enengeni wa mpfuvu", meaning to lose one's wealth in a silly or stupid way. He illustrates that by giving birth to a child, the woman is showing her worth in the family. It means that their dowry has not been paid in vain.

4.3.21 Kasi u dyohe yini wena Afrika? – Ngobeni, R.

This poem is about pain and suffering in African countries and the plea for God's help and mercy. Africa's agony is indicated by the expression "va tshama hi rhanga ro hisa" from the idiom "ku tshama hi rhanga ro hisa", meaning to be suffering. He suggests that Africans are suffering due to many things which are happening in this continent. There is no peace because Africa is characterised by wars, diseases and natural disasters.

Their suffering is also depicted in the expression "va yime hi swikun'wana" which is an idiom meaning to be uncomfortable. The poet means that in Africa there is no time to relax because of unrest. There is no peace. Everybody is running for dear life. People are migrating from one country to another due to civil wars, starvation and natural disasters.

To describe the extent of the pain and suffering, the poet says "Va sale misiha ya nhloko" which is an idiom meaning to be lean. People are just skeletons because they are starving. Children are dying of malnutrition because their parents died of wars, malaria and other terrible diseases like ebola and HIV (AIDS). He also say "ngati yi halaka siku na siku" which means people are dying daily. There are brutal killings and civil wars. People are dying in great numbers.

This is expressed by "va hanya hi rikoko ra xilondza" meaning that in many African countries people are suffering. There is immense hunger and starvation.

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The poet also says "u khome nyarhi hi timhondzo" which is an idiom meaning to be in great danger or having a lot of problems. Africa is full of troubles. People are fighting each other for power. Some are dying of starvation, and in some countries brutal killings propelled by tribal conflicts, religious wars and ritual murders are rife.

The expression "va etlela va hlaya tinyeleti" from an idiom "ku etlela u hlaya tinyeleti" which means to be hungry is also another sign of Africa's hostility to its citizens. Many people are dying of hunger due to lack of food in their countries. In countries like Somalia and Rwanda, people, especially young children are dying of starvation. African wars and plights cause the Red Cross Organisation to always keep an eye on Africa. The poet uses a proverb "va vambe ngoma" meaning to be ready for any action to indicate that because it is well known that Africa is restless. The Red Cross Foundation is always ready and prepared to lend a helping hand as there is always something bad happening in Africa. He implies that Africa will never be free of disasters.

The terrifying situation under which many Africans are compelled to live is described by the poet as follows: "ti tsema nhlana" meaning that what is happening in Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Somalia is dreadful and painful. People are dying in large numbers due to starvation, civil wars, natural disasters and genocides.

To indicate the theme of God's mercy upon its people, the poet uses the expression "Yehovha Xikwembu khoma Afrika xikatla", which is an idiom meaning to help or to give a helping hand to someone. The poet says that God should help Africa in her sufferings and make her a happy and peaceful continent. In addition, "Makhombo ya Afrika a ya kumi ndzhuti ya wisa" means that all Africa's problems must come to an end. God must intervene by stopping Africa's wars, hunger, droughts and floods.

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4.3.22 Nkuwa – Babane M.T.

The theme of this poem is love, passion and care for one's parents. The poet uses the expression "u n'wi kombile xikosi" from the idiom "ku komba xikosi" meaning to neglect something, to emphasise the importance of taking care of one's parents. This is also indicated in the expression "u nwi lahlele mandla" from the idiom "ku lahlela mandla" meaning to neglect someone and not wanting to help anybody. The poet means that this young man does not want to help his parents. He advocates for people to take care of their parents.

To show that after looking after their children, parents deserve to be taken care of, the poet says "Nyuku wa vona wu hundzuke wa mbyana" which is from the proverb "nyuku wa mbyana wu helela voyeni". All these mean that after their hard work, parents deserve to be looked after with care and love.

The theme of taking care of people is displayed by the expression "swi ku ondlile, swi ondli-vu!" which is a proverb "xi ondli xi ta ku ondlavu" meaning that as parents take good care of us, we should also take good care of them. This supports the fact proverbs are educational. The monster tales and moral stories of childhood give way in adolescence to the wisdom of proverbs used by parents as suitable situations arise to initiate the child fully into the wisdom of the tribe.

4.3.23 Tshamani ehansi – Hlungwani, M.C.

The theme of this poem is patience, forgiveness and reconciliation.To express the need for patience, the poet uses the expression "mi nga heli mbilu" from the idiom "ku hela mbilu" meaning to be impatient. The poet refers to people or a political party which has lost in the elections that they must not give up. They have to sit down around the table and look at their mistakes and correct them. They must correct what made them lose the elections.

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To expresss the theme of persevarence the poet uses a proverb "ndlopfu a yi fi hi rimbambu rin'we" meaning that a powerful person cannot be discouraged by one misfortune. He/she must learn from his/her mistakes and pick up from there and emerge a victor. This is supported by "mi nga lahleli thawula" from the idiom "ku lahla thawula" meaning to give up a fight. He means that one must not give up no matter how difficult the situation is.

The poet uses the expression "Timhaka ti vulavuriwa ehubyeni" from the proverb "njhovo yi chukiwa ehubyeni" meaning that crucial issues are discussed instead of resorting to violence. This means that if there is any issue to be discussed, people must sit around the table and discuss it instead of resorting to violence.

4.3.24 Ha ha avanile – Hlungwani, M.C.

The theme of this poem is racial division and racism between Blacks and Whites within South Africa. To reveal this theme, the poet used the expression "va-dya-nhlampfi na vanhu i kondlo na ximanga" from the idiom "ku va kondlo na ximanga" meaning to be great rivals or natural enemies. He means that Whites and Blacks are not united. They hate each other instead of living together as a rainbow nation. Whites still live alone in their own areas. Blacks are still packed in rural areas. Black children are not allowed into white schools.

To describe the animosity between Blacks and Whites the poet says "a va dyisani ro vupfa" meaning that they still trouble each other. Whites still see Blacks as animals which deserve to be treated as criminals, not people. Blacks still see Whites as oppressors who deserve to be killed or to be chased out of the country. They still hate each other.

To express his critical attitude towards Whites, the poet says "vona va lava ku dyela ehenhla" from the idiom "ku dyela ehenhla" meaning to be superior or wealthy. He says that Whites see themselves as being superior to Blacks and

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they see themselves as the right people to benefit from the wealth of the country at the expense of Blacks. They think a black person is inferior and must always be poor, and dependent on them.

He adds "va hi vonela ebodhleleni" meaning they undermine those who are less fortunate. They see Blacks as less human than they are because of their financial status. He also says "xi nge songi masangu" from the idiom "ku songa masangu" meaning to retire. He means that apartheid is not completely abolished because Blacks are still undermined by Whites.

To indicate the role played by racial segregation in work places, the poet uses the proverb "ku bananiwa hi rhambu ra mfenhe. This means Whites appoint one another. Nepotism is still rife in filling up vacant posts, and so Black people continue to suffer. To indicate that this situation is not pleasurable, the poet says "mhaka leyi a yi na nhloko na ncila' from the idiom "ku va na nhloko na ncila" meaning it is not easy to understand this situation. He says that it is not easy to understand why a white person gets a more senior position to an equally qualified Black person and he/she earns a higher salary although they do the same job.

He also says "mi hi mamisile tintiho swi ringene" from the idiom "ku mamisa rintiho", meaning to take advantage of others, to refer to the fact that Whites are still using their skin colour to gain advantage over their Black counterparts. He says he has had enough of this situation and wants the situation to change to a state where Blacks and Whites will be treated with equality. He wishes that Blacks could voice their displeasure.

4.3.25 Makwangala – Mkhari G.O.

This poem is about the appreciation of traditional and cultural ethics. This is shown by the expression "a nga ha vuyi" from the proverb "tolo a nga ha vuyi"

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meaning that the past cannot be brought back. He wishes it were possible to bring back the past, like in the days when the youths used to respect their adults. The poet implies that the present situation is not good because the youths no longer have respect for adults.

He is lamenting the present situation through the use of "va tswala miri, ku nga ri mbilu" which is a proverb meaning that children do not live according to their parents' wishes. They do as they please without considering the consequences of their actions. This is a complete opposite of the traditional ways where children respected their elders and followed their guidance.

4.3.26 Rivalela – Mkhari G.O.

The theme of this poem is that of forgiveness, reconciliation and endurance. Moral or religious proverbs are generally didactical but not doctrinal as they serve to reinforce the traditional values and beliefs of a group and by appealing to a common fund of moral wisdom which can provide advice for individual dilemmas. The poet used idiomatic expression "Hi ta phahlelana mariyeta" from an idiom "ku phahlelana mariyeta" meaning to forgive one another. He says that as people we must forgive each other. He adds "Xihoxo xi tshama evanhwini" which is a proverb meaning that as people or human beings we are immune from committing mistakes. Therefore, we must learn to forgive others. In English they say "To err is human, to forgive is divine", which means anyone can make a mistake. This means after a quarrel or misunderstanding, people must sit down, talk about it, and reconcile.

To project the theme of endurance, the poet used the proverb "Swandla a swi mili byanyi", meaning that no matter how difficult a situation is, one will rise again and be as good as before. The poet is thus saying we should not lose hope in life. No matter how hard a situation is, a man always finds a way out.

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4.3.27 Mhangele - Mkhari G.O.

The theme of this poem is the appreciation of nature and the lessons we learn from nature. The poet uses the proverb "Humba va landza hi rihlakahla" meaning to catch a thief one must follow its trail. There is no way one can catch a thief without studying the marks left by the thief at the crime scene. Likewise, a dog follows the scent left by a guineafowl to catch it. Through the idiom "yi tseme yi ri vona", meaning to run away, the poet means that after seeing that it is being chased by the dogs, the guineafowl simply flew away to avoid danger.

4.3.28 Vo chembula – Mkhari G.O.

The theme of this poem is endurance and perseverance. The idiom "Va byi khomile hi swandla" from the idiom "ku khoma vutomi hi mandla", meaning that their lives are hanging in the balance, is an indication that they are in constant danger. As they are working underground in the mines, the mine can collapse and bury them at any time. They are not safe at all. They are forced to endure all these hardships they are working under and persevere, knowing that they could lose their lives any time.

Where the poet says "timbilu ti tlutlamile enkolweni" he means that they are not at ease because they are afraid of the situation they are working under. They are in perpetual fear for their lives. The area they are working in poses a threat to their wellbeing. However, they have to persevere.

The proverb "Mali i sathani" means a person will do anything, good or bad for money. People are forced to go underground risking their lives because they need money. The poet adds "va rahile mabakiti", from the idiom "ku raha bakiti" which means to die. He means that many mine workers have died on duty, but more and more people still go underground into the mines to work regardless of its danger. To conclude the poet uses another idiom "Byela tsolo" meaning to

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have nobody to confide in when things are tough. He means that this young man, who is working hard, trying to save money for himself and his family, does not have anybody to complain to.

4.3.28 Va himetela mina – Mkhari G.O.

In this poem we get the themes of hatred, jealousy and perseverance among people. These are brought out by the proverb "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta micele ta ku vona", which means that whenever one does bad things to another, he must know that the same will be done to him/her. Here he means that what ever things they do to him a day will come when the same will be done to them. He/she endures this pain by knowing that "Ku hluvuka swi huma evusiwaneni", which is also, a proverb meaning that hardwork pays off or for one to be successful in life, one must sacrifice a lot. Through hard work even the poorest of them all can become very rich.

The theme of jealousy is captured by the proverb, "Mavondzo a ya hakeri" meaning that jealousy does not pay. One cannot get anything by just being jeolous of others. One needs to work for one's own success and stop hating others.

4.3.29 Kokwana va xisati – Mkhari G.O.

This poem is about love and the appreciation of old age and its values in society. The proverb "Vana va munhu va tsemelana nhloko ya njiya" means that brothers share whatever they have no matter how big or small it is. This proverb is used because whatever thing the old lady has, she shares all of it with her grandchildren. She never eats alone because she has a natural obligation of taking good care of her grandchildren for the sake of her children. This generally makes old people to be valuable assets in the family, community and the society

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at large. They teach, guide and take care of the moral lessons which the society has to learn to live a productive and responsible life.

4.3.30 Ndleve – Mkhari G.O.

This poem presents the theme of appreciation. The poet appreciates all the good things the ear as a body organ does for a human being to make sure that he/she stays alert. The proverb "A yi hlawuli ndluwa yi siya hove" means the ear is not selective. It accepts all news, bad or good equally. This indicates how well the ear performs its functional duties. Everything people have heard or want to hear, they use the ear to receive it.

4.3.31 Ku laya ka mukhegulu – Marolen, D.P.P

The theme of this poem is the value of traditional and cultural moral lessons which are the essence of Ubuntu. Ubuntu exhorts people to live together in harmony. The idiom "Ku tlula ka mhala ku letela ye n'wana wa le ndzeni ka wena", teaches the community to do good to others so that their children will copy the good things from them.

The proverb "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye n'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti", propagates the theme of compassion and love for others by giving a helping hand whenever there is a need. The theme of coexistence is captured in the proverb "A ri swi koti ku nusa hove - Ritiho rin'we a ri swi koti", which is from a proverb "rintiho rin'we a ri nusi hove" literally meaning that one finger alone cannot pick a thing, no matter how small it is. This means that one cannot survive without the assistance of others. A human being cannot survive alone; he needs others to make a living.

This is also brought out by the proverb "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni; Loko u ri ehandle swa yila." which is a proverb meaning that it is not wise for a person to

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hate or ridicule a handicapped person because one does not know what might happen to him in life. One must not laugh when one is in trouble because one day it might happen to you.

The proverb "U nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta: Ta le minceleni ta ku vona." meaning whenever one does bad things to others one must know that the same could be done to one, also indicates the theme of passion and empathy for others. The proverb "Hleka xilema u ri ndzeni, loko u ri ehandle swa yila", also portrays the same sentiments. The idioms "u nga dlayi nyoka u ndzuluta, ta le minceleni ta ku vona", and the idiomatic expression "Ku nyika i ku hayeka, u ta tlhela kambe u hawula", are both valuable lessons of life.

"Ku nyika i ku hayeka, u ta tlhela kambe u hawula", is an idiom which captures the expression, "blessed is the hand that gives". When one is generous to others, they will also be generous to him/her but if you do not give others nobody will give you anything. Assistance is given to those who offer it to others, which displays the theme of generocity.

The theme of generocity and care for others is also brought out by the proverb "Wa kombela wa ndlala, yaloye: N'wi he a tidyela, a nge heti". It means if a person asks for something; give it to him or her. Such a person is better than a thief who steals out of greed.

4.3.32 Masasani u fele enhoveni – Marolen, D.P.P

This poem reveals the theme of love for one's parents, a sense of help for others and deception.The heading of the poem "masasani u fele nhoveni" is a proverb meaning that the one who helps does not receive the honour he or she deserves. In this instance the person in the poem does not have the decency to thank and honour his/her parents for the role they played in his/her lives. This indicates that the parents have been deceived as they do not get what is due to them. These

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parents also deserve to be loved and cared for but they are forsaken by their own flesh and blood.

4.4 Conclusion

Idioms and proverbs are important literary devices which can pass messages effectively. They assist the poet in making sure that the message they intend to pass to their readership is understood with little difficulty as they are expressions with a meaning that is different from the meaning of the individual words. In order for idioms and proverbs to be understood easily, their usage in the society should be perpetual to allow the use of a language that is correct and natural to people who speak it as their first language.

As proverbs are coined by an individual quite unwittingly and quite unintentionally, they make a statement which may have a certain appeal to the listeners who will repeat it to others. In that way an expression becomes part of the privileged utterances of a language, a poet has the same task. He is entrusted to coin proverbs or utilise those that have been already coined in his/her community. For an expression to be appealing, the choice of words must be good, and they must aptly describe a given situation. When people use the expressions used in his/her poetry, they feel that no better words could have better captured the situation.

All proverbs, whatever situation they describe, be they humorous or not, seem to have a common use in that they may all serve to instruct. It could not be correct, however, to say that the proverbs are framed with the specific purpose of teaching. What happens is that an expression, after evolving, may be regarded by the people as an appropriate means of instruction. Proverbs are a collection of the experiences of a people, some of which were learned the hard way. These experiences are passed on from one generation to the next, ever fresh and ever true. This makes them a perfect tool to be used in poetry.

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Idioms and proverbs are didactic and teach a lesson by expressing a moral or moral ideal which is not particularly difficult to attain but which is rather a summing up of everyday experience in getting on in the world as it is. Others are practical in significance, and suggest a course of action to be followed in a given situation. In some cases, they may be said to pass a judgement on a particular situation and they are figurative as they employ various structural forms such as contrast and parallelism, rhythm and alliteration, as well as balance.

Proverbs refer to certain situations. Because situations differ, we find that some proverbs seem to be contradictory. That is to be expected if we remember that there are always more angles than one from which to look at a problem. Proverbs are a useful means of studying a people. They show how very observant the people are, so the habits of birds and animals, and the behaviour of nature in general, do not go unobserved. They reveal what the people adore, and what they despise. They reveal what the people's outlook on life is, and provide the student of human nature a peep into the character of a people. And the best way of conserving them is through poetry.

From the examples given, it is clear that poetry uses many idioms and proverbs. These expressions assist the poet to convey his/her message with ease because idioms and proverbs are well known expresssions that contain universal truths. It is easy to give a lesson of life and bring out the theme of each poem through the use of an idiom or by using a proverb. Xitsonga poets use idioms and proverbs as an important tool in most of their poems, making them a perfect tool to conserve them.

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CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

The aim of this research study was to highlight the fact that poetry uses many idioms, proverbs and proverbial phrases. This has been shown to be true as every poem quoted in the study used a number of idioms and proverbs. It can thus be concluded that poetry could be used as a mechanism to store these valuable language commodities.

Idioms and proverbs form an integral part of Xitsonga and other African languages. It is heartening to observe that many idioms and proverbs have already been collected and stored in the form of books. However, this may not be enough seeing that the use of idioms and proverbs requires attention on a regular basis.

It is therefore necessary for a study of this nature to be conducted where students of literature are made aware that they need to prevent the demise of idioms and proverbs in Xitsonga language. There was a need for a platform where poets will be made aware that they are playing a vital role in preserving our most precious language heritage. This study provided a brief overview of how poets use idioms and proverbs in their writings. In a nutshell, the study has shown that idioms and proverbs play an important role in Xitsonga poetry. They help in expressing the message of the poem effectively.

The fact that idioms and proverbs are important literary devices which can pass messages with much aesthetic quality and beauty when used in poetry could be deduced from the examples given in the study. Idioms and proverbs assist the

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poet in making sure that the message they are conveying to their readership is understood with little difficulty.

From the examples given in this study, it is clear that poetry uses many idioms and proverbs, which assist the poet to convey his/her message with ease, as idioms and proverbs are wellknown expresssions and contain universal truths. It is easy to give a lesson of life through an idiom or a proverb. It has been shown that Xitsonga poets use idioms and proverbs as an important literary device in most of their poems.

This study has shown that proverbs and idioms are often used in poetry to show the poet's intention for writing his/her poem, which is to advise, educate, warn or pass judgement about a social problem which people need to take note of. In addition, idioms are symbols of the poet's extra knowledge about the language he or she uses. The poet uses idioms and proverbs to appease his/her listeners about daily situations they encounter; so that they may forget about these harsh realities of life.

From the study, it is evident that idioms and proverbs are used to convey the poet's intentions in a more aesthetic and witful manner, in order to teach us the lessons of life which are acquired through experience and age. The role of literature is to make us conscious of the multiplicity and complexity of human experience. Figurative language attempts to bring out everything explicitly.

The study has indicated that idioms and proverbs assist the poet in making sure that the message is understood clearly. In order for idioms and proverbs to be understood well, their usage in the society should be regular. Poets should also try to use language that appeals to readers. One of the ways of bringing this about is to use proverbs and idioms.

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From the examples given in this study, it is clear that Xitsonga poetry uses many idioms and proverbs. These expressions assist the poet to convey his/her message effectively because idioms and proverbs are well-known expresssions which contain widom. The study has shown that it is more effective to give a lesson of life through an idiom or a proverb.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has shown that poetry as a literary genre could be used as a custodian of idioms and proverbs, as part of the Xitsonga oral literature. Idioms and proverbs have been seen as a valuable vehicle in the transportation of messages, lessons and themes in poetry, and as such, their worth is unquestionable. Their conservation is therefore critical.

Further studies should be conducted to highlight the fact that other forms of literature can also be used to conserve these valuable language resources. Studies can also be undertaken to find other ways of conserving them. The names idiom and proverb can also be looked at, as they seem to be misplaced. The idiom should have been named proverb, as it is made up of verbs. Similarly, the proverb should have been named an idiom.

A study should also be conducted to justify the need for idioms and proverbs to be updated, as most of them still talk of things from the olden days, which tends to make them irrelevant in the modern era. Gender-sensitivity should also be looked into and how they were used to undermine women in society and their role in social injustices. These as some of the spheres, which can be investigated as far as idioms and proverbs are concerned.

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