A SURVEY OF THE LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS IN VENDA

(A descriptive study from the earliest beginnings up to 1970)

by

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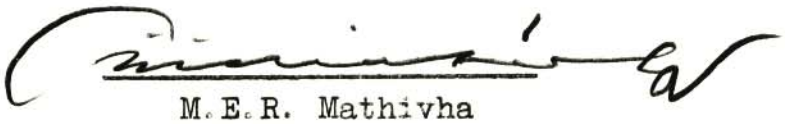
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DECLARATION

I declare that this essay is my own work both in conception and execution.



M.E.R. Mathivha

D E D I C A T I O N

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO:

(a) Gedzula and Mavhungu both my beloved parents for the love of my culture which they instilled into me from early childhood.

(b) C.F. Beuster, E. Schwellnus, their family descendants, all the missionaries who worked in Vendaland and the BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY for the sacrifice made in the writing of Venda as a Language.

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INTRODUCTION.

(a) Object of study.

The main object of this study is to give a general survey of the literary achievements in Venda Literature from the earliest times up to and including 1970. As such it must not be expected of this essay that a detailed treatment of each form of literature will be given.

The reason for embarking on this study is to give a general appreciation of the attempts made by the early writers and to place their attempts on record for the future generations of the Venda speaking people to evaluate. Furthermore, to indicate the role which the early missionaries played in the development of Venda as a written Langauge.

This is an attempt at recording the literary attempts in the Venda Language. It is a recording of the pioneering work done by the LUTHERAN MISSIONARIES and the first generation of Venda writers in the cultural aspect of the Venda speaking people. It is a preservation of the past activities of the early missionaries and also of the Venda writers of today, for a people's past is their spiritual heritage and as such it should be preserved and appreciated for the sake of the Venda speaking people.

(b) Methods.

(i) Materials.

The method of collecting materials was the tracing of old manuscripts, printed and unprinted; also to make photostatic copies of some of them. Copies of printed books were perused and studied. The books were grouped according to their kinds viz: (1) Religious books, (2) School readers, (3) School Language books, (4) Accounts on traditional History, (5) Translations, (6) Novels, (7) Drama and (8) Poetry.

(ii) Treatment.

The method of treating the subject matter was to give a brief account of the traditional literature which forms the

foundation of the stories which later writers incoporated into their books either as school readers or novels.

The oral traditional literature of the Venda is a survival of the indefinite past and on its basis the Venda literature of today developed. After the brief historical account, each book is treated separately as a significant contribution in Venda literature.

The books are commented upon as literary attempts in Venda and no comparisons have been made. Comparisons are left for future researchers when the Venda books will have increased to justify comparisons. The material consits mainly of published books in Venda.

The method of the entire thesis aims at enabling a student to perceive at a glance the literary importance of certain books in Venda and to help him to find ideas expressed in Venda books, as well as to assess the literary achievements in Venda without much ado.

The method followed in this thesis is that of critical appreciation. It is a survey of the story of the Venda Language from its unwritten form to the written form in which we find it today.

The books have been commented upon in their chronological order of publication within the group to which they belong. Each book is treated as a whole and as a literary contribution in Venda.

The novels and dramas have been treated under the following headings: (a) plot, (b) characters, (c) Literary comments, while those on poetry have been treated under (a) plot or arrangement of the book, (b) characteristics i.e. the type of poems, (c) literary comments.

Rev. C.F. Beuster, Dr. P.E. Schwellnus, Rev. Th. Schwellnus and Mrs. D.E. Giesekke stand out as pioneer authors in Venda. The succeeding chapters are attempts by later authors who added their works on the literary map of the Venda lan-

guage. The authors of today are improving their art of writing and in this way they enrich Venda literature.

----------oOo----------

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY BEGINNINGS

The Oral Traditional Literature.

The traditional lore of any nation or community is that unwritten body of diffuse knowledge of the people which functions in complete independence of outside influence which pertains to the preceding generations and which has been kept alive by being orally handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth. In this diffuse lore one finds prose forms (genres) composed of stories short as well as long apart from poetry.

Each form covers a variety of subjects or themes which interpret the life of the people. We also find forms which are not stories neither occurring in great quantities. Our ancestors were therefore provided with their literature which laid the basis of their code of law and philosophy. Some of the stories served as the "Bible" of the community.

In some of the stories there were concepts of beliefs which had to be passed on to the next generations. Some stories had an aim namely to explain and to unravel the mysteries of nature which surrounded the human race.

The stories showed people's imaginative genius. They formed a guide to the nature of their religious beliefs, the form of their government and it may be stated in short that they concerned all that relates to both the inner and the outer life of those by whom they are told or related.

In the lore of the Venda speaking peoples, we find the material comprising myths, fables, folktales, proverbs, riddles, blessings, greetings and the ordinary daily forms of the idiomatic expressions: nga l̂i vhe l̂a maladze (remain in peace or let it be peaceful). The lore also includes chants, folksongs, folkspeech and the poetry of our ancestors. The young people of the community assimilate these forms by listening, watching and participating without being formally or verbally instructed.

The available written records of traditional literature are the work of the white missionaries and other interested

individuals who wrote for the sole aim of extending mission work amongst the pagans.[1)]

In this thesis we intend to deal with the section of traditional literature which is rendered in prose and poetry form but especially as it affects the development of Venda as a written language. We are therefore not going to study the whole body of oral lore but only that which will throw light on the development of Venda literature.

It is in this sense that we speak of oral traditional literature. The material contained in this research has been obtained from various persons and from old manuscripts kept at the Venda Literature Depot at Tshakhuma.

The traditional lore may be explained as follows:-

(a) MYTHS: This term covers all the stories that deal with the creation of the world, with the origin of things, with natural phenomena, with gods and with religious beliefs. It is v intimately entangled with the hardest problems of thought of religion and of early history. An attempt is made to explain the relationship of man to man in his environment and to solve numerous questions that baffled him. His answers to mysteries of life and death, love and hatred. This took the form of a story which is generally referred to as myth.[2)]

The genre myths consists of a variety of explanatory, marvellous and improbable stories which are believed and narrated in good faith. Stories in this genre account mainly for the existence of life and death, of the universe, of all sacred rites and ancestral customs of the origin of natural phenomena and how certain food stuffs were adapted as food by man. These tales which set out to explain the origin of cultural traits and natural phenomena without including religious factors can be differentiated from the rest and be classified as ETIOLOGICAL MYTHS (Ngano dza tsiko).

The Venda traditional prose literature comprise the following mythical stories:-

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1) Theal, G.M.: Kaffir Folklore, p.
2) Guma, S.M.: The Form, Content and Technique in S.S. Traditional Literature, p.3.

(i) Stories concerning the supernatural.

In these stories we get ŃWALI the heavenly God of the Vhalemba and the Vhasenzi and the practices performed to appease him. We also find the relationship between ŃWALI and RALUVHIMBA. ŃWALI stays in heaven and has no connection with human beings directly but through RALUVHIMBA who acts as the medium through which the people can communicate with ŃWALI and vice versa.

Ńwali and Raluvhimba constitute the supernatural beings of the Vhalemba and the Vhasenzi. There is also the story of "KHUSWANE" who is supposed to be the equivalent of Ńwali amongst some Venda tribes. He also has the characteristics of the great powers ascribed to Ńwali.

(ii) The myth of Ḽiḓuxwani.

In this story the Venda believe that when a person dies some people with evil power may take the corpse and cut off the tongue and then use the person to plough the fields at night. This belief causes the people to put branches (thorn branches) of the mutshetshete over the new grave or to keep watch over the grave for the first few days. Sometimes the graves are made in the huts or in the village where the people who are related to the dead person live. The aim is to protect the corpse.

(b) Fables:

Under the heading fable, we include a group of short stories in which characters are animate beings with human interests and feelings. Most of these stories are didactic and aim at illustrating a definite moral but in some, the intention is not clear. The latter seems to illustrate mainly the triumph of craftiness which is mistaken for wisdom over brute force. In fact these stories are intended for amusement. A fable may be defined as a short tale related to teach a moral and the characters are usually animals or inanimate objects.[1)]

This genre consists of a variety of animal stories. Animals are the actors in these stories and they assume human qualities. These are stories which are told for the education of the children. The place where they take place is not known, but

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1) Jobes, G.: Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore, p.564.

each story has a definite theme and a plot worked out to its natural conclusion. Animal stories group themselves naturally into the following:-

(i) ETIOLOGICAL stories which give an explanation of the particular phenomena amongst animals e.g. Ndi ngani mbila i si na mutshila (Why the rabbit has no tail).

(ii) AMUSING stories which are mainly meant for amusement and show the people's love of humour which finds expression in this form.

(iii) Stories with a moral.

Although these groups seem to exist, there are overlapping types. Amusing stories may be educational and moralising just as at times the moral tendency may be overwhelmed by the show of triumph over the brute, e.g. "Sankambe tshi tshi vhulahisa mapfene" [1] (Sankambe causing the death of the baboons).

We get fables which portray the aesthetic side of life and some weaknesses of human nature and a study of the weaknesses reveals the right way to act towards the wrong doer. For instance, the story of "Sankambe tshi tshi yhulahisa Muzhou"[2] (Sankambe causing the death of Muzhou).

Some of the fables are mythical and include tales which set out to explain the origin of cultural traits which deal with the origin of institutions, customs and certain food stuffs. Some of them elucidate sparkling points or moral right. This is revealed by acts of sufferers when later on they sing in their distress in order to summon supernatural help. This help may come through a bird or some kind of reptile. The method of calling this help is the singing of chorus: "Samninga-ninga Pesu" (The answer of the spring come and knock out).

(c) Legend:

A legend is a story of long ago, a history which is so old that it is semi-mythical. It also denotes narratives about characters connected with the history of the race. It is an embodiment of genuine folk-memory, no doubt flavoured with a dash of pleasant romance.[3]

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1) Schwellnus, Th.: Ndede ya luamso lwa Tshivenda, p.76.
2) Ibid.
3) Jobes, G.: Dictionary of mythology, Folklore, p.564.

These narratives include accounts of things which occurred long ago, such as wars and migrations of people, accounts of the exploits of traditional heroes and also narratives about events or persons of past generations, e.g. "U dzama ha Dimbanyika". "U swika ha Mbelengwa Vhukalanga". (The death of Dimbanyika. The Arrival of Mbelengwa in Mashonaland).

(d) Folktales:

The folktales are popular stories handed down by tradition from generation to generation and which are told for the sake of telling a story. They are popular for their aesthetic value and for amusing the younger generation and they serve to some extent to educate them in the art of speaking.

The folktale is the most common form of folk narrative handed down by word of mouth from the earliest members of the community to the present generation. The folktales usually describe the experience of a person or persons with an animal or animals showing the human feelings for human suffering at the hands of animals or strange characters aroused and thereafter seem to form the main theme of the story.

In the folk stories animals speak but they do not completely assume human qualities as in pure animal stories. An animal is made to feel that it is impossible for it to assume human qualities in these stories. This is shown by the language the animal uses. For instance the story of "Samninga-ninga Pesu":

SAMNINGA-NINGA PESU

"Salungano salungano,
Ho vha hu na mu̓nwe musidzana we a vha o vhingwa shangoni la kule. Ha ri nga li̓ńwe ḓuvha a humbela vha vhuhadzi hawe uri a ye u dalela vhabebi, Vhavhuhadzi hawe vha ri ngauri a hu na muthu ane a ḓo u fhelekedza ri u ṋea kholomo hei u tshimbila ṋayo

Kholomo ya hone yo vha yo naka hone i na luṋanga luthihi, na hone i tshi tamisa, Muvhunduni mu̓ńwe na mu̓ńwe o vha a tshi ṱangana na zwo vhifhaho, vhathu vha tshi funa u mu vhulaha uri vha dzhie kholomo vha ṱuwe nayo.

Hone o vha e na kuimbo kwa u ḓi-pilela ngakwo, musi maswina a tshi ḓa u dzhia kholomo hei. Ha ri musi a tshi vhona vha tshe kule a thoma u imba a ri:

'Ndi fela kholomo yanga,
Samninga-ninga pesu,
Kholomo ya lunanga luthihi,
Samninga-ninga pesu,
pesu..... pesu
pesu..... pesu'.

Mushumo wa vha wonoyo u swika a tshi swika ha vhabebi vhawe maswina a songo kona u mu vhulaha na kholomo vha songo i dzhia. Musi a tshi thoma u imba kholomo yo vha i tshi mbo di thoma u runga vhathu avho vhothe nga lunanga luthihi. A swika hayani ha vhabebi vhawe vha takala nae a dzula u swika a tshi huma.

Another folktale using the cow as its character is as follows:-

MUDYANOMBE

"Salungano salungano,
Ho vha hu na muñwe musidzana we a vha o vhingelwa shangoni la kule. Ha ri nga liñwe duvha a humbela vhavhuhadzi hawe uri u funa u yo dalela vhabebi vhawe. Vha vhuhadzi hawe vha ri ngauri a hu na ane a nga mu fhelekedza ri u nea kholomo hei uri i u lamulele ndilani. Kholomo yo vha yo naka heyo. Ha ri musi a tshi swika muvhunduni muñwe na muñwe vhathu vha hone vha funa u mu dzhiela kholomo hei. Ndi hone a tshi thoma u imba musi a tshi vhona vhanna vha tshi da nga vhuhali a ri:

'Ndi ri vhothe-vhothe mudyañombe
nga vha fhele — mudyañombe mudyañombe
Ndi nzee, ndi ngedembulu — mudyañombe mudyañombe
A vha ndi vho-mugede (vhane a divha) — mudyañombe mudyañombe
Mudyañombe nga vha sale'

Vhane a ri nga vha fhele ndi vhatsinda,
Vhane a ri kha vha sale ndi mashaka.
Mushumo wa vha wonoyo a vhuya a swika hayani,
vha hawe vha mu takalela a dzula tshifhinga tshilapfu u swikela a tshi humela vhuhadzi hawe".

Among folktales we also find stories of cannibals such as: Musidzana o dzewaho nga dula, Ntsa i tshi lela ñwana, Phele na musilisili, Maivha a sa li mufumbu. (The girl who was married by a frog, The duiker which nursed the child, The hyena and musilisili, Doves which do not eat bran).

(e) Historical Narrations:

These are accounts of previous generations, stories of wars, migrations, epidemics, famine and modes of living, narrated for

the sake of imparting knowledge. Many of these stories are of more recent origin than the legends. The stories are mainly of interest to the old people. They form the literature for the adults, while fables and folktales are interesting to the younger generations. In the historical narrations there exist different genres in the oral traditional literature of the Venda speaking peoples viz. myths, fables, legends, and historical narrations.

It is difficult to separate them into watertight compartments. In Venda true fables (ngano) occupy a distinct place from the other forms. The fables can be distinguished by their characteristic beginning and ending. The Vendas were the last people whom the Whites met in the Northern Transvaal with the result that the records concerning Venda are not very old.

POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE VENDA LANGUAGE

The Venda fables and folktales which have been given in the previous paragraphs formed the basis of Venda literature. The Luvenḓa language is the language of the Vhalemba and the Vhasenzi invaders who came to the land, which according to an explanation given by Ravengai Muzeziwa means "VELE-E-NNḒA". This means that one of their leaders VELE is outside the original home which is Mashonaland. His language which he and his followers coined was called "LUVENḒA" the language spoken outside Mashonaland.

The leaders of the Vhalemba and the Vhasenzi migrated southwards about the 12th and 13th[1] centuries and eventually established their homes in the present Vendaland. The leaders of these two communities are the real founders of what we can call VENDA CULTURE AND VENDA LITERATURE.

These leaders gave Vendaland its name, its language and its great links with the great tribes found in Africa. The Vhasenzi and the Vhalemba tribes divided by their traditions and customs but bound together by certain marriages in their history, presented a united front in the North Eastern Transvaal in the early 14th century.[2]

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1) Mullen, J.E.: The Arab Builders of Zimbabwe, p.5.
2) Ibid, p.13, 33, 41.

Before these tribes came to the present Vendaland they were preceded by early hunters of copper, gold, iron and game. The hunters of copper etc. narrated stories about the country they found down South and these stories awakened a spirit of adventure in the rest of the community with the result that during some struggle for chieftainship in Mashonaland the group under Vele broke away and came down to the Transvaal.

The language of the Venda of today developed from some form of Shona, Shambala, Nyanja, Sena, Swahili, Bemba and Ndau. The Venda speaking peoples of today are descendants of the people who have remained in the areas where the aforementioned languages are spoken. This language had already crystalized as a means of communication when the first missionaries landed in Vendaland in 1872.

Here are the examples of these oral lores:

MMVI-MMVI DZA ENOA MAKHULU-WEE

MUANI WA LUNGANO	VHAMVUMELI
Salungani-salungani;	Salungana
Ho vha hu muńwe mukegulu;	"
E na muḓuhulu wawe wa musidzana;	"
Mukegulu o vha a tshi funa muḓuhulu wawe nga maanḓa.	"
Mukegulu o vha sa anzi u ṱwa hayani.	"
Mishumo yawe ho vha hu ya masimuni na madavhani na u ya khunini.	"
Mukegulu o vha tshi anza u onesa muḓuhulu wawe nga madekwana ngauri o vha a tshi fhindiwa nga maanḓa musi a tshi ya mishumoni	"
Ngomu tshi ṱangani tsha hoyu mukegulu na ńwana-nyana hoyu ho vha hu na zwikumbu zwiraru.	"
Tshińwe tsho vha tshi tsha muroho, tshińwe tshi tsha thanga, tshinwe tshi tsha mmvi zwo vha zwo shatelwa.	"
Mukegulu a ḓi onesana na muḓuhulu wawe sa misi a mu laya a ri: ḓuvha ḽińwe na ḽińwe u shatele tshitemba tsha muroho na tsha thanga, u dovha u shatele, hone tshitemba tsha vhuraru, vhuraru u songo vhuya wa tshi shatulula."	"

Ndi hone nga ḽiṅwe ḓuvha nga madekwana mukegulu a tshi onesana na muḓuhulu wawe a ri: "matshelo ndi ya davhani ḽa kule, khamusi ndi ḓo vhuya ḽi tshi vho kovhela kana vhusiku, hone ṵ songo shatulula tshiḽa tshitemba, u shatulule zwenezwiḽa zwivhili; tsha muroho na tsha thanga". Salungana

Nwamanyana a tshi pfa zwauri makhulu wawe vha ya davhani ḽa kule a funa u shatulula na tshitemba tsha vhuraru, nge a funa u vhona uri hu na mini ngomu. Ha ri o fhedza u bika o no ḽa a mbo ya a shatulula tshiḽa tshitemba. "

Musi a kha ḓi bva u shatulula tshila tshetemba a vhona mmvi dzi tshi fhuhfha dzoṱhe dza mbo swika makoleni. A sala o farelela tshila tshitemba o shuwa. "

Ndi hone musidzana a tshi thoma kuimbo kwawe kwa u vhidza dziḽa mmvi uri dzi vhuye dzi dzhene tshitembani. "

Mmvi-mmvi dza enda makhuluwee Dza enda
mmvi-mmvi dza enda makhuluwee
mmvi-mmvi dza enda makhuluwee
mmvi-mmvi dza enda makhuluwee

Mwana-mwana wa ka enda pi. "

Ndi hone dziḽa mmvi dzi tshi vhuya dza ri ngomu tshitembani fhelele ṅwananyana a takala. Salungana

Mukegulu vha tshi vhuya vha wana zwitemba zwoṱhe zwo shatelwa vha ri: "Athi ri wo shatulula zwenezwiḽa zwitemba zwivhili fhedzi wa litsha tshiḽa tshiṅwe? Nwananyana a ri iina makhulu ndo shatulula zwenezwiḽa fhedzi." "

Matsina ṅwananyana o ḓifhelwa nga u imba kuimbo kwa u vhidza mmvi, a ṁbo dovha a shatulula makhulu vho ya tsimuni dza vhuya a takala "

NḒEVHE VHUYA-VHUYA

MUANI WA LUNGANO — VHABVUMELI

Salungana, salungana! — Salungana!

Ho vha hu na muṅwe mukegula "

E na muḓuhulu wawe wa musidzana "

Mukegulu o' vha a sa anzi u ṭwa hayani. "

O vha a tshi anza u rambiwa madavhani. "

Hone hafha muṱani mukegulu o vha e na zwitemba zwivhili. "

Tshiṅwe tshi na muroho, tshiṅwe tshi na nḒevhe, zwo shatelwa. "

Mukegulu nga u ḓivha uri muḓuhulu wawe a nga ḓi shatulula zwitemba zwothe, o laya muḓuhulu wawe nga misi uri a shatulule tshitemba tsha muroho na tsha thanga dza u koḓela muroho fhedzi. Salungana! "

Musidzana a shuma nga he makhulu wawe vha mu laedza ngaho. "

Hone, nga liṅwe ḓuvha musidzana a vhilaela, nge' a funa u vhona uri ngomu tshetembani tshine makhulu wawe vha ri tshi songo tibulwa hu na mini? "

Ndi hone a tshi takuwa a yo shatulula tshiḽa tshitemba tsha nḓevhe. "

Musi tshitemba tshi tshi shatuluwa a vhona nḓevhe dzi tshi bva dza ṱuwa nga lutsinga dza guma makoleni u si tsha ḓi vhona. "

Ndi hone musidzana a tshi thoma u imba luimbo u dzi vhidza; "

A imba ari:

Nḓevhe vhuya-vhuya! Vhuya-vhuya!
Nḓevhe vhuya-vhuya wee! "
Nḓevhe vhuya-vhuya! "
Nḓevhe vhuya-vhuya wee! "
Mwana, mwana wakaendapi! "

Ndi hone nḓevhe dziḽa dzi tshi vhuya dza ḓa dza ri tshitembani fhelelee! Salungana!

Musidzana a mbo dovha a shatela tshiḽa tshitemba nga dakalo "

Makhulu wawe vha tshi vhuya, vha mbo vhudzisa vha ri: "A wo nga shatulula tshi ḽa tshitemba tshe' nda ri u songo tshishatulula? "

Musidzana a ri: "Hai a thongo shatulula". "

Musidzana a dovha a shatulula tshitemba tsha nḓevhe luvhili hafhu, a tshi ri u imba nḓevhe dza vhuya. "

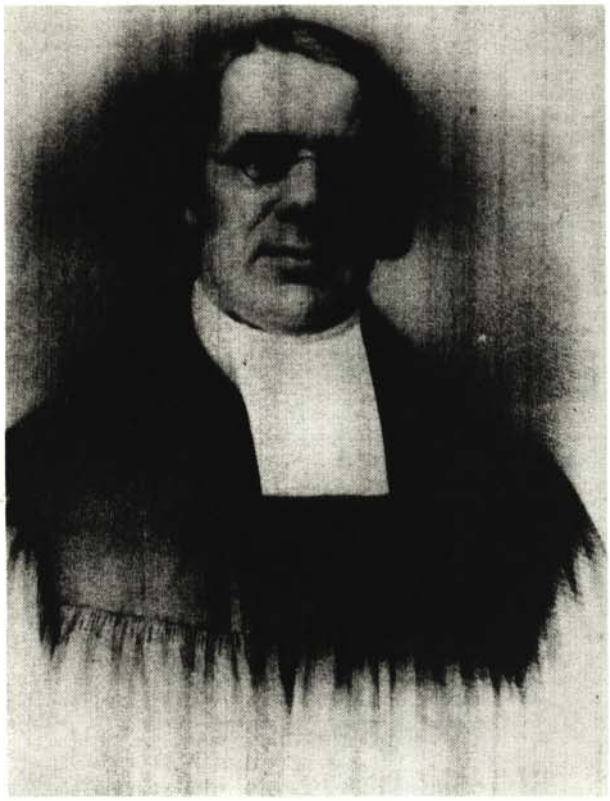
Nga liṅwe ḓuvha o' ri u shatulula na u imba zwisi thuse. "

A imba luimbo lwawe lwa "Nḓevhe vhuya-vhuya...! a tshi ita na u lila nge' a vhona dzi sa tsha vhuya. "

Ndi hone musidzana a tshi bika vhuswa hawe, a siela makhulu wawe, a shela vhukhopfu mufaroni a gonya nga lutsinga lwe' nḓevhe dza gonya ngalwo. "

Mukegulu vha tshi vhuya vha wana muḓuhulu o ṱuwa, na u toḓa vhakundwa. "

Hone u ḽa musidzana a swika shangoni ḽa vhathu vha no ḽa mavu, vha sa li vhuswa. Vha no dzula milindini. "



(a) when young



(b) when old

Dr. D. Wangemann. The Director of THE BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY who sent C.F. Beuster and E. Schwellnus to the Venda people for mission work.

FIRST RECORDING OF THE VENDA LANGUAGE

The Venda language was first recorded in 1872 when C.F. Beuster, a Berlin Lutheran Church Missionary, who had been sent to Vendaland by the Director of the BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, D. Wangemann, arrived. D. Wangemann sent C.F. Beuster and E. Schwellnus as missionaries amongst the Venda speaking peoples. The missionaries were the first recorders of the Venda language. Here too what D. Ziervogel says is true that "the earliest attempts at writing the language were made by the missionaries who interested themselves in the language of the people amongst whom they worked".

C.F. Beuster paid little attention to the lore of the Venda but the recording of the lore was left to the missionaries who followed him in the writing of the Venda language.

THE FIRST MANUSCRIPT IN VENDA

In November 1872 C.F. Beuster and Klatt arrived at Maungani Ha Tshivhasa. They were missionaries of the BERLIN MISSIONARY SOCIETY the body which had sent them to the Northern Transvaal with a specific purpose to start missionary work amongst the Venda speaking peoples.

These early German missionaries obeyed the command that states that they should go out into the world and preach the gospel to those who have not heard it so that they may be converted.

They came from a civilization which had developed a system of writing with the result that they liked certain things which existed amongst the Vendas and disliked others. Therefore the statement of A.R. Louch is true when he says "it is just in the nature of man to prize or oppose certain things, and this is a feature of his knowledge of himself and others as well as a condition of his biological existence".[1)]

Such was the state in which C.F. Beuster and Klatt found themselves when they first arrived in Vendaland in 1872. They found a people speaking a language which had a store of traditional lore which had not been submitted to writing. Beuster

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1) Louch, A.R.: History as Narrative: History and Theory 1969, p.54.

"Ziervogel, D.: Linguistic and Literary achievements in the Bantu Languages."

immediately began to learn the language[1] of the people he had come to convert to Christianity. He started by pointing at things and the people would give him the names or concepts in Venda while he recorded that in his early exercise books. He was learning the language directly from the people who knew no other language except their own viz. Venda. Beuster took great pains in collecting words and arranging them in some order until he could make simple sentences. He employed the letters or symbols which were used for the writing of German which was his master tongue. He made all kinds of symbol combinations which were possible to convey the meanings of Venda utterances.

About 1876 Beuster, with the help of some of his converts, started to translate the Bible into Venda. He started with some chapters from Genesis. These are the earliest manuscripts in the History of Venda Literature.[2]

Some of the pages of the early manuscripts written by hand with Beuster's corrections are:

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1) Beuster School: Log book.
2) Hand-written manuscripts in possession of Rev. D.W. Giesekke.

From the above hand-written extracts it is evident that Beuster was either influenced by Sotho or by Pedi in his orthography, since the early Lutheran missionaries who were sent to the Transvaal had to be acquainted with Pedi because the Lutheran Church had Pedi as its official language in its early history.

These early manuscripts were written in the Luphani dialect despite the orthographical difficulties for instance "Vatho vote va vidzelela vare ha Farao : re fe zuleoa" (Vhathu vhoṱhe vha vhidzelela vha ri ha Farao: ri fhe zwiḽiwa). Forms such as ea and oa for ya and wa obtained in Southern Sotho during the period when Beuster first wrote the Venda language. The striking feature of these hand-written manuscripts is that Beuster tried to use the idiom of the people in the rendering of the Biblical passages.

These hand-written manuscripts led to the printing of the early books in Venda.

THE FIRST PRINTED BOOKS IN VENDA

The first part of the Bible which was translated and published by C.F. Beuster was the Gospel according to St. John. Its title was "EVANGELI NGA YOHANNES NA DZIEPISTOLA DZA YOHANNES NA DZIPSALME NA DZIMOE DZO KHETHOAHO NGA TŠEWENDA". This is as far as one can make out also the very first book in the Venda language.

The following extract illustrates the orthography:-

> "O rangane epfi lo va le hone, honno epfi lo va le ha modzimo, honno epfi lo va e Modzimo. Lone lo va le ha Modzimo o rangane. Zote zo etoa nga lone honno a ho ngo etoa tšetho tša zo etoaho arali ho se nga lone. Kha lone ho va ho na votšilo, na votšilo ho va ho tšedza tša vathu. Na tšedza tšea vonetšela sûšune, hono šušu a lo ngo tse tanganedza. Ho va ho na mothu romoaho nga Modzimo, dzina laoe ndi Yohannes. Ene o da nga molando oa votanzi, ore a ve tanzi tadolo ha tšedza, ore vote honno ore a ve tanzi tadolo ha tšedza, ore vote va tende nga ene".

It is evident that the orthography is either influenced by Sotho or by the Lepsius orthography. Characteristics of the orthography are inter alia:

(1) the use of both o and u for the [u] sound of Venda e.g. **mothu for** [muthu].

(2) the use of the vowel symbols e and o before another vowel for the semivowels y and w respectively e.g. etea nga lene, va kona e nea weine for [itwa nga lone and vha kona u ṋeya] respectively.

(3) the absence of a distinction between dentals and other consonants e.g. tanganedza and tadolo for ṱanganedza and ṱadulu respectively.

(4) the use of the Lepsius underlined e o for [ɔ] and [ɛ] respectively e.g. [lɔnɛ] and [ɛnɛ]

(5) discrepancies in spelling of the same word e.g. honne, hono for [huno].

The influence of Pedi resulted from the fact that the missionaries were first taught Pedi before they came to Vendaland. Beuster seems to have learnt Pedi because the early evangelists who helped the missionaries in Vendaland were Pedi speaking.

The early translation of the books of the Bible were followed by the translations of the hymns from German into Venda. Some of the hymns can still be identified and compared with the modern hymns:

"Ho na šango la vodevode,
Nga e tenda re do le vona,
Khotsi e dore nea lone,
O do dzula na vaoe vana,
Re do dzena re do takala. [1]

The rhythm in these hymns is still following a transition from old traditional rhythm to modern rhythm. The spelling is still abounding in Pedi forms. The style of the hymns and the phrasing shows that Beuster was struggling with the question language of signs and symbols. When Beuster was still busy with the translation of the Bible he noticed that he had neglected the children who had also followed their parents into the church. He thought of teaching the early Christians how to read. He wrote the "SPELBOEK EA TŠEWENDA" in 1899. This is the first book printed along the lines of a school book for the Venda language. It is the first school reader ever written in Venda for use in schools.

1) Beuster, C.F.: Nyimbo dzo Khethoaho, p.123 (Hymn 182).

This book paved the way for Venda to be used as medium of instruction in schools. (For details of this book see school readers).

RELIGIOUS BOOKS AND LINGUISTIC ARTICLES

The Spelboek ea Tševenda was followed by a hymn book which contained hymns and psalms with passages from the Bible translated into Venda. Between 1899 and 1900 we have a pause in the History of Venda Literature and the orthography seems to have entered a stage of change. The diacritic marks viz. dentals started entering into the Venda orthography : buḓula-schlagen, bukuṱa-schlagen. This might have been caused by the war that was raging on in Vendaland.

During this time Mphephu Alilali Tshilamulele Ramabulana was fighting with the armies of the South African Republic. It was during that period in the History of Venda Literature that fresh Shona words were brought into Venda when Mphephu and Milubi returned from Mashonaland. The Vendas always ran to Mashonaland whenever there was trouble from outside in Vendaland.

At that time the Schwellnus brothers Theodor and Paul had gone to Germany where they were studying for the ministry. Both of them being children who were born in Vendaland and had grown up with the language as their means of communication in their daily lives. These two brothers viz. Theodor and Paul Schwellnus, the sons of Rev. E. Schwellnus, were German by descent but they were Vendas by birth. They learnt Venda from early childhood. Venda was their language in the playing fields, in the church and German was only spoken in the evening prayers with their parents.

Their ideas and concepts had been moulded in a Venda environment with the result that the Venda language was part and parcel of their cultural heritage. They played all the games that Venda boys played. They learnt the tricks which Venda boys practised in their daily lives. They attended certain practices which adults could not have been able to attend. They spoke Venda and lived Venda right through their lives.

The Schwellnus brothers gave C. Meinhof good material for the phonetical and phonological analysis of Venda. C. Meinhof gave a good analysis of the Venda speech sounds in his article "Das Tšivenda" published in 1901. In this article Venda orthography was changed to what it is more or less today.

This is the first scientific work on Venda and it is the article that had a great stabilising influence on the written form of Venda. He formulated rules for the study of Venda phonetics and phonology. C. Meinhof had studied the phonetics and phonology of many languages viz. Pedi, Sudanic languages, he made use of the knowledge he gained there to improve the orthographic system of the Venda speech sounds. He compared Venda sounds with those he postulated for UR-Bantu.

The symbols used in this book das Tšivenda are still the symbols used in the written form of Venda today with slight changes and adaptations. The orthography advocated by this book was introduced the following year.

The beginning of 1902 saw the birth of "KATEHISMA DUKU EA DR. MARTIN LUTHER". This book was published during the period of transition of the orthography. The book was used in the training of the new converts and also as a book to be read by Christians. This book was written in a dialect which is more or less Shona e.g.

Ko Tenda

Ndi no tenda ko modzimo Bambo, oe simba rose,
Mosiki oe denga na pase. Ndo ko dene? Ndo ko ti:
Ndi no tenda kuti Modzimo oa ndi sika ne zose
zoakasikoa, oa ka ndi pa moveri no moeea, meso ne
zeve ne zose zo moveri, nzere no ko nzgoa koose,
bwa o tsha zu tshengeta. Pa, soro pe ezu oe ndi
pa hanzo ne shango, ko dya no ko noe, imba no
rovaza, mokadzi no moana, munda ne zupfuvo ne
numbi dzose..... p. 7.

The arrangement of the subject matter was mainly for adult use. It was a book meant for the teaching of the moral code of the Christian religion. The style used is that of question and answer which was the manner of presenting this kind of code in the early Christian church.

In 1903 a new edition with improved orthographical changes of C.F. Beuster's Hymn book appeared. This book continued to be

the hymn book of the Lutheran Church in Vendaland for a considerable time. The book was divided into two sections viz. (a) Hymns (b) Liturgy.

The Liturgy of the Lutheran Church in this book was as follows:-

(Khovangano ea goadama nga magona o suka mofunzi a tši re: voaaelo ha Morena) etc.

Mof: Khotsi eašu

Kh: Ngaova movuso ndi oao na maanda na o holisoa nga o sa feleho. Amen.

Mof: Yesu Kristo etc.

Kh: Kristo ngoana ea Modzimo eo bwisago šango zuvene u re khathotšele! Kristo ngoana ea Modzimo eo bwisaho šango zuvene re re voaoelo.

Mof: Voaoelo ha Morena vo ve na enoe note. Ho neoa tšelalelo tšo khethoaho.

Mof: Tendane Morena ngaova ndi oa vothu haleluya!

Kh: Honno khathotšelo eaoe e hone nga o sa feleho Haleluya!

Mof: Thabelo.

Kh: Amen.

Kh: Loimbo.

Mof: Kha re holise Morena!

Kh: A tendoe nga madova!

Mof: Morena a u fatotšedze a u volonge, Morena a u penyisele tšefatoo tšaoe a u khathotšele. Amen.

Kh: Amen, Amen, Amen.

Mof: Morena a u fatotšedze a u volonge, Morena a u penyisele tšefatoo tšaoe a u khathotšele.
Morena a u lavelese nga tšefatoo tšaoe a u fe voaoelo.
Amen!

Kh: Amen, Amen, Amen.

The literary value of this liturgy is that it heightened the meaning of the words of ordinary speech to that of a philosophy. When one reads them one gets the feelings of the composer Rev. C.F. Beuster when he pronounced them. The picture comes to the mind in the form of a lively man instilling in the congregation the message of peace. It is graphic indeed to visualize the moment when Beuster said, "Morena a u fatotšedze a u volonge, Morena a u penyiselele tše fatoo tšaoe au khathotšele, Morena a u lavelese nga tšefatoo tšaoe a u fe

voaoelo. Amen. These words are emotionally charged and they transfer their emotive effectiveness to the audience or congregation. The influence of this intense emotion is still found amongst the descendants of the early Christians in Vendaland. This book contained some of the hymns which make the Venda heart grow fonder when it hears the melody and the words giving it. It is a pity that some of these hymns have been changed or omitted in the publications that followed. Here is one of the hymns that has been retained by Sects but not included in the modern Hymn book:-

Ho na šango la vodevode,
Nga o tenda re do le vona
Khotsi o do re nea lone,
O do dzula na vaoe vana
Gidima Gidima,
Re do dzena re do takala : :

Re do imba ngee dakalone
Nyimbo ntsoa dzo nakesaho
Ro no fedza votungu hote
A re tša šaea voaoelo
Gidima Gidima
Re do dzena, re do takala : :

Khotsi eašu oa vodevode
Kha re mo fe o tenda hašu
Nga molando oa vothu haoe.
Kha re mo fe na mbelu dzasu
Gidima Gidima
Re do dzena re do takala : :

This hymn gives us the mood and the imagery in those years when the Christian religion fired the hearts of the converts. When one reads the opening verse one is struck by these words: "Ho na šango la vodevode nga o tenda re do le vona". These lines raise up the faith of the Venda to the realisation that whatever the troubles he has on this Earth he can hope to get to a peaceful world, a world which will only be possible for those who have faith.

When we read the lines: "Khotsi easu oa vodevode,
Kha re mo fe o tenda hašu"

we can imagine the impression they made on the early converts and the strength they instilled in the hearts of those fiery Christians in their striving after the ultimate good, that which only God can give to those who do not lose heart.

This book occupies a very important position in the development of Venda literature. The poetry found in the hymns has left its influence in the language.

The Venda folksongs which were used for entertainments were then taken by tunes of these hymns and the congregations developed a habit of singing these hymns in their daily lives. The Christians grouped themselves into singing groups, therefore making singing a feature of the early Christians in Vendaland.

Even the heathens started imitating the Christians in their singing, although they did not believe in the message of peace. Even chiefs at times got interested in the tunes contained in the hymns from the book. The Christians later on were distinguished by their singing and were regarded by other chiefs as the children of the great chief and, therefore, did not do some work for the chief as was regularly done in Vendaland.

The Schwellnus brothers Th. and P. were so interested in "DAS TŠiVENDA" with the result that they collected a list of Venda verbs and published them in a book entitled "DIE VERBA DES TŠiVENDA" in 1904. In this book the Schwellnus brothers started by giving the Venda speech sounds each with a description. The Venda speech sounds were compared with German speech sounds.

The description of the speech sounds is followed by Venda verbs which are arranged alphabetically with German equivalents or explanations. This book shows the introduction of the new orthography which contains diacritic marks viz. the dental and the velar diacritic marks. The orthography in this book still retains some of Beuster's symbols. This is revealed by the following verbs: arava, alafa, afula, bovea, hufa for aravha, alafha, afhula, bovhea, hufha respectively. It is also noticed in this book that the vowels in Venda are now decreased to five viz. a, i, u, o, e, ŭ. The dental consonants are used with dental symbols viz. boḓa, bvuḓa, piḓa, buḓula, paṱa, paṱamedza, bukuṱa. We meet with the two l's in Venda viz. l and ḽ. We get three n's viz. n, ṅ, ṉ.

This book indicates tones in the verb stems. The tones are indicated initially on the vowel. The tones are high and low. This book formed the basis for further translation work in Christian literature. This book may be regarded as the first

Venda-German dictionary. It is the transitory stage of the Venda orthography, i.e. the 1895 orthography and the 1918 orthography.

It is in this book that a definite departure from Beuster's way of writing Venda is made. It is significant that Venda children are now concerned with the recordings of the Venda language in transition. It shows in its presentation that the difficulties that Beuster encountered in the recording of Venda speech sounds were now being eliminated. A break with Pedi sounds is made in the publication of this book. The Schwellnus brothers were not particularly influenced by Pedi and therefore Pedi symbols were gradually disappearing from Venda orthography.

The influence of this book is seen by the contributions which the missionaries who followed the early missionaries made. The book made the learning of Venda easy. Some of the missionaries became very interested in the language and even contributed to the development of Venda literature by composing hymns in Venda but based on German tunes.

This book was a valuable contribution to Venda literature because it enabled the German missionaries to build up a Venda vocabulary in a short time. The book also made it possible for the early missionaries to translate extracts from the Bible.

Between 1904 and 1911 there was no publication in Venda. This period is also a period of transition in the History of Venda Literature. Venda literature was transiting from Beuster's hands into the hands of the Schwellnus brothers. The Church was also undergoing some changes in Vendaland. It was the time when the Church was establishing mission farms which formed the centres of influence in the civilization of the Venda speaking peoples. The missionaries involved themselves in the social changes which were taking place in Vendaland.

In 1911 an important step in the History of Venda Literature took place when "MIKANZWO YA VHUSWA HA VHUTSHILO YA MAḌUVHA A MURENA OṬHE A ṄWAHA" was published in Berlin. This book standardized the written form of Venda as far as religious literature was concerned. In this book the Venda idiom as a literary aspect of the development of the Venda speaking peoples had taken a developing step forward. The translation of the

passages from the New Testament into Venda was in smooth idiomatic Venda. Some passages read as Venda originals.

The translators used the Luphani dialect with a few old forms of Shona words such as pinga, phwidzi, mapitoni where they were appropriate. For instance: "Duvha la u elewa Murena a tshi vhuyelela denga". This sentence reads smoothly as original Venda but it is a translated sentence. The word denga for heaven is the most appropriate in this context. The opening passage of this book is taken from St. Math. 21-1-9:

> "Musi vha tshi sendela tsini ha Yerusalem, vha tshi swika Betfage thavhani ya mitwari, Yesu a ruma vhafunziwa vhawe vhavhili a ri: Iyani mudanani u re afho phanda hanu ni do wana mbongola yo vhoxwa i na namana yayo. Ni dzi hungululele, ni dzi dise ngeno. Arali muthu a tshi amba nanwi, ni ambe ni ri: Murena u na mushumo nadzo; u do tavhanya u dzi rumela ngeno."

This passage reads smoothly and it is in the Venda that the Venda used in 1900. The dental diacritic marks are used right through for all sounds which have dental characteristics. The orthography has totally changed from Pedi to Venda.

One is elated when one reads the following passage:

> "A re na vhuporofita, hu vhe hu no anana na lutendo. A re na mushumo wa u shumela vhanwe (tshivhidzoni) nangoho a vha shumele. A no (kona u) funza, a funze. Wa u fhembeledza, a fhembeledze. A no pfi a kovhe a kovhe mbilu i nthihi. A no pfi a linde vhanwe, a fungelele" p.21 (Vharoma 12-7-16).

These are encouraging words for a Christian who meets difficulties. The words are simple but meaningful. The concepts conveyed by this passage are well translated into Venda and they do not sound foreign to the Venda ear. The stress in this passage is laid on faith. All the activities are centred around faith "A no pfi a kovhe, a kovhe mbilu i nthihi". The injunction is that if you are given a duty you must do it faithfully.

Mikanzwo contains passages translated from the books of the prophets, the psalms and books of the New Testament. On page 146 the book starts with the "ZWIRENDO ZWA U KHODA TSHILIDZI MUSI RO NO AMBA ZWIVHI ZWASHU". This section of the book contains selected passages from the prophets that make the Christian

to confess his sins. This made the Vendas confess their sins since the words used are piercing to the heart: "U ralo Murena: Idani ha ṋne noṯhe no netaho, no lemelwaho, nṋe ndi ḓo ni awedza. Ḓihweseni dzhogo yanga, ni funzwe nga nṋe, ngauri ndo vuḓa, ndi mudzia u ḓi-ṯukufhadza mbiluni, ndi hone ni tshi ḓo wana vhuawelo ha mbilu dzaṋu". In section III (ZWIRENDO ZWA U BVUMELA EPISTOLA) i.e. DZI-SEKWENSE) of the book we find the different festivals of the church given with appropriate passages relevant to each festival.

The significance of this book is that it contains passages from the Bible which the Christians need whenever they want to speak precisely:

> "Inwi dzikhoro takusani dziṯhoho dzaṋu, takuwani miṋango ya kale na kale uri Khosi ya vhurena i dzhene - Vhudzani ṅwananyana wa Tsioni ni ri vhona mutshidzi wau u khou ḓa; vhona zwa u tonda ngazwo u nazwo, zwa u lifhedza zwo mu ranga phanḓa".

This passage strengthens the Christian along his path of firm belief in the Gospels. The Christian is inspired when he reads or hears these lines:

> "Imbelani Mdzimu, Lidzelani dzina ḽawe mbila' Fukulani gondo ḽa hoyo a phiguluwaho masogani' Dzina ḽawe u pfi Yehowa. Na hone ni khane phanda hawe. Fhululedza u takale, ṅwananyana wa Tsohioni ngauri a sizwi, ndo ḓa u thikha vhukati hau' u amba ha Yehowa."

When Christians want to express their strong conviction about their faith they quote the following:-

> "A huna u tshidzwa kha muṅwe na muthihi na hone tsini ha denga a huna ḽiṅwe dzina ḽe ḽa ṋekedzwa vhathu, line ḽa pfi ri tshidzwe khalo. Ndo liladza mato anga ḓzithavhani. A mpfarisaho u ḓo bva ngafhi? U fariswa hanga hu bva hu ha Yehowa, musika-denga na shango. Ha nga tendi mulenzhe wau u tshi redzemuwe, mulindi wau ha edeli. Yehowa u do u linda wa vha kule na vhuvhi hoṯhe, u ḓo linda muya wau. Yehowa u ḓo linda u bva na u dzhena hau, zwino na lini na lini".

The future of the Christians is insured in these words:

"Shango tshaḽo ndi u fhira na nyemulo yaḽo, hone a no ita zwiṋe Mudzimu a zwi funa, u ḓi ḓzula u swika lini na lini. Ni tshimbile lwo teaho vha Murena, uri ni mu takadze hoṱhe, kha mishumo yoṱhe ya vhudi ni vhe vha aṋwaho mitshelo - Luvhaṋi Yehoŵa no takala, sŵikani phanḓa hawe ni tshi fhululedza".

From page 50 the book is rendered in poetic prose with which every Venda speaking person who reads it will feel really at home. For instance, when he says "He ṅwananyana wa Tsioni' khana nga maanḓa, ḓala muḓalo, ṅwananyana wa Yerusalem". The word khana here is used with a wide meaning, it means to run with great pleasure, to dance about in appreciation of something grand, to dance as a token of a welcome of an important personality. The authors of this book were good translators who were well versed in the Venda idiom. This is poetic prose and it appeals to the memory and the image created by these words is superb. Despite the new orthography used in this book it also introduced a new symbol, viz. bg as in "Huno uyo wa phuli o bebga nga ŋama wa mufumakadzi o bebga nga mbavhalelo". This symbol might be a Shona influence which P.E. Schwellnus brought into Venda since he knew Shona after he had been a missionary out in Mashonaland. It might be assumed that Th. Schwellnus exerted his influence in the translation of these passages and also when we observe the orthography used. This book has developed from early attempts and appears to be crowning the earlier attempts which have been made in connection with the symbols used in the writing of Venda.

In 1913 another publication of Beuster's "NYIMBO DZO KHETHOAHO DZA VATENDI NA DZA VANA NGA TSHIWENḒA" appeared but it did not improve its orthography. On the whole this book remained the same as already described. The year 1918 saw the publication of "NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA" by Th. Schwellnus This book furthered the course of the new orthography (for contents and discussion see Readers).

During 1918 an important book was published entitled "MAFHUNGO A BUGUNI YA MUDZIMU". This book had probably been translated by Mrs. E.D. Giesekke. The style of this book seems to be that of Mrs. E.D. Giesekke. This book used the same

orthography as Mikanzwo and contains extracts from the Old and New Testaments. The extracts are rendered in good Venda:

> "Vhana vha Israel vho vha vha tshi gomela vha tshi vhaisala nga mushumo wa vha Egipte vha dzula vha tshi rabela Mudzimu uri a vha khathutshele. Moshe a tshi khou lisa nngu dza makhulu wawe thavhani ya Horeb a vhona tshiṱaka tshi duga nga mulilo tshone tshi sa swi. Mbiluni yawe a ri litshani ndi vhone! A pfa ipfi ḽi tshi mu vhidzelela ḽi tshi ri: Moshe, Moshe u songo sendela. Bvula thovho dzau henefho hune wa vha hone, ndi shango ḽikhethwa. Ndi nne Mudzimu wa vhokhotsiau, Mudzimu wa Abraham wa Îsaak wa Yakob. Moshe a fukedza tshifhaṱuwo tshawe nga ofha u livhana na Mudzimu Yehowa".

This scene where Moses met God in the burning forest is well rendered in Venda and the appropriate words are used which describe the scene to a Venda without implying any foreignness in the minds of the Vendas.

> "Dawid a lilela Saul na Yonathan a ri: Ho vhulahwa yone ndele ya Israel. Ndi ṱungufhalela iwe Yonathan mukomana wanga. Ndo vha ndi tshi u funa hani? Vhanna vha vhuhali vho fa hani, vhadzia mmbi vho lovha hani? Zwenezwo a tshi pfa uri vha-Yabes vho swiṱa Saul a vha vhudza a ri: Ni fhatutshedzwe nge na khathutshela Saul muṋe wanga; na inwî Yehowa a ni khathutshele".

From this extract we can recall the feeling of King David's sadness at the loss of his bosom friend and relative Jonathan. The words carry the tense emotion and they evoke a sense of pity from those who read them with understanding. These words confirm the custom of the Vendas which states that people can quarrel but no one wishes for the death of the other.

> "Yehowa a dovha a ḓi-sumbedza kha salomo lwa vhuvhili a amba nae a ri: Thabelo yau ndo i pfa, nndu ye wa fhaṱa ndo ita nnḓu khethwa. Arali iwe wa tshila ita zwine milayo yanga ya amba u na mbilu ya u luga, vhuhosi hau ndi ḓo vhu khwathisa. Arali u tshi ḓo nkhangwa ndi ḓo vhaisa vha-Îsrael, nda vha balaṅganya, nndu ye wa mphaṱela nda i tutshela ya thuthiwa, uri vhoṱhe vha no ḓo fhira vha tshi vhona vha akhamale, vha zwi ofhe vha vhudzise vha ri: Iyi nnḓu na iḽi shango ḽi tshi vhuya ḽa ralo, izwi Yehowa o zwi itelani Ndi hone hu tshi ḓo fhindulwa ha pfi: Ndi nge vha ṱutshela Yehowa Mudzimu wavho".

The extract is full of omens which also influenced the Venda to regard certain things and practices as very sacred. It fitted

well the religious position of the Venda chiefs. These extracts formed a piece of literature to be read by old and young. Deducing from the extracts of this book one gets the impression that this book can be included among school books as a reader. Its passages are in the form of short stories written in simple prose which can be read without difficulty.

Some of the passages are so good that they may be committed to memory. Some of them are in the form of short essays which helped the Venda readers to develop their abilities as far as writing an essay is concerned. The way in which the words are used in this book is appropriate. From the language of this book it is clear that the author was well versed in the Venda idiom. The language flows naturally and the message of the passages comes out naturally without even giving the impression that this is translated work. The author summarized the stories from the Bible and gave them in her own words.

In 1919 Th. and P.E. Schwellnus published "WÖRTERVERZEICHNIS DER VENDA-SPRACHE" in which German nouns and words are given with their Venda equivalents. This book gave the German speaking people a chance of reading and writing Venda. The book serves the German speaker as well as the Venda speakers. The two languages are learnt comparatively. The words are spelt in the new othography. Here are some words as they appear in this book:

Baumspit = maṱhakhe (a)
Baumstamm = Block danda
Baustil = kufaṱele (ku)
Beet = ndima (i)
Beil = mbaḓo (i)
Bein = mulendzhe (U)
Berg = thavha (i)
Bewachen = linda
Blase = pone (li)
Befehlen = laya

Blatt = ṱari (li)
Blei = mutonvu (u)
Blut = malofa
Bogen = vura (vu)
Brausen = mubvumo (u)
Braut = muselwa
Brucke = muratho
Dsch = ṱhanga
Deckel = tsitibo (tšhi)
Bundel = mufundzhe

Despite the fact that this book was published in 1919 after "Mafungo A Buguni Ya Mudzimu" it is clear that the orthography was still confused. Diacritic marks are used and at the same time the symbols used by Beuster are found e.g. kufaṱele for kufhaṱele vura for vhura and sometimes vha is used. The symbol tš is used instead of tsh for the modern orthography. This book

may be regarded as one of the books of the transition period in the development of Venda orthography.

This book also contributed to the knowledge of words which were used in the translation of texts from the Bible. It is not clear why the book published in 1919 is still using the old orthography when a book published in 1911 used the new orthography cf. Mikanzwo. In 1920 Beuster's hymn book was published in a new edition but still it retained its orthography. Here is an extract from this book:

"Khosi ea votolomuvusi oa vothe,
Tanganedza nyimbo dzašu
Tšeledzi tša khotši ro vona ha eoe,
Naho re so ngo eleoa.
U re pfe, re tšidze,
Epfa nyimbo dzašu
Dzi šuke tadolo" 1)

During 1920 there appeared a translation entitled "EVANGELI NA MISHUMO YA VHAAPOSTOLA". In this book the new orthography predominates. This book forms the transition between the old translations which were done by Beuster and others and the translations done by P.E. Schwellnus. It marks the end of a generation and ushers a new generation in the translation process in the development of Venda literature.

In 1923 the translation of the New Testament was done by P.E. Schwellnus. The new orthography was used in this book. The language used in this book is the sweet Venda which a Venda has sucked from a Venda breast. P.E. Schwellnus distinguishes himself as a translator by using common expressions and familiar objects within Venda culture to convey those philosophical concepts contained in the Bible. Here are some extracts:

St. Mark IV: "A vha funza a ri:
Thetshelesani, vhonani, muzwali o ya
u zwala a tshi khou zwala iṅwe mbeu ya
wela kha ṋdila, zwiṋoni zwa da zwa i la..."

He uses simple words but in an effective manner. There are no borrowed words but pure Venda words.

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1) Beuster, C.F.: Nyimbo dzo Khethoaho dza Vatendi na Vana, p.81.

St. Mathew V: "A tshi vhona magogo a vhathu a gonya thavha a dzula vhafunziwa vhawe vha sendela. A ạtama mulomo a vha funza a ri: Mashudu vhaheḓana muyani, ngauri muvhuso wa ṱaḓulu ndi wa vhenevho...."

The statement "A ạtama mulomo a vha funza" is rendered very effectively and in conformity with Venda culture. When a person opens his/her mouth especially if he/she is old, the Vendas expect to get the truth and the last testament for those who remain.

St. Luke 8: "Misi iyo Yesu a tshimbila na miḓi na miḓana a tshi huwelela mafhungo maḓifha a muvhuso wa Mudzimu, vha fumi na vhavhili vhe nae. Na vhaṅwe vhasadzi vho fhodzwaho vhe na mimuya mivhi na malwadze, vho-Maria Magdalena we ha bva mimuya miṱanu na mivhili".

This brings the message of the New Testament close to the Venda heart in the language which the Venda knows very well. This book has exerted a great influence on Venda literature. The prose which Schwellnus used in this book affected even the daily speech of the people with the result that the different dialects of Venda were discarded in favour of the Luphani which Schwellnus used in this book. This book laid the foundation on which the Bible was to rest in Venda. The use of common names of trees found in the New Testament made it easy for even an uneducated Venda to follow the argument and to participate in the discussion. The association of the people was aroused and the people loved the version of the Venda as given by Schwellnus. Some old Christians in Vendaland still remember some passages which they learnt by heart shortly after the translation of the New Testament. They always say that if you want to speak Venda fluently speak like Schwellnus in his New Testament.

The phrases which he used in his translation were quoted now and again in the daily speech of the Vendas. It formed the reading material in Vendaland in those years. The translation of this book brought with it new ideas and new concepts in Venda culture. The outlook in life of a Venda changed too.

In 1924 the modern Venda hymn book entitled "NYIMBO DZA VHATENDI" by P.E. Schwellnus was published. In this book the sweet Venda which Schwellnus learnt when Venda was still unin-

fluenced by Pedi is used. For instance Hymn I:

I a ḓa Yone Khosi
Nga ỉ ṱanganedzwe,
Ndi muṋe wa vhuhosi,
Nga a ṱhululedzwe,
Ndi Yesu a ḓaho,
Hosiana nga i pfale,
Dakalo nga ḽi dale,
Hu rendwe a ḓaho p.4.

The way in which Schwellnus chose his words and fitted them into music is very excellent indeed. He uses words which convey the meaning clearly in Venda and leave no person in doubt if that person has some knowledge of the Venda language. The book is written in the new orthography and encouraged the adoption of the new orthography. The phrasing in most of the hymns indicates that Schwellnus had put the Venda language on a high plane of development. He raised the language to the level that it became a medium of communication for the Venda speaking peoples.

When we compare the last line of the above hymn with the last line which Beuster gave to that hymn we find them reading like this: Schwellnus: "Hu rendwe a ḓaho" Beuster: "A rendoe nga mese. Nga mese does not provoke our senses and emotional expectation. For in a ḓaho we get into the process of expecting and ever expecting while nga mese causes us to feel that the emotion has been experienced and it has passed or it will be always like that.

Some hymns start by the form "Hee" or "Kha" which is the form which Venda traditional poetry usually assumes in order to draw attention of the listeners to what is coming or being rendered. For instance Hymn 89: Kha ndi U nambatele, 73: Hee Muya wa Murena, 72: Hee muya Mukhethwa i ḓa, 40: Hee ipfani-ha vhahashu, 39: Hee muya wa dziṱhanzi vuwa, 29: Kha ri ye u rabela, 16: Kha ri rende Yesu washu, 11: Hee ḓadzwane ḽo mela. In some of the hymns we meet with a sombre mood or a serious attitude towards the Christian religion. We get hymns which express the weariness of the Christian heart and the hope it can develop. In hymn 140 we get these lines:

1. Vhohwalaho vho ingaho, vho lemelwaho
Vha pfi iḓani u rulwani; ʼḓani-vho.

2. A vhidzaho, a kungaho, naa ene ndi nnyi?
   We a shengela hu u itela vho-inwi.
   .....
   .....

5. Mmbudzeseni, nntsumbedzeni, ndi lamulelwe!
   Yesu muruli, Yesu mubvuli 'ya kha-e.

In these lines the author Th. Schwellnus gave the pain he felt at Christ's crucifixion and he relived that experience as a Christian. This hymn makes Christians shed tears even today when it is well sung in Venda. The tense emotion is carried by the words and the poetic form in which Th. Schwellnus put the words, which are unparallelled in the History of Venda Literature. This hymn also reveals the character of the man behind the words, that he was a stern man who allowed no changes in his convictions.

The liturgy is also rendered in the new orthography in this book.

LUIMBO:

Muf: Nga dzina ḽa khotsi na ḽa Murwa na ḽa MuyaMukhethwa. Amen. Luimbo nga lu ye ha khotsi na ha Murwa.

Tshivh: Na ha Muya o khethwaho.

Muf: Ndi one maitele a kale na kale.

Tshivh: Na zwino na lini na lini. Amen.

Muf: Thabelo: Mudzimu Ramaanda oṱhe, mune wa tshilidzi! Vhutshinyi hashu na zwivhi zwashu ri a zwi ḓivha. Ri khathutshele mbilu, U songo ri ṱala, naho ro tshinya! Ri rule zwivhi zwashu ngauri Yesu Kristo Murwa-mufunwa wau o ri pfumelela. Ri farise nga Muya wau uri zwivhi ro zwi laṱa ri vhe vhau vha no ita zwine wa zwi funa. Amen.

Muf: Murena.

Tshivh: U ri khathitshele ..... p.150 to 151.

The liturgy stabilised the form of the written Venda and its idiom is very impressive and meaningful. Forms like "ndi one maitele a kale na kele", "na zwino na lini na lini" are very effective in the religious practices of the Venda. The words create an atmosphere of God's presence in the prayer. Religion to the Venda speaking peoples is that stable form of philosophy which does not change in order to conform to modern conveniences.

Religious forms remain archaic, if the forms are changed a Venda feels that it is no longer God's words but man's. According to the Venda, God is the oldest and the unchanging, and he remains the same for always.

The significance of this book lies in the fact that it improved the singing in the Venda services. The phrasing became natural and the Venda sang the words fluently. The book collected all earlier attempts at hymn composition and put the hymns on a plane which was never before attempted. The tunes which obtain in Venda hymns were used by Schwellnus. Schwellnus's poetic idiom is found in his hymns. When he says: Hymn 206:

> Yerusalem, Yerusalem,
> Musanda wa ṱadulu,
> Wa tshedza tshi sa fheliho,
> Zawelo ḽone fulu,
> U haya ha vho tshidzwaho
> Na vha u funaho.
> Yerusalem, Yerusalem,
> Ndi ḓo vhona lini?

He immortalizes the city of Jerusalem and makes it a city that can be visualised and be occupiable by those who have lasting faith. This hymn book is an important face brick on the wall of the History of Venda Literature. It is a shining brick at whose lustre no passer-by in Venda literature can pass without wondering. In 1927 C. Endemann published "Midzimu Ya Malombo" in the new orthography with German translations. Here is an extract:

> "Musi vha tshi thoma u tshina, ndi uri ha lwala muthu. Vha mu alafha vha vhona, a sa fholi vha ya thanguni. Mudzia thangu a vha vhudza a ri: u na mudzimu wa malombo. Ndi hone vha tshi vhidza munwe a tshinaho uri a de, a wise mudzimu wa malombo. Ha kuvhangana vhathu na mashaka awe, vha thoma nga u lidza tshele dza magala pasi.
>
> (Wenn die Leute anfangen zu tanzen, dann bedeutet das, jemand krank ist. Sie behandel ihn, wird er aber nicht gesund, so wenden sie sich an die Wuerfler Der Wuerfler sagt ihnen dann: Er hat den Gott der Malombo. Kranken zum Vorschein bright. Darauf versammeln sich die Leute und seine Anverwandten und fangen an zu spielen die "Tshele dza magala nga pasi" d.h. Klappern, die man sitzend spielt.)

The significance of this passage is that Venda has been used to disseminate information about a cultural aspect of Venda

life and custom. This may be regarded as the forerunner of Anthropological publications on the Venda speaking peoples.

It is evident that C. Endemann had set himself the task of recording down cultural aspects of the Vendas but owing to his untimely death he could not complete this task. From accounts given by Evangelists who had the privilege of being guided by C. Endemann, we get the impression that he was a man full of energy who actively participated in all the activities of the congregation. He was a man who conferred with his evangelists and made thorough preparation of sermons to be delivered on the different Sundays.

Many old Christians recall the inspiring sermons that he used to deliver from the pulpit of the Beuster Mission Church. It was through C. Endemann's involvement in the life of the community in which he worked that saved twins at Beuster Mission Station. One of these twins has made good progress with the result that he is an inspector of schools today. The other twin is a progressive business man who represents the Vendas in Johannesburg Urban Councils.

The Venda Christians had accepted Endemann as a fellow Christian and even forgot that he had a different colour. He had mastered the techniques of writing Venda when he passed away. Cut is the branch that could have borne much fruit. In addition to this article he wrote an "Outline Grammar for Venda" which has not been published but is in the hands of W. Endemann. After two years Dr. P.E. Schwellnus translated the psalms into Venda. In the psalms Schwellnus showed his poetic talents. Listen to his language as found in the translation of Psalm 23:

> Yehova ndi mulisa wanga, a thi nga shayi tshithu.
> U ndadza mafuloni avhudi, u nnyisa madini a vhuawelo.
> U netulusa muya wanga; u ntshimbidza a nnyisa ndilani
> dzo lugaho, a tshi itela dzina lawe, Naho ndi tshi
> tshimbila govhani la dzunzi la lufu a thi ofhi vhuvhi.
> .....
> .....
> Zwavhudi na zwivhuya zwi do ntevhela maduvha othe a
> vhutshilo hanga, nda do dzula nnduni ya Yehova maduvha
> a sa fheli."

While the rendering in Afrikaans is as follows:-

"Die Here is my herder, niks sal my ontbreek nie.
Hy laat my neerlê in groen weivelde, na waters
waar rus is, lei hy my heen. Hy verkwik my siel;
hy lei my in die spore van geregtigheid, om sy
naam ontwil. Al gaan ek ook in 'n dal van dood-
skaduwee, ek sal geen onheil vrees nie; want U is
met my, U stok en U staf die vertroos my. U berei
die tafel voor my aangesig teenoor my teenstanders;
My beker loop oor.
Net goedheid en guns sal my volg al die dae van my lewe;
en ek sal in die huis van die Here bly in lengte van
dae."

The English version reads as follows:-

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me lie down in green pastures; He
leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth
my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with
me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou prepareth a table before me in the presence
of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the
days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of
the Lord for ever."

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus uses the common Venda words with poetic effect. His rendering of the metaphor in the opening paragraph of this psalm: "Yehova ndi mulisa wanga" and when he concludes the psalm by collecting the ideas with the appropriate words which do not indicate that these lines were translated but which sound as original. The last verse collects all the ideas in this psalm and raises the imagery to some great heights.

P.E. Schwellnus's ability to translate poetry may be demonstrated by psalm 104:

Afrikaans:

"Loof die Here, o my siel! Here my God, U is baie groot!
Met majesteit en heerlikheid is U bekleed - wat Uself
omhul met die lig soos met 'n kleed, wat die hemel
uitspan soos 'n tentdoek; wat sy solders bou in the
waters, wat van die wolke sy wa maak, wat vleuels van
die winde sy boodskappers maak, van vuurvlamme sy
dienaars. Hy het die aarde gegrond op sy grondveste,
sodat dit vir ewig en altyd nie wankel nie."

The English version reads as follows:-

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: Who maketh the clouds his chariot: Who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever."

Schwellnus rendered this psalm in the following idiomatic form:

"Renda Yehova, muya wanga! Yehova Mudzimu wanga, wo hula zwinzhi, wo ambara lupenyo na madzanga. Wo fuka tshedza vhunga, wo adza ḽiṱaḓulu vhunga thovho. Wo ṱoka dzithikho dza ṱhanga ya nndu yau maḓini, makole U a ita goloi yau, U tshimbila kha phapha dza ḓumbu. Vhaḓinda vhau ndi mimuya. vhau ndi khavhu dza mulilo. Wo fhaṱa ḽifhasi kha miteo yaḽo; a ḽi nga dzingenyei linî nâ lini."

For a Venda whose respect lies deep rooted in his cultural heritage the first line "Renda Yehova muya wanga Yehova Mudzimu wanga wo hula zwinzhi, wo ambara lupenyo na mudzanga" arouses in him the grandeur of a wonderful and respected God before whom he must kneel down in great humility and penitence. The words "lupenyo na madzanga" give a graphic image of the Almight God. For no one can gaze at lightning and splendour. Schwellnus delved deep into the meanings of words and then rendered the German or the English version of the psalm in good idiomatic Venda. He did not follow a literal translation. When he says "Makole U a ita goloi yau, U tshimbila kha phapha dza ḓumbu" he gives this metaphor very aptly. The metaphor conveys the meaning so well that a person who is not well versed in the idiom of the language into which the psalm is being translated would not have been able to put it so clearly as Schwellnus has done. The word "ḓumbu" means a storm and "phapha" means wings and therefore if God rides in a storm which has wings, it is a real supernatural phenomenon. In the translation of these psalms Schwellnus was really inspired.

His words are well chosen and well used in their right places. The psalms have influenced Venda poetry very greatly since the psalms constituted the only written poetry in Venda literature before 1940. The themes of the psalms also influenced

the composition of the hymns in Venda a great deal, for example hymns such as "Maṱo anga nga lilale" which is based on Psalm 121 and "Imbelani" which is based on Psalm 98.

The publication of psalms in Venda helped the development of Venda literature in that something very great in thought had been rendered in the idiom of the Venda language. Schwellnus brought the lofty thoughts and ideas of the Hebrew poetry nearer to the Venda heart in the common vehicle of the Venda language.

It is clear that Schwellnus himself had lofty ideas too, otherwise it would have been impossible for him to render such ideas in the language of his heart and of his thoughts. From the expressions which Schwellnus used in the translation of the psalms we get the feeling that he was very proud of this language; no wonder he sacrificed his whole life for the sake of the development of Venda.

In 1930 P.E. Schwellnus published his "Mudedezi I" (for discussion see school readers).

In 1937 the greatest publication in the History of Venda Literature appeared viz. BIVHILI the complete translation of the Holy Bible by Dr. P.E. Schwellnus. Here Dr. Schwellnus gave his best form of the Venda idiom. It is in this translation that he reveals himself as a gifted translator. Here are some extracts with the Afrikaans and English versions:-

Afrikaans:

> "Maar die slang was listiger as al die diere van die veld wat die Here God gemaak het. En hy sê vir die vrou: is dit ook so dat God gesê het: Julle mag nie eet van al die bome van die tuin nie?"

English:

> "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden".

Venda:

> "Nowa yone nga u thanya yo vha i tshi fhira phukha ḓoṱhe dza shango dze Yehova Mudzimu a dzi ita. Ya amba na musadzi ya ri: Nangoho Mudzimu o amba a ri miri yoṱhe ya tsimuni ni songo i ḽa?"

When one reads the lines one is struck by the simplicity of the language. These lines are very effective in their intentions.

The words "Nowa yone nga u thanya yo vha i tshi fhira phukha dzothe" render the sentence more clearly because here it is referring to a time when the snake and the human being were still friends. The time before the enmity arose. Schwellnus uses the word "yone" to emphasize that it was the snake and no other animal which was clever at that time. He uses the word "thanya" in order to draw the difference between clever and wise. For a person can be clever but he may not be wise. Thus the snake was clever but its tricks could be discovered and thereafter it could be charged for having pretended to be wise. Thanya implies in Venda that such a character can connive at tricks but his tricks can be discovered and be undone. Let us take illustrations from Exodus 40:

Afrikaans:

1. Verder het die Here met Moses gespreek en gesê:
2. Op die dag van die eerste maand, op die eerste van die maand moet jy die tabernakel van die tent van samekoms oprig.
3. En jy moet daarin plaas die ark van getuienis en die ark met die voorhangsel bedek."

English:

1. And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying:
2. On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the Tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.
3. And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil.

Venda:

1. Yehova a mbo amba na Mushe a ri:
2. Nga ḓuvha ḽa u ranga ḽa ńwedzi wa u ranga u imisê yeneyi nndu ya mulanga mbulungelo ya milayo u i dzheñise.
3. U i tsire nga luḽa lupila.

In rendering the above passage Schwellnus used the word "ranga" for the Afrikaans "eerste" and the English "first" with good effect. The words first and eerste can mean to be at the beginning of a game or a thing but in Venda when one says "ranga" it means the origin, the very first beginning of a

thing without any other thing preceding this one. Schwellnus gave an idiomatic translation without missing the essentials of the meaning. He uses the word "tsire" instead of "tibe" for the simple reason that tiba would have made the ark not visible to those for whom it was meant. The word "lupila" means to cover an object with the purpose of protecting it from dust or other forms of dirt but veil in English may mean a thin material through which you can see what is inside, like the veil that a bride puts on, on a wedding day.

We may take other passages at random from the Bible:

Afrikaans:

1. Toe sê haar skoonmoeder Naomi vir haar: My dogter sal ek nie vir jou 'n rusplek soek dat dit goed met jou kan gaan nie?
2. Nou dan is Boas by wie se diensmeisies jy gewees het, nie ons bloed verwant nie? Hy kyk vannag op die vloer gars uit.
3. Was jou dan en salf jou en trek jou klere aan en gaan af na die vloer toe; laat jou deur die man nie herken totdat hy klaar geëet en gedrink het nie.

English:

1. Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, my daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?
2. And now is not Boas of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the thrashing floor.
3. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee and put thy raiment upon thee and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

Venda:

1. Naomi mazwale wawe a mbo amba nae a ri: Nwana'nga? Naa ndi nga si u ṱoḓele vhuawelo, hune wa ḓo dzula wo takala?
2. Naa Boasi, uyo munna ane wa ḓi bva na vhasidzana vhawe, a si shaka lashu? Zwîno u yo fhula mavhele luvhatani ṽhusiku vhuno.
3. Zwino ṱamba, u ḓole, u ambare zwiambaro zwau, u ye hênengei lûvhatani. Hone U sedze uri munna a si u vhone, a range u ḽa na u nwa.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus rendered this passage well in idiomatic Venda. He uses familiar expressions well-known to the Venda women folk. He has rendered this by recalling a familiar custom amongst the Venda of "u farelwa musadzi" i.e. the woman whose husband is dead is given to another man who is related to the deceased to raise children for that family. The whole Bible was translated in a like manner right through and it reads very smoothly. There are very few omissions of the main ideas.

The Venda used in this Bible exerted a great influence on the development of Venda literature. It became the book of every Venda Christian family, its words and expressions were used daily in every Venda family.

The translation of the Bible into Venda awakened in the Venda speaking peoples a love for discussing religious topics and eventually for Christianity as a form of Philosophy.

The philosophy of the people got a challenge from the philosophy of the Bible. The people read many human episodes which illustrated the virtues of man and the short-comings of man.

The social aspect of Hebrew life also affected the social aspect of Venda life.

In certain tribes it confirmed their practices as good. For instance, the Lembas who did not eat pork and dead animals were encouraged when they read the related prescriptions in the Bible.

The aspect of the Bible which stated that man is on a journey to a future home, found good soil in the Venda who usually regarded the dead as living beings but in another form and in another world. The Venda statement:

"Munhu muvhi mu tsha mmona,
Kwa vha kufa mu tsha mulila"

(The human being is bad while you see him but when he dies you need him) when they heard such stories as those of some prophets who died or who changed form or who went to heaven alive, the Vendas got encouraged in their faith.

The stories of the kings, prophets, priests etc. had a very important influence in the development of Venda literature. They

made Venda authors to write about the lives of kings, early Christians or some love stories which had some base in the Bible.

Sometimes the bad part of the story was taken and the good part was discarded. King David's misdemeanours were taken as examples but his repentance was not imitated.

The translation of the Bible into Venda crowned the written form of Venda. The Bible indicates the highest stage of development of the Venda language. The Bible stabilised the philosophy of the Venda and therefore their form of expression.

LITERARY COMMENTS

The early writers of Venda used the idiom of the language which was spoken around Maungani. The words used by Beuster indicate the Luphani dialect in its pure form. For instance, when he rendered the accounts of Moses's instructions to leave Egypt in these words: "Takoa u tšimbile eoe na vathu ne ee šangone le elaho mukhaha na notši". This sentence is rendered in the correct Venda construction, it is only the orthography which makes it strange to the present Venda.

The word mukhaha for mafhi is the most appropriate word in this sense. The old people, even today, still insist on saying mukhaha in their speech in the place of mafhi.

Beuster uses the word rola for dzhia in the sentence "honne Moše a rola tabernakela a e toka nda kole ha mešaša a e vidza ndu ea e tangana". The use of rola indicates that the Luphani dialect acquired the word dzhia from other Venda dialects.

Beuster also used idiomatic Venda when he rendered the stubbornness of the Israelites in these words:

> "U vodze vana va Israel ne lošaka loa metsinga medenya, bvulane zünina ore ndi deve tšene ndi nga eta na enoe".

The word medenya is used to indicate the hard headedness of the Israelites and it is a harsher word than tshipimbi.

Beuster had tried to master the Venda language with the result that he could choose suitable idiomatic expressions for the rendering of the Biblical sentences in his translations. He laid the foundation for later translators of the Holy Bible.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus in his translations uses the present Venda orthography. In Yesaya 55 verse 10-13 he uses the periodic style in the rendering of these verses. Listen to what he says:

Yesaya 55 verse 10-13

Vhunga mvula na ńwando zwi bva ṱadulu zwi si tsha humela hone, tshazwo ha vha u ṋûkâdza shango, u ḽi anwisa na u medza zwaḽo, ha ṋekedzwa mbeu muzwaḽi, muḽi a wana vhuswa, nâ ipfi îanga ḽi bvaho mulomoni wanga ḽi ḓo nga zwenezwo; a îi ngaˆvhuyi fhedzi ngeno hanga; ˆtshâḽo, ḽi ḓo shuma zwi ntakadzaho, ḽi ḓo vuledza zwe nda ḽi ṙumela zwone. Ngauri ni ḓo bva ño ṱakala, na dededzwaˆkha ya mulalo, na phanda haṋu hu ḓo ṱaha mifhululu ya dzithavha na mivhundu, ṁiri ẏothe ẏa ṁadaka i ḓo phuphutha nga zwanda. Vhudzuloni ha miḳokole huˆḓo melâ miṱongola; vhudzulôni ha vhuḽada hu ḓo mela muṯhâla. Ndî zwone zwine dzina ḽa Yehovâ ḽa ḓô khoḓiwa ṅgazwo; zwi ḓo vha tshieletshêdzi tshi sâ ṱûwi liṅi na liṅi.

When the sentence "vhunga mvula na ńwando zwi tshi bva ṱadulu zwi si tsha humela hone tshazwo ha vha u ṋukadza shango, u ḽi anwisa na u medza zwaḽo, ha ṋekedzwa mbeu muzwali...." it makes the reader or the listener to carry on up to the end so that he can understand the reasons why dew and rain cannot return to heaven. Dr. P.E. Schwellnus uses Luphani words but now and again we find new words which are probably taken from other Venda dialects, viz. ṱaḏulu instead of denga for heaven, ṱaha instead of pfala, phuphutha instead of losha.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus has the ability of rendering even the feelings of the original passage into Venda. Schwellnus presents the facts in simple straightforward Venda which has given us the basis of the Venda literary form.

Mrs. E.D. Giesekke wrote in a smooth Venda which rendered the original Biblical sentences nicely. She renders the story of Isaach's marriage affairs as follows:

Sara mme-a-Isaak a fa Abraham a mu lilela a mu swiṱa. Ho no vha maḓuvhanyana a amba na mukoma wawe Elieśêr, a ri: "Ana nga Yehova, u sa ḓo ambisa musidzana wa Vha-Kana, u tshi ambisela Iśaak; u tse hayani hanga u mu ṱodele musadzi kha lushaka ˆwanga". Elieser a ana aˆdzhia fumi ḽa dzikamela dza hweswa thundu nnzhi, a tsa nadzo shangôni la Mesopotamia a swika muḓini wa Nahor, a awela tsini ha tshisima tshaho. A raḇela a ri: Yehova Mudzimu khathutshela murena wanga. Arali nda amba na musidzana a no ḓa ngeno tshisimani nda ri:

> nnwise' ene a ri: inwa zwau, ndi ḓo nwisa na kamela dzau, ndi hone ndi tshi ḓo zwi ḓivha zwauri ndi ene we wa ri a vhe musadzi wa Isaak, mulanda wau". Ha ri a sa athu fhedza u amba ha ḓa Rebeka. (Mafhungo a buguni ya Mudzimu p.14) 1918.

In this passage she uses words which are suitable: "a mu lilela a mu swiṱa. Ho no vha maḓuvhanyana a amba na mukoma wawe Eliseer a ri: ana nga Yehova, u sa ḓo ambisa musidzana wa Vha-Kana u tshi ambisela Isaak, u tse hayani hanga u mu ṱoḓele musadzi kha lushaka lwanga".

When she uses swiṱa she has rendered the burial ceremony more appropriately. The word lilela is very suitable for the concept of mourning for the dead wife. The sentence "u tse hayani hanga u mu ṱoḓele musadzi kha lushaka lwanga" gives this command in the simplest words but very appropriately. This passage is written in the sweet Luphani dialect.

The authors Beuster, Schwellnus and Giesekke used the orthography which developed steadily to what it is today.

VENDA ORTHOGRAPHY

The Venda language, from the earliest records which we have inherited from our great benefactors, shows the following stages:-

(a) The orthography proposed by C.F. Beuster.

(b) The orthography proposed by C. Meinhof.

(c) The orthography of the Schwellnus brothers.

(d) The orthography which is used today.

Beuster's orthography is characterised by the absence of diacritic marks except the underlining of vowels to show open and close vowels. It is also characterised by the preponderance of Pedi symbols.

C. Meinhof's orthography is characterised by the diacritic marks and some remnants of Pedi symbols. The dental signs are used but the other symbols are underlined to show the voiced fricative v and the voiceless fricative f for vhala and fhala.

The Schwellnus brothers adapted the symbols used by Meinhof into the writing of Venda. They improved upon the Pedi symbols and devised new combinations which made it easier to write Venda. They retained some underlinings of Meinhof until 1918 when the

new Venda orthography took roots.

The Venda orthography as it is used today developed from the orthography suggested by the two brothers and what Meinhof did. The orthography is characterised by the presence of dental signs and the combinations of symbols to represent certain speech sounds in the orthography. This orthography is also characterised by a five basic vowel system. The vowels have no diacritics. It is also characterised by the doubling of syllabic nasal consonants. The different orthographies may be represented by a table:-

TABLE

Beuster + 1876[1]	Meinhof 1910[2]	Schwellnus Brothers 1904[3]	New 1930[4]	After 1930 Present[5]
a	a	a a,	a	a
e e	e	e	e	e
o o	o	o	o	o
e	i	i	i	i
l	l	l	l	l
u o	u	u	u	u
b	b	b	b	b
d	d	d	d	d
d	d̂	d̂	d̂	d̂
f	f̂	f̂	f̂	f̂
f	f	f	fh	fh
l	l̄	l̄	l	l
l or ll	l̂	l̂	l̂	l̂
k	k̂	ʻk k	k̂	k̂
t	t	ʻt	t	t
t	t̂	ʻt̂	t̂	t̂
p	p̂	ʻp	p̂	p̂
r	r or r	r	r	r
s	s	s	s	s
z	z	z	z	z
m	m	m	m	m
n	n	n	ṅ	ṅ
n	ń	n̂	n̂	n̂
n	n̂	n,	n̂	n̂
ny	n	n	ng	ng
g	g	g	g	g
h	h	h	h	h
nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
nd	nd̄	nd̄	nd̄	nd̄
nt	nt	nt	nt	nt
ts	ts	ts	ts	ts
tso	ts	ts	tsw	tsw
e	y	y	y	y
o	w	w	w	w

1) C.F. Beuster's Evangeli ya Johannes 1895.
2) C.F. Meinhof Das Tšivenda 1901.
3) Th. and P. Schwellnus: Die Verba des Tšivenda 1904.
4) E.D. Giesekke: Mudededzi series 1930.
5) Venda orthography 1950.

Beuster + 1876	Meinhof 1910	Schwellnus Brothers 1904	New 1930	After 1930 Present
zu	z	z	zw	zw
nt	nt	nt	nt	nt
pf	pf	pf	pf	pf
pk	pj or px	py	pf	pf
pf	pv	py	pv	pf
nzo	nz	nz	nzw	nzw
nz	nz	nz	nz	nz
nk	n'k	nk	nk	nk
mpf	mpf	mpf	mpf	mpf
tš	tš	tš	tsh	tsh
ntso	nts	nts	ntsw	ntsw
ts	ts	ts	ts	ts
th	th or t̔h	t̔h	th	th
z	ž	z	zh	zh
kh	kh	kh	kh	kh
ph	ph	ph	ph	ph
mp	mp	mp	mp	mp
bg	by	by	bw	bw
mbg	mbj or mby	mby	mbw	mbw
bw	bv	bv	bv	bv
mbw	mbv	mbv	mbv	mv
mv	mv	mv	mv	mv
ng	ng	ng	ng	ng
ndz	ndz	ndz	ndz	ndz
v	v	v	vh	vh
dz	dz	dz	dz	dz

The Venda orthography passed from Beuster's hands to the Schwellnus brothers and finally to the hands of P.E. Schwellnus and Mrs. E.D. Giesekke.

CONCLUSION

The early beginnings of Venda literature gets crowned by the translation of the Holy Bible into Venda. The Bible laid the foundation of the Venda language as a means of communication, not only between man and man but also between man and God the Almighty.

The Venda soul could not now say that it did not hear the message of the Bible since it was in the Venda idiom, which lies deep in its make up.

The concepts and philosophy of the Bible were systematized in the language which a Venda speaker uses in seeing visions,

and in which he enjoys his dreams.

The missionaries set the Venda language on the road to the unique position of being an instrument of great influence in the hands of a developing nation.

The missionaries of the Berlin Missionary Society sacrificed their lives for the sake of the Venda soul and the Venda language. They have built an everlasting monument which will guide the Vendas from generation to generation. The language monument will always outlast the material monument, because in the language lie those deep rooted spiritual values of a nation which no human force can subdue no matter how sternly applied. This language has preserved the Venda and distinguished them from the rest of the Bantu peoples of South Africa.

The language made the Vendas what they were, makes them what they are and what they will be. The most treasured aspects of Venda Culture are enveloped in the Venda language. Therefore the translation of the Holy Bible into Venda and all the work that has been done in connection with the Christian literature that laid the basis for the translation of the Bible, made the Venda language to stand on all its pillars.



Rev. C.F. Beuster : A PIONEER OF VENDA LITERATURE

CHAPTER II

THE SCHOOL READERS

Venda as a language of the school was introduced by C.F. Beuster with his publication of his "SPELBOEK EA TŠEWENDA" in 1899. This book was published after C.F. Beuster had worked amongst the Venda speaking peoples for 17 years. This SPELBOEK is the first Venda school reader or reading book which was specifically written for the purpose of teaching how to read and write Luvenda.

In this book Beuster taught the letters of the alphabet from vowels to the consonants. The book did not only contain sentences and word formation but also passages from the Bible which were added at the end of the book. The book was written in the old orthography which had many Pedi forms.

The first chapter deals with vowels and chapters 2 and 3 with consonants in simple words and simple syllables. Chapters 4 to 20 consist of consonants, consonant combinations in simple syllables and words:

Consonants: m n l in mama, nana, lala
b w v in baba, wawa, vawa
d g h in vo no da na?
vo dela mene?
vonane gole lo hola
f x k kh ph in ekane made no do ka kaveli
khadane kholomo
va lima khado
phele e no phokha kholo
phuve ea loma kholomo phakho
r s š in re a rola lo ro fe
re a sala, re a šuma, šada le a rema
re a šuša kholomo
t, t' th, m in va tata o da, takalane
dova lo no t'ava t'adolo makolene
va la mathuthu
n, z, y, ž in va nana khane
vo re malela
vo eta zone na?

re a zaola mavele
mozŭmi o zuma phokha
kha re ža̍ke daka. Yeremia o da

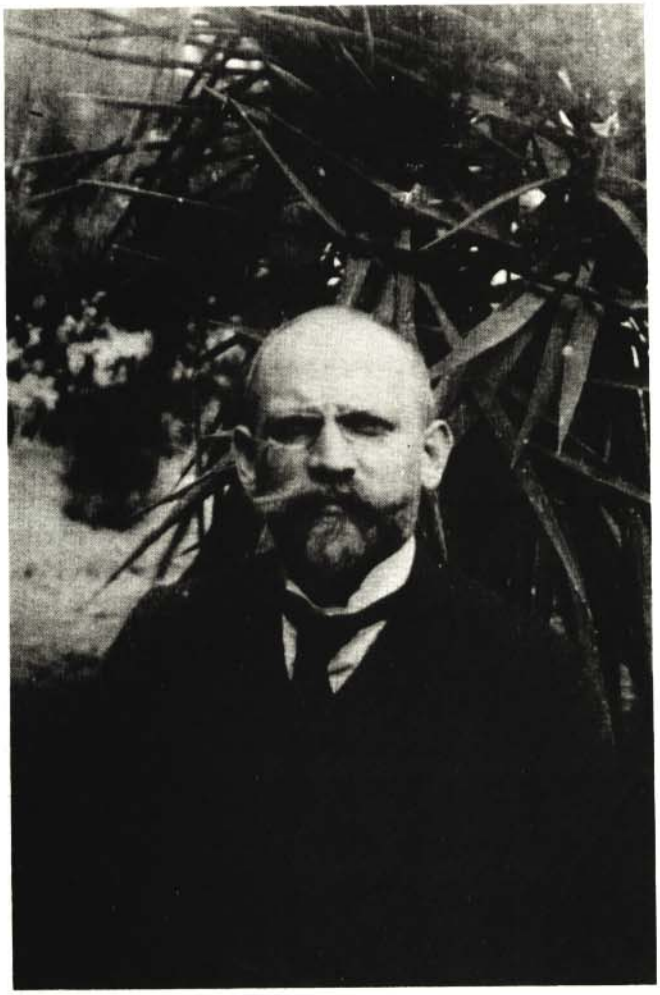
In lesson 19 the letters of the alphabet are given in capitals and small letters. Simple passages translated from the Bible are also included for the young people: "Adam na Eva vo vombga nga Modzimo, ndi vabebi vašu. Vana vavo a se va: Kaini na Abel na Seth". The reading book part ends with punctuation marks such as koemo, tšeemo, tšeaoelo, mbodziso? ganoko! etc. About 60 common proverbs in Venda are given on page 18. Some of them are:-

Mohoha moholo a o na nama
Mahondo manže ha bge molindi mothehe
Khangala mbeli a dzi dzule mulindi mo thehe
Mano a vambga nga lovadzi

The words and sentences in this book agree with "Elke woord wat die kind lees vorm 'n deel van die ontwikkeling van sy leesgewoontes en smaak en daarom mag dit nie as blote meganiese oefening beskou word nie." [1] The reading book is then followed by passages from the Bible under the title: Mafongo mamoe a Modzimo a Testamente ndala: "O rangane Modzimo o vomba t'adolo na fase". A long list of stories from the Old Testament especially from the book of Genesis are given. This part is followed by "Mafongo mamoe a Modzimo a Testamente Ntsoa; Honne Jesu a re: mothu momoe o va a ena vatokana vaveli".

This reading book was written by a minister of religion, it had to provide for hymns so that the young children could learn how to sing the hymns at an early age. This aspect of the school lasted for a long time, up to the time when schools became community schools in 1954. The names of the months and names of the days of the week and tables for measures, length, money, etc. were appended at the end of the reading book. This spelboek piloted the form which Venda took as a language of communication. It is a very important publication for the Venda Literature because it shows the reader the difficulties which the early pioneers in the writing of

1) Lydia Pienaar: Die kind en sy Literatuur, p.10.



Rev. Th. Schwellnus : A pioneer of Venda folklore.

Venda encountered. Some extracts from the "Spelboek ea Tšėwenda" of 1899 are given in the appendix.

The second school book which was published in Venda was "NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA" by Th. Schwellnus in 1918. The new orthography which had been suggested by C. Meinhof was used, it in turn laid the foundation for the standard Venda orthography which is still in use today. This book opens by giving the five basic vowels found in Venda. The vowels are followed by the consonants used in syllables and in short words:

b: ba-ba, bi-bi, bu-ba
beba, be-bu, a u be-bi

p: ba-pu, u a pea
a i pi-e, bo-pa, pi-a-i

m: ma-ma, ima-me, i-ma
mu-ma, lo-me, i-ma-i

ỳ: ya-u, yo be-ba

w: wa-we, ma-wa, wo-i-ma
a i wi, we a wa, yo wa.[1)]

The book continues in this way using syllables as a form of word building until page 47 where all the consonants and consonant combination are completed. On page 49 Th. Schwellnus gives the capital letters and small letters of the alphabet just as Beuster did at the end of his "Spelboek ea Tšėwenda". On page 57 he gives the punctuation marks. For the first time in a reading book in Venda do we find the indication of low and high tones. Schwellnus was the first to show semantic tone in Venda in otherwise identical words. For instance:

thóvho ya u adza
thòvho dza zwienda[2)]

This book gives the numerals from one to ten on page 63. The numerals are followed by some proverbs in Venda. Schwellnus gives 100 proverbs without giving their meanings. The proverbs are followed by about 40 riddles in Venda, with their solutions. The school reader ends here with its method of teaching how to write and how to solve problems. From page 71 the reader starts with its important part, viz. the FOLKTALES

1) Th. Schwellnus: Ndede ya Luambo lwa Tshivenda, p.4-5.
2) Th. Schwellnus: Ndede ya Luambo lwa Tshivenda, p.62.

in Venda. The fables of Sankambe occupy about six pages. Each fable ends with a proverb to emphasize the moral for each story. The Sankambe tales are followed by a myth about the origin of colours in animals, viz. "He phukha dza vana hone mivhala". This is followed by "Gumba ḽe ḽa ita ḽi tshi aluwa nga u imbelwa", "Litsha izwi zwivhuya zwi tshe phanda", "Nwana we a alutshela dzivhani" page 80, "Tshilombe tsha ngoma" p.82, "Ṱharu ye ya vha i tshi ila u vhonwa" p.83 and "Nyamalide" p.85.

In this book Th. Schwellnus gives the plain facts in the fables concerning Sankambe. He uses short simple sentences which are clear in meaning and logical in arrangement. The result is that the story which is being narrated becomes clear to the children who are reading it or who are listening to the teacher reading it.

The use of the dialogue in the story makes the fable more lively and real to the children. The dialogue is used at the right moment in the narration of the story. For instance in the story of Sankambe and Muzhou where striking sentences are used to make the story more lively: as example "Ehee ula muri wanga khuuvha u songo fuliwa". In reply to this statement Sankambe says "Yuwi! nṋe ri vhadzia khombo hu vho ḓo pfi ndi riṋe ro ḽaho, ndi ita u dzhena mulindini nda khokhelwa nga matombo". In this sentence Schwellnus uses the subjectival concord for the second person to make it more respectful and more inclusive viz. "ri vha khombo" and when he comes to the next sentence he says, "hu ḓo pfi ndi riṋe" in which he uses the indefinite concord and in the indirect form.

Th. Schwellnus interchanges the present tense and the narrative tense: "ndi ita u dzhena" which is followed by "nda khokhelwa nga matombo". He uses the concord to make the sentence more effective: "Ḽi tshi tsha ha vha u kanuka fhedzi tshukhwi, tshukhwi". These exclamations heighten the emotions of the children who may be reading the book or who are listening to the story. The sentence which Sankambe used when it heard of the story of the fruits viz. "na mbvisa nda vhona" does not fit but it increases the suspicion that Sankambe may be involved.



Mrs. E.D. Giesekke : A pioneer of Venda school Readers and other religious books.

Sankambe who is full of tricks suggests a test in the words: "Na zwino onoyu a si lu̱lo! Na u ḽa izwi zwiṅwe a zwo ngo sala dzikhudoni. Hu funa u ita u tokwa nzambo". When the high jump took place and the word "wavhaa" is used in connection with Muzhou, the jeering of the young people, who in most cases identify themselves with victors, is aroused.

When Schwellnus uses the statement "Maano ha fhedzi ṅwaha" the reader realizes the truth of the statement that "truth will be out".

Many of the stories of Sankambe are an illustration of one or more of the proverbs. We therefore get the fulfilment of the truth of the proverb "Khukhuna luombeni thunda nnda i a vhonala" when Sankambe is discovered as the real thief. The significance of this book is that it is the first collection of the stories which teach a Venda child the wisdom or the proper way of behaving when in circumstances as depicted in the various stories involving Sankambe.

Since Th. Schwellnus grew up with the Venda language, it is clear that he confirms the statement: "Die boek is die ervaringe en lewens van karakters wat in die hande van hul skeppers mense van vlees en bloed word om ons lewens te verryk en ons 'n beter begrip van ander te gee".[1)]

This book developed the matter and form of the reader "SPELBOEK EA TSEWENDA" of 1899.

The third school reader which was published in 1930 is "MUDEDEDZI WA VHANA VHATUKU VHA VENDA" by Mrs. E.D. Giesekke. This book starts with the vowels in Venda. The vowels are followed by single consonants with those vowels forming syllables:

lala, lila, lilela, ulula
bala, beba, buba, bibi, bubela
balela, buli, bulela, bele.[2)]

Here the consonants l and b have been used in the formation of the syllables. The book continues on the formation of syllables: dada, dida, dobela, dudela, duda, dodela, hoha, hula, hulela,

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1) Lydia Pienaar: Die Kind en sy Literatuur, p.10.
2) Giesekke, E.D.: Mudededzi wa vhana vhatuku vha Venda, p.2-3.

hobalala, dahela, ḱela, kola, kubuli, dakalo, kudido.[1] The book uses this method of word formation until the syllables so formed are used in simple sentences such as:

O wela mugodini
Ikani muxe uyo
Ṱuwani, ni yo ri ṱudela mutu
Ni songo ṅaṅa na hana u ḓa [2]

After the simple sentences with single consonants the book teaches all the letters of the alphabet with small and capital letters (page 10). After the letters of the alphabet have been shown, the book uses small and capital letters in the construction of simple sentences.

Baba o buba
Maemu o ima
O ni ṋea nama ene muṋe
Lalani no muma mulomo
Mutuli u na muelo
Tibelani muxe mutuluni
U doba madoni a ḽa
Mukukulume u a pala
Mufu ha femi o fa
Ipfa khuhu i pfala u lila
Goni ḽo fhufha
A huna mavu a u nama
Kusuku kwo kavha kha mususu
Vho zhaka muxe muhulu [3]

Some of these sentences are illustrated by pictures of insects, persons, animals, games, articles etc. The style of this book is in a simple straightforward matter of fact language. The author uses simple words to convey the message which is suitable for small children or those who have never learnt to read.

The second book which Mrs. E.D. Giesekke wrote is "MUDEDEDZI B WA VHANA VHATUKU VHA VENDA" in 1910. This book starts with the commonly used nd by using it in simple sentences:

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1) Giesekke, E.D.: Mudededzi wa vhana vhatuku vha Venda, p.3-4.
2) Ibid.
3) Ibid.

Ndau ndi lone livhanda lihulu
Afho mutani hu na ndilo
Pandelani o lima ndima yawe

This speech sound is followed by nd:

Ndila ino i ya mutani
Zwino ri vho pfa ndala
O vhuyelela nduni u toda nduhu [1)]

The nd sound is followed by ng, ngw:

Nguluvhe yanga i vho nona
Ngoho muroho wa ngowa a si u difha
Ngwena ndi livhanda la ngomu madini
Ngwala yanga yo sala: ndo i hangwa

The nasal compounds are followed by ts, tsh, mw, bv, mbw, mv, bw, nz, nzh, nzw, hw, zw, xw, pw, mphw, mp, mpf, mph, ny, dy, nts, nstw, ndz, ndzh, tzh, nn, nn, ndzw, tz, mm, aa, oo. These speech sounds are illustrated by being used in sentences:

Hatsi ho swa hothe
Tshiivha tsho kavha kha muri
U songo tswa
Dzuvha lo nakaho ndi lifhio
Idani ni dzhie muroho
Tshikoloni ri ya ri tshi vhidzwa nga tsimbi
Mbado yanga yo gomala
Mvuvhu i dzula mativhani a mulambo
U na mwota kha shada
Nzie na zwipanzi zwi a fhufha
Fuvhalo lo hulesa a li phuphwi
Nzhelele mikondeni Dzata ri bva hone
Mpato wa fola u gudani la hashu [2)]

Each speech sound is illustrated by a number of sentences. Pictures of animals and things where the speech sound is used are given to impress upon the mind of the child the significance of the sound or sound combinations. After the author had ended the speech sounds which obtain in Venda she continues with lessons on

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1) Giesekke, E.D.: Mudededzi wa vhana vhatuku vha Venda, p.5-6.
2) Ibid, p.8-16.

IDEOPHONES:

E 'gidi-gidi-purr-tzhakata'
Ndo ṱoka ḓanda ḽe 'nziri' [1]

The ideophones are followed by words with enclitics:

Iḓani-haṋa ri tshimbile roṱhe ri ye ha hashu
Ndi ḓo shuma na-vho

The enclitic is followed by the apostrophe:

A ri ḓi' (for A ri ḓivhi)
Thi mu ḓi' (for Thi mu ḓivhi)

The apostrophe is followed by words which are distinguished by tone. The author calls it intonation:

Thámbo ya u hunga mbudzi i ngafhi?
Thàmbo ya fula ndi thébvu [2]

In the indication of tone the author does not state the number of tones in Venda. The reader now starts with short stories or extracts in prose. These forms of stories were taken from the common experience of the Venda community. Some of the stories were taken from the Bible. Venda stories:

Khukhwana i sa pfi (page 30)
Lupfumo vhukuma (page 32)
Tshiḓula na kholomo (page 35)
Pfeṋe na nngwe (page 36)
Nzie na ṋotshi (page 37)
Kondelela (page 38)
Swina li mbiluni (page 39) etc.

Biblical stories: Hulisa khotsi-au-na mme-au, Ńwananga; Mulisa wavhudi. [3]

After the author had given these prose stories she gave twelve riddles. The riddles and proverbs are followed by short story passages. In the story of "Khukhwana i sa pfi" the author tried to develop the sentence into a paragraph and to relate a continuous story. The stories contained in this book aim at a moral. When the author uses the sentence "iṅwe khuhu yo vha

1) Giesekke, E.D.: Mudededzi wa B wa vhana vhatuku vha Venda, p.25-26.
2) Ibid, p.3-28.
3) Ibid, p.33-43.

yo thothonya khukhwana dzayo ya enda i tshi dzi palela dzi tshi gidima na mme-adzo"[1] she makes the story impersonal. The word "inwe khuhu" immediately strikes the reader to feel that there is something strange going to happen.

When young people hear such words they become very attentive and are ready to take part in the story, but when the words "tsha lila lwa u ṱungufhadza tsha ri: tzwioo, tzwioo, ngavhe ndi pfe zwiḽa mme-anga a tshi mbidza" bring sadness in the hearts of the young stubborn children. The author uses good appropriate words. In describing the hawk when it took the chick she says "dada ḽa ṱuwa nalwo". This statement is brief but to the point.

The significance of this book is that it is an improvement in its arrangement of subject matter and in the types of sentences when compared to the "SPELBOEK EA TŠEWENDA" of 1899.

In 1930 Dr. P.E. Schwellnus wrote "MUDEDEDZI WA VHANA VHAṰUKU VHA VENDA I". This book contains 30 stories and poems. Some of the stories are taken from Venda folklore and some are taken from the Bible. The poems are taken mostly from the Bible but some few others are compositions which the author made.

This book does not teach letters of the alphabet like the two previously mentioned MUDEDEDZI A & B. This book continues with the short stories of the type that were given at the end of Mudededzi B. The prose is simple and most of the stories have a moral lesson to be drawn at the end of each story.

The pupils are introduced to poetry by extracts of short poems. Some of these poems are based on themes found in the Bible. The reader is requested to be grateful to the Almighty in the poem "MUṆE WANGA". The main thought here is humility which is summarized in the following lines:

"Tshihulu tshine nda ri nga-tsho u nthakhe
U mphe mbilu-mbuya; i ṱanzwe, i nake,
Ndi u takadze ndi ndilani dzau,
Ndi hone ndo pfuma ndi ṅwana wau."

This poem is followed by a suggestive title of a story viz. "NANGA TSHIVHUYA", p.6. In this story the 4th person chose the

1) Giesekke, E.D.: Mudededzi B, p.30.

book and it happened to be the best choice. This story is followed by "NDI DO NGA THORO YA MBEU". After these stories, the folklore stories follow: Thi nga hangwi, Maanda nga u pfana, kubevha kwo lamulela Ndau, Zwibokoto murathoni, A no ngo naka zwone, Dumbu na duvha, Thovhele Sihafha, Dzuvha musedza mbilu, Na tshivhanda tshi a livhuha, Phele na muthu etc. These folklore stories are interspersed by stories from the Bible. The book ends by giving 30 proverbs and riddles.

In Venda Literature this little book is the continuation of Venda prose which has been started in NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA and improved upon by stories from MUDEDEDZI B.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus uses short sentences in the stories. In the story "He dziphukha dza wana mivhala yadzo" the very first sentence invites the reader or listener to put his/her imagination far back into antiquity: "Kale-kale dziphukha dzo vha dzi na muvhala muthihi dzothe dzo vha dzi tsetha dzi tshi fana". This sentence is clear in meaning. Like Th. Schwellnus in his NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA when he rendered the accounts of Sankambe, the author uses the dialogue. The dialogue in some of the stories in this book intensifies the interest in the stories.

The author alternates the perfect and the narrative tenses for an effect: "Mulilo wo no tou vha tsini-tsini tshibode tsho no tovhowa ha da nngwe". The narrative part "ha da nngwe" relates the fact to the past but it can also give the possibility that it can be now. The author also uses the adverbs or adverbial phrases to introduce his sentences in the periodic style: "Nga matsheloni na mbamatshele ndala na dora zwa vha zwihulu tsha twa tshi tshi ri 'ngavhe nngwe i tshi vhuya ya ntsisa ndi a fa", p.57.

In the use of the dialogue the author uses the respectable form of the Venda idiom. "Lalani nga lurumbu, ndi ńwale, hu vhonale we a lamulela Sankambe". The imperative mood form "lalani" second person shows intimacy of the two animals and also the gratitude being expressed by Sankambe towards the tiger.

Sometimes the author uses sentences which express disgust or revenge: Tsha ḓa tsho ka matepe nga khumba tshi tshi khou suka nga tshanda tsha shata dzithophe tshi tshi ri: "vha ḓo u vhona uri wo sea Sankambe lila ḓuvha" p.60. The words as used here are the common words but used effectively without obscuring the meaning of the sentence.

This book is significant to Venda Literature because it is an improvement on "MUDEDEDZI A & B" also on "SPELBOEK EA TŠEWENDA".

The publication of "MUDEDEDZI I" lasted for a long time before "MUDEDEDZI II" appeared in 1938. In this book Dr. P.E. Schwellnus made the first collection of Venda short stories. Some of the passages are very humorous. This book continues the trend which Schwellnus started in Book I. The author here divides the book into three main parts according to the type of the stories:

(i) the folktales related by I. Dau
(ii) legendary stories related by Venda speakers
(iii) the stories which have been written or recorded down by Vendas
(iv) the proverbs in Venda which form the last part of the book.

This book contains short stories on folklore, history, Venda iron-smelting methods, proverbs, animal stories and wars which were fought in Vendaland. The short stories are characterized by the naturalness of the language and their simplicity in style. The stories are factual in their manner of rendering the message. They form a good exercise for the writing of essays in Venda. Some stories depict the confusion which has come with the advent of the western form of life in Venda tradition and custom, for example the manner of treating patients in Venda tradition as opposed to the European way of treating patients. The old beliefs clash with the new as you find in "HO NGO LOIWA". In "BEPHA ḼA MAPFEṆE" we are introduced into tricks of hungry animals. The baboons devise a plan to rob the people and they do it successfully under the pretext of a Tshikona dance. The moral to be drawn from the story is that tricks will not last long, they will eventually be

discovered.

In "MUṆA-VHANA" p.31 the same thing happens which took place with the baboons but this time the woman or person is cheated for good. The tricks of the duiker here succeed in getting the woman expelled from her husband's home. This story is told in simple language and the small children who are still in the formative stage are well warned in time so that they may not be cheated by sweet words or by their problems and then sacrifice greater things for minor things which they can do without.

The book is interspersed with pictures illustrating some of the facts and events. This book ends with 100 proverbs in Venda which are mirrors of the philosophy of the Venda speaking tribes. In this book Schwellnus writes in simple clear language. The dialogue makes the facts in the stories lively and more real. The pieces which are sung in the stories heighten the imagination of the readers. In one of the stories, the little girl's objection is given in simple language: "Kha ri hume. Naa a no ngo zwi pfa hu tshi pfi Nyabanga u a ṱa vhathu". The reaction of the big girls is of a despising nature and it is expressed in the following words: "fhumula u a penga". The author uses the periodic style: "Nga madekwana vha iswa nnḓuni: vha fhiwa dzinguvho ha adziwa dzithovho ha pfi zwino edelani ni fuke dzinguvho". This kind of construction keeps the suspense of the readers or listeners. When the impending danger is given it is in the words:

> "Nyabanga nga ngeno munangoni u pfala a tshi khou ṱuṱula banga ṱawe a tshi ri: Getshe-getshe-getshe-getshe' vha ha Nyabanga -nkulu no edela-naa" p.40.

The word getshe gives the hugeness of the knife and the cruelty which Nyabanga reveals in his words. In this story of Nyabanga the little girl's awareness of danger makes her able to do away with the blankets in these words: "Kwone kwa sala ku tshi ṱata idzo dzinguvho kwa fuka kuṅwenda kwakwo kwa vusa vhaṱa vhasidzana kwa ri: fhaṱuwani ni pfe zwine liṅwe dithu ṱa amba ṱi do vhuya zwenezwo" p.41.

The significance of this book is that it is a good collection of short stories based on folklore of Venda. It is

The stories in this book are an improvement on the previous attempts.

The story of Nyabanga in this book is an illustration of the conscience of the human race which guards against anything that is not right. The little girl symbolises the human conscience which tells a person that this is wrong before any wrong is committed. The queerness of the little girl makes her become suspicious of every kindness that is shown to the girls. Her doubts are the human soul's doubts of human pretexts.

The story also illustrates the struggle between bad and good in this life. Nyabanga represents the bad evil-intending beings while the little girl represents the weak but well-intending beings. The story illustrates quite well the statement that says "the road to hell is full of enchantments". The big girls who were carried by their unending adolescence are interested in the music of the bird and the wide open roads.

Their adventurous spirit is leading to the truth of the statement that says "curiosity killed a cat". The weak are sometimes very useful in life because they are aware of their weakness. They use their minds more carefully than the physically fit. They save the strong.

"Mudededzi II" is an important contribution to the development of Venda literature. It served as a school reader as well as a collection of short stories in Venda. Even today this book is still a valuable book for reference for themes of short stories in Venda. It crowned the Mudededzi series, thereafter Dr. P.E. Schwellnus started the series viz. THE NDEDEDZI series.

In about 1940 Dr. P.E. Schwellnus the father of Venda literature started to write the Ndededzi series from Sub A to VI. "Ndededzi A" replaced "Mudededzi A" but took the matter and improved it. It added the spelling rules and orthography at the end of the book. The Tshivenda orthography was meant for those who are doing further studies in Venda. The book taught the letters of the alphabet using simple short sentences accompanied by illustrations taken from Venda life and the surroundings.

In "Ndededzi B" Schwellnus continued with the remaining

letters of the alphabet together with illustrations. All compound speech sounds were dealt with in this book. The book covers all that was in "Mudededzi B". On page 30 of "Ndededzi B" the author starts with little short stories in Venda on common domestic animals.

"Mudini wa hashu hu na tshimange, tsha hashu.
Tshi na vhana vhavhili; muńwe ndi mutshena;
muńwe u na mavhala-vhala."

In this way the author is trying to teach the pupils the idea of a composition on familiar topics. After he had dealt with common domestic topics he gave short stories on some abstract concepts:

Tshiṱuhu (cruelty)

"Bele o vha e mutukana wa u sa pfa, wa maṱuwa. Zwe zwa vhifhela vhabebi ndi tshiṱuhu tshawe" (page 39). Some folklore stories are also included in this book. Hymns from the Venda hymn book are also included towards the end of this book. The book ends in Venda proverbs and riddles.

"Ndededzi B" was followed by "Ndededzi I" which incorporated the contents of "Mudededzi I" with improvements here and there. More short stories were added from folklore, legends, history, fables, illustrating the significance of Venda proverbs. It also contains some Venda composed poems:

"Zwiṋoni masimuni
Hee zwiṋoni ni 'tani,
Kha masîmu ashu?
We a lima' na ndi nnyi?
Ndi zwiliwa zwashu,
A' A' A' A' dzimbava,
Dzo dou fura heṋefha,
U tswa zwithu zwashu? 1)

Below this poem a vivid illustration consisting of a variety of birds is given. Some short stories are based on the Bible for the purpose of teaching the young some morals. The book ends by giving Venda proverbs and certain important statements from the Bible. Some of the proverbs are:

"Vha vhenga mbava na muloi, muhumbeli vha mu ita ńwana"

"Khukhuna luombeni thunda nnda i a vhonala"

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1) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi I, p.22.

Biblical: "Fulufhedza Mudzimu U ite zwivhuya ndi hone shango li tshi do vha hayani hau lo lala" (Page 52).

In "Ndededzi III" Schwellnus introduced many changes. He took few of the stories from "Mudededzi II" and included them in this book. Some of the stories were taken from "Mudededzi I" some from the Bible. "Murena Yesu o vhuya a dzula o livhana na mbulungelo ya mali ya nndu-khethwa, a vhona maitele a vhathu vha tshi longa mali mbulungeloni".[1] The book starts for the first time with a dialogue:

A: "Khe ndi tshi ni wana ni vhulaloni! No ita hani ni tshi nga ni khou pfa vhutungu".

B: "Aiwa, a si vhutungu vhuthihi, ndi manzhi matungu ane nda vha khao. Hone rangani u dzula. Vhudzulo ngoho".

This book ends by a poem on "Pfunzo":

"Pfunzo i tshi fhela
zwi di naka-vho;
'ne dzo ri difhela
nangwe ro fa-vho;
: : Ri vho fa, ri vho fa nga ndala nga ndala nandi-vho: :[2]

"Ndededzi II" was followed by "Ndededzi III" which was a new publication since Mudededzi series went up to II. This book starts with a poem:

DZITHAVHA DZA HASHU

Hee dzithavha ni nnakela
No tikiwa hafhano.
No li linda heli shango
Kha milalo na mivhango[3]
No di ima no rano.

This poem is followed by a short story from the Bible: Simsoni, Dzipfunzo dzavhudi dza Yesu, Jakobo, Thabelo ndi tshitangu, U ri hangwele milandu yashu and Mushe Munna wa Mudzimu. Folklore stories are also included in this book. In this book Dr. P.E. Schwellnus brings in something which he obtained from Venda traditional life:

Mafhuwe a mutulini

Vhothe: "Ri tshi sinda ngezwi : :
ri ri gi' ri ri ri ri gi' ri ri gikhigi!

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1) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi III, p.
2) Ibid, p.69.
3) Ibid, p.5.

Mutuli: "Dani-ha, ḓani-ha, hu pfi nga ri ṱavhanye.
Ṽha ḓaho ṽha ḓaho vha pfi nga vhâ bikelwe".[1]

This book ends by giving 30 proverbs in Venda and 16 riddles. The riddles formed an interesting game in Venda social life.

The style of this book, like that of the previous books, is simple, factual and objective. The author gives the stories without involving his personal feelings but allows the readers to form their own judgment. The moral is left to the readers to draw for themselves. With this book Schwellnus improved the Venda literary form and added something to Venda literature. In "Ndededzi IV" the author starts with a short poem describing the early morning:

"Nga mitsho hu tshe ho tshete!
Hu si na tsho no vuwaho
Zwi naka muthu e eṱhe
O vuwa zwawe a amba zwawe
Mbiluni yawe, na muṋe wawe
: : E tsini-tsini o ḓa-vho":[2]

By this curtain raiser the author introduces the Std. IV pupils to the book. The book contains folklore stories from "Mudededzi II" and also others taken from other fields. Some stories are taken from the industrial life in Vendaland, some are taken from "Mudededzi I" of 1930. In this book the author uses some technical names for things and articles. For instance he uses "gungwa" for ship, "ḽiwedzi" for an ocean liner, "ḼIfhufhi" for an aeroplane, "Thavhandubi" for volcano. These terms are included in stories in the form of a lesson: The stories vary. Some are lessons in Geography, History, Bible etc. The book ends by giving 100 proverbs in Venda without explanations.

The prose style in this book is good and the author improves on his previous books. The stories are presented in such a form that they make interesting reading. The writing of essays in this book has developed further.

"Ndededzi IV" was followed by "Ndededzi V". This book opens with a poem on "U ONESANA". Here is one of the verses of this poem:

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1) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi III, p.67.
2) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi IV, p.4.

"Musi ḓuvha ḽi tshi fhisa
Ho ḓa zwi netisaho
Ho ḓa zwine zwa ofhisa,
Ho ḓa zwi lemelaho
Nga ni linde zwavhuḓi,
A ni ise havhuḓi". 1)

The mood in this poem is sombre. One feels that sad atmosphere when one reads the words: "Ho ḓa zwi netisaho". The poem is followed by stories from the Bible with a biblical moral, ethnology, history of the tribes of South Africa, important characters in history, tribal wars, old ruins, a dialogue and the book ends by giving 86 Venda proverbs. The epilogue of the book is given by a poem "Ri ya fhi?".

"Henefho, henefho,
A si kule naa?
Hu nga si ri takadze-vho,
Riṋe-vho ra dzhena?
Hayani ra yo dzula
Hu sa ṱuiwiho,
Vhudzulô ha u rula,
Zwi ri lemelaho" 2)

The style of this book continues to improve. The author's prose style has matured and already forms the basis for the standard Venda literary form.

When Dr. P.E. Schwellnus wrote "Ndededzi VI" he put the crown of his attempts at the writing of readers in Venda. He opens this book by composing a poem based on psalm 104. Here are some of the verses:

"Makole u a ita dzigoloi dzau,
U swika nga phapha dza ḓumbu
Shango wo ḽi fhaṱa kha miteo yalo
Ḽi si tsha ḓo dzinginyea lini na lini
Wo ḽi fukedza nga mativha a malwanzhe,
Madî a ḓa a kudana na dzithavha" 3)

The poem is grand. The imagery is very suitable. The words used fit the praise to a deity. The book proceeds by taking stories with the biblical themes as the previous books. It also treats the important Bantu historical characters. On page 25 the author composed a poem on "TSHILIMO":

1) Schwellnis, P.E.: Ndededzi VI, p.25.
2) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi V, p.83.
3) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi VI, p.4.



Mr. P.R. NGWANA THE AUTHOR OF VENDA READING BOOKS AND LANGUAGE BOOKS.

"Wo da! wo ḓa!
Iwe mvula ye ra ṱuvha-
Ro u vhona u tshi mona
U tahi fhira nga mashango maṅwe
Ro u vhona hu vhusiku
U tshi penya wo dzumbama nga dzithavha,
U tshe kule Vhulovhedzi"[1]

This is a descriptive poem which a pupil of grade VI can enjoy. The book gives good descriptions of rivers, old ruins, deserts, snakes, electricity, human races, proverbs from the Bible and from Venda social life. The style of this book is simple but very appropriate. The author presents the fact in plain language. The language varies in its vocabulary making allowance for the stage of development of the pupils:

> "Muthu a tshi tuwa nga dzindila na magondo, u do vhona mashango manzhi, na vhathu, na mishumo yavho; a do vhuya a vhona zwinzhi, a da a ri vhudza zwe a tangana nazwo ndilani".[2]

This is an introductory sentence to the story about the river ZAMBEZI. The sentence has developed from a simple sentence to a complex sentence. The words "dzindila" and "magondo" show that the author has a good command of the Venda idiom. The difference between the two words is brought out in the sentence. The words also reveal that the story which follows will have to deal with different people and different things. Dr. P.E. Schwellnus used well chosen words in his writing. He really shows that he grew up in a Venda environment. He loved this language with the result that he did not like borrowing words from other neighbouring languages unless it was not possible to give a Venda word. In 1958 the third series of Venda readers was published by P.R. Ngwana. This series is based on the frequency of speech sounds. This series is entitled "MURATHO".

"Muratho A" starts with Venda speech sounds according to the frequency of sounds. In this book the symbols used in the Venda orthography make it difficult for the pupils in the lower grades to start with the diagraph "VH". In other languages where the single symbols are used it works out but in

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1) Schwellnus, P.E.: Ndededzi VI, p.25.
2) Ibid, p.31.

Venda it creates some confusion when the pupils come to the single speech sound "V" and "H". The book is well illustrated with short sentences based on the picture. This makes the book more modern in its approach. The type of print is also satisfactory for the use by children. The sentences are not as rhythmic as those found in "Mudededzi A". This may make the book to be unattractive to teachers and pupils alike. As far as its method of teaching is concerned it should bring better results under the guidance of a good teacher. The "Muratho B" is also based on the frequency principle. It starts with simple sentences based on simple topics with good pictures as illustrations:

"MASHAU"

1. Mafhafha ha na ṋama
2. Vhomme vhone vha a a takalela
3. Vhaṅwe vha a la nge vha shaya muroho
4. Ri ralo nge a si ḓifhe sa ṋama vhukuma
5. Mashau ene u ri mathuthu a si a ḓifha [1)]

The order in which these sentences appear could have been better if the words containing kholomo, mashau lisa should have been in the first sentence so that the illustration of the above sentence may have a bearing on the lesson from the word go. On page 6 the word "khuhu" appears from the start which makes it easy for the pupils in Sub B to grasp the meaning of the sentences.

The reader continues along the same lines giving a picture and thereunder a number of sentences. The lessons and illustrations are based on common domestic animals, domestic activities etc. These familiar objects make the book attractive. The book ends by giving a long list of words previously met and those appearing in this book. The words are arranged alphabetically. It would have been better if these words were used in short stories, but underlined to show that they have to be learnt. As single words they do not serve the author's purpose viz. to increase the vocabulary.

1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho B, p.5.

The style of the author here is simple, clear and factual. The sentences mean what the words mean, which is a good feature of a reader for the younger children.

This book can do well to teach reading in the lower classes if the teacher who is responsible for reading has enough imagination and vim.

"Muratho I" follows the same method of teaching the sentences in Venda. The book is fully illustrated with sentences describing the picture. Some of the stories are built around a picture and it is interesting for Std. I children:

> Vhonani kholomo asidzo dzo temba, inwi ni funa dzifhio?
> Ndi amba ngauri zwi takadza vhathu a zwi fani.
>
> Muṅwe a nga funa dzwothwa,
> Munwe a funa dzwothwana. [1]

Here the author attacks the subject matter directly and uses the words which are appropriate to the cattle.

The book continues in this manner up to the end. The style of this book is simple and clear for the pupils. The sentences under "Vhaeni" should be very interesting to the children if the teacher handles them well: "Mulovha ha vho-mavhungu ho ḓa vhaeni. Vho swika ḓuvha ḽi tshi kovhela. Vho vha vha tshi bva Tshitungulu". [2] The style here is factual. Fact follows fact and the sentences are built upon the simple sentence. The other sentences are linked by linking words to form a continuous story. The child at this stage is introduced to short essay writing or paragraphing. The two last lessons build a good transition from Std. I to Std. II. "Muratho II" starts with a short simple story based on "Lavhengwa and the Crow". The story starts in the folktale manner:

> "Shangoni ḽa Govheni ho vha hu na vhaṅwe vhakalaha vhe vha vha vha tshi pfi Vho-Lavhengwa. Maṱo a vho o vha a si tsha tou vhona zwavhuḓi ngauri vho vha vho no vha muthu wa maḓuvha". P.5.

The sentence "ho vha hu na vhaṅwe mukalaha" immediately attracts the attention of the reader and immediately the reader is made aware that the story is taking place in a far off country which

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1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho I, p.
2) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho II, p.5.

is quite different from the ordinary surroundings. In this book the paragraph which was introduced at the end of Book I is developed nicely and progressively. The reader contains stories on animals, persons, articles, birds and certain processes.

This book like "MUDEDEDZI II" can be regarded as a collection of short stories in Venda on various topics within the common experience of young children.

Many of the stories in this book are rendered in simple words and in clear sentences. Ngwana also uses the dialogue to bring out the struggle between the tiger and the dog. He says "kale-kale mmbwa na nngwe zwo vha zwi tshi konana. Na u zwima zwo vha zwi tshi zwima zwoṱhe". These are plain words describing the friendship which existed between the tiger and the dog. Ngwana can express surprise in these words: "Vhathu vha kha ḓi helele' ya vha yo no bva nayo ya i pwashekanya dzikhundu".

The author expresses sympathy for the dog in these words: "Ṋama iyi ine ra khou la i a rothola. Mulandu ndi mini? Ine nne nda ita ndi tshi la hayani i ḓifhiswa nga mini?" p.53.

This book is a great improvement on the previous series as far as the teaching of the short story is concerned.

In "Muratho III" the author expands the short paragraphs to long paragraphs. The book contains the following types of stories: folklore, legends, animals, persons, proverbs, sunset, birds, fables etc. The author has included a poem which is composed on "ṈI A KOVHELA": This poem is a descriptive poem giving us all about the sunset:

"Zwiṋoni zwi pfala u bvuma
Zwifuwo zwi ya nga mahoro
Hu pfala zwipoṱolio na zwiṱiringo
Vho namelaho mbelesa vha tou ṱonga".[1)]

This poem is very interesting to a herdboy. The sentence which says: "Zwifuwo zwi ya nga mahoro" is full of meaning. It may mean when all the people get to their hiding place or the end of a period when everything scatter to its shelter. It may mean also that living things sought themselves out by means of their tastes and kind. The book starts by a dialogue:

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1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho IV, p.97-98.
2) Ibid, p.8, 4.p.73.

Kholomo: Moo! Ri a vusa.

Mbongola: Ni ḓivha uri tshifhinga tshiṅwe na tshiṅwe ndi tshi ni vhona ndi ni pfela vhuṱungu.[1]

This form of the dialogue teaches the young children the use of language as a means of communication. The author uses the periodic style in his sentences:

> "Musi o no imba khathihi fhedzi ḽiḽa ḓaka ḽe muṋe wa vhuhwe a hwivha ḽa mbo ḓi mela ḽa dovha ḽa fana. Zwenezwo a ṱuwa a ya a dzumbama tshiṱakani". [2]

This way of changing the form of the beginning of the paragraph makes the reading interesting. This book ends by giving a list of the words for the building up of the vocabulary.

"Muratho IV" improves on the short stories which had been given in Book III. The short sentences are expanded into a paragraph and the paragraphs compose a short story. The book contains stories on folklore, poems, birds, animals, clothes, persons, egg-laying animals and the royal language used in Venda royal homes for insects and history. The poems which are included in this book have some fair description of their subject matter:

> "Tsho swika tshifhinga tsha maḽiwa manzhi;
> Ndala yo ri shengedzaho i vho fhira-vho;
> Mâsimuni zwi ri ḓifhelaho ndi zwinzhi,
> Ndi dzimphwe na mabvani zwi ḓifhesaho". [3]

This verse puts familiar thoughts into verse and polishes these facts until they shine as new. The author's language is satisfactory. He starts with the locative forms in order to introduce his paragraphs:

> "Shangoni ḽa mapani ho vhuya ha vha na iṅwe ndau ye ya vha yo kalahesa. Na mano yo vha i si tshe na".

This way of using the locative is varied by the use of adverbial phrases as alternatives: "Nga ḽa matshelo hu tshe nga matsheloni, ha swika phunguhwe". The inclusion of the "musanda" words reminds the Venda speaking peoples that they come from various tribes in order to form the present Vendas. The use of the narrative tense in order to show continuity of the story is also another

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1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho IV, p.97-98.
2) Ibid, p.8, 4.p.73.
3) Ibid, p.97-98.

device which the author uses: "A swika a vha adzela thovho murunzini wa muumo we wa vha u hone henefho mutani".

When the author comes to the poem on love he says:

"Lufuno ndi tshithu tshi kanukisaho vhathu
Lu fhata midi lu thutha mudi
Lu pfumisa vhathu lu shaisa vhathu.
He lwa kunda, hu sala madakalo,
He lwa kundwa hu sala zwililo
Hune lwa vha hone lwo dzika.
Murahu lwo sia phosho".[1]

Here the sides of love are given duly. Love is a good force as well as a destructive force in the human families. The words which are given at the end of the book could have been better used in sentences and not in this isolated manner.

"Muratho V" continues on what IV had attempted. The writer continues to write short stories which include: folklore, fables, animals, care of the body, persons, poems, insects, birds, food, the royal language, and a vocabulary list. This book starts with a poem:

"Nda humbula khaladzi,
Ndi pfa thoho yo tangana,
O nthusa o ntonda nga zwinzhi,
A tshi shumela khaladzi awe.[2]
Nga mbilu yawe i nthihi".

The author has included some interesting pieces of poetry in this book. When he describes a farewell he says:

"Zwino ndi a tuwa,
Mutsinga wanga u kho petiwa,
Milenzhe yanga i na tshivhevhe;
Mato anga ha tsha ni vhona.
Hune nda ya ndi vho hu divha.[3]
Vhabebi salani tshothe".

By using such extracts of Venda poetry, this book has raised the standard of Venda in the Primary School and it makes interesting reading even for adults. For a person who wants to learn Venda, this book can help him satisfactorily.

"Muratho VI" starts by giving short stories with long paragraphs showing the stage of development of the pupils. The author uses the simple short sentences but with great variety of

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1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho IV, p.8, 4.p.73.
2) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho V, p.5.
3) Ibid, p.88.

sentences. This book contains stories on: folklore, persons, animals, insects, poems and birds; a dialogue, idiomatic expressions and vocabulary lists. In this book the author gives us his good prose. The language flows smoothly and the stories have questions at the end of every story for the sake of testing comprehension. This device helps the teacher or even the reader to check important points in the story.

His periodic style makes the stories live: "Fhano kha shango la Afrika-Tshipembe hu na sibadela tshihulwane" instead of saying "Afrika-Tshipembe i na....". He starts the other way round to keep the suspense of the reader.

The poems included in this book are good:

"Vhuswina ndi dwadze ḽi si na vhukono,
Vhugala na vhuhwavho zwi kule nae,
U hoya na u fhura ndi madzanga awe,
Vhuswina a vhu na phaṱo vhathuni,
Vhu pwasha midi ha sia marubi,
Muthu wa mazwifhi ndi shubi vhathuni".[1)]

In this poem the author brings out the bad part of enmity in his words. The feeling is that of disgust and resentment.

As a reader"+Muratho VI" compares well with"Ndededzi VI" and these two books round off the work in the primary school as far as reading is concerned.

CONCLUSION

The development of Venda school readers paved the way for Venda to become an official language in Vendaland. The authors of the school readers used words and expressions which arouse in the Venda child some sense of pride for "to recognise certain words is no sure path to learning. It helps but needs blending with many forms of activities and understandings".[2)] These authors have been able to do this by means of their illustrations and sentence constructions.

In these school readers "there is literature. There is poetry. Some writing is an art form capable of giving the highest aesthetic pleasure and satisfaction. A poem is more than the sum total of the meanings of 65 words used there. A

1) Ngwana, P.R.: Muratho VI, p.105.
2) Tooze, Ruth: Your Children want to Read, p.42.

folktale or epic legend is more than the sum total of 65 words used in it. Words are more than symbols, more than meaning, more than sounds. Words have undertones and overtones. Words put together in beauty enter the mind and soul of man and take him literally "out of this world" into a realm of understanding or imagination or beauty or joy of past believing".[1)]

The four authors of our Venda school readers have, through their books, created that unsatisfied hunger for knowledge to burn for ever. We may conclude by saying "reading is the creative act through which the mind and heart or mankind, transmitted through author and artist, enter the child's being and thus return to the life stream".[2)]

Therefore the statement which said,
"For a time during the early thirties, Venda students at Bethšhabelo were compelled to include in their curriculum Northern Sotho because their language was not catered for. The undertones of the Vendas never ceased until the then Superintendent Dr. F. Kruger decided to resolve the matter. Within six short weeks he completed a study course of the language. The sceptics were silenced by his incredible competence to teach Venda. The irony of it all was that his tutor Ernest Mudau was one of his pupils",[3)]
became a stimulus for the production of Venda books.

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1) Tooze, Ruth: Your Children want to Read, p.43.
2) Ibid, p.222.
3) Lutheran Church: Botshabelo, p.75.



Dr. P.E. Schwellnus : The father of Venda literature.
The translator of the Bible into Ve

CHAPTER III

SCHOOL LANGUAGE BOOKS

The development of the school readers led to the need for language books which could serve as a guide to the study of the Venda Language. The earliest book published for the purpose of teaching the Grammar of Venda was "LUVENDA GRAMMAR" by Dr. P.E. Schwellnus in 1930.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus wrote this book for the purpose of meeting a need that arose in schools. The Venda students who were undergoing training as teachers had no reference book on which they could rely on concerning the rules governing the writing of Venda.

In this book Schwellnus gives an analysis of Venda words, classifying them in accordance with the rules which were used in classical grammar of the early 20th Century. In his classification of words Dr. Schwellnus coined the terminology which has formed the bases of our Venda Grammar today. The book is disjunctively written and it has been the base on which our Venda orthography rests. The grammatical rules in the Venda language were founded on this important book.

The book covered many aspects of language study: parts of speech, moods, syntax, conjugation, rules of writing Venda, synthesis, analysis, intonation and rhythm in poetry. This book was a pioneer work that spurred the Venda Language on its road towards maturity. The present Venda authors learnt their grammatical rules from this book. Here are some extracts from this book:

(a) (i) "Muthu a tshi amba, hu na zwine zwa pfala zwi tshi bva nga mulomoni zwinwe zwi a unga zwiṅwe zwi tou nga u thathaba, zwinwe zwi tou suvha Nga rir ri ndi pfala. Pfala i tshi nwaliwa hu vhewa tshiga tshayo ya pfi "Ledere" kana "Tshiga". Zwiga zwa pfala ndi A.B.D....."

(ii) "Pfala dzi na tshakha dzadzo. Hu na pfala-ndoṱhe, na pfalanyana, na thembana-pfala.

In this extract, Schwellnus shows that Venda does not agree with the languages of Europe as far as Gender is concerned. He also deals with the tones in Venda :

(c) "Khala-fhasi
Ndi ṅevha nga nama
Thàmbo ndi ya u vhofha
Mbìla ndi dza mutondo

Khala-ntha
Ndi ṅevha maswina
Thámbo ndi ya nombelo
Mbíla ndi kuvhanda kwa thavhani[1]

Schwellnus' indication of tones is only between two identical words and he only indicates the tones on the initial syllable but leaves the other syllables unmarked.

(d) "Fhungo-tswitit. Ndi ŧi si na thavhi, ŧe ŧa ŧuga ŧi ŧithihi, ŧine ŧa pfala arali ŧi na 'subject' (ŋefhungo) na 'predicate' (nyito):-

Munna (ŋefhungo) u a lima (nyito). ŧa Ŋefhungo ŧi wanwa nga u tou ri: Hu lima nnyi? (munna). ŧa nyito ŧi wanwa nga u tou ri: Munna u ita 'ni? (u a lima)[2]

Schwellnus gives questions which a student who is learning how to analyse a Venda sentence should ask and to teach him that the answers will be the required parts of a sentence.

(e) He gives his views on the figures of speech in this book:

"Hune ra wana Mutsindo wa u ŧudza (jambus) ngefha:-
-.-.-.-.-. ku-le ndi hu si na wa-u
Mu-bva ha na nzi-e dzi-kho-r-o-ni[3]

Here, Schwellnus tried his best to explain rhythm in poetry. The underlined words or syllables are those which follow the iambic foot.

(f) Schwellnus concludes his book with the following:

"Ndi fhedza henefha. ḓaka lone a ro ngo ŧi fhedza ŧoŧhe. Tshe ra vhona ndi nḓila ya u li dzhena. Hu tshee na zwinzhi zwo nakaho kha heŧi ḓaka ŧa Luvenḓa; zwi ḓo waniwa zwa ḓihwa nga ane a takalela lwa hawe. Onoyo u ḓo ḓadzisa he nŋe he nda ŧahedza, a onyolosa he nda kombamisa. Ndi hone dzinḓila dza Phenḓa-Luambo dzi tshi ḓo kona u naka, dza takadza vhane vha funa Luvenḓa lu tshi lalama.[4]

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1) P.E. Schwellnus: Op cit., p. 39
2) Ibid., p. 45.
3) Ibid., p. 57.
4) Ibid., p. 59.

Pfala-ndoṱhe (vowel) ndi ine ya pfala naho itshi bva i yoṱhe: a, e. i. u. o, a. Pfalanyana (semi-vowel) i pfala zwiṱuku-ṱuku i tshi bva na pfala-ndoṱhe; i yoṱhe a i vhuyi ya pfala. Ndi 'w' na 'y' dzine dza pfala u tshi tou ri: wa, we, wo, ya, yi, yo, yu.

Themba-na-pfala (consonants) nga ri pfufhifhadze ri tou ri: "Themba". Themba naho i tshi pfala zwayo i yoṱhe, i ḓi bva na pfala-ndoṱhe yayo Kha lwashu luambo, hu ḓi ranga themba ha tevhela pfala-ndoṱhe[1])

(b) "Maipfi ndi a mbeu nzhi. Hu tshi vhudziswa 'part of speech' hu ṱoḓiwa lushaka lwa ipfi. Dzitshakha dza Maipfi ngedzi:

1. Noun. Dzina (muthu)
2. Adjective. Liṱalulu (muhulu)
3. Pronoun. Lisala (ene)
4. Verb. Liiti (ita)
5. Adverb. Liḓadzisi (zwavhuḓi)
6. Prepositions. Livhofhi (nga)
7. Conjunctions. Liṱanganyi (na)
8. Interjection. Liaravhi (yawee)
9. Particle. Li-tika-fhungo (naa)[2]
10. Onomatopoea. Pfanyiso (pilivhili)

Schwellnus tried his best to get the equivalents of all the parts of speech which were given in old grammar books in Venda. He grouped words according to their function in the sentence. The grammar of Venda has not deviated much from this grouping of words.

(c) "Kha nyambo dza Europa Gender i na mushumo muhulu. Arali e munna hu tou pfi he, his, him, ngauri munna ndi 'Masculine Gender' (male). Arali e musadzi hu tou pfi she, her nga u ya vha 'feminine Gender' (female.) Hune ya tou pfi it, its ndi common Gender (neuter). Kha nyambo dzashu izwo a zwiho. Zwi re hone ndi madzina ane a amba tshi re nduna kana tsadzi, na a sa ṱalulu zwenezwo. Ngea

Common Gender	Male	Female
muthu	munna	musadzi
nwana	mutukana	musidzana
vhabebi	khotsi	mme
	khosi	mufumakadzi
khuhu	mukukulume	phambo etc.[3])

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1) P.E. Schwellnus: Luvenda Grammar, p.6.
2) P.E. Schwellnus: loc cit.
3) P.E. Schwellnus: Ibid., p. 13.

In this last paragraph the late Dr. P.E. Schwellnus summons all Vendas who love their language to carry on the investigations in the pursuit of clear understanding of this cultural heritage.

This book is an important contribution to the History of Venda Literature. It remained the only reference book in the teaching of Venda Grammar up to 1940.

In 1940, T.H.M. Endemann and E.F.N. Mudau published "PHENḒALUAMBO YA ZWIKOLO ZWA VENḒA" for use in Primary Schools. This book approached the Venda Language through the sentence method. It took the sentence as its starting point. The sentence was taken or given and then the words were analysed into parts of speech deducing from the function which the words perform in the sentence. This book uses the discovery method in the study of grammar. It starts from the whole and then to the parts. Here are some extracts from this book to illustrate what has been said above :-

(a) "Mafhungo-tsinde a sa kondi ri tshi amba Luvenḓa ndi ane a nga aya:-

> Mufunzi u a funza. Liṱo li a vhona. Tshiṋoni tshi a fhufha. Muri u a wa. Vhuswa vhu a fhisa. Kubwa ku a huvha. Mushonga u a vhavha. Luare lu a vheula. Nndu i a swa. Livhele li a hula. Kholomo i a tala. Tshimange tshi a shavha. Muzwimi u a zwima.
>
> Arali ri tshi sedza kha ayo Mafhungo, ri wana kha Fhungo linwe na linwe hu na zwipiḓa zwivhili. Tshipiḓa tsha u ranga ndi Muiti; vhunga: Mufunzi u a funza. Funza ndi Nyito kha fhungo ilo li no ri: Mufunzi u a funza.
>
> Ipfi ilo li no ri: funza li pfi nyito; fhedzi arali lo ima li lothe hu nnḓa ha fhungo, li pfi "Liiti".[1]

The authors here deal with the two parts of a sentence namely the Subject and the Predicate and at the same time teach the noun for they say: "Arali ri tshi sedza kha vho Ṋefhungo a Mafhungo ayo oṱhe, ri vhona vho-Ṋefhungo ayo ọthe a madzina a zwithu kana vhathu.

Ngea: Tshiṋoni, muri, luare, mushonga, liṱo, na zwinwe.

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1) Th. Endemann & E. Mudau: Phendaluambo Ya Zwikolo Zwa Venda. p. 7

Maipfi aya a re madzina a zwithu kana a vhathu ndi "madzina".[1]

In this way this book involved the pupils into the lesson and kept them active since the rules had to be drawn from the examples presented. This book continues in this way giving examples and thereafter deducing the rules. On p.62, the authors change their method of presenting the lessons and immediately fall back on to the old method of defining the part of speech. Here is an example:

(b) LIDADZISI. "Lidadzisi ndi Ipfi line la ri vhudza uri mushumo wo itwa hani, lini, ngafhi, vhunga musi ri tshi ri:-

Nna mutukana o gidima hani?
Mulwadze o tshimbila zwavhudi.
O ya mulamboni.
Madadzisi mahwe asia;-

1. A maitele. (manner)
ngavhuya, khamusi, kathihi, zwavhudi, tshothe, zwituku na...

2. A Tshifhinga. (Time).
zwino, lini, namusi, matshelo, mulovha, nwahola, kale na.....

3. A fhethu (Place).
ngafhi, fhala, hone, tsini, dasi, ntha, phanda, seli, na.....[2]

From here, this book loses its good approach it had from the begining and it does not interest the pupils as it did in the opening paragraphs. The authors departed from the sentence method or from the whole to the details. Another aspect of this book is that it now uses the same terminology as Schwellnus' 'Luvenda Grammar' and therefore the two books seem to be the same here except that PHENDALUAMBO is in simple Venda. It simplified the matter contained in LUVENDA GRAMMAR.

The rules governing the process of nasalization are given in a systematic way and the sound changes are tabulated as follows:

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1. Th. Endemann & E. Mudau: Op cit., p. 7.
2. Ibid., p. 62.

f > pf
b > mb
r > th
l > nd
k > kh
vh > mb
v > mv
fh > ph
p > ph
d > nd
g > ng
s > ts
t > th
x > kh
z > nz [1].

The publication of this book in simple Venda made the language of the pupils in the primary school interesting. It also made it possible for Venda teachers to make a comparison between this book and Luvenda Grammar and thence to contribute by drawing their own language rules. The book provoked the thinking of the Venda teaching personnel with the result that the Venda lessons in school became interesting.

Since the publication of this book the insight into the study of the Venda language grew and led to the publication of language books in Venda.

In 1954, Mr. P.R. Ngwana published "KHA RI AMBE LUVENDA". This is the first book in Venda which was mainly full of exercises and proverbs. The book adopted a new method of presenting the Venda language. The exercises are preceded by a comprehension test which is followed by questions based on the passage read. Some of the questions are of a general nature with the result that Venda pupils who do not possess a wide knowledge of the Venda vocabulary will not be able to answer the questions. Teachers whose experiences in Venda is not wide may not be able to answer some of the questions or to explain the difficulties contained in the exercises.

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1. Th. Endemann & E. Mudau: Op cit., p. 38

Some of the comprehension tests can serve as short essay models for the primary and secondary pupils. Some of the passages are based on the Venda Folklore and are interesting to the pupils.

The book deals with the Venda word-division by giving exercises involving problems of word-division:

(a) ofha , o fha
(b) ngauri , nga u ri
(c) uri , u ri
(d) sina , si na
(e) pfano , pfa no[1)]

The pupils are asked to use these forms in good sentences to show that they know the differences.

This book also contains (a) idiomatic expressions and (b) proverbs:

(a) (i) u bvisa vemba,
(ii) Mapfene o tsisa vhana
(iii) dunzi ḽo fhufha
(iv) o ḽa ṱhoho ya khanga.[2)]

(b) (i) Mukapi wa tshisima a si munwi watsho.
(ii) Ya a siho i dzwala nga maboho.
(iii) Tshiṅanga tsha haya tshi fura madidedzo.
(iv) Ro vhamba maano ntsa yo fhira.
(v) Sila ḽi funwa nga muambari. [3)]

Here lies the significance of this book namely that of language usage. The rules are being tested in this book so that the pupils do not just memorise the rules but deduce them from passages or from questions.

The book contains models of letter writing which form a valuable contribution to Venda literature. The revised version of this book contains the analyses of sentences, short essays and dialogues which form an interesting aspect of the Venda language.

The demerits of the book are that it does not teach, it only tests. It cannot help the pupils but makes them more dependent on the teacher. If Ngwana had made some preliminary lessons which gave hints on the problems on which the exercises are based, he would have done the study of language more justice especially for school purposes.

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1) P.R. Ngwana: Kha Ri Ambe Luvenda, p. 26.
2) Ibid., p. 45.
3) P.R. Ngwana: Op cit., p. 60.

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The book is not arranged progressively and it is ungraded. On the whole it advanced the course of Venda Literature in our schools.

The school books increased when H.M. Mulangaphuma published "ḒENZHE ḽA LUVENḒA" in 1958. This book follows more or less the same method which Ngwana followed in Kha Ri Ambe Luvenda. The difference lies in the fact that this book teaches the pupils the subject matter before it tests them by means of the exercises.

It is primarily written first and foremost for use in the primary school. The subject matter is introduced by a comprehension passage which pupils read and then answer questions which are based on the content, meanings of words and on the story as a whole.

The exercises are varied, some require the pupils to complete the sentences while others require the pupils to construct their own sentences. In some exercises the pupils are given words in brackets and they are required to choose the suitable word to complete the sentence:

Dzehenisani ipfi ḽo fanelaho mavhakani:

(a) (swarulani, tumulani, khophani) itsho tshikoli nga vhukati.

(b) (viani, olani,) makolo afho kha guvha.

(c) Miomva yanga yo (beba, ṱanza, aṋwa) nga khula khulu.1)

Some model letters are used to demonstrate the art of letter writing:

Vondwe School,
P.O. Sibasa.
12 ḽa Luhuhi, 1959.

Ha muṋe wanga,

Tsha u thoma ndi a vusa na u vhudzisa mutakalo ngeo ḓoroboni. Ndi vha ḓivhisa uri ngeno hayani vhana vha khou wela tshivhasoni. Ṋamusi ndi ḓuvha ḽa vhuraru ri tshi ḽa ri sa swikisi. Nṋe na mme ri tou swiṱula fhedzi nga u shavha zwiṱoma uri zwi ḓi wana zwiṱuku-ṱuku nga madekwana.

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1) H.M. Mulangaphuma: Denzhe La Luvenda, p. 12

Zwino vha khou humbelwa uri vha ṱavhanye u ri farisa nga masheleni a u ṱunḓa.

U takaḽa ro takala roṱhe ri dinwa nga ḽone ḓuvha.

Kha vha saḽe,
Ndi nṋe ṅwana wavho,
Phusuphusu.[1]

The pupils are requested to learn this letter and to give a reply to the child who wrote it.

The publication of this book increased the number of reference books in the teaching of Venda as a living language. It simplified the study of grammar greatly by allowing the pupils to discover the rules for themselves.

This book is a valuable contribution to Venda Literature although it is not well arranged according to subject matter. It is supposed to cover the work prescribed for STD. III to STD. VII - i.e. from primary to the secondary school which is an impossible task.

This book is significant in that it does not teach formal grammar but some aspects of functional grammar suitable for the pupils in the primary school.

This book is a great improvement on KHA RI AMBE LUVENḒA since it can guide the pupils by using what is commonly met with in the daily speech of the pupil. It analyses forms which the pupils use in their daily conversation and try to give reasons for such forms.

In 1960, Prof. D. Ziervogel and R.S. Dau published a book entitled "A HANDBOOK OF THE VENDA LANGUAGE". This is the first book written scientifically for the study of Venda at the University level. This book explains Venda phenomena in English. It uses the system of word-division as outlined by C.M. Doke and as improved by D. Ziervogel. This book treats the Phonetics and Phonology of the Venda Language first and then the morphology of the language. The book ends by treating the syntax in Venda.

It is a good scientific contribution to Venda Literature but for the practical purposes in school it must be supplemented by the previously mentioned Venda books on language.

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1) Ibid., p. 13.

This book has popularized the study of Venda in the University world. It gives a person who can read English a firm foundation in Venda. It is not accessible to those who can only read Venda or where the Venda language is taught through the medium of Venda.

The authors indicate tones in otherwise identical Venda words for the distinction of meaning.

In Part II of this book, the authors gave a good exposition of the application of sound shift in Venda. The speech sounds are compared with the UR-BANTU forms and certain rules are given concerning the shifting of speech sounds from Ur-Bantu to Venda. Here is an extract from this important book:

Nasal Compounds with ni-

02.5 Nasal compounds with ni- are found with

(i) nouns of class 9)
(ii) nouns of class 10)
(iii) adjectives of classes 9 and 10 and
(iv) with 1st pers. sing. obj. con.

(i) Nouns of class 9:
02.6

ni-k > kh: khanga (guinea fowl) B. ni-kanga;
khare (ring) B. ni-kare

ni-t > th: thaba (mountain, ni-tava;
thambo (rope) B. ni-tambo

ni-p > ph: phala (rooibok) B. ni-pala;
phaha (wild cat) B. ni-paka 1)

This book treats certain constructions very clearly and in this respect it raised the standard of Venda in our schools. Here is one of the constructions given briefly:

"USES OF THE RELATIVE

11.23 The relative is said to qualify a noun or pronoun and may precede or follow the word it qualifies e.g.
Vhanna vhane vha tshimbila vha ya musanda (The men who are travelling are going to the capital)

dze dza ẹdela dzimmbwa a dzi ḍivhi u u luma
(the dogs which are asleep cannot bite you).

1) D. Ziervogel & R. Dau: A Handbook of the Venda Language, p. 20.

11.24 The relative may be employed without the word it qualifies e.g.
Vha farisaho vha ḓo ḓa navho (those who help will come together with them).

Although the authors state that the relative qualifies a word or it may be employed without the word it qualifies, it is not true, for the noun or the word it qualifies is understood otherwise the right concord would not have been used.

This book can be used in High Schools if it can be translated into Venda so that its subject matter may be useful to the upper classes of the secondary school. When it is rendered in English, it is only useful to those who use English as their medium. The terms used in this book will not be allowed when the discussion is in Venda.

The handbook of the Venda Language was followed by "NḒILANA DZA LUVENḒA" written by E. Mukhuba. This book is specifically written for the lower primary classes. It tries to provide a foundation study of the Venda Language. The author has made a noteworthy contribution for the infant classes in a Venda school. This book can be improved by adjusting it to the different stages of development of the lower primary classes. During 1966, "ṮHAHULELA LUVENDA", by M.E.R. Mathivha and J.T. Makhado was published. This is the first book of its kind to treat the matter that has been prescribed for secondary schools. The book treats all the aspects of the grammar in Venda. The book is divided into the scientific section, language usage section, syntax section, and the proverbs section and finally revision exercises and test papers.

The book uses the modern Venda terminology which has been coined by the Department of Bantu Education and amended from time to time by revised lists. It is written in the modern venda orthography. This book explains the phonological processes in Venda:

"Musi mibvumo mivhili i tshi ri yo vhandekana muńwe wa shanduka u swikela u tshi fana na muńwe tshoṱhe kana u swikela u tshi ambelwa fhethu huthihi na wa u thoma kana wa u tevhela, tshanduko iyi ri i vhidza 'nyelelanó (assimilation)[1].

This book treats the noun classes under the following headings: (i) Form; (ii) content; and (iii) function. For instance, the nouns of classes (3 and 4):

Tshivhumbeo: Madzina a ulu lushaka kha vhuthihini a na ṱhoho (thangi) ya mu- kha vhunzhi a vha na mi- sa:

Vhuthihi	Vhunzhi
muri	miri
mulindi	milindi
mutuli	mituli
muludzi	miludzi

Mańwe madzina a lushaka holu ha na thangi ya mu- fhedzi a thoma nga ńw-sa: ńwedzi, mu-enda > ńwenda mu-aha > ńwaha.

Zwi re ngomu

1. miri: muṱulume, mufula
2. mirado ya muvhili: mutsinga, muṱana
3. zwa mupo: ńwando, ńwaha
4. madzina o pambiwaho: mutshini[2]

This book tries to explain the formation of the past tense in Venda by stating that the perfect tense is formed by the prefix of the absolute pronoun of the noun which is the subject of the sentence:

Kha ṱikhathi ṱa ndo ṱiimela ṱa dzina ṱi vhumbwa nga thangi ya ṱisala ṱa ṱenelo dzina kana pfalandoṱhe ya ṱenelo ṱisala sa: muthu o ṱa vhathu vho ṱa, kholomo yo ṱa (one, vhone yone.)

This means that in order to form the perfect tense when using the noun vhathu, we use the prefix of the absolute pronoun vhone viz. vho as the subjectival concord.

The book gives many examples of all kinds of letters for the pupils to learn and practise. The book further teaches the writing of telegrams in Venda. It also gives the rules for the writing of essays. Some of the essays are used as comprehension tests.

1) Mathivha and Makhado: Thahulela Luvenda, p. 18
2) Ibid., p. 25.

This book gives explanations of some of the idiomatic expressions which have not been done before in a language book. This book teaches first and then tests. The exercises are based on the lessons already dealt with in the preceding pages.

The publication of this book raised the standard of Venda in the secondary and high schools.

Recently the authors published a language series entitled "NZHELE YA LUVENḒA". This series treats the Venda language along the new approach to language studies. The series from Std. I to VI, teaches the Venda language progressively. The lessons start with reading and then the reading is followed by sentences based on the essentials of the story. The sentences are followed by questions on the story and on language in general but based on the story read. This series is a definite contribution to the development of Venda Literature in the primary school.

CONCLUSION

The publication of the language books in Venda for the use in schools stabilized the Venda Language as a medium of communication. The books have standardized the Venda which is taught in schools. The books have improved the taste of the written Venda.

Each book has tried to solve some previous problem which could not be explained in the earlier books. The Venda language books have developed to a reasonable degree and they can be comparable to language books in other languages in the Republic of South Africa.

The recent school language publications in Venda seem to crown the efforts of Dr. P.E. Schwellnus who set the ball rolling in the early 1930s.

DICTIONARIES

The development of dictionaries in the Venda Language was started by Rev. E. Gottschling between 1897 and 1903 by making a collection of words written on ruled pages. This dictionary, however, has never been published, "it is just a bound volume with large ruled pages, containing several thousands of entries obviously copied from earlier notes, since there are few corrections and alphabetical tangles. The orthography is the old one used in those days"[1)]

The first dictionary to be published in the Venda Language is "THE TSHIVENDA-ENGLISH DICTIONARY" by Dr. N.J. van Warmelo in 1937. The introduction to the dictionary is a scientific treatment of the Venda Grammar based on the orthography which had been used by Dr. P.E. Schwellnus. This dictionary gives an outline treatment of the dialects of the Venda Language. Among the dialects which N.J. van Warmelo discusses is the "tshimanda" which is supposed to be spoken between Luonde and Lwamondo. This dialect to my mind is the Luronga dialect which is heavily influenced by Luphani and Luilafuri.

In the introduction the author discusses stress accent, intonation, phonology, the noun classes and prefixes, the noun suffixes, the adjectives, pronominal forms, demonstratives, copulatives, verb stems, verbal suffixes, verb forms, descriptives, adverbs, conjunctions and particles. He gives a clear exposition of each one of the above and an expansion of these aspects of Venda Grammar can give us a good scientific grammar book in Venda.

The introduction is followed by the dictionary part of the book. The Venda words are arranged alphabetically. The words are taken as they are found in the spoken form or written form. The verbs are preceded by a hyphen thus -akha=draw taut. Other words which are not verbs are written as they are in the written forms.

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1) N.J. van Warmelo: Tshivenda-English Dictionary, p. 5.

The tone marks are used on vowels forming a syllable. The tones which Van Warmelo uses are 'low and high'. The mid tone he does not show but just leaves the syllable unmarked: alama = brood, sit on eggs, alamedza = sit on top of, bear down upon.

This dictionary contains some of the old words in Venda which are disappearing in the spoken language today. For instance, the word 'phaṅgàmí = leader, is being replaced by murangaphanḍa, the word phàmbá is being replaced by 'thuba'. The modern Venda usage would do well if these words are used for the other meanings which may be ascribed to these words.

The dictionary also contains proverbs connected with words explained in the dictionary. If the proverb bases its meaning on a word, it appears under that word: Tsadzi = female; proverb: "Khuhu tsadzi a i ambi mutsho i ambaho ndi ya nduṇa" = A woman is a minor and may not discuss matters in public proceedings.

The phrases used in this dictionary are good Venda phrases. The dictionary ends by giving the names of plants, animals and insects. This is a very important contribution to the Venda Language since some of the plants or animals are gradually disappearing. These names will help in the teaching of the subjects like Biology and Botany in our Venda schools.

This dictionary, however, has the disadvantage of not knowing the Venda word for the English word since Dr. N.J. van Warmelo did not put the English words first and Venda words as he has done with Venda words. It helps the English speaking person who is reading a Venda book or listening to a Venda speaker. The Venda speaker does not get what the English speaker is saying since he has no English-Tshivenḍa part of the dictionary.

This dictionary helps a great deal in the translation of Venda texts to English. It will serve the course of Venda literature if the author revises it and in the revision if he could give the English-Venda side of the dictionary.

This dictionary is a very important contribution to Venda Literature which stand out like a mountain peak in the Venda Language.

During 1937, L.T. Marole and F.J. de Gama published "ENGLISH-TSHIVENDA VOCABULARY". This book contains English words with their Venda equivalents. The Venda used in this book does not conform to the accepted Venda orthography and word-division. Here are some of the words from this book:

"Behold(n) vhona, vhonani
Being(n) muthu, tshivhumbiwa
Believe(v) tendani
Bellows(n) muvuvha wa nandoni"[1)]

This dictionary has many spelling mistakes which could have been avoided. The book can help an English speaking person to get the Venda equivalents while a Venda who does not know English will not be helped. For the school going children this book made the translation from Venda to English easy. It encouraged the pupils in the primary and secondary schools to learn the vocabulary of Venda and English.

The following year L.T. Marole published a phrase book entitled "PHINDULANO", in which he translated English phrases and idioms into Venda. This book teaches the practical usage of Venda and English:

"Good morning my friend = Riya vusa khonani yanga
Where are you going to = nna niya ngafhi?
I am going to church = ndi ya Gerekeni"[2)]

In this book Marole treats the salutations, buying and selling, hunger and thirst, going to the chief's kraal, going to church, Vendaland, English idioms and phrases, cooking, house work and finally he gives the names of wild animals, birds, and domestic animals.

With these two books Marole tried to acquaint the Venda speaking person with the English idiom. He helped those who could read Venda but did not know English. These books can help a person to get on in English and Venda.

1) L.T. Marole & F.J. de Gama: English-Tshivenda Vocabulary, p. 8.
2) L.T. Marole: Phindulano, p. 11.

CONCLUSION

Dr. N.J. van Warmelo's dictionary remains the authoritative work in Venda. It is a reliable source of information for the Venda Language. It is a scholarly work which has been well written and the Venda proverbs are well preserved for the future generations. A revision and an expansion of this dictionary is really overdue.

The significance of the Venda dictionaries is that all of them have been written mainly for practical purposes and it is easy to consult them and in the arrangement of the words it is easy to find the meaning of the word or phrase.

HYGIENE BOOKS IN VENDA

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus had the welfare of the Venda people at heart. After he had written the school readers, a grammar book and having finished the complete translation of the Holy Bible, he turned to the health of the people. He was quite aware that after the spiritual feeding he had given to the Venda soul, he must look after his physical needs. He therefore systematized the health rules which he deemed suitable for the Venda in a book entitled "MUTAKALO" in 1939.

This is a text book on Hygiene written in a way that it can be used as a school reader. He used the Venda terminology for most of the technical terms. The book uses the method of question and answer at its early stages:

> "Mavhudzi a dzula ngafhi?
> Akha ṱhoho, na kha tshitiko, na kha dzikhumbana,
> na kha ṱhovuma.
> Mushumo wa mavhudzi ndi u itani?
> Ndi u pila ḓuvha, na phepho, uri ṱhoho na
> vhuluvhi zwî dzule hu khudaho" 1)

The book treats the subject matter from Sub.Std.A, to the Higher Primary classes. The parts of the body are treated first and then the treatment of the common diseases and some epidemic diseases. This book ends by discussing the Bantu medicines, their values and their disadvantages.

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1) P.E. Schwellnus: Mutakalo, p. 8.

The author uses simple scientific language in explaining the different parts of the body or the diseases. The coined terms fit in very well into the discussions with the result that at times the reader cannot feel that a new term has been used:

> "Tsha vhuna ndi u si ḓivhe "ngilatshikha". Ṅanga yo ara kana yo tshea u tshenuwa hu tshi zwimba, hu tshi vhaisa, hu tshi mweka, hu sa ṱavhanyi u fhola" [1].

The use of the word "ngila-tshika", is very appropriate in the sentence and it sounds a common Venda word yet Schwellnus has coined it.

This is the first book on a scientific subject. The Venda languages was used for the first time in a technical topic. The complicated technical terms used in hygience were rendered in a simple clear manner in Venda.

The publication of this book in Venda raised the standard of Venda in its application to science. The influence of this book is seen in the development of hygienic conditions in Vendaland today.

In 1962, a publication entitled "NGUDA-MUTAKALO" appeared. This book is the second book on hygiene. It is a translation from the English book "HEALTH EDUCATION". This book has been translated into Venda by H.M. Mangoma. It deals with all the parts of the body in Venda using the new terminology coined by the Venda Language Committee.

The book treats each part briefly and concludes each part by asking questions which is a form of testing the pupils on the matter learnt.

In this book there is not much that can be said about the subject matter since it is not a creative piece of work but a translated work. The language used is simple but at times it is stilted with the result that the pupils in the primary school may not grasp the meaning.

It is, however, a book written in the transition period when Venda was being introduced as a medium of instruction in

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1) P.E. Schwellnus: Mutakalo, p. 100.

all primary schools. It uses many of the terms found in Mutakalo and therefore, the use of Mutakalo in Venda primary schools may bring better results.

CONCLUSION

The provision of text books on scientific subjects is still a virgin soil in the History of Venda Literature and Venda authors will do well to attempt the writing of these types of books in Venda for the development of the scientific aspect of the Venda language.

The scientifically written books in Venda will help the Venda children to develop the scientific spirit.

The Vendas who have been trained in science will do the Venda speaking peoples a lot of good if they render their knowledge in Venda.



Dr. N.J. van Warmelo : The preserver of Venda Culture and Lexicographer.

CHAPTER IV

TRADITIONAL AND HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS

The history of Venda Literature is also bound up with the historical narrations of the early Vendas. The man who was interested in the history and culture of the Venda speaking people is Dr. N.J. van Warmelo.

His interest in the accounts of the old cultures of the Bantu of South Africa made him to travel far and near in search of information.

In 1932, he published "CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS VENDA HISTORY RELIGION AND TRIBAL RITUAL". This book has preserved the most valuable aspects of the culture of the Venda speaking peoples.

The introduction traces the history of the Vhailafuri or Western Venda. The house of Ramabulana is traced through the accounts given by Tsamaano Ramabulana. The informer gave the accounts in Venda while Dr. van Warmelo systematized the matter and even translated the matter into English.

The book contains accounts of the circumcision schools for boys, girls, religious beliefs and practices of the various tribes which compose the Venda Ethnic Group. The system of the divination is given a good treatment and preserves the forms which obtained in the olden days in Vendaland and in Venda culture. The author also included an account by G.P. Lestrade on the Venda and their Rhodesian Affinities. Lestrade gives an account about the Lemba who are found among the Venda and even briefly commented on their peculiarities. He also gives their influence on the Bantu of Southern Africa.

The book is written in prose and the Venda idiom used in it is good for such folklore accounts:

"Mutumbuka-vhathu o ṱuwa Victoria, a tshi ḓa Rhodesia. Ha vha na Bele-ḽa-Mambo, e na mwana wawe Ṱindima, vha ḓa vha dzula Bulawayo Vhukalanga. Vha tshi ṱuwa henefho vha tshi ita zwa mivhango ya vhukoma, ha ṱuwa Dimbanyika, a ḓa u wela Vhembe e na ṅwana wawe Ndyambeu.

Vha ḓa u dzula Nzhelele vha wana shango ḽi ḽa ha Raphulu. Vha ha -Raphulu na vha ha-Tshivhula vha vha vha sa ḓivhi u sika mulilo vha u fheṱa nga dzithanda vha tshi tshila u nga vhathu vha ngaho dziphukha. Ndi hone vha tshi vha funza zwa mulilo.

Vha ri vha nyaga u ita nndwa na avho vha bvaho Vhukalanga, vhala vha fhisa shango, vhala ndi hone vha tshi shavha-ha, ngauri ndi tshithu tshine vha vha si tshi ḓivhe."[1)]

This prose style is the same as that which is being used in the narratives of the folktales. It is simple, clear, factual and interesting to listen to when the story is being told. This language conveyed important historical facts in the past. It is easy to remember these facts because the language is not involved.

This book continues in a simple style and it narrates initiation facts:

Ndi zwone vhana vha tshi bva nga madekwana vha tshi ya nnḓa ha muḓi vha tshi ya u kwevha. Vha swika fhaḽa nnḓa vha yo tumba muṅwe a tumba fhala vha ita danga.

Vha dzhia phapha dza mulemalema vha fhisa vha kuya vha kwevha ngadzo. Tshilombvokombvo, nanga-dza-ntsa na mahushule ndi miri ine vha kwevha ngayo. Vha seli na seli vha vhidzana vha ri "Maḥuke" ndi uri Kha ri ṱangane ri kwevhe".[2)]

The technical words such as "maḥuke" let us meet and "kwevha" pull out, are interspersed and form significant points in the training of the young persons. It makes interesting reading for the children of today who are no longer practising this exercise.

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1) N.J. van Warmelo: Contributions Towards Venda History, Religion and Tribal Ritual, p. 9.
2) Ibid, p. 38.

The circumcision of boys is given although here, the story is very incomplete as this is a secret initiation school which is not mixed with women. The language used is not so easy to follow. The account given in this book, however, has been rendered in the simple prose which can be understood:

> "Zwiḽiwa zwi tshi ḓa vhasadzi vha vhidzelela vhe kule vha ri: 'Ri a swa. Vhanna vhaḽa vha imbaho vha fhindula vha ri: "Iswai-zwau Nyankongo". Ndi vhana, vhana vha semaho vho-mme kana dzikhaladzi. Ndi hone midabe i tshi takuwa ya ya u rola vhuswa. Dzina ḽa vhuswa vhu pfi tshivhonelo. Nyimbo dza hone ndi maṱamba, luńwe lu pfi, "Khunye khunye na vhasadzi na vhasidzana, hogo hogo hogo khunye" Ndi samba ḽivhi ḽi sa funi u gudiswa vhana".[1]

It is interesting to realise that the words used in the initiation of Venda children is mainly profane but semantically the emotive effect of these words make the people who have gone through these initiations to be clean in their speech. This may be because they have experienced the bad effect of the meanings of such words at the initiation. The word "Nyankongo" is a bad word but the initiates use it in the circumcision lodge and in this use they experience the roughness of it and thereafter they will not use it.

The publication of this book helped the Venda nation to feel conscious of itself and to be proud of its culture. The book unearthed a rich treasure in the study of the Venda and related tribes. From the accounts given in this book, future studies concerning the Venda tribes can be made. This book also preserved the language used in the institutions which the Venda practised long ago and some of which are still going on in Vendaland today.

Literarily the Venda language has been put to a particular use and in this usage it has developed the written form.

For students of Anthropology this book is a great source of information rarely found in other books on the Venda. If this book is used as a base, then the construction of Venda history is possible.

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1) N.J. van Warmelo, ibid., p. 128.

Eight years later van Warmelo published an important book in the history of Venda Literature: "THE COPPER MINERS OF MUSINA AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE ZOUTPANSBERG."

In 1940, however, van Warmelo edited the Venda accounts and even translated them into English. This book contains accounts by M. Motenda, S.M. Dzivhani and E. Mudau. We may briefly comment on the Venda texts as related by the forementioned authors:

RAMABULANA

(a) Plot: The story of the western Venda is related. The earliest settlers in Vendaland are given, their dwelling places, their customs, their musical instruments and the competitions which were held.

The arrival of the Vhangoṋa at Zwavhumbwa is given a prominent place in the account. They reached Zwavhumbwa after the Vendas were already there, and were not allowed to build inside the kraal. The Raphulu tribe was already there when the Vendas arrived at the present Vendaland.

The arrival of the Ramabulana people is told with an outline of the geography of the country whence they came. The origin of such greetings as: "Mambo, Mulungu, Thovhela-muhali wa-shango" is traced to the place where they dwelt in the past.

They left the place of their origin because they had a faction fight which took place and they migrated southwards until they reached Nzhelele where they built the capital city which they called Dzata. This city became the headquarters of the Ramabulanas and their related tribes. They subdued the whole of Vendaland from here. It is at Dzata that we meet the legendary leader of all the Vendas called Ṯhoho-ya-Nḏou. He was the son of Mulozwi. Ṯhoho-ya-Nḏou used a small drum in his expeditions to conquer the whole of Vendaland.

From Dzata, he invaded Dzanani and conquered the Raphulu people. He made the various tribes into one nation speaking one single language. He discarded the Shona that he spoke in favour of the new language he had created.

After the conquest of the whole of Vendaland, Mulozwi died mysteriously by just getting into the cave with his dogs. Ṱhoho-ya-Nḓou, did not rule for a long time, he also disappeared without any trouble in the country. The people tried to trace him but all in vain. Ṱhoho-ya-Nḓou's sons were Ramabulana and Ramavhoya. Ramabulana succeeded his father as chief of all the Vendas with his uncle Ravhura of Makonde. Ramavhoya fought Ramabulana and Ramabulana was defeated, he left Vendaland and went and recruited coloureds and the Batlokwa and invaded the headkraal and in turn defeated Ramavhoya whom he killed by strangulation.

Ramabulana fought many battles with the armies of a Pedi chief Sigwadi (Sekwati). Ramabulana was succeeded by his son Makhado who ruled Vendaland with great fame. He fought many invading tribes and even with the early trekkers. The early missionaries came in 1871 to Vendaland during his reign. When Makhado died in 1895, trouble arose amongst his sons Mphephu, Sinthumule and Maemu. Sinthumule asked for help from the boers and a fearful battle ensued. The Venda armies were disorganised and Mphephu ran away to Mashonaland. Mphephu returned to Vendaland after the Anglo-boer war in 1902. He died in 1924 and was succeeded by his son Mbulaheni George in 1925. He is the first chief to be installed by the Whites in Vendaland.

The story of the Tshivhase Royal family is related. The battle between Rambuda and Tshivhase ended when Mphephu intervened on behalf of Rambuda. Tshivhase died and he was followed by his son Ramaremisa. Ramaremisa was followed by Ratshimphi. From here, the book now relates about the minor chiefs in Vendaland.

An account is given about the customs of the old Vendas. The sacrifices, marriage laws and medicines.

An account is given about the Vhalemba concerning their origin, customs, marriage laws and their chiefs from Mbelengwa to Shimbani. The Lemba laws and clan names are given in an interesting manner. The Lemba taboos are given and a significant notice can be taken of the similarity between Lembas and the Jews. The Lemba prayer is given in such a manner that the reader is taken to the old good past.

After the Lemba account an account on Lwamondo is given and this is followed by the account on the arrival of the Tsongas in Vendaland. The contact situation between the Vendas and Tsongas started this time.

(b) Characters: The characters are many in this account. The most important are:-

(i) Ramabulana: He is a pioneer in the chieftainship of the whole of Vendaland. He succeeded his father Thoho-ya-Ndou the legendary chief whose rule remains an inspiration to Venda chiefs. He built an Empire for the Venda nation. He is a good organiser who befriended himself with the boers, Batlokwa and the coloureds. He laid the foundation for his son Makhado.

(ii) Makhado: He consolidated what his father did into a mighty Vendaland. He was a fearless man who instilled his bravery into his soldiers with the result that he was called the "Lion of the North". He built a unifying army in Vendaland and left behind him, when he died in 1895 a Vendaland with a centralized government.

(iii) Mphephu: He inherited the strong Venda army from his father. He was a man who had the greatest respect for blood relationship. He saved Sinthumule from death by ordering his armies not to kill his brother. He was a person who could forgive those who had wronged him. We see him giving Sinthumule the control of the headman after they have been reconciled.

(iv) Mbelengwa: He is the founder of the Lemba chieftainship. He consolidated the Lemba clans in the Belingwe area and made them to be respected by the tribes living in the vicinity. His magic powers are still latent in the Lembas of today. He formulated rules and taboos for all the Lembas to follow and to practise.

(v) Shimbani: He was not so strict as his previous Lemba chiefs. He allowed the infiltration of customs of other tribes into Lemba homes. He intermarried with Vhalozwi women. He betrayed the Lemba magic powers by allowing a woman who belonged to other tribes to take care of the great possession. He is not a firm character like his predecessors.



M.M. MOTENDA-MBELENGWA : A pioneer writer of the west Venda.

The other characters are not the main concern of the story but they have just to illustrate how the forementioned characters acted their parts.

(c) Literary Comments

After Motenda had given a good account of Ramabulana's history, customs and religious beliefs, he also traced the relationship between Ramabulana and the Lemba.

Motenda gives the account in a humorous manner. He is one of the earlier writers who used humour in his accounts. He uses vivid language and his language makes the story graphic before the reader. His language has some tinge of foreign words especially Northern Sotho and Tsonga. This book has preserved the forms of the Venda which obtain in the Luilafuri dialect. His account of the Vhalemba is well done and serves as a good source of information about this tribe which is found in the Venda group. Motenda uses language aptly, listen to his words when he describes the battle between Sinthumule and Mphephu.

> "Sinthumule zwi si mu vhee mbilu a dovha a ramba mmbi ya yo dzhena ha Manavhela, e na muhumbulo ya u dodela mukomana a tshee o livhala. Huno tsevhi ya ṋenga ya yo luma khosi Mphephu nḓevhe. Ndi hone a tshi ramba mmbi i tshi vha tanga muḓi wa Manavhela. Fhedzi a ramba mmbi i sathu u bva, a huwelela nga ipfi ḽa vhuṱunga a ri: ni songo fhaladza malofha a khotsi anga a a fhaladzaho u ḓo zwi vhona zwoṱhe. Arali vhe vhathu nga vha liwe nga pfumo, a vha midzwe nga munna wa vhaṋe. Ndi hone mmbi i tshi, bva muthu a wana i tshi tou suvha sa vhusunzi. Vho swika vha mbo tanga thavhana, tshikhoo tsha tshigidi tsha lila tshi tshi vhuyelela kavhili na kararu. Vhathu vha fhela ngoho, ene Sinthumule a bva e ethe, na vhathunyana vha si na vhukono. Vha mu litsha a ṱuwa vha tshi mu vhona. Sinthumule a mbo ḓi fhenywa tshoṱhe, mukomana a sala a kha ḓi vhusa."[1]

Motenda uses idiomatic expressions such as 'zwi si mu vhee mbilu' which means that he was not satisfied with the state of affairs 'a wana i tshi tou suvha sa vhusunzi' meaning that the army was moving in a formidable manner.

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1) M. Motenda: Ramabulana, p. 167.



S.M. Dzivhani : A venda writer on folklore.

The passage illustrates the sympathy existing between brothers of the same father and that blood is thicker than water. This episode also gives the reasons behind the continuing feud between Mphephu and Sinthumule houses today.

Motenda can render a serious moment humorously:

> "Huno ha ri musi maswole a tshi swika a wana thanga ya murole i tshi khou ḓithela mufuvha khoroni. Madele a kho ḓi ri, "Thusu wa ha nya-mutsa-nga-davhi la lombe, wa sa faresa davhi u ya wa." Muṅwe wa vhala a ri, tsha kale-kale "tshe ra ḽa vhana vha ndau ro fhedza ra itwani" Vha-Musanda vho mbo sinye-sinye sa ndau. Vha mbo ritha mabu. Vhavenḓa vha hana u pfa henefho vha gekhana navho vha tou vha vhaisa. Maswole a ri u shavha, a ḽi ṱahula shango a tshi humela hayani hao Makwaṱambani." 1)

When Motenda uses the expression: 'a ḽi ṱahula shango' he depicts an army that is so cowardly that it looked as if it were weeding in the field. This also shows that the army had no courage to continue the war.

The book as a whole has been a worthy attempt as the first book written by a western Venda.

MAHOSI A VENDA

(a) Plot: The land belonged to Luvhimbi a Mbedzi chief who was a rain maker. The land is described and the early settlement of the Vendas is given. The sacrifices of Luvhimbi is given as very important. This is followed by the conquest of Luvhimbi by Ḓimbyanyika and the eventual subjection of Luvhimbi as a man in charge of the Thondo.

An account is given of the different totems found amongst the Venda speaking tribes. This is followed by the arrival of Ḓimbanyika with a group of hunters. Ḓimbanyika came along with the sacred drum called "Ngoma Lungunde". This drum performed wonders in battles. Ḓimbanyika subdued the whole Vendaland. The story of the eldest son "Mundalamo" is given a prominent position as a lesson to the young princes in Vendaland.

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1) Ibid., p. 163.

An account is given about the death of a chief and how a new chief is installed. The story of how Masindi followed Bele in the chieftainship, and that Masindi was followed by Tshisevhe who had Thoho-ya-Ndou as his brother, is related. The death of Tshisevhe caused Thoho-ya-Ndou to disappear with the sacred drum and to the division of Vendaland into three main houses viz.: Ramabulana, Tshivhase and Mphaphuli.

A short account is given of each dynasty and eventually the account of the Mphaphuli house is given in some details up to and including Ratsibi's reign. An account about the chieftainship at Tshisaulu is given. The book ends by giving the battles which Ratsibi waged against the other tribes in Vendaland.

(b) Characters: The characters in this book are many but the following make the thread of the story:

(i) Luvhimbi:

He is the rain maker of Eastern Vendaland. He relies on the presents which he receives from those who come to ask for rain. He does not organise his tribe into an army. He is good at tshikona dance. He is a weak administrator. He does not consolidate the Mbedzi tribe into a unified whole. The advent of Ḓimbanyika divides the Mbedzi tribe who were not unified and the division of the Mbedzi led to the capture of Luvhimbi and to his eventual subordination. He does not even make a plan to escape when he is made a captive at Dzata. He is not well drawn.

(ii) Ḓimbanyika:

He is a strong powerful ruler who has an army which is formidable. He conquers every small tribe in Vendaland. He is also human; he feels pity for those he conquers. We see it when he takes Luvhimbi into his kraal and allows him to live. He is so confident of himself that he does not even fear the plotting which Luvhimbi may make in order to regain his authority. His personality is felt all over Vendaland.

(iii) Mundalamo:

He is a very ambitious young prince who does not even analyse the situation at the chief's kraal. He usurps the crown during the father's life time. He does not even observe what the elders were doing about his mistakes. He continues to think that he is the undisputed heir. He is reckless, he does not even read the minds of the aunts and the uncles. He is embarassed at the installation day. He is a disappointed man when the young brother succeeded the father.

(iv) Tshilala:

He is the son of Tshisevhe who was given the responsibility of looking after the war medicines at Dzata. He is a faithful royalist. He remains with Ragavheli when the other brothers: Ramabulana and Tshivhase had forsaken him. He tried by all means to get Ragavheli to be chief. He left for Kekanastad to get some medicines for Ragavheli but Ragavheli was killed there so that he could not go back to Dzata. From his activities in this account, he is also a coward. If he was brave, he would have gone to Dzata to be chief but he feared the other brothers and eventually settled at Tshitomboni to be the founder of the Mphaphuli royal family.

(v) Ratsibi:

He was a tricky fellow, he caused the death of Madadzhe so that he could be installed as chief of the Mphaphuli tribe. His plot was immediately discovered by Maalazwanḓa Madadzhe's sister and he ran away to Tshaulu where he hid in the bush and thereby causing the massacre of many people. He connived at the death of Lavhelani and declared himself chief. He organised the subjects of Mphaphuli and made a conquest of the areas which were handed over to Tshivhase for administration during the time of his wanderings. He has organising ability and a personality that made men to rally behind him.

(c) Literary Comments: Dzivhani uses simple idiomatic Venda which is not mixed with foreign words. He has a graphic power of description for he says:

"Henefho tsini ha musanda Dzata hu na mulambwana wo fhandaho mudi nga thungo ya vhubvaduvha u no pfi Gadabi .....
Ndi hone hume ha pfi: Muńwe musi Dimbanyika o tsela hone uri a di ambuse, o swika madini a bvula thathamahe yawe -tshiambara-pfunda, ngululu na sila nguwane, a zwi vhea kha kusunguzwi, a dzhena madini Mundalamo we muhumbulo wawe wa vha wo no di di-vhumba vhuhosi nga ethe a ri shumbu-shumbu dzila phila dza mune wawe a di-tama ngadzo, a dzhena mudini a mona nawo o fara na tshifaro tsha musanda lubonda lwa mugo .....

Mundalamo a sendela munangoni wa pfamo e na fulufhelo la uri u do vula ila ngwena (vothi). A isa tshanda tshawe a ri: Ndi nne Mundalamo, fhondo la luvhimba, ndi ri: vulea! Ha ri du, vhathu vha thoma u lavhelesana. A farelela ngwena nga zwanda zwivhili a sinyalala na khofheni e gagaga zwe : kweta tshitiko tshau. A livha-livha ngei na ngei vhathu vha lavhelesa fhasi. Nga lwa vhuraru a farelela ngwena a tika na nga thoho e tsetsetse zwe ri vhutoto; elelwa zwa kale nandi, u fhondo la luvhimba. O vhona zwauri o kundwa u vula a sendela nga tsha murahu a di-tika nga mutsheto o tswukisa mato mitodzi i tshi tsenga-tsenga." 1)

In these passages, Dzivhani shows his gift of expression in the Venda language which remains memorable and it is in dramatic prose. He uses the Luphani dialect right through. When he describes Madadzhe, he says:

"Madzadzhe o vha o naka tshifhatuwo tshawe. Musi a tshi dzula kha khulunoni vha mu khoda vha mu renda lwe a vhuya a di-hangwa. Vhathu vha ri, "kha vhatamuni vhawe na kha vhafumakadzi vhawe haho o mu fanelaho".2)

The language states clearly the factual things which are needed in a historical narrative. He advanced the course of Venda as a language in the conveyance of historical messages.

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1) S. Dzivhani: Mahosi A Venda, p. 138, & 148
2) Ibid., p.

NGOMA-LUNGUNDU

(a) Plot:

The mythical story starts with the Ngoma-lungundu being given to Tshilume. He obeyed the orders and was instructed to trust the Lemba in the carrying of the sacred drum. He left Matongoni under fearful circumstances which even caused the death of the members of the royal family. He took the instructions to heart and migrated Southwards. He sojourned at **Chibi** where the Vhasenzi intermarried with the Karangas and thus caused the ugly faces which we find amongst the Vhasenzi. The Lembas did not mix with the Karangas with the result that they remained tall and handsome. Tshilume travelled further down South until he died. He was succeeded by Tshikalanga because he was made chief in Vhukalanga. Tshikalanga was succeeded by Bele and Bele was succeeded by Ḓimbyanyika. Dimbanyika was succeeded by Ṯhoho-ya-Nḓou and after him, the Empire split into three kingdoms.

Dyambeu or Vele was the one who eventually reached the Northern Transvaal. He was followed by Dimbanyika who subdued the whole of Vendaland and the migration passed on to the extreme South until a place where the drum was less magical with the result that they returned to Vendaland. In Vendaland, the fame of the sacred drum grew and it became a fearful instrument in the hands of the Vhasenzi. The plot ends by the disappearance of the sacred drum at Dzata.

(b) Characters:

(i) Tshilume:

He is an attentive son who obeys his father's instructions. He is liked by the gods and the people from both tribes of the Vhasendzi and the Vhalemba; they support him. He is an obedient leader who realises that freedom is dependence on others. He is a brave man who did not disappoint the gods in the hope to please the appetites of his followers. He is cruel as we see in the massacre of the people at Chibi. He wiped a whole army leaving no one to tell the tale. He has however, human short-comings and therefore he was told that he would not see the promised land. This is akin to Moses' story in the Bible.

(ii) Dyambeu or Vele:

He is a man who has been given the opportunity to lead the people in their final lap of the journey into Vendaland. He gets his name from his characteristics. He crossed the Limpopo and finally proclaimed the ownership of the land he had come to settle in at, as his and his people. He just forms the bridge between those who ruled in Mashonaland and those who were going to rule the new country he had occupied.

(iii) Dimbanyika:

He is a brave soldier who takes up arms against any small or big tribe in Vendaland which had owned a part of the land. He led a united Senzi-Lemba army against Luvhimbi, Mutele, and the Vhaṱavhatsindi of Tshiheni. He is the soldier king of Vendaland. He did such a good work for the Vendas with the result that he did not die an ordinary death that befell other kings in Vendaland. He just disappeared into a cave and gave instructions from there. The symbol that showed that he was in the cave, were his faithful dogs which kept watch over the entrance.

(iv) Ṱhoho-ya-Ndou:

He was a calm man who did not want any form of violence. He ruled Vendaland peacefully. He did not want wars that is the reason why he left with his sacred drum when there was trouble at the capital. He did not want to give the dangerous drum to any of his warring sons for fear that the one who gets it will destroy the others. He was so imbued with peace that he preferred to disappear from Vendaland so that he might not see the troubles into which the sons were leading the whole nation.

(c) Literary Comments:

Mudau attempted to trace the origin of the Venda and the Lemba. He gives his account in a fictitious manner and in an idiomatic prose style. The main theme in this account is the drum around which all the vicissitudes of the Vhasenzi and Vhalemba are woven. The drum was an instrument in the life of the people. It became an awe-inspiring possession of the Venda speaking peoples. The drum brought great affliction whenever it was sounded.

The drum was the symbol of great power among the Venda. This awe-inspiring influence of the Venda drum is still felt in the Venda cultural life. At Tshivhase's kraal a remnant of this drum is called "Mutula-Gole". Mudau renders all the episodes in good idiomatic Venda. He does not use borrowed words unless they will be describing a foreign situation. The descriptive power with which the author gives the words makes this legend live in the eyes of the readers.

The atmosphere which Mudau creates in this legend is such that one recalls the sweet flowing language of Th. Schwellnus which he used in his "NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA". The imagination which Mudau puts into this story makes this book a worthy contribution towards Venda literature. Mudau describes the scene of the burnt village as follows:-

> "Vha fhirela pfamoni khulu ya ene Mwali nga ethe. Vha tshi tshimbila vha di enda vha tshi kumela na ndila, vha tshi dzhena vha wana hu si na muthu zwithu zwe zwa vha wi ngomu zwa wanala zwo swa zwothe zwi milora na na mahala fhedzi. Fhedzi nga thungo ya devhula vha wana mahala a kha di nzhenzhema, hu sa vhonadzi nga u fhisa ha mulilo wonoyo we wa vha u si nzhenzhema, hu sa vhonadzi nga u fhisa ha mulilo wonoyo we wa vha u si na vhutsi, na mudugudugu wo vha u siho, e mahala fhedzi a swaho. Henefho vha luvha vha amba vha ri 'Mambo wa Denga na shango lothe 'mbvumi ya shango 'munna muhulwane. Iwe mufuwa-vhathu vhothe 'Makhulu-washu rothe. Ha mbo pfala ipfi henefho madumbani la u tou ofhisa la bvuma la ri 'mbidzeleni ńwananga a pfaho, ndi onesane nae. Humani, ni songo amba zwe na zwi vhona fhano, ngauri arali na amba, ni do delwa nga bulayo fulu kha lushaka lwanu lwothe!" 1)

By the use of words such as nzhenzhema, the author gives us a picture of a deadly fire which had settled down and even made the soil on which it was burning just as hot. When he uses "ndou-lume Iwe musika-vhathu, zhazhamela la shango" he selects the appropriate words fit to describe such a supernatural subject of an old ancestor who has assumed the characteristics of the gods.

This is a story imaginatively conceived and it becomes a contribution to the history of Venda literature.

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1) E. Mudau: Ngoma-Lungudu, p. 117.

MAKHULUKUKU

(a) Plot:

The Vendas of today come from Dambanyika who left the lower Congo and settled in Rhodesia. He was followed by his son a chief called Dyambeu-Dambanyika. Dyambeu was followed by Vele-Lambeu who built Dzata. This Dzata was an imitation of the great Dzata which they left in Rhodesia. The people of Vele followed the Vhaṱavhatsindi who had migrated to the land of the Vhangoṋa. The Vhaṱavhatsindi made themselves masters of the whole Vendaland. When Vele-Lambeu arrived and had massacred Tshidziwelele the chief of the Vhangoṋa, all the tribes which were living in Vendaland bowed to his authority. Even the Mbedzi in the East subjected themselves to the rule of Vele-Lambeu. He made the Ngoṋa headmen to subject themselves to the rule of Vele-Lambeu. He made the Ngoṋa headmen to keep the holy places for the sake of rain. After the whole of Vendaland was brought under one ruler, we are given the different chiefs who followed after Vele-Lambeu had died. The Venda government became divided into three viz.: Ramabulana, Mphaphuli and Tshivhase. Each royal family developed its chieftainship with factions fights within itself and intrigues. In these intrigues we meet Ṯhoho-ya-Ndou who disappeared mysteriously. After the disappearance of Ṯhoho-ya-Ndou the royal families became independent of the capital Dzata. We also meet an important character in Venda History namely: Makhado who later on became the supreme chief in Vendaland. The first encounter with the early trekkers is given and the part they played in Venda History is given a prominent place in this book.

The geneology of the Ramabulana house is given up to and including Mbulaheni George Mphephu. The Tshivhase house is also traced from Raluswielo Mukhesi Tshivhasa through Luvhengo Ligegise Tshivhasa and up to and including Ramaremisa who was succeeded by Ratshimphi. An account about the Rambuda tribe is given as well as their relationship to the Tshivhase family.

The Mphaphuli house has two theories of origin: the one says that the Mphaphuli house comes from tribes in the South who moved up North and met the people of Vele-Lambeu in Mashonaland. The second account states that the Mphaphuli tribe comes from chief "MUSI" who once ruled in the Southern Transvaal and that they are the descendants of "Mpafuli"

The first chief was Tshilala who was followed by "Tshimboho Mphafuli, Tshilala Ngolo". He was followed by Ratsibi. Ratsibi was followed by Makwarela and Makwarela was followed by Phaswana in 1927. The timidity of the Vhangoṋa is brought out clearly in the accounts in the Mbilwi area.

After the Mphaphuli account, Marole gave brief accounts about the Vhaṱavhatsindi and the chieftainship of Thengwe.

The Vhaṱavhatsindi account was followed by the story of Mboyi Funyufunyu and how the chieftainship of Piet Booi developed. The book rounds off the stories of the different chiefs by giving something about the Venda Language which is divided into the following dialects:-

(i) Tshiilafuri spoken around Kutama, Sinthumule.
(ii) Tshironga spoken around Lwamondo, Masia Tshimbupfe.
(iii) The Venda in the Bible spoken around Tshakhuma, Tshivhasa, Mbilwi.
(iv) Lumbedzi spoken around Lambani, Makuya, Mutele, Tshikundamalema.
(v) Tshinia spoken around Khohomela, Manenzhe, Dondwe, Folovhodwe.

Marole concludes by saying that the Vendas should use one language as it was the case during Vele-Lambeu. The book ends by giving some important dates with events in Vendaland.

(b) Characters:

Many historical characters are met in this book. The book's main aim is to trace the origin of the present Vendas and therefore the characters do not matter much but what matters most is the story. We, however, meet the following:-

(i) Dambanyika: He is a person who left his home country because he did not want war or troubles. He was a lover of peace. He died on the way and he did not reach the present Vendaland. This same name is given by other writers but under the form Ḓimbanyika which means the take-over of the country but Marole's rendering means to give up the country. He is a weak person who could not persevere when difficulties arose.

(ii) Tshigevhedu:

He was one of the younger sons of Mpofu. He was the rightful heir to the Venda throne. He was not accepted by Ramavhoya who was older than him. A faction fight arose and Tshigevhedu was chased away together with his followers. He went to Lydenburg and stayed there for some time. He met a great boer general H. Potgieter who had a big army. He asked him to help him get back home. With the help of Potgieter, he regained the chieftainship. As he promised the boer army to give them elephant tusks, he failed to get them. This caused Tshigevhedu to run away from his village when the boer army was demanding the tusks. His character reveals that he had a cowardly nature. Every time he must run away from trouble, that he cannot face his troubles like a man.

(iii) Raluswielo Mukhesi Tshivhase

He left Dzata and settled at Tswime. He went to Vuvha where he left his sister Nyatema ruling while he trekked to Phiphidi. He was cruel, he burnt the villages of the Vhangoṋa, hence his name Tshivhasa: The man who burns the villages of other people leaving his village intact. He was good at organising his followers. He had many cattle posts. He ruled his people with an iron hand. The Vhangona who were under him were totally subjected and assimilated until today none of them dare say he is a Mungoṋa. It was a physical and a spiritual conquest of the Vhangoṋa.

(c) Literary comments:

Marole is trying to trace the origin of the Venda. He had no records to help him but relied on hearsays. His narrative is disjointed and does not follow on each event as it is supposed to be in history. Marole uses Luphani dialect but his orthography and word division is far from the accepted Venda orthography.
He uses borrowed words unneccessarily.

"Huno tradition iri: hori vhukati vhuhulu hulu ha muvhuso wa Thoho ya Ndou magota na vha hulwane vhandovha vhakuvhangana unga mulovhani, vha amba nga tshavho vhari ri itahani? vhonani Tshisevhe mune wa vhohosi ono vha munna vhukuma, vhari ri ya mudzhenisa vhuhosini hawe vha ruma muthu uyo divhisa Thoho ya Ndou zwauri ufanela ubva tshinduloni hu dzhene mune wa vhuhosi Tshisevhe".[1)]

Here, Marole uses "tradition" when he could have used the word "Lungano" or "vhakale vha ri". His spelling leaves much to be desired for instance: "vhuhulu hulu instead of vhuhulu-hulu" vha mudzhenisa instead of "vha mu dzhenisa", "vhandovha instead of vha dovha","hori instead of ho ri". This is a general weakness of Marole in writing Venda. When he says: "tshinduloni" one does not know what he means. The word tshinduloni in this sense means nothing, what he wanted to write is tshidzuloni (in the chair). Such mistakes in spelling mislead the reader and also hinder the clarity of meaning. If this book could be edited, and be written in the accepted venda orthography, its information would contribute to the clarity of Venda History. For Venda Literature, it was a worthy attempt by Marole to write Makhulukuku.

RALUVHIMBA

(a) Plot:

Marole traces the Venda gods from Kusane, Mwari to Raluvhimba. Kusane is the oldest who disappeared and was then replaced by MWARI. Mwari went to Mubvumela where the people used to go and ask for the provision of their needs such as rain etc. Many people used to go to Mubvumela. Mwari is regarded as the creator of human beings.

The name Mwali gradually faded away and the name Raluvhimba was adopted. Raluvhimba left Mubvumela and came to Makonde in the company of Matokole a Lemba man who had relatives at Mubvumela.

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1) L.T. Marole: Mukhulukuku, p. 10.

Maṱokole used to observe the signs of Raluvhimba on top of the mountain at Makonde. When he saw the signs he would announce to the people and the people would answer by means of praises.

Many people were sent on errands to Raluvhimba. Maṱokole in one of his journeys brought back along with him Karanga women. The story of Raluvhimba is continued with some people posing as Raluvhimba until 1936, when a rumour went round that Raluvhimba's wife has died on Wednesday and that Wednesday was a holiday and that no work should be done. Many people believed such a story. A funny thing about Venda men, is that, they take stories based on witchcraft very seriously. Anything that is mysterious is taken for a fact. This story was believed up to 1941.

(b) Characters:

The main character is Raluvhimba, the Venda deity who is supposed to be the son of MWALI. The other persons named in the narrative are just to make the story develop. Raluvhimba has supernatural powers as well as human qualities. He is feared by all the people and many forms of homage are paid to him. Around Raluvhimba, Marole has been able to build up the idea of the supreme being amongst the Venda.

(c) Literary comments:

Marole is handling the story of a deity among the Venda speaking peoples. He relates the story with some sense of contempt. In presenting the concept of Raluvhimba, he makes stories about these deities common human pretences.

Marole has tried to arrange the book in a better way than Makhulukuku. His usage of the Venda language, however, still leaves much to be desired. He uses borrowed words such as "mugadala" instead of "muthada".

The language of some of the characters reveal them as strangers:

> "Huno hari nga murahu vhaḽa vha vhakalanga vhari: thina kabanga lo Mwari ena ezile fanakalo. Thina kabanga lo Mwari ena hayifuna. Ena hlala lapa Mbvumela".[1)]

From these sentences, it is clear that Marole did not get this version from Venda speakers. It reveals him out that he once worked in a mine where Zulu or Nyanja was used. The above sentences are Ndebele or Zulu despite the fact that he ascribes them to Karanga men. The publication of this book has contributed to the development of Venda literature, for, in here, lies the seeds of the philosophy of the Venda or the bases from which the Venda may be converted to christianity.

LUSHAKA LWA VHALEMBA

(a) Plot:

The story of this book traces the origin of the Lemba and tries to establish the relationship between the Venda and the Lemba on one hand and the Karanga on the other. The Lemba migrations from Rhodesia up to their arrival in Vendaland is given. Their chieftainship is traced and their tribal intrigues are given. Marole was faced with a problem when he wrote this book. He had traced the Vendas but amongst them he met the Lemba. The influence which the Lembas wielded among the Vendas was great. Even in Raluvhimba where he gave Maṱokole's place in the sacrifices to that deity he turns at the end and says that Lembas were not permitted to enter the chief's place.

Here, he shows that he was uninformed. He should go to Dzata and study the structure of the kraal. He would have found that the village is divided into three sections viz.: Vhandalamo section, Masingo section and Vhalemba section. Chief Mphephu's kraal is still a reminder to this arrangement today.

He gives the customs of the Lembas and their daily behaviour. He admits that they had a superior sense of tidiness and also possessed a superior culture. They were the prosperous businessmen of the time. Their superior intelligence made them famous in most kraals and their advice was always sought after.

The book ends by giving an account about the circumcision of Makhado. The Lembas by this action influenced the Venda culture and totally changed it. The Vendas adopted Lemba culture in many of their things such as "u palula ṱhoho" instead of

"u phula tshivhundu". He finally gave the Lemba clans which number about seventeen.

(b) Characters:

The book has not many characters and it was not meant to be so. We may, however, deal with the following:-

(i) Nkalahonye:

He is an inquisitive fellow who entered the Arabic Culture and adopted it to be his own and developed it. He changed altogether, from being a Karanga into a Mulemba in all respects. He became very proud about his Arabic culture with the result that he despised the Karangas. He does not even feel the shame that he has changed from Karanga to Lemba. The author is trying here to force a matter he does not know. How can a Shona prince true to himself turn against his people and even adopt certain practices which were contrary to his people? Why are the Karangas afraid of the Lembas? The truth is that Nkalahonye seems to be non-karanga as revealed by his character.

(ii) Mbelengwa:

He was a good organiser. He organised the Lembas into a solid group and he built a big village next to a mountain which bears his name today. He was a man who was very fond of aesthetic activities. He used to organise music festivals of the Deze in his kraal. He tried to maintain the purity of his people. He made the life in his kraal memorable, that is why we get the expression "Mbelengwa i na vhavhuya".

(c) Literary comments:

In this book Marole tried to build a history of the Vhalemba by bringing all sorts of traditions which are not held by the Lembas. He has, however, put on record the story of these black Jews for future researchers to build on.

He tried to date the Zimbabwe ruins:

"Huno vhatshi sedza hovha ho huna maguda (dzi khumbi) dza dzi nndu. Vha wana ho shulwa nga semende, huno henefho kha semende vhutanzi ho ńwalwaho uri: 1,200 B.C. ndo wone ńwaha we Zimbbwe havha hu tshikho u shumiwa i khakhathi khulwane huno ho piringana zwigwada zwa masuhana"[1].

His spelling still leaves much to be desired:

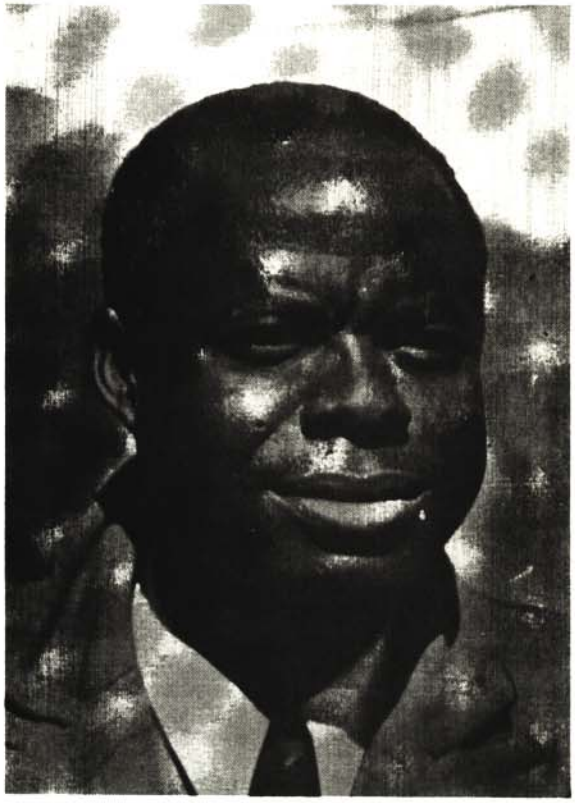
"Huno vhado kuvhangana vha hulwane vha vha Lemba, vha amba na muthanga uyu uri arali atshi funa u mala ńwana wavho, kha tende uta dzisiwa. Huno arali vha mutadzisa uyavha mulemba akona u mala"[2].

Words such as "uta dzisiwa" for u tanzisiwa", "mutadzsia" for "mu tanzisa" are such glaring mistakes, that the book does not read well. Despite the fact that he has collected the stories from various persons and in most cases not from true sources, the publication of this book adds to the development of Venda literature.

On the whole, Marole is a pioneer in the historical accounts of the Venda which are written by a Venda published on his own expenses. He has printed these books for the sake of the Venda speaking peoples. He has not feared to be isolated but wrote for the sake of preserving that which he thought valuable in his culture.

Students of General History will find Marole's accounts useful in the final synthesis of Venda history.

1) L.T. Marole: Lushaka La Vhalemba, p. 4.
2) Ibid., p. 12.



W.M.D. Phophi : A Venda writer and an Ethnologist.

PHUSUPHUSUDZA DZIMAULI : W.M.D. PHOPHI (1956)

(a) Plot:

In Phusuphusu Dza Dzimauli Phophi gives us the history of the Rammbuda tribe in Vendaland. In the introduction the author gives us the aim of his book namely to show the close relationship between the Tshivhasa people and the Rammbuda people and also of how the people at Dzimauli gained their independence as a tribe.

The story begins with Phophi Rammbuda who was a fleet-footed hunter and a warrior. On one of his hunting expeditions he came to Dzimauli where he found the Ngoṋa under Queen Nyafhasi. Phophi admired the country and through a clever ruse became its ruler.

An army from Dzata tried to destroy his kraal but instead the Dzata army was defeated because of the mountainous nature of the country.

After Phophi's death his son Vele became chief of Dzimauli. One of his brothers, Masindi tried to drive him away but he failed and he in turn fled to Mbilwi. Vele sent messengers to Mbilwi with the instructions that Masindi be killed. The Mbilwi people carried the plot and killed Masindi.

Vele did not want to bow before Tshivhasa. He had many sons who were brave and who defended the country from invaiders. After the death of Vele, Bele was installed as chief of the Rammbuda tribe. Bele was incapable and egocentric and the people preferred Tshikosi a younger brother to him. The people of Tshivhasa preferred Mashila, also a younger brother of his.

A fight ensued at Dzimauli between Tshivhasa's armies and Rammbuda's armies. The Tshivhasa armies were defeated because of the impregnable mountains at Dzimauli. Bele was betrayed by Mamphidza. Bele ran away, he became a refugee in various places in Vendaland. He was eventually murdered and peace reigned at Dzimauli.

Bele was later on followed by Tshikosi as chief. He ruled Dzimauli for a long time. He allowed the missionaries to preach the gospel to the people in his country.

Tshikosi is followed by Ratshibvumo as chief of the Rammbuda tribe and after the death of Ratshibvumo his son John Ratshilumela succeeded him as chief. He was formally installed in 1949.

(b) Characters:

Phophi's main aim is to give a historical survey of the Rammbuda tribe and its place in Vendaland. The characters in this book are therefore not fully drawn as one would expect in a novel. I will only deal with a few characters who are found in this story:

(i) Phophi.

He is called Rambuda because he is fleet-footed. He is compared with a hare i.e. father of the hare. His character is revealed by the manner in which he takes Dzimauli and this does not show a noble act on his part. He is however a good organiser of men and men can rally behind him. He succeeds in the creation of the royal house of Rammbuda.

(ii) Bele.

He is an incapable chief who is egocentric and knows no reverence not even towards his father. He has no organising ability and is a very poor commander. Even the people he had asked to help him noticed that they were supporting a weak person and therefore did not carry out the invasion as required. The people disliked him, thus they danced over his grave because of the happiness that the people felt when the much hated chief was dead.

(iii) Tshikosi.

He was a very warlike chief. He was a good leader who led campaign after campaign against the other small chiefs until the whole of Dzimauli was under his control. He planned together with Mpefu the murder of his brother, Bele. He fought all his life against his brother, Siphuma. He did this until the government stopped him. He refused the missionaries permission to establish schools in his country.

(c) Literary comments.

The author has a good command of the Venda language particularly the old form of Venda. He writes in a good style in which words are put in contrast to bring out the meaning.
He uses short sentences and his paragraphs are usually short.
The arrangement of the book according to chapter headings help the reader to refer to a particular period in the chief's reign and find out what he wants.

Phophi can convey a command in his words, listen when he says: "Ipfi ḽi tshi swikiswa sa zwenezwi kha muhali onoyo wa ha Ramabulana nga dzawe, tshiala tsha rambwa na zwenezwo. Muthu e' "Dza mbuvha ni yo dzi wana henengei phanḓa". Vhahali vha Dzanani sa nga lwa mulovha, vho ḓa vha kumbana na vha Tshikosi ha vha u nzhena nḓila u ya henengei Tshamulumbwi" p.61.

The word "tshiala" here means the experienced army or the group of soldiers who have fought in many battles and who were victorious.

Phophi can use the appropriate words when describing some aspects of Venda life. He says "Dzembe musi ḽo ralo u kwewa mufhi-ṋini waḽ nga u nzhena vhuhosi ha Ratshibvume, ḽa Dzimauli ḽo mbo dovha ḽa lala" The expression "dzembe ḽo rale u kwewa mufhiṋini waḽ" means when the rightful successor had been installed. This is an idiomatic expression of a good well cultured Muvenḓa.

The author has made the dry bones of history live again in his narrative. His language makes the reader see and feel the smell of the forests at Dzimauli. Phophi is well, versed in the Venda language with the result that he draws from the whole wealth of the Venda language. He uses the following idiomatic expressions: "u raha thavha, u rwa shango, u rudza mbilu, mbilu yo rula, u wisa murunzi, mativha a xa, u vhilinga mbilu, vho amba nga lwa gungupea, ha mbo vha u ṱunga ṋotshi". In addition to the idiomatic expressions Phophi uses proverbial sayings. Here are some of them:
"Mushavhi wa mvula vhilula, Ipfi ḽa mufu a ḽi pfukwi".
"Ńwana ha tsheleli muńwe hone e na nḓala".

"Mbevha dzi tshi fa dzi kungwa nga vhuanzwo".
"Masindi a miliswa tshivhindi"
"U vhona hu rumbula maṱo".

Phophi uses few ideophones in his book because it is tribal history but where he does, it is effectively done, for instance:
"ńońońo hu si na tshi pfalaho" p. 88. He can also use or coin compound nouns: "mbengwa-mbudzi-ya-gwembe", "Vha-ha-Rambuda-tshiwa-nga-matembele".

When Phophi wants to stress a point he does it by repetition of the verb: "Tshikosi o hana o hana". He can also use the negative to emphasise a point "Kholomo dzo vha dzi si na musi u thu-biwa nga vhahali"

Phophi uses figures of speech. For instance he uses Euphemism: "Masindi vha mu milisa tshivhindi nḓuni" i.e. they killed him. Simile: Bele o tswukesa sa ḓama". Metaphor: "Ndi hone Siphuma ya mbo vha ndau i vhombaho"

In this book Phophi gives a balanced view of the Rammbuda tribe. He has given us a complete account of both the good and the bad points of the rulers of Dzimauli. Phophi has certainly been successful in portraying the country and its people and has brought its problems before the eyes of the reader.

Phusuphusu dza Dzimauli is a worthy contribution to the development of Venda literature and it has set a standard by which future Venda historians will be guided.

BOOKS ON VENDA LAW

For a community to be stable, it must have some set of rules which guide the individuals of that community. The individual must know his place in the community in which he resides and the community also must bear a particular relationship towards the individual.

The daily life of a community becomes peaceful when the primary unit of that community viz the family is well governed. The different families must have a common set of rules which unite them to form a nation.

The language of any community embraces some aspects of its laws and customs. The laws of any nation are conveyed by its language. The system that the language has is also carried accross to its laws.

When a language develops, its laws also develop and by so doing the need for codification of the laws arise. The need for codifying Venda law arose after Dr. N.J. van Warmelo had studied the Venda tribes and had given a short account of each in his ethnological publications.

In order to establish the relationship that exists among the Venda tribes, Dr. N.J. van Warmelo in collaboration with Mr. W.M.D. Phophi published the first volume of Venda laws. This volume they entitled "VENDA LAW PART I". This book was published in 1948, and was specially devoted to the subject of BETROTHAL in the Venda communities.

The Venda text was written by Mr. W.M.D. Phophi who collected it from the old men and old women. He wrote it in the present Venda orthography. The book discusses all aspects of the beginningsof marriage contracts indicating among other things who is to be married and who is not to be married.

This volume was followed by "VENDA LAW PART II" by the same authors. This volume deals with married life. It discusses the married woman from the time she is a bride until she is a full fledged woman who occupies a place among other women in the kraal. The types of marriages in a Venda community are discussed.

In Venda law a woman can marry another woman. She takes all the responsibility that a man would have taken under normal circumstances. In this sense marriage among the Venda is not a mere sexual affair, but a spiritual affair. The woman who is married together with her offspring constitute property. This form of property is a spiritual property.

During 1948, a third volume entitled "VENDA LAW PART III", was published. It deals with Divorce in all its aspects in a Venda community. The causes of divorce and the remedies of divorce are given in this book. The laws which govern divorce in a Venda society are well set out in this volume.

In 1949, Van Warmelo and Phophi published the fourth volume entitled "VENDA LAW PART IV", which treats the laws which govern all cases in connection with inheritance. Inheritance of commoners and chiefs is given and all forms of rules governing the inheritance are set out for the guidance of those who deal with such cases or are involved in such cases.

Recently the authors published the volume entitled "VENDA LAW PART V", which specifically handles the laws affecting property. This book completes the attempt made by Van Warmelo and Phophi in the codification of Venda law. These five volumes codified Venda law and made it uniform in the Venda area.

The significance of these books to Venda literature, is the use of language found in them. Mr. Phophi the author of the Venda text is a master of his language. He knows the laws and customs of the Venda in and out. He himself is an interesting conversationalist. Listen to what he says about the new bride's locality:

> "Takalani, musadzi wa Phalandwa a tshi vhingwa o wana muṱani hu na Nkhumeleni, musadzi muhulwane. Ndi he a pfunda nnḓuni ya Nkhumeleni, u pfunda ha fhela a dzula henefha muṱani, u swika hu tshi fhela ńwaha wothe a vho ṋewa matswia awe na nnḓu yawe o no vha na ńwana wa musidzana"[1].

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1) Van Warmelo and Phophi: Venda Law Part 2, p. 238

This language is simple, clear but technically tricky for one who does not know Venda law and custom. Words such as pfunda, mutani, newa matswia convey more than the literal meanings. For pfunda, here, may mean getting initiated into the rules and customs of that particular family, while mutani may mean the husband and the closely related members of the family. In this way, it can be clear that Phophi can use the Venda language legally and effectively. He has recorded some laws which border on habits:

> "Hunwe hafhu vha itela uri musi vho vhona u ndi fobvu, vha kone u dzula vho vhandaladza zwithu zwavho a sa do doba, na uri tshithu tshi u ngala-ngala mudini vha sa sokou rwana nga khofheni ha nowa"[1]

The phrase u rwana nga khofheni ha nowa, means to accuse one another unfairly. This phrase cuts a matter short if it is in a Venda court where the accused is just making unnecessary arguments when in actual fact he knows the truth. This is an apt statement in delivering judgment in a Venda court. In Venda and in many Bantu communities the custom gradually becomes law, because, of its constant use:

> "Muthu a fa, vha hawe vha fanela u tavhanya u divhisa Mukoma wa tshisi, ene a kona u hwedza mafhungo musanda. Vha sa divhisa mukoma ndi mulandu une vhane, vha mufu vha nga bvisiswa kholomo".[2]

The law concerning the reporting of death cases is given here in a clear, simple language which every one can understand. Phophi's language in the legal problems of the Venda is sweet and smooth. Certain problems of Venda law are worded clearly by Phophi. He relates the story with cases which actually took place in the life of certain individuals. He quotes cases some of which can still be remembered. Here is Phophi's rendering of an actual case:

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1) Ibid., p. 246.
2) Van Warmelo and Phophi: Venda Law Part 4, p. 700

"Lowani, musadzi wa Ralikhanya, o lovha a si na vhana. Vho-Makhulu vha ri; "Thundu ya ńwana a ri i vhangi. Nga i dzule ri thome ri lile mufu washu". "Aiwaa, ha mbo fhela ńwaha vha sa vhudzani tshithu. Nga ɬińwe ʂuvha Ralikhanya u vho sokou vhona hu tutuwa Nyamuthelo, mme a Kumbani. Vha ʂa vhe, A thi na manzhi hone ndi nao. Vha ha Ɲemuɬuŋdi vha ralo vhe: ri vusa nʂila yashu iɬa ya mulovha. Mainganye u ʂa u vusa nnʂu ya mukomana. Vhahulwane vha hashu vha ralo, vhe, a ri ɬanzi tshe ra ɬa. Musidzana o no vha khomba yo ɬambaho, zwoɬhe zwi na vhakwasha henengeyo. Rine ashu ndi aneyo".[1)]

This law indicates that a Venda marriage contract goes beyond the two partners. It is legally binding for a younger sister to follow the elder sister if the elder sister died without bearing children or she has left no children. When the elder sister is barren, the younger sister must go and bear children for the elder sister. This brings out the fact that the Bantu marriage is not a mere love affair between two persons and that the value of marriage in Bantu is dependent on the birth of a child. The property aspect of it is overshadowed by children for if there are no children in the marriage the woman hardly gets proper status.

The language which the author uses makes interesting reading and it is appropriate to the subject matter.

This volume has preserved the laws of inheritance among the Venda. In cases of doubt, the Venda court can cite some of the cases quoted in this volume as illustrations or confirmations of their wise decision.

In Volume V the law of property is discussed and thereafter, the kinds of properties are given with examples from practical cases in Venda society. The nature of property is discussed clearly which leaves no one in any doubt as to what is meant by property in Venda law.

The language used in stating the laws is simple and straight forward:

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1) Ibid, p. 1024.

"2665 Muḓi wa ha Ṋe-vhuṱalu wo vha wo vhandekana na wa ha Luvhengo. Goha ḽo vha ḽo fhaṱwa ha Ṋe-vhutalu; vhasadzi vha ha Luvhengo vho bwela mituli yavho gohani ḽeneḽi. Vhusiku vha tshi vuwa vha ya u sinda muḓinin wa Vhuṱalu.

2666 Fhedzi naho gohani afha hu tshi sinḓa vhasadzi fhedzi, mulauli wa goha ndi Ṋemudi. Ndi ene ane vhadzia u tama u bwela mituli yavho afha gohani vha ḓa vha humbela, a kona u vha tendela."[1]

Van Warmelo and Phophi recorded the Venda law in simple words for the clarity of every one who uses Venda as language. They did not look for high sounding words in the recording of Venda law. The story of ownership of property is well set out and really form the bases of our future Venda law.

The changes which have taken place in Venda law have been incorporated as illustration of the adaptability of the law of a community.

The value of cattle is given a prominent place in the law of the Vendas:-

"2828 Vhavenda who ḓi vha vhafuwi vha thakha u bva tsikoni tshavho. Mipfuluwoni yavho vha tshi tendeleka na shango, u bva tsikoni tshavho. Vhembe u vhuya u swika fhano vho ḓi ralo u tendeleka vha tshi pinga thakha yavho.

2839 Zwisumbo zwa uri thakha a vho ngo thoma u i fuwa fhano Venda Ndi zwinzhi Dzingano dzine dza imbiwa nga madekwana musi hu tshi dzedzwa nga tshifhinga tsha mavhuyahaya, hune musi dzi tshi anewa phukha dza ambiwa sa vhathu, huṅwe dza ita mishumo mihulusa i fhiraho ya vhakoma vhadzo. Ho anda dzine zwifuwo zwa vha ngomu. Kuvutshele kwa midzimu ine i tshi vuwa ya lila u vhumbwa nga mboho kana mbudzi na zwone vhu tshe vhuṱanzi ha u khwathisa uri u fuwa a ho ngo vha ha musalauno. Ho di vha ha kalesa, musi midzimu iyi i lilaho u vhumbiwa vha tshee vhathu, hu sa athu u iwa ngei murunzini. "[2]

This passage also proves that the Vendas owned cattle long ago despite the fact that some of the praises for cattle are akin to Pedi. It may be the Pedis borrowed this from the Venda because, before the Pedi settled in the

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1) Van Warmelo and Phophi: Venda Law Part 5, p. 1070
2) Van Warmelo and Phophi: Venda Law Part 5, p. 1130.

present Bopedi, the Vendas had already settled there.

It is interesting in these Venda laws to find that all the fines are based on cattle, sheep and goats and none on pigs, fowls or other articles used by the Vendas and their related tribes.

It is evident from these volumes that all property ownership is restricted since no person can use the property as he/she likes without getting the consent of the family or family head.

The main aspect of ownership in Venda is to maintain collective control through the seniors, of individual property with a view to preventing losses and having assets available for distribution in case of need.

The ownership of certain properties is restricted for the sake of political security within the tribe. Therefore, any man or woman who possesses a lot of properties is feared amongst the Vendas for he can sway the allegiance to his side from the chief's side.

The publication of these volumes on VENDA LAW is a great contribution to the development of Venda literature. They preserve all that the Vendas value highly as far as their daily life is concerned. The recorded VENDA LAWS make the Venda language to be fully anchored on its bases and to have a hope for the proper survival as a means of communication.

TRANSLATIONS.

In Venda the translated books are not many besides religious books. We have the following books as translations:-

"Makhathula-mbilu a Julius Caesear and Lwendo Lwa Muendi."

MAKHATHULA-MBILU A JULIUS CAESEAR : M.H.Nemudzivhadi.

(a) Plot:

The central idea of the play is the decay of the Republican spirit in Rome and the rise of Caesarism. This is given right at the beginning of the play where we are made aware of the spirit of monarchy abroad which the ordinary people are showing unconcious evidence. This is made by the citizens when they cry out in Act. III "zwipida zwa Caesar zwi do ambadzwa Brutus" p. 52 (Caesar's better parts, shall be crowned in Brutus). The Nation is here giving expression for a representative in whom it may have full confidence.

The play has also the aspect of a tragic character embraced in the principle of good cannot come out of evil. This is revealed in Brutus who is noble, wise, valiant and honest but who wrecked his life by one great error. He committed a crime which brought down the grandeur of Rome. The play has structure. It is arranged in five Acts which represent the opening movement, growth height or climax, fall and close or catastrophe.

In the opening Act we meet Brutus and Cassius making up their minds against Caesar. In the growth we have everything between the opening and the climax and including the conspiracy and all the movements of the conspirators as well as the portrayal of Caesar's character.

The climax is the death of Caesar. This assassinated manifest many facets of human feeling and character. Everything sort itself out, friend and foe know each other.

The fall takes into account all the events which happened

between the ides of March and the battle of Philippi. The spirit of Caesar descends gradually by means of his ghost and his heir Octavius.

The catastrophe comes when the conspirators are defeated at Philippi and the sudden suicides of both Cassius and Brutus. This also proves Caesar's power.

(b) Characters:

The play has many characters but I will only deal with few of them viz:-

Julius Caesar:

He is an ambitious man who feels very proud of his achievements. The Tribunes say to the pleibeians : "Na adza maluvha ndilani ya a daho nga gundo la malofha a Pompey" (that comes in triumph over Pompey's blood). He says himself proudly; "Ndo tharamudza tshanda tshanga gundoni u swika afha, hune nda vho ofha u vhudza ndebvu dza mmvi ngoho" p. 37. (Have I in conquest stretched mine arm so far, to be afeared to tell grey-beards the truth) whilst Antony says in addressing his dead body : "Iwe shubi la mbokoti ya munna we a vhuya a tshila tsingani dza zwifhinga.." p. 50. (Thou art the ruins of the noblest man, that ever lived in the tide of times) and goes further and says; "Naa magundo au, na vhugala na madakalo a gundo na zwithubwa zwothe zwo hwetekana kha kuelo kwonokwu" p. 47. (Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs spoils shrunk to this little measure). He was a man who had great command over his subjects. For Antony says "Ndi do elelwa. Musi Caesar a tshi ri ita tsha u ri, tshi a phethwa" p. 12 (I shall remember: When Caesar says, "Do this" it is performed).

The envy which Cassius has towards Caesar comes out in the words; "Munna uyu o no tou vha Mudzimu" p. 15 (This man is now become a God). He has established a position of honour which is being aspired by all those who want to be important. The people say of Brutus who had assassinated Caesar "Zwipida zwavhudi zwa Caesar zwi do ambadzwa Brutus" p. 52. He is arrogant "Caesar u do ya, zwithu zwi mu shushedzaho a zwi

lavhelesi hunwe nga nnda ha mutanani wawe, musi zwi tshi do livhanya zwifhatuwo na Caesar zwi do ngalangala" p. 35 (Caesar shall forth, the things that threaten'd me. Never look'd but on my back; when shall see the face of Caesar they are vanished). In these words the readers can discern a sense of fear in Caesar.

Brutus:

Brutus belongs to a family which once ruled Rome. This is revealed by Cassius when he reminded Brutus in these words, "Ho vhuya ha vha na Brutus we a vha a tshi ḓo vha o khaula muya muvhi wa misi yothe, a tshi itela u dzudzanya Roma nahone zwi sa mu konḓeli sa khosi" p. 16 (There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd the eternal devil to keep his state in Rome as easily as a king). Brutus as a person had a motto which was 'peace, freedom and liberty.' His republicanism is brought out in these words, "A si uri a tho ngo funesa Caesar, hone ndi nge nda funesa Roma u mu fhira" p. 51 (Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.) His honest opinion was that there could be no man "Ndi nnyi a re fhano ane a tou vha muvhi lune a sa funesa shango lawe" p. 52 (Who is here so vile that will not love his country).

Brutus is a philosopher for Cassius says "Filosofi (funa-vhutali) yau a i nga u shumeli tshithu, arali u tshi ḓi-nekedza khombo mmbi" p. 68 (Of your philosophy you make no use, if you give place to accidental evils). Brutus was a gentleman for Antony says "Vhutshilo hawe ndi musi vhu vhulenda huno, zwisiki zwo farekana khae lwe mupo wa kona u takuwa wa ḓivhadza linnda lothe wa ri, Hoyu o vha a mbokoti, munna wa vhanna nga-ngoho" p. 84 (His life was gentle and the elements, so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all world, "this was a man." He was a mighty speaker who relied on presenting the facts without being aware of the consequences. He justifies his murder of Caesar and promises the public that the same will be done to him if he does commit what Caesar did.

Cassius:

He is the opposite of Brutus as it is shown in the envy he

has towards Caesar while Brutus has none, "Munna uyu o no tou vha Mudzimu, Cassius ndi kupuka kwo semwaho, kune kwa fanela u khotha. Arali Caesar a tshi nga soku mu vhidza nga thoho" p. 15 (..This man is now become a God; and Cassius is a wretched creature, and must bend his body if Caesar carelessly but nod on him). Caesar sees the envy in Cassius and he says "Uyo Cassius u na kulavhelesele ku sa takadzi, u humbula nga maanda huno vhuduna ha u ralo vhu a shavhisa.... Thi divhi munna we nda vha ndi tshi nga sendedza nga u tavhanya sa Cassius wa mutono. U humbula nga maanda" p. 17. He is impulsive in his actions. He struggled for victory in vain which Titanus says "Yowee duvha li kovhelaho, vhunga u masanani au matswuku u a mbwandamela vhusiku ha namusi, Zwino-vho duvha la Cassius lo kovhela malofhani awe matswuku" p. 79 (O setting sun as in thy red rays thou dost sink to night, so in his red blood Cassius' day is set).

Antony:

The character of Mark Antony possesses many and various features of which we may say that generally speaking, the more attractive are due to the conception of the poet, whilst the more repugnant belong to his real historical character.

Antony is selfish and loves pleasure. Brutus speaks of him with contempt as a man when he says he is "Gamesome given to sports to wildness and much company, who can do more than Caesar's own when Caesar's head is off". Antony is devoted to Caesar for he says "A thi nga wani tshifhinga tsho mpfanelaho u fa, a hu na fhethu hune ha do ntakadza, a hu na luṅwe lufu vhunga ndi tshi nga remekanywa fhano tsini ha Caesar nga Vho-inwi, vhanangiwa na vhane vha musaluno" p. 47 (I shall not find myself so apt to die. No place will please me so, no mean of death as here by Caesar and by you out off, the choice and master spirits of this age.) The fidelity which Antony shows towards Caesar claims the admiration of the people who value friendship. He is a man of great ability but little fixity of purpose. He was resourceful and could yield to circumstances. At one time he is cunning and persuasive; at another outspoken and bold. Cassius understands

nndwa, mafumo nga sine mihala, ri balangane uri ri kone u kovhana vhugala ha ḓuvha heli ḽa muḓalo na dakalo" p. 84 (So call the field to rest; and let's away, to part the glories of this happy day.)

Portia:

The character of Portia is a reflection of that of Brutus. Wife and husband possess one mind and soul. She is a true and honourable wife accustomed to share all his thoughts, his pleasures, his griefs. She feels a noble pride in her ancestry and in her husband: "Ndi a tenda uri ndi musadzi, fhedzi naho zwo ralo musadzi a ḓivheaho nga maanḓa, mukololo wa Cato u humbula uri 'thi fhiri vhasadzi nga nne nga tshileme ndo tou bebwa nda dzewa sa zwenezwi? (I grant I am a woman, but withal a woman well-reputed Cato's daughter. Think you I am no stronger than my sex, being so fathered and so husbanded). Like her father and her husband she has cultivated stoicism and she is able to suffer for others: "Ndo khwaṱhisa nga u sumbedza u dzia hanga, ndi tshi ḓi-nea tshilonda nga lufuno lwanga afha kha tshirumbi, ndi nga zwi Konḓelela ndi sa fheli mbilu, zwi si zwiphiri zwa munna wanga" p. 34 (I have made strong proof of my constancy, giving myself a voluntary wound, here in the thigh: can I bear that with patience. And not my husband's secrets?) She is impatient and she expresses this in her speech: "Yowee, yowee, u sa tseka-tseka khwaṱhela thungo yanga. Vhea ḽitavha vhukati ha mbilu yanga na lulimi lwanga. Ndi na muhumbulo wa tshinna fhedzi maanḓa ndi a tshisadzi. Zwi konḓela hani vhasadzi u vhulunga nyeletshedzo" p. 40 (O constancy by strong upon my side. set a huge mountain "tween my heart and tongue, I have a man's mind, but a woman's mighty, how hard it is for women to keep counsel).

Calpurnia:

She is a contrast to Portia. She loved Caesar it is true and he would sometimes humour her; but in the marriage of Caesar and Calpurnia there was not, as there was in the case of Brutus and Portia a secret sympathy wedding, heart to heart and mind to mind. She does not, like Portia share her husband's ambitions, plans, and secrets. Caesar does not import to her

his fears whilst her influence over him, even when it weighs on the same side as his fears for himself, is easily overborne by that of the conspirators Dacius.

(c) Literary Comments:

The literary aspect of this book will concern the Venda text of the play. In Act I Scene I the play opens with these words: "Hayani 'zwino, vhadzia-vhubva vhenevha" p. 10 (Hence' home, you idle creatures get you home). The rendering of "hence" "home" seems not well covered by the word "hayani". It could have been better rendered by "Tuwani zwivhumbwa zwa vhubva zwenezwi iyani hayani". This would agree with the Venda idiom and phrasiology. For a translator's "goal is to translate in the same form in which the people speak, in a style which seems so natural to them that it speaks initially and personally to their own hearts". [1] He further renders the second part of the statement by saying "Ndi duvha la u awela pamusi? Nga u sa zwi divha ni vhanna vha mishumo ni si na tshiga tsha mushumo wanu. Amba, u shuma ufhio?" '(Is this a holiday? What 'know you not, being mechanical, you ought not walk upon a labouring day without the sign of your profession. Speak what trade art thou?)

This could be rendered like this: "Ndi holodei? Mini? A ni zwi divhi ni vhanna vha mishumo uri a no ngo fanela u sokou tshimbila-tshimbila nga duvha la mushumo ni si na tshiga tsha u sumba mushumo wanu? Ambai, mushumo wau ndi ufhio?" The translator has not kept the form and the rhythm of the passage. In Act III Scene I the author of the Venda text renders Caesar's speech as follows:- "Ndo vha ndi tshi do vha ndo kona u i tsekiswa arali ndo vha ndi tshi nga iwe. Huno arali ndo vha ndi tshi nga rabelela u tsekiswa, thabelo dzo vha dzi tshi do ntsekisa. Hone ndo dziba sa paledzi ya Devhula ine vhudzibo hayo na vhuawelo ha sa vhe na muthu kha denga ane a divha lutombo lwo hulungwa nga thase dzi si na mbalo, dzothe ndi mulilo inwe na inwe, i a penya, fhedzi hu na inwe nga nnda hadzo ine ya khwathisa vhudzulo hayo. Zwo ralo na shangoni, lo tondwa zwavhudi nga vhathu fhedzi vhathu ndi nama na malofha, vha a humbula, ngeno kha tshivhalo ndi tshi divha muthihi fhe-

1) Nida, A.E. : BIBLE TRANSLATING p. 5

gala o ni vhudza uri Caesar o vha e na vhuhovheleli" the word "vhohovheleli" means to long for, to reach to, and it does not convey the meaning. I think the word "vhudianganyi" would fit here and it would keep the rhythm: "Brutus o ni vhudza uri Caesar o vha na vhudianganyi".

The style of this book is clear, it is a translation. The reader feels it as he reads on that the language is not the sweet flowing Venda. It is put to a mould which appears strange to the Venda speaker. The idiom is sometimes reversed such as in "A tho ngo ḓa u khoḓa Caesar, ndo ḓa u mu vhulunga" when the original says "I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him" (Ndo ḓa u vhulunga Caesar i si u mu khoḓa).

The Venda in this book is mainly the prose form of it and not the dramatic. The author could have been dramatic: "Ri tshi tevhedza vhuthu hawe nga ri mu fare nga u hulisea hothe na mikhwa ya u vhulunga. Marambo awe a ḓo lala musha-shashani wanga namusi, sa liswole vhukuma lo laiwaho nga u huliswa. Huno khaulani nndwa, mafumo nga a sine mihala, ri balangane uri ri kone u kovhana vhugala ha ḓuvha heli la mu-ḓalo na dakalo" p. 84. He should have rendered it to agree with the original and not in this lose style. The original of the above reads as follows: "According to his virtue let us use him with all respect and rites of burial, within my tent his bones to night shall lie, most like a soldier, ordered honourably. So call the field to rest, and let's away, to part the glories of this happy day."

The translation as a whole has been satisfactorily done although here and there it leaves much to be desired. This translation in Venda is an achievement and an enrichment of our literature.

LWENDO LWA MUENDI: E.D. GIESEKKE

(a) Plot:

Lwendo Lwa Muendi is the history of the struggle of human nature to overcome the temptation of this world and to shake off the bondage of sin. It is the story of a man named Christian who sets out on a journey weighted with a heavy burden of

sins. His story is delivered under the similitude of a dream.

Christian leaves his home and he is accompanied by Faithful. He delights in human companionship and he undertakes a journey in hearty human fellowship which makes it possible for the natural way in which the dialogue is expressed. He engaged himself in a conversation in which the persons with whom he is discussing showed a desire to divert him and make him forget death and destruction.

Lwendo Lwa Muendi is an Allegory. An allegory is a story in which the characters, objects and events stand for ideas and relations among ideas. They are not to be taken as real but as representing certain aspects of character which are involved in the meaning. Usually such stories are relatively simple. The story of Lwendo lwa Muendi is an illustration of how the human soul can achieve its salvation and reach its destination. Lwendo Lwa Muendi is a story which centres on one person, a hard worked and travelling person who suffers every vicissitude, good and bad but endures them all. There is no real plot to be developed but a narrative unity which comes from the fact that Christian is the chief character throughout the book and he alone holds the main threads of the story. Without Christian the whole story falls into pieces. He had to pass through a succession of scenes and he was introduced to a great number of people and animals as he went through life.

(b) Characters:

The Book Lwendo Lwa Muendi has one important character namely Christian (Mukriste). He forms the central theme of the story and the other characters are just fellow travellers who help him to while his time or help him to change his course. Mukriste has flesh and blood as is shown by his ups and downs in his journey. The other characters: Mutenda, Tshipimbi, Fulufhelo, Mutalutshedzi, Muevangeli, Mutendaothe, Ofhani, Karuwani, Lufuno, Suke, Luambo (na vhaṅwe-vho) and others just make the thread of the story vivid and more human.

(c) Literary Comments:

In discussing Lwendo Lwa Muendi we must take into account the fact that the translator Mrs. Giesekke had noticed that the Christians needed something to read which could uplift their ideals and concepts, about Christianity.

The translator's knowledge of Venda problems and misfortunes made it easy for her to coin interesting names although translated into Venda. In chapter I the author of the Venda text gives us this passage: "Ndi kha bva nga maṱakani a ɬino shango, nda ya nda swika fhethu hu re na bako. Nda dzhena nda lala nda farwa nga khofhe nda lora. Nda lora ndi tshi vhona muthu muṅwe we a vha o ambara nguvho dzi sa ḓivhalei dzi no nga dza madzanganda o ima o hwala buto ɬi si na vhukuno. Nda vhona a tshi vhala a fhedza a lila a tshi bvisa miṱodzi a tetemela, nda pfa a tshi nga u ṱavha na mukosi a tshi ri: 'Ndi ḓo tou ita hani nne, uri ndi tshidzwe' p. 1. (As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den and laid me down in that place to sleep, and, as I sleep, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book and read therein; and as he read he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he broke out with a lamentable cry, saying 'what shall I do:)

The first line could have been rendered like this:-

"Musi ndo tshimbila maṱakani a ɬino shango ndo swika fhethu huṅwe he ha vha hu na bako nda eḓela henefho fhethu musi ndo eḓela nda lora muloro." The version which the translator has given does not bring out the prose passage. It does not bring out the idea of time of the action and also the sense conveyed by the sentence. As it stands the sense is: "I am just going through the wilderness of this world I went and reached a place where there is a cabin." The translator here

ommitted the sentence "I laid me down in that place to sleep." The sentence "Nda ya nda swika fhethu hu re na bako" is not related to the preceding sentence, for this is the narrative tense which should follow the past tense or future tense. The preceding sentence is in the continuous present tense and therefore the sentence should have read as "Ndo bva nga matakani a lino shango" so that the narrative part could follow nicely.

The choice of the words "matakani, madzanganda, furalela, vhukuno" are very appropriate. They convey the meaning clearly.

The passage where Christian said "Yes, said Christian (for that was his name) because of that all is not worthy to be compared with little of that that I am seeking to enjoy, and if you will go along with me and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there where I go is enough and to spare, come away and prove my words" p. 14. The Venda version is as follows:-

"Mukriste: Ngauri ndi lone dzina la onoyo munna, a ri ipfani nne Ngoho zwine na do newa zwone zwi fhirisa kule izwo na sia nga u zwi tutshela. Henengei he nne nda luga hone, madakalo ndi manzhi. Idani ni ye ni zwi vhone nga inwi vhane" p. 4. This could have been rendered as "(Ilo lo vha dzina lawe uyo munna). Ngauri zwothe a zwo ngo tea u vhambedzwa na zwituku zwa zwine nda khou u toda u di-phina ngazwo nahone arali ni nga ya na nne na kondelela, ni do ita sa nne vhunga henengei hune nda ya hu na zwinzhi na u fhira. Ariyeni ni tou vhona nga vhune". The sentence "come away with me and prove my words" is not well rendered by "idani ni ye ni zwi vhone nga inwi vhane", for come has been literarily translated and yet it means let us go together and not come "ida."

The closing passages of the book the Venda text reads as follows:- "Zwezwo ndi zwe nda vhona ngazwo uri muthu nangwe o no di ima munangoni wa khoro dza tadulu, hu di vha na ndila hone i no isa muthu vhudzula-vhafu" as follows:- "Zwezwo ndi zwe nda vhona ngazwo uri muthu, nangwe o no di ima munangoni wa khoro dza tadulu, hu di vha na ndila hone i no isa muthu

vhudzula-vhafu sa zwila hu na ndila i no isa mudini wa Tshinyalo! Ha vha u karuwa, nda vhona uri mathina ndo tou lora" p. 152. (Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the city of destruction. So I awoke, and behold, it was a dream) p. 168.

"Vha ya vha mu suma ngei ha khosi ene a sa vhuyi a da uri a mu vhone, a sokou laedza vhala vha-penyaho, vhala vho fhelekedzaho Mukriste na Mutenda u gonya mudini vha ye vha tuwe na Musadivha vha mu vhofhe zwanda na milenzhe vha tuwe nae" (So they told the king but he would not come down to see him but commended the two shining ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the city). This should have been rendered as follows:- "Zworalo vha vhudza khosi fhedzi khosi ya sa tse u da u mu vhona; ya laedza vha-penyaho vhe vha fhelekedza Mukriste na Mutenda u ya mudini". This phrase "vha ya vha mu suma ngei ho khosi" does not bring out the meaning of the passage for it means "they went and introduced him to the king". By translating the word king for khosi the translator used an appropriate word or equivalent. The translation is idiomatic with a tendency towards literal forms. In most passages it reads as the original but in others it is clear it is a translation for ideas and concepts are foreign to Venda culture and philosophy of life. For instance when the author says "Now I saw in my dream that there two men went in at the gate and so, as they entered, they were transfigured and they had raiment put on that shone like gold" (Nda vhona muloroni wanga avha vhanna vhavhili vha tshi ri vha dzhene vha vho shandukiswa vha newa zwiambaro zwi no penya sa musukuu u si na tshilavhi). In Venda it is better to say "Ndo vhona muloroni wanga vhanna avha vhavhili vha tshi dzhena khoroni vho ambara zwiambaro zwi no penya sa musuku". p. 150. The phrase "u si na tshilavhi" suggests that the gold was a liquid and as such it could not have been worn as clothes. Even if it was figuratively used this is a foreign concept in Venda. In Venda the gold could have been dusty or rusty or covered with some mould.

The translator can render certain ideas clearly: "Nda pfa muloroni wanga hu tshi pfala dzitsimbi dzi lilaho dzi tshi

nga ndi dza u fhululedza, hu tshi pfala zwa uri dzhenani dakaloni ḽa muṋe waṋu" (Then I heard in my dream that all bells in the city rang again for joy and that it was said unto them 'enter ye into the joy of your Lord'). This passage does not sound as if it was translated. The word "dzhenani" really conveys the meaning 'enter ye' naturally without any hint of a translated sentence.

Expressions such as "wo tou fhurea vhukuma, zwi khou vhona" p. 49 are so natural that a Venda speaker will not feel the sense as translated. The symbolism in the book is successfully done by the translator for "what makes an object symbolic in a literary work is its being fixed as the focus of unusual attention either for the speaker or for another character in the world of the work." [1)]

Lwendo Lwa Muendi has added to Venda literature (novels) what the Bible did for, Venda ideas and concepts. The book opens the way for Venda authors to make a choice as it is expressed in the closing sentence:

"Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the city of destruction. So I awoke and behold, it was a dream."

The addition of this book in Venda literature is an achievement in the literary attempts in our language.

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1) Monroe, C. Beardsley: AESTHETICS p. 408 quoted from "THE LANGUAGE POETS USE" p. 175.

CHAPTER V

PROSE : THE NOVEL

Venda written prose may be divided into (1) the Novel and (2) the Short story. In this Chapter, I am treating the novel in order to show what achievements have been attained in Venda prose. Before treating the Venda novel, let us attempt a definition of the novel. A novel may be defined as a "discursive prose narrative, imaginatively conceived and consisting of four parts - plot, character, theme and diction. The moral values embodied in the theme should be implicit in the action of individuals, rather than explicitly stated, the reader's attention should be focussed on individuals rather than on the society of which they are part, and which they may represent symbolically and the length of the action should be determined not by actual historical events, but by the time necessary to resolve the personal and moral conflicts embodied in the whole".[1)]

From this definition it seems that the novel is a unity of plot, theme, character and diction. What is important in the definition is that it is a prose narrative imaginatively conceived. If the prose narrative is not imaginatively conceived it loses the grip on the reader's attention and it may fail in its message of resolving the personal and moral conflicts in man. Another definition of a novel states that "A novel is a fictitious narrative which contains a plot and yet this does not qualify a book as a novel. Fiction is first and foremost a story; but in greatest fiction the story is subordinate to the rendering of life.

Fiction like any other art must have something to express, the narrative is only the particular form of the expression. Prose fiction should not be a mere rendering in prose, but it should be an interpretation of the very life of man.

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1) J.M. Leighton: The Quest for Form, p. 11.

The novel says R.L. Stevenson "is not a transcript of life, to be judged by its exactitude but a simplification of some side or point of life to stand or fall by its significant simplicity. From all its chapters, from all its passages, from all its sentences, the well written novel echoes and re-echoes its one creative and controlling thought".[1] Of what nature is this controlling thought?

It may be that this thought is the art of fictitious narrative which has an object, viz. to convey what life means to the narrator, who simplifies in order to bring out the meaning. The novel may also be defined as the interpretation of human life by means of fictitious narrative in prose. The novel may also be regarded as a relatively long fictional prose narrative with a more or less complex plot or pattern of events about human beings, their feelings, thoughts and actions.[2] According to this definition a novel must penetrate into the human psyche i.e. the reader must be awakened and his deepest feelings, be roused to the extent that he can visualize the state of the characters involved in a novel action. The novel also must show the pattern of life in such communities for it portrays human beings and their feelings.

Sometimes a novel is considered as a fictitious prose narrative dealing with human beings and their actions over a period of time and displaying varieties of human character in relation to life.[3] With this explanation we find that a novel is also depicting human activity within the concept of time. The human character must be related to life, and life must also depict the period in which it is being lived.

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1) Webster's New World Dictionary, p. 1005.
2) A.F. Scott: Current Literary Terms, p. 196.
3) A.F. Scott: Current Literary Terms, p. 196.

The novel as a form of fiction may be defined as follows: A written prose fiction. This term in English is loosely used and has been constantly modified to include new experiment in fictional writing.[1] Some regard the novel as a work of prose fiction relating an affair of some magnitude and grounded upon character and observation.[2] The novel must observe the character of the time in which it is written. It must portray the aspects of human life. The novel is a long prose work of the imagination dealing with imagined people and events. Its essential elements are character and plot, although works which lack one or the other have been classified as novels.

The novel must have structure. Until recently, the criticisms of the novel lay in the concentration of elements such as characterization, plot and style. The principal criteria of success for the first two were respectively verisimilitude and unintelligibility. The novel is an organised and unified whole, i.e. character and plot form a single unity. The novel is shaped by an intellectual logic which shapes the pattern. The novel must have a plot. A plot is a plan of action of a play, a novel, a poem or a short story.

The plot may also be defined as a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. For instance "The King died and the Queen died is a story". The King died and then the Queen died of grief is a plot.[3]

This can also be expanded in 'The Queen died no one knew why until it was discovered that it was through the grief of the death of the King'. This is a plot with a mystery in it, a form capable of high development.

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1) Encyclopedia Brittanica, p. 572.
2) Chamber's Encyclopedia, p. 104.
3) World Ref. Encyclopedia, p. 3592.

Another view of the plot is that it is a causal sequence complicated by mystery with most of the emphasis on the mystery - and as such it may become an aspect of his craft which he viewed understandably with some irritation.[1)]

The plot of a novel can become aesthetically valuable as well as entertaining when it is made to serve along with every other narrative device, the novelist's central conception of the things, which happen. The plot of a novel can be told to a gaping audience of a cave man or to a movie - public attending a show and all the time been kept by 'and then - and then' this can only supply curiosity, while a plot demands intelligence and memory. The death of the Queen in the story we say and then but in a plot we ask why?

The plot then is the novel in its logical intellectual aspect: It requires mystery, but the mysteries are solved later on: the reader may be moving about in world's unrealized but the novelist has no misgivings. He is competent, poised above his work, throwing a beam of light here, popping on a cap of invisibility these and "qua plot maker" continually negotiating with himself qua character - monger as to the best effect to be produced.[2)]

Bound together with a plot in the novel is the theme. A theme is the subject on which one speaks; the theme is more often used to indicate its central idea. Bucker says, "a theme in very restricted sense is the central thought and which the author is trying to communicate and make meaningful to his reader in a broad sense, it is the whole composition that embodies this central thought.[3)]

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1) Webster's World Dictionary, p. 1123
2) E.M. Forster: Aspects of the Novel, p. 92.
3) W.E. Bucker: College Handbook, p. 1.

For present purposes a theme may be a brief written exercise in putting together facts and ideas so that they convey to a reader a unified thought, opinion or attitude. An essential element of plot and theme is the character in the novel. The character in a novel is one of the ways by which we can come to any knowledge of what passes in the minds of others by means of their words and actions. The motives to actions and in what turns of the mind seem in my opinion more necessary to be known by the actions themselves. The novelist should choose that his readers should understand what his principal actors think than what they actually do.

The characters in the story are the actors, the very life in the book. Aristotle says "Character gives us qualities but it is in action - what we do that we are happy or the reverse". He further goes on to say "all human happiness and misery take the form of actions". We believe that happiness and misery exist in the secret life, which each of us leads privately, and to which the novelist has access. By the secret, we mean the life for which there is no external evidence, not, as is vulgarly supposed that which is revealed by a chance word of a sigh. A chance word or sigh are just as much evidence as a speech or a murder, the life they reveal seems to be a secret and enters the realm of action.

Sometimes the novelist tries to make the characters real to the reader and to fit them into the plot. But the novelist has other aims besides the illucidations of his plot. He desires to make his readers so intimately acquainted with his characters that the creations of his brain should be to them, speaking, moving, living human creatures. This he can never do unless he knows those fictitious personages himself, and he can live with them in the full reality of established intimacy. They must be with him as he lies down to sleep and as he wakes from his dreams. He must learn to hate them and to love them.

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1) A.F. Scott: Current literary terms, p.136.



Mr. T.N. Maumela : A PIONEER VENDA Novelist.

He must know of them whether they be cold blooded or passionate, whether true or false and how far true and how far false.

The depth and breath and the narrowness and the shallowness of each should be clear to him. And as, here in our outer world we know that men and women change - become worse or better as temptation or conscience may guide them so should these creations of his change and every change should be noted by him.

Human nature remains the same but it is subject to adaptations. Therefore, the characters in novels may become nearer to the real human beings although the two may not be identical.

We will discuss the novel attempts in Venda under the following headings: (a) plot; (b) characters (c) Literary comments.

ELELWANI : T.N. Maumela, 1954.

(a) Plot.

Elelwani is the first of the books Maumela wrote, and it can be rightly called one of the pioneering works (baanbrekerswerk) in modern Venda literature. While much can be said about Maumela's plan of the story, one does not need to delve deep to reveal the main purpose of this novel as being principally his dislike for the Venda custom and tradition of allowing old men entering into marital unions with young girls who are usually teenagers. Maumela uses Elelwani and Old Ratshihule, who is a chief of Makovheni as his example of such customary marriages which are pre-arranged by parents. There is no doubt that parents whose daughters had the privilege of getting married to chiefs or headmen were the happiest because they were eventually able to earn the respect of other members of the community if not the environment. The custom of uniting young girls with elderly male members of the community is not specifically followed by

the Venda alone, for, among the Sotho and other South African Bantu tribes, such marriages were also recognized.[1]

Maumela, however, disapproves of such marriages and hence, the introduction into his plot, though not quite convincing, of a full-blooded suitor, Vele, who poses as the embodiment of the modern belief among the Venda and other Bantu communities, that the youths should be left to blunder alone in all love affairs. "The plot in short, is in accordance with our wishes, not with our knowledge. It externalizes with greater power than we ourselves possess our natural desire to live dangerously and yet be safe; to turn things upside down".

It is strange that Vele (Matshinyise) should adopt the Zionist Christian Church Sect religion for the purpose of achieving his own aims and then return to heathendom soon thereafter, and desert his congregation. This point will be dealt with fully under criticism.

Maumela's story in Elelwani depicts life in a modern Venda society, which still has much in store of typical Venda culture. The two girls, Elelwani and Mutshekwa, are also typical of Venda girls, whose cleanliness can still be seen if one stands along all roads and paths that enter Sibasa town. The conversation that goes on between Vele and Nthambeleni on the one hand, and Elelwani and Mutshekwa on the other, is characteristic of the youths in Venda society. Snuff plays an important social function and there is no wonder why the young men after having noticed some objects coming from behind, which later appear to be human beings, wait for them.[1] The demand by Venda young men for snuff from girls also has a secondary meaning if not a shift by which some intimacy between the two sexes is implied. This is what still obtains in Venda society, particularly among the unschooled members of the community. The conversation takes place between Vele and Elelwani on pages 7 and 8,

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1) Maumela: Elelwani, p. 6.

which is a preparation for what is to take place later on; but their schemes are hampered by the forces of custom which under normal conditions may not be sacrificed to the wishes of the youths. Elelwani says, when replying to Vele's statement about the fact of her being betrothed to Chief Ratshihule of Makovheni, "Izwo ndi zwone, nṋe ndi nga ita hani? Tshavhuvhili vho no ita na u ḽa thundu dza hone. Ndi kanzhi ndi tshi landula, ha tou vha u ḓi-ṱungela mabu, ndo semekanywa nda dohwa. Ndi ḓo vhuya nda ya, ndi ḓo kundiswa ngani?" (That is quite true, what can I do? Secondly they already used the property from that place. I have denounced this on several occasions, and it only caused much suffering upon me, I was scolded time and again. I will eventually go there, what will debar me from going?)

Many other factors of events in Venda society though somewhat superficially given, have also been reported, for example, both the adults and the youths partake of beer drinking but they do not drink as a group. This is perhaps the result of the division of the community into age-groups. Praises said to Chief Ratshihule when drinking beer are typical of Venda custom which tends to idolise chiefs as though they were no mortal beings. There is however, some unreality about Ratshihule's love for Elelwani, which induces him to give her the keys for his palace, which thing never happens in Venda society. According to Venda custom the chief's senior wife is responsible for the custody of all domestic property of the family, and not a junior wife. She alone controls everything and only reports to the chief about requirements of other wives, as well as reporting the arrival of guests or the issuing of food or beer to visitors.

Dr. Malherbe says "n Goeie roman vereis volledige arbeid, stewige bou".[1] While it is a fact that

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1) Malherbe, Dr. F.E.J.: Die Kort-verhaal Kunsvorm p. 45

superstitious beliefs play a major role in Venda cultural pattern, this aspect of the community life, unfortunately, has not been fully elaborated in this book. This flaw may perhaps be ascribed to the introduction into Venda society of the new era in religious beliefs, namely, the Zionist Sects. That the chief's messengers sent to Phafula for the purpose of bringing with them the "Mungome' (witch-doctor for smelling out) some of them falling victims to malaria and dying before reaching home, while others do arrive at home, but die before giving any account of their trip, gives the reader the idea that the author wanted to sacrifice the traditional superstitious beliefs of the tribe in the power of "vhangome", to the mockery of religious beliefs of Zionists, some of whom are just as good Christians as those found in other Church organisations. The author might, perhaps, have forgotten some of his ideas about his plot, and later on decided to add something to it so as to arrive at a feasible conclusion.

In her book "The Anatomy of Drama", Marjorie Boulton, states: "In a novel it is possible to have a great many incidental episodes and sub-plots, even, sometimes, whole separate stories incorporated into the book".[1] But in spite of the truth that may obtain in the above quotation, the episode at the swimming pool where Nemavhulani's daughter's head gets caught between two stones, seems not to assist the reader in introducing him to the Zionist prophet, Matshinyise. Any religious man of some repute who is believed to possess some powers of healing can easily be known to everybody in that particular area even throughout the whole country, e.g. Bishop Lekganyane.[2] Both Ratshihule and his young wife, Elelwani, are too responsive to everything told to them. In spite of his having nursed some beard, under normal conditions Elelwani could have recognised the Zionist minister

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1) Boulton, M.: The Anatomy of Drama, p. 14.
2) Maumela, T.N.: Elelwani, Chapter V. pp. 22-26.

as being her Vele, who promised to marry her after having discovered ways and means of winning her over to his side. Her parents, too, seem not to worry about the accusation that their daughter is a witch. According to Venda custom, this accusation is a form of public delict, and the suspects must be cleared of this stigma through going to the "mungome", after which fines may have to be paid if they happen to be cleared of the offence. Of course, this may be difficult if the accuser is a chief, for it is rare that he may be forced by a subject to have whoever has been accused of witchcraft cleared by him. Nevertheless, members of Elelwani's family do not lift a finger, and this is not common in a Venda society. And following the passing in Parliament of the Anti-witchcraft Act, smelling out of the would-be suspects for witchcraft is carried out in secret for fear of arrest by the police. But in spite of this deterrent the parties that might have accused each other of witchcraft may agree to go to the "mungome" at their own risk, and thus the chief or headman is not held responsible for any consequences on the part of the law.

The omens such as a dead owl and an earthenware full of blood that had already coagulated, together with some black substance strewn round it, seen by Ratshihule one morning after which he called Elelwani to witness what he saw, are common happenings among the Venda. This is of course, a sinister way of striking terror into the minds of the victims of superstition, the aim being to disturb peace in the families concerned. The chief is frightened and says: "Zwithu izwi zwi nga amba mini, na mudisi wazwo a nga vha e nnyi....?"[1] (what may these omens signify, and who might have brought them here?) Indeed, even people who are not superstitious might want to know what actually brought them because they were not there when people went to bed the previous night.

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Elelwani, p. 31.

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(b) Characters.

(i) Elelwani

As far as character depiction is concerned, there is not much of it in this novel. This may be due to the fact that this is the first of his works on literature. In his book "Aspects of the novel", Forster says: "But people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes; their inner as well as their outer life can be exposed. And this is why they often seem more definite than characters in history".[1] Although the novel has been named after her, Elelwani does not come out as what one would expect the main character to do. The only time when she behaves like any other human being is when she is with Vele on their way home from Sibasa (Camp) where they had gone for some shopping. But after she has been accused of witchcraft she shows no signs of resentment at all but goes home peacefully. Although the novelist might have aimed at raising the point of witchcraft as a public delict, he could also have had given its reaction on the Mabaḍa family (Elelwani's parents and their relatives) since it is generally accepted in a Venda community that this crime is in no way better than murder. Her attachment to Ratshihule is much of feminine attraction to the male person, which is somewhat akin to the desire of a hungry lion when it sees a young fat impala. That he entrusted her with the responsibility of keeping the keys of all his huts (palace) does not originate in Elelwani. An intelligent young woman would have used the opportunity well and steal huge sums of money which Bantu chiefs are believed to possess and go home a wealthy woman when occasion arises. It is also not quite convincing to see Elelwani and Vele agreeing upon setting up a family of their own soon after she had left the head kraal when the latter met the former as she was going to fetch water.

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1) Forster, E.M.: Aspects of the Novel, p. 46.

(ii) Vele

With regard to Vele, his character depiction becomes realistic only when the reader meets him accompanying the girls to and from Sibasa. The conversation held between him and Elelwani is typical of the love affairs of young people, as well as what takes place at the beer drinking party. Further than this, there is nothing that shows some warmth such as is seen among lovers of all times, and in all nations of the world. Vele is a bad example of some of the Christian converts among the Bantu, who are not afraid of using the name of the Almighty for the sole purpose of achieving their own aims. That he chooses to defame a young woman in public is ridiculous, and under normal conditions, Elelwani would have not accepted his proposal for marriage ties. As a matter of fact, Elelwani's features have been overdrawn so much that she ceases to be a real human being, and had the novelist done so by means of using a dialogue between characters in the book there would have been no blemishes on his part.

(iii) Ratshihule

Although Ratshihule is typical of all chiefs in Venda-land, who have almost become addicts to beer drinking, he is much of a caricature rather than a real character. As a chief, he is obeyed by all his subjects, particularly councillors, yet his ready acceptance of the suggestion given him by Old Nemavhulani about the zionist minister at Mianzwi, who possesses powers of a seer, is unfounded and not quite convincing. His immediate departure from his congregation is another sign of lack of responsibility, and it is doubtful if there could have been such a minister of religion such as "Matshinyise" was.

All the other people in the story are nothing but types, who disappear from the scene sooner than expected. Nthambeleni and Mutshekwa are typical examples of such types who are there not to play an important role at all;

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so that a discussion on each one of them is quite unnecessary.

(c) Literary Comments.

Maumela's works of literature are characterised by the simple style which pervades all his books, and this has earned him some popularity particularly to the inexperienced readers, such as primary school pupils, who encounter a little if no difficulty at all in understanding the contents. In Elelwani, the author seldom uses idioms, idiomatic expressions, while no trace of proverbs may be found anywhere in this book. In his book "Die Kort-verhaal", Dr. F.E.J. Malherbe says: "Oorspronklikheid van inhoud en vorm is die bron van kunsspanning. En sonder die nodige spanning is alle kunswerk dood".[1)]

The beauty of expression and narration can always be conveyed to the reader or listener if idiomatic expressions are thrown in where they are most suitable. It may, however, be not denied that Maumela possesses rare gifts of the ability to describe some natural sceneries, human beings, animals and even objects. The description of the head kraal at Makovheni is a good example of this endownment, yet Maumela's description of Elelwani's beauty (page 3, chapter 1) leaves the reader with some doubt whether the author is not describing a literal doll. Had the author made use of other characters to reveal that beauty to the reader, it would probably be possible to give him the benefit of the doubt. Nowhere else in the book has this girl's beauty been described in the same terms as those in Chapter 1.

With regard to diction, Maumela has a tendency to use clauses or phrases in the place of sentences. Again, in paragraph 2, page 3, one finds a good number of examples of this defect, e.g. "Musidzana wa phaphathe vhukuma, wa tshiimo tsho linganelaho zwavhudi tsho'

1) Malherbe Dr. F.E.J.: Die Kort-verhaal as Kunsvorm, p. 56.

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tswititi, e si mulaphu ngeno a songo pfufhifhala" (A well-built girl, of a suitable, straight stature, not tall although not short). Instead this could have been rendered as follows: "O vha e musidzana wa phaphathe vhukuma, wa tshiimo tsho linganelaho zwavhuḓi tsho tou tswititi, e si mulapfu ngeno o vha a songo pfufhifhala". There are many other such examples of phrases which are followed by full-stops, but it will not be necessary to mention all of them. The following are a few extracts of such constructions:

"E mutswuku a sa vhuyi a vhudziswa."

"Lukanda lutete lwo tou thaho hoṱhe, uri ndi lwa tshisadzi zwi sa vhuyi zwa hangisa."

"Khofheni ho ḓaho zwavhuḓi ha marama na ṱhaha dzo linganelaho zwavhuḓi."

"Maṱo mahulu a tsie ndapfu".

While Maumela shows an unlimited vocabulary of words that are normally used by females in their conversations, he is also inclined to use some coloquial expressions; e.g. "Afhu" in "A! afhu ni nayo tshali, Mutshekwa....., instead of "A! hufha ni nayo tshali, Mutshekwa .....

It will however, be realized that in spite of the lack of the use of idioms and proverbs in Elelwani, Maumela has given a reasonable range of idiomatic expressions in many of his sentence constructions. He has also made use of the dialogue although some heightened form of some of these constructions could have been given. With regard to spelling, punctuation and purity of language, Maumela has been quite successful in their application. The book "Elelwani" is perhaps still the best of Maumela's work on modern Venda literature.

In their literary treatise Grove and Botha state: "Die roman beskryf situasies en persone".[1)]

1) Grove, A.P. & Botha, E.: Inleiding by die Studie van die Letterkunde, bl. 121.

Unfortunately Maumela's characters or people in Elelwani are such that they cannot assist him in his artistic attempts for they seem not to be real human beings. The author himself commits an error which some of his predecessors have committed, namely, the attempt to explain to the reader why certain acts happened in the story. That Vele should tell Elelwani that he made some pre-arrangements with Old Nemavhulani for the provision of the dead owl and thick blood placed in an earthenware, should have been left to the reader to find out for himself. This is a similar defect in Ngomalungundu (Mudau) which, although somewhat fictitious, would have its unravelling left to the reader to decide, and thus, in conjunction with its flowing narrative style, would leave the riddle still to be solved.

From a literary point of view of books on Bantu languages, Maumela has made a mark in his attempt to clear the thicket which hitherto no Venda writer had adventured to enter. The defects in his book are quite normal, since this was his first attempt at novel writing in Venda.

MAFANGAMBITI : T.N. Maumela (1956)

(a) The Plot

In his literary critique: "The Structure of the Novel" Muir quotes Carruthers who states that "all novels, no matter what their subject-matter, their aim or their style, should have a clear and definite pattern".[1)] He goes further to state that "The term 'plot' stands outside these dangers. It is a definite term, it is a literary term, and it is universally applicable. It can be used in the widest popular sense. It designates for everyone, not merely for the critic, the chain of events in a story and the principle which knits it together....

1) Muir, E.: The Structure of the Novel, p. 14.

In all these novels a few things happen, and in a certain order, and in every novel things must happen and in a certain order. As they must needs happen, however, it is the order which distinguishes one kind of plot from another".[1)]

In Mafangambiti, Maumela makes use of the prevailing drought and its effect on humans, animals and the vegetation, the survival of the fittest, in which the calf which loses its mother sooner than it has been calved, but grows to become a ferocious bull in the environment; the daily lives and adventures of the boys and finally, the Venda cattle rearer, who would rather tolerate his pets die natural deaths than have them sold to foreigners. In planning his story, Maumela realised the fact that a successful narration is one in which the various facets of life come into play. In other words, the plot of the story does not function as an independent unit, but together with other units forms a sum total of the whole workmanship. In his plan of what he considers should be the requirements of the short story (Kort-verhaal) Dr. Malherbe says: "Die kort-verhaal (novelle, skets) as kuns genre moet beantwoord aan die algemene eise van skoonheid. Voor ons dus die bepaalde vereistes vir 'n goeie kortverhaal uiteensit, moet ons eers kortliks stilstaan by wat by alle ware kuns mag veronderstel word: persoonlikheid, waarheid, spanning, stemming, skone eenheid van vorm en inhoud, e.d.m."[2)]

Although the above requirements for a short story, I think if taken into consideration, they may serve a useful purpose if applied in the art of novel writing.

With regard to the drought which introduces the reader to the story, the author succeeds very well in that the drought at Maneledzi coincides with many other droughts which took place many years ago and those which

1) Muir E.: The structure of the Novel, p. 14.
2) Malherbe, Dr. F.E.J.: Algemene eise vir kuns: Die Kort-Verhaal as kunsvorm, Deel 1, bl. 1.

still occur during our own time. Stories have been told of severe droughts which have occurred in Vendaland and that people went to the extent of boiling hides and drink the salty warm water as though it were soup. In recent years droughts are no longer a menace to human life because today it is possible to obtain foodstuff from any part of the world and help feed the needy. Three or four years ago the Department of Bantu Administration and Development of the Republic of South Africa entered into tremendous expenses of feeding innumerable numbers of starving Vendas who otherwise would have perished. No one can doubt the truth as given by the author that even aquatic animals die when streams and rivers dry up following intense evaporation, and thus an unpleasant smell can be experienced near their courses.

Regarding Tshirole nothing is strange about its growth until it becomes the famous ferocious bull, Mafangambiti. Feeble conditions in early childhood may not necessarily continue to adulthood. This also applies to animals which, if the drought had been broken, regain their health following good pasture that results. Mafangambiti also goes through the same stages until it becomes the leading bull at Maṉeledzi. It is customary among Venda and other Bantu herd boys to boast of their bull that never loses a fight against a rival bull. This may sometimes lead to faction fights between groups of boys concerned. The argument between Ntshavheni, whose home bull is Tshivhavhula, and Ratshilumela, one of the herd boys for Mafangambiti, is a typical example of such quarrels. Yet that Mafangambiti should possess some of the aggressive characteristics of a human being such as the breaking of the women's calabashes leaves the reader with much doubt. The difficulty Mafangambiti presented to Radzilani when he wanted to inspan it may be quite credible, although that it ran after him until it gored him on his back, after which he falls and breaks his clavicle (collar-bone), elevates this ferocious bull

to the behaviour of a dog or even a human being. But beasts that are extra-ordinarily strong may break yokes and skeys when being trained for inspanning. Of course, Bantu and even White pastoral farmers train their animals when they are still bullocks. The same applies to riding on their backs. Mafangambiti seems to hear the language of the herd boys urging the bull to fight on and thus defeat his opponent. To me Mafangambiti symbolises nothing other than that it is a ferocious bull which got spoiled as it was not being used for anything. The background of the story of this bull is nowhere else but in a Venda environment. The praises that the herd boys sing to this bull are certainly undoubted examples. The reader, however, fails to understand the death of this bull. This death is rather too sudden and to the greatest disappointment of Vhakoma Vho-Gavhi, its owner.

The Venda cattle, sheep and goat owners find joy in just looking at their pets. Before the arrival of the Whites, the Venda and other Bantu people did not make use of their cattle for anything else other than paying lobola or slaughtering when there were feasts such as Thevhula ceremonies (Venda) or wedding celebrations as well as the installation of chiefs. Until recent times, it becomes so difficult for one to obtain a goat or even a fowl to slaughter, because those who possess these pets rarely sell them. After all they do enjoy eating the meat of these animals after they have died of some other causes. One remembers how difficult it has been for school teachers and officials to convince the Bantu about the danger of eating meat of animals that have died of disease. There is therefore, no wonder that Old Gavhi refuses to sell Mafangambiti to the two White visitors who are butchery dealers (slagters). Whether Old Gavhi did not want to dispense with Mafangambiti because he had much difficulty in nursing it remains to be seen; but the fact is that a Venda cattle owner hardly sells his stock, although he may be forced to

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do so when his family is being menaced by starvation against which he has no other way but the sale of his stock.

The adventures of herdboys are typical of the youths in a Venda society. Herdboys enjoy seeing bulls fight, even dogs. They, too, fight with rival groups of other boys. This fighting is of course the training ground for lives which they will live later on. Among the herdboys at Maneledzi, the most interesting is Madadzhe, who is much of a baby. He reveals to his parents the little crimes such as stealing Gangazhe's oranges, the fight between Ratshilumela and Zwiitavhathu, a boy from Mukondeni, fighting for stolen honey. He actually tells his elder brothers in the presence of the parents that he won't tell anybody about what they do while herding cattle, not knowing that by so saying he has already revealed everything. A game of mufuvha played by boys at Gavhi's home is typical of the manner in which Venda boys while away the time, but if played while herding cattle there is a danger of cattle straying into people's mealie-lands. Wherever they are, and whenever they come to the scene, one finds much entertainment in the conversation of boys. That boys are generally naughty and mischievous may not be argued against. The herdboys induce Old Ravhutsi to stick thorns of the 'murenzhe' tree along his field with the idea that they will pierce herdboys if their cattle stray into his mealie-land. Unfortunately the thorns pierce Ravhutsi instead, to the greatest amusement of the boys.[1] There is no doubt that the herdboys have been well-drawn. The author, however, might have been a herdboy himself.

Cattle sales have today become a great venture. Their owners fetch exorbitant prices whether they are sold at auction sales, which usually take place at dipping tanks or at home. Of course, when the cattle owner sells his beast at home, he is likely to lose because

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Mafangambithi, p. 24.

there is no competition between buyers, and also that he may be forced to sell when he is in need of money with which to pay poll-tax or to buy food (mealiemeal) for his children. The arrival of two White men who are butchers at Gavhi's village who intend to buy Mafangambiti is therefore quite normal, except that following the recent regulations governing entry of Whites into a Bantu community area, this permission has to be granted by the Bantu Affairs Commissioner.

(b) Characters

Unfortunately there is not much in this novel that can be said about character depiction, in that the main character is a bull and not a human being. Much of this bull, Mafangambiti, and its somewhat peculiar instinctive behaviour has already been discussed under plot.

(i) Maṱodzi

In the same way the herdboys give the reader no specific scope for characterization and that what has been discussed in previous paragraphs will probably suffice. Of course, Maṱodzi, as the eldest son to Gavhi, is their leader because when something had gone wrong he is held responsible for it by his father; e.g. the riding on the back of Tshirole (Mafangambiti when it was still a calf) which thing was very much disliked by Old Gavhi. To me, Maṱodzi seems to represent the author himself.

(ii) Gavhi

Vhakoma Vho-Gavhi is typical of a Venda cattle owner who will under no circumstances part with his stock no matter how much financial depression he may be experiencing. He is a customary cattle rearer, for one hears him praising them as he stands near the cattle kraal. He knows all his cattle according to their colours, and it is not difficult for him to notice which of them is missing. He is also sympathetic for he wastes no time in having Radzilani sent to hospital after he has

been injured when trying to inspan Mafangambiti. Vhakoma Vho-Gavhi, however, surprises the reader in that he does not seem to pay attention to his family matters. He rather spends most of his time on his cattle. He may be looked upon as a miser in that he refuses to sell Mafangambiti until it is bitten by a snake and then dies afterwards.

(iii) Ravhutsi

Old Ravhutsi, into whose mealie-land cattle strayed on several occasions, disappears from the story just as he has come into it. The important part that he plays is that of making the reader realise that if cattle or children effect some damage to one's property the parents concerned are held responsible.

(c) Literary Comments:

What has been said about Maumela's style in Elelwani may not find room here except where the author as usual delves into descriptions which do not come out of the mouths of his creative world. It has been said in Elelwani that Maumela did not make much use of idioms and proverbs in that novel. This is not so in Mafangambiti where Maumela shows some great improvement in sentence construction as well as in idiomatic, proverbial and ideophonic expressions. The use of dialogue is also widely applied, while the herdboys figure most, as has already been stated. In his book 'Readings in Modern Fiction', Davis says: "A good plot has its events determined by characters, which are largely a result of an organic function of the setting; and in a good novel the inseperable relationship of plot to character and both to the setting is revealed at almost every instant by the diction".[1)]

1) Davis, E.: Readings in Modern Fiction, p. 35.

In Mafangambiti, Maumela may be exonerated from what may be considered a lack of sufficient character depiction as he is writing about an animal. In as far as diction is concerned, the language used by Maumela is quite free from blemishes, for one finds some of the following expressions throughout the whole book which are typical examples of good Venda:

'ri ḓo vhona hu no ya phuna na tshiṋoni,' meaning (we shall see how this matter will end);
'maano a vhambwa nga luvhadzi' - (experience is the best teacher);
'muhulwane u kanda mupfa a tshi u vhona (an aged or responsible person ignores trifles);
'vha rumela muthu u yo farelwa lufhanga' - (he sent somebody to go and apologise for him);
'mufhefhe ndi ufhio?' - (no one is better than another - we are all sinners or evil-doers);
'Musundwa (Musiṋda) ibva hu dzhene Mudabe - (let the inexperienced give way for the experienced one);
'ya Mudzimu i bva dziṅweni' - (no crime is a little crime);
'vhutulu ho ḽa mufhomi' - (Poison has eaten the smearer - the intrigue has entangled the schemer);
'a songo vhuya e zwi munyu' - (he must never utter a word to anybody);
'kholomo i si na vhukono' - (quite a reasonably grown-up head of cattle).

While the description about Mafangambiti on page 34, paragraph 2, may be viewed as being somewhat exaggerated, this, however, reveals Maumela's descriptive powers. In his book on literary appreciation, Nienaber says: "Die Hobsons het 'n besondere natuurkennis. Die maatsoekery van die diere is in hierdie opsig van belang.... Die skrywers het voorwaar die diere in hulle intieme lewe noukeurig waargeneem en wat hulle nie waargeneem het nie, het hulle deur hulle kunstenaarverbeelding aangevul, maar op so 'n natuurlike wyse dat dit die indruk van

egtheid en werklikheid skep".[1] The difference between the two writers is that the former is writing about wild animals, while the latter is writing about domestic animals. In spite of all this achievement in as far as diction is concerned, the word 'mavhevhe' should be written 'mavheevhee' (rumour, hearsay).

The writer has been successful in teaching his readers through Gavhi, that one should make hay while the sun still shines. The unnecessary hoarding of money or property that is not being used may result in its getting destroyed before utility thereof has been made. Mafangambiti which has been feared and admired by all dies of the poisonous fangs of a merciless snake.

It is the opinion of the author that small beginnings spell greater achievements, it is inconceivable how the once famous and ferocious Mafangambiti should have such a sudden and tragic death. But if the author intends to impress upon the reader's mind that achievements that have been attained after some hard work and some sweating may sometimes crumble to dust, he may then be considered to have been very successful in his message to humanity about the so-called greater scientific achievements which may one day cause mankind to revert to the civilisation of the caveman.

Therefore, it may not be out of order to say that Mafangambiti's rather somewhat sudden death and that it dies abruptly makes the story end earlier than expected.

The author has tried to depict the activities of herdboys but the characters leave much to be desired. He indulges in descriptions of the characters without the characters revealing themselves to the readers.

The rustic setting which he has chosen betrays him too, that he is not very well acquainted with the world of the Venda herdboys. The character of Mafangambiti

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1) Nienaber, Dr. P.J.: Perspektief en Profiel, pp. 269-370.



E.S. Madima : A Venda novelist and Essayist.

too does not satisfy the readers for, there is no reason why Mafangambiti died. One would have liked to see the struggle of its growth being rewarded or being worth the trouble the bull took. The lesson it was supposed to teach fails because the young people who are encouraged to persever lose heart when they meet Mafangambiti's death. The author could not carry on with the bull, thus he caused his death through a snake.

Mafangambiti should have lived and the neighbours should have admired its offsprings. The other cattle owners should have made it their duty to mix their cattle with the herd that had Mafangambiti as its bull.

Mafangambiti as a novel takes us out into the animals which are close to the Venda and as a second novel by Maumela it fulfills an important position in the development of novel writing in Venda. Mafangambiti was published simultaneously with A SI ENE.

A SI ENE : E.S. Madima (1956)

(a) Plot:

This is the first novel which E.S. Madima wrote in 1947 but published in 1956. The characters which Madima gives us in this book are living people whom we meet in a Venda community today. Some of the characters are in urban areas while others are in rustic surroundings. This book is based on the environments of Hammanskraal, Germiston, Johannesburg and Vendaland. In this book, the author advises the Venda children that they must not imitate urban life since urban life is bad. The bad side of urban life is exposed in this book. As an example, we see it in the plot that Maluṱa made with the tsotsis to kill Adziambei. Another illustration of this we find in the episode in which Fanyana eloped with Adziambei and when Maluṱa was beaten by a big belt by the thugs when he was taking a walk with Adziambei.

The aim of the author is to show that the corrupt life in urban areas and the sins committed there do not last, and persons who are involved in such bad behaviour do not end well. This is confirmed by the death of Fanyana through a shot by Matshaya with a revolver, the death of Maluta through stubborness and shock.

The plot of this book is well developed. "The plot may also be defined as a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. For instance, the King died is a story. The King died and then the Queen died of grief is a plot".[1] The author also gives an aspect of Venda social life, the marriage customs where the parents participate in the proposals of their children and do not allow self choice as in the western society. We are given the etiquettes to be observed at the in-laws' place when the son-in-law has visited the home of the fiancée. We are given the different games of the different age groups in Vendaland, these contrast with the games in the urban areas. When the reader reads about thugs, he immediately realises that he is busy with urban life and corruptions. The novel must observe the character of the time in which it is written. It must portray the aspects of human life. The novel is a long prose work of the imagination dealing with imagined people and events its essential elements are character and plot; although works which lack one of these or the other have been classified as novels.

The book ends by showing that children who do not listen to their parents end very badly. The book delves down to the problem of adjustment of a rural person into urban conditions. The "Makgoweng Motif" is at work in this book. The characters leave their rural homes and go to Johannesburg where they meet bad influences and they are in turn swallowed by bad influences and become worse than those who were brought up in such surroundings. In this novel, we are given the soul of a

1) World Ref. Encyclopaedia, p. 3592.

Venda undergoing changes in its adaptation to newer environments. We also see that the over discipline that obtains in Venda homes makes the Venda characters to become unsuitable for fast changing environments. Right through this book runs a philosophy that a Venda copies bad things without analysing the merits and demerits of the acquisition. All the characters are spoilt by urban conditions.

(c) Characters:

This novel has chief characters (hoofkarakters) and minor characters. The main characters are: Maluṱa, Adziambei, the minor characters are Fanyana, Muhanelwa, Ranwane, Tshibalo and Matshaya.

(i) Maluṱa

Maluṱa is a young man who is well conversant with the rural Venda life and complex urban life. He is able to fit in both these environments. The author has portrayed Maluṱa as a person with an unstable character. He changes too easily without taking into consideration the result of what he is doing. This is revealed when Maluṱa having made a promise to marry Muhanelwa changes suddenly and marries Adziambei a girl he has just met, whilst he had gone to finalise his marriage with Muhanelwa. He is a person who has adopted some urban habits and has some experiences that two women in the urban areas are not a good economic proposition. He plotted with the thugs to kill Muhanelwa so that he may remain with his Adziambei whom he had then found.

He is a man who has no stand point. He stands between two women, one pulling that way and the other pulling this way with the result that he fails to serve two women. When he does not see Adziambei he takes Muhanelwa to wife but when Adziambei comes back to the scene, he deserts Muhanelwa and even plots to kill her. Muhanelwa escapes and left for Vendaland where she stays at his home. He is shocked when he arrived home

to meet his wife Muhanelwa. The shock becomes so great that he fainted and died.

(ii) Adziambei

Adziambei is a beautiful young woman who is full of life. She is a stubborn girl who does not care to whom she speaks. Even her parents are not listened to when they give advice: "nna Adziambei ni ṅwana-ḓe a sa pfi zwine vhabebi vhaṋu vha amba"; "A si hone ndi ḓo vhulahwa vha wana ṋama". This is a reply from a very rude child and it augurs ill for her in life. She is a jealous girl. This is revealed by her act when she immediately grabbed Maluṱa from Muhanelwa when in actual fact she knows that Maluṱa is engaged to Muhanelwa. She has an unstable character. She loves whomever she sees and will soon go with him as husband. When the author portrayed Adziambei, he meant that the title of the book fits her for "she is not herself but her nature".

From the time we meet Adziambei, we are aware that she is a pigheaded girl who will listen to no one but herself only. She has a good social nature. She easily adapts herself to all environments and sometimes she cannot be found out that she is just a rustic Venda girl. She pretends to be very honest to Fanyana so that she could steal the revolver and money. This aspect of her character shows that she has really changed from the conduct that she had in Vendaland and has really become an urban girl who is as cruel as a snake that does nothing else but kill although it will not eat the animal. Her sexual instinct drives her mad and the fact that she does not conceive makes matters worse because she feels that she is not a complete woman like others. She feels shy to come home without a child when her contemporaries have children, that crown of a Venda woman. She leaves for Lesotho with the hope that she may be lucky and conceive. She goes to Lesotho as a pretext that she will be loved by the men who do not know her.

(iii) Muhanelwa

Muhanelwa is Maluṱa's girl whom he has to marry. He has already paid the necessary lobola. She is portrayed as a typical Venda girl who is faithful to the contract that has been made by the parents. She has her own mind too. She tells Maluṱa that she will get married when it is proper time and when she has made all the necessary preparations.

She has been portrayed as a person who must treat Maluṱa when he comes home for the last time. She shocks Maluṱa who thought that she was dead and in the shock he died. The author makes this character the conscience of the Venda person which will remind the person that you have wronged me so many times. If her appearance did not shock Maluṱa, maybe he would have lived for some days.

She is drawn as a good Venda girl for the Venda children to imitate. She is an obedient woman, she listens to her in-laws and even goes to meet Maluṱa knowing that Maluṱa wanted to kill her in town. She has true love for Maluṱa. She is faithful to the contract of marriage.

(iv) Fanyana

Fanyana is an urban character who lives a corrupt life. He is a great thug. He is a crook who steals Adziambei under pretences of all sorts. He is drawn for the sake of showing us the other part of Adziambei's character. He is responsible for the changed character of Adziambei. He is a rogue and a robber. He is an untrustworthy person who cannot even be relied upon for a minute. He is drawn from both sides. We see what he does and also feel what he feels in his mind when he plots to elope with Adziambei.

The other characters are merely given as mirrors of the main characters.

(c) Literary Comments:

The language in this book has developed greatly. He uses the Luphani dialect effectively. He uses simple straightforward sentences with good idiomatic expressions: "khofhe o vha a sa vhuyi a dzi doba, ḓuvha ḽiṅwe na ḽiṅwe a tshi ana ngano nga mbilu", p. 7.

Madima's use of ideophones enriches the language in this book: "Ḓuvha ḽi tshi mbala ndi musi o no bva; mbilu ya tou khathu! e vhu dobo, e vhu pfaa". This is graphic and the reader can really see the person who is very worried by a letter and the manner of tearing it to pieces. He continues using ideophones: "u fema ha hone hu u tou daka" and when he expresses the longing for Maluṱa she says: "Maluṱa vhuya-ha, ha vhuyi iwe". The vivid ideas are expressed by the ideophones in this book: ṅonzoṅonzo ngwanzha phevhe, dzoko, ra,ra,ra.... ṅwavhaa". These words express the images or state of mind of the particular characters.

The author uses some borrowed words which could have been avoided. "na moḓoro a tshi reila". Reila could have been substituted by "tshimbidza" "Second class" could have been rendered by "vhudzulo ha vhuvhili". Such expressions as: "a ḽi ambi na boyi luvhili, bambiri ḽa tshipentshele, nnḓu ine ya pfi chemist, wat soek jy in ons huis skelm? Ons gaan jou vandag wys, jou lelike muntu! Likwapa mpela. Van waar af kom jy?" could have been avoided and simpler Venda words which are clear in meaning used. These words lower the good Venda words which the author used at the beginning of the book.

The author makes Maluṱa say: "fhedzi ndi ni funa u fhirisa vhaṱhannga vhoṱhe. This is not clear since Maluṱa is also a young man how could it be possible that he was more handsome than himself. He could have said "vhasidzana" in this place.

This book despite its foreign words and some shortcomings, is a lively book with characters who take part by involving themselves in the action. The characters are not described as has been the case in some Venda books.

In this book we see Maluṱa becoming reckless forsaking Adziambei and also Muhanelwa and changing to become a villain who is cruel and heartless in his attitude towards Muhanelwa.

In this book the two main characters act and sometimes do speak, that a reader can see them as human beings of flesh and blood. Madima does not waste time by describing Adziambei's beauty but gives us her beauty by making young men and even men like Fanyama admire the girl. The fact that she even goes to Lesotho with ease seems to suggest that she went in the company of men who loved her.

A SI ENE depicts the life, that a man changes easily when he is in a new environment and even his nature may be so affected that he appears a different person in appearance and actions.

The fact that Adziambei does not bear children is a strange aspect and it does not fit well to such a girl who has been well brought up in a rural Venda environment where the traditional folk would have made efforts to correct this shortcoming.

The publication of A SI ENE has been a contribution in the development of the art of novel writing in Venda Literature. It is one of the pioneering novels in Venda literature. In 1957, P.M. Masekela published Nungo dzi Mulomoni.

NUNGO DZI MULOMONI : P.S.M. Masekela (1957)

(a) Plot:

This book is the first novel that Masekela wrote in Venda. In this book the author gives us the living conditions in the urban areas and the rural areas.

We hear Khorombi speaking with Ramaano about his father who is troubled by cycling every day. This is an indication that life is moving very fast in this environment. The children of these people are in the complex city life.

We meet Khorombi while he was in the train on a journey to Mapani where he is going to teach. When the children come from school who are noticed by their roughness. They do not care about any one. We are given a picture of the treatment meted out to new comers at school when Khorombi was still a student at Kilnerton. We are given actions of intoxicated students which, even now is still a problem.

Among the young people we find a sense of despising one another. This is revealed by Khorombi when he says that his friends jeered at him when they heard that he was going to teach on the farms. We get this aspect again when Sipho (a girl in Sophiatown) laughs at Khorombi saying that he works on the farms where the people eat worms. Khorombi also shows that he is touched by these remarks and he is shy about it. He tries to deny that he is working at Mapani since this will lower his status of birth as a Sophiatown bred.

We are given the life at Messina too. We see that the people there are very fond of the western civilisation forms of life. We thus find dances at night and the people really enjoy themselves but when we get to Mapani we find that at this place, it is a restful place resembling the Venda environment and forms of behaviour typically Venda. The custom that a young man moves about with a girl is not practised. This is revealed by the people who get surprised when they saw Khorombi walking with Mushaathama gracefully.

At Mapani the people are still backward as far as education is concerned. The children do not go to school regularly, they must look after cattle and they must also help in the ploughing because they say that a child cannot eat schooling.

We see the inspectors of schools visiting the school and find that there were no children and the teacher was in the field. In this respect we find that the novel may also be regarded as relatively long fictional prose narrative with a more or less complex plot pattern of events about human beings, their feelings, thought and actions".[1] Khorombi tried to set the environment going but he had to cope with the prevailing conditions in that environment. Some parents had seen that troublesome children at home had already become better because of the school.

We see Khorombi as a fully fledged young man and even what he does with the girls is befitting to such an age since no normal young man can pass this stage without doing what he did. When Mushaanzhele and Mushaaṱhama boast about their photos, we see that it is normal for such young people to do.

The picture we get at Tshitandani is that of drunkards, people who boast about their children but in a vain manner.

Love making episodes salted with humour intersperse the scenes in this book. Khorombi meets with Indian traders who cheat like anything and he persevered all this since his father wants him to enlighten the rustic environment. He eventually marries Mushaaṱhama and becomes a full fledged man who has a family. He developed the Mapani school and he illustrates what a young teacher can do in such backward areas where the people have no faith in schooling. Khorombi is a symbol of the struggling Venda soul to get back to Vendaland.

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1) Webster's New World Dictionary, p. 1005.

(b) Characters:

For the characterisation in this book a general comment on the main characters will suffice.

(i) Khorombi

He is a young teacher who has recently completed his teacher's course. His father Piet Khorombi although he stays in Sophiatown says that his son must go to Venda-land to teach there so that he may acquire the cultural aspects pertaining to the Vendas. In this act, we find that although Khorombi was brought up in urban areas, he was not spoilt by such an environment otherwise he would have refused to go to Mapani. He would not have left his friends in Sophiatown and gone to Mapani. He would not have left his friends in Sophiatown and gone to such a remote area.

When he meets difficult situations he easily gets discouraged, this is revealed by the stories he heard from the girls about the conditions at Mapani. He is not firm in his convictions, he even thinks of going away from Mapani before he has finished a long time there. He is not a strong personality who sticks to his aim. To him a disappointment to a girl is nothing, it does not worry him. We see him in love with Mushaanzhele but he went home during the holidays where he meets Sipho and he loves her while he has not rejected Mushaanzhele and yet Mushaanzhele has all the confidence in him.

Afterwards, he is in love with Mushaaṱhama and eventually, married her. Mushaanzhele was very much disappointed since she had thought she would be married by Khorombi. It is true that all human happiness and misery exist in the secret life which each of us leads privately, so, it is with our Khorombi in his love affairs with the women in this book.

In his work as a teacher, he is a devoted worker, we see this when Thizwilondo had come to fetch the child by force, when he disciplined the parent properly and Thizwilondi became calmed down and abandoned the unbecoming mood which had brought him to the school. He has the patience when he explains to people who do not understand things. He is humble, that is why he was acceptable to the rustic folks. Even his pupils are treated very humanely with the result that Khorombi is the model teacher for Mapani. He is a human being whom you would like to befriend.

(ii) Mushaanzhele

This is a girl who stays at Tshitandani but she teaches at Messina. She is not a conservative girl but she takes life as she finds it. She is very fond of the pleasures of youth. When Khorombi met her with Mushaaṱhama he could not start friendship with them but Mushaanzhele started him off by talking about the many people with whom she is in touch with: "Hoyu ndi muṱhannga wa Dzwerani..... uyu ndi wa ha Mudzhadzhi" p. 20. She is a girl who loves young men "inwi a ni ḓivhi tshithu. Litshani ri ḽele shango. Vhathu avha arali vha sa nnzea vhoṱhe ndi na fulufhelo ḽa uri muthihi wavho ene a nga si ponyoke" p. 21.

She is interested in civilised persons: "Uḽa ndi muthu arali ni nga wana o raloho ni nga ḓi phina nga vhutshilo", p. 27, she is not shy: "kha vha dzo thusa nga tshifhinga". p. 33.

She is a girl who wants to please her boy friend, she even takes Khorombi to her home where the tea was so bad that she even said that "tie ya hone a i tou nde". She is a girl who has flesh and blood. She shows her likes and dislikes and she tries by all means to entice her boyfriend completely in love, but in this action she has forgotten the Venda view of a woman who exhibits such emotions that no man would like to marry such a

woman who exposes her love. The Vendas like a woman whose love is concealed and to get to it one must dig hard. She helps to reveal that other side of Khorombi.

(iii) Mushaaṱhama.

She is a short girl with a hefty body who has put on shoes with short heels. She is a person who does not like the way Mushaanzhele conducts herself: "haṋu u tshimbila ho kalula. A hu na na ńwedzi une ni nga fhedza hayani". Mushaaṱhama does not reveal what is in her heart but she can incite others to express their love sentiments: "tenda o wana ḽikhuwa ḽawe", p. 20. She also boasts about her boy friends, she even produced a letter from her friend at Dzamba. Mushaaṱhama also cheats: "no amba na nṋe zwenezwino na ri arali muthu ḽo mu ṱavhela a ḽi ore. Na nṋe ndo wanavho tsilu ḽanga litshani ndi ḽi fule, ḽi ḓo ri ḽi tshi sala ḽi tshi karuwa nda vha ndo ḽi hofhola. Muthu o funzwaho u a dzima. Ndi ḓo ṱou kokodza nga ningo. Zwiambaro a zwi tsha ḓo fhela" p. 22.

She can be angry at times and becomes rude: "arali ni tshi hu ḓivha u fhira nṋe ambani zwine na zwi ḓivha". She is a lady who can console young men: "ni songo vhuya na dinalea. Ńwedzi wa u thoma u tshi fhela ni ḓo ri u hola na renga lukanya-kanya, arali ni sa swikeleli ni nga amba na mushavhi u ḓo ni litsha na lu fhedzisa mińwedzi i tshi ḓi ya". She co-operates well at school. She does not want to expose her friend Mushaanzhele when Khorombi is talking about Mushaanzhele, she keeps quiet. She is a typical Venda girl who is commonly found in good families in Vendaland. She symbolises the model girl the Vendas like to produce in their women folk.

(iv) Ndavha

He is the only man who can read and write at Mapani. He is also sceptical about education. We see it when he says that the educated persons do nothing, and that the children must look after cattle.

(v) Ramaano

He is an old teacher who knows Piet Khorombi the father of our main character. He is the adviser in this book. He encourages Khorombi to persevere in difficulties that lie ahead at Mapani. He draws a lesson from what he got at Mphaphuli. He represents the old traditional Vendas who love their homes and who like their children to spend their energies at their own homes and not in environments where they will not be appreciated.

The other characters are just there to reveal something about the main characters.

(c) Literary Comments:

The story of Piet Khorombi cycling to work shows to us that in urban areas during the olden times the bicycle was the means of conveyance. The author wants to give us a picture of the people in urban areas who move fast in whatever they do. The life in these areas is fast moving. Changes come so rapidly that over night you may not know the place the following day because of the changes. The love affairs of Khorombi and Mushaanzhele end because Khorombi must have realised that emotional love as shown by Mushaanzhele cannot last long for violent emotions soon subside down when reality takes their place.

The people of Mapani did not have faith in education because many of the persons who came to Mapani had fared badly and had brought corruptive tendencies among the community. This suspicion on the educated persons strikes deep down in the Venda, namely that when an ignorant person meets with an enlightened person the two are on two different planes of development and do not understand each other. The uneducated suspect the educated and they think the educated persons are out to sell out their country and customs. The view that Ndavha's education is like a person who washes one foot and leaves the other foot is true. He will appear more dirty than the one who has not washed both his feet.

The author has made the journey to Mapani very long without showing the readers why it should be so long. The episodes on the way do not justify the length of the journey.

The author starts telling us about Ramaano being a teacher at Kutama where he will alight but we find that it is where the girls entrain and yet this place where the girls entrain is supposed to be Louis Trichardt. The author here seems to be confusing his plot and his characters. For the novel from all its passages, from all its sentences the well written novel echoes and re-echoes its one creative and controlling thought.[1)]

The author's main purpose is to reverse the "Makgoweng Motif" which has been so apparent in Maumela's and Madima's novels of this period. The conservative Piet Khorombi is made by the author to be the exponent of the back-to-Vendaland motif. Piet Khorombi's instruction to his son to go back home and enlighten the rustic people is representative of the conservative Venda persons who do not want what the people in town bring back to their homes as far as behaviour is concerned. He does not appreciate the behaviour of the people in Sophiatown; that is why he sends Khorombi away from this corrupting environment. The author would like to reveal to us the social life of a married man when he gives us the story of Thizwilondi and his concubine. He shows the character of such persons in these words" ... vha mbo tata na u dzhena nḓuni ..... Mukalaha ho ngo vhuya a lenga o mbo ḓi dodoma a dzhena nḓuni a dzula e tshete". This word dodoma shows the fear that this man had for his wife. The author can personify the train: "tsha mbo vhea mukosi tshidima tshine u doba tsha tenengedza ha-ḓa-na-vha-si-nongo-ḓa", ḽa takuwa buka ḽi sina malofha, duka ḽi sina vhutsi ho sala tswane". p. 2.

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1) Webster's New World Dictionary, p. 1005.

The proverbs and idiomatic expressions are well used in this book. For the author says: "ṱhoho yo no tou mboo nga mmvi", p. 6, "gambana ḽitswuku thavhani ya Luonde ḽi tshi vho bvisa ningo," p. 5. He gives the way the man was scolding in apt words: "u tou pala maulu". When he describes the hard working woman he says "musadzi a sa dzuli nga ṋala".

The author sometimes uses implication by his words. We can see this in the way Mushaanzhele encouraged Khorombi to go to Mapani when she says "ni ḓo hu vhona ḽiṅwe ḓuvha, u anetshelwa ndi u dziṅwa" p. 29. When he implies that Mushaanzhele was beginning to love Khorombi he says "zwiṅwe inwi Mushaaṱhama ni vho engedza", p. 31. It is generally believed that to feel pity for the others especially in such situations, is a step towards love.

The author uses the Venda that is mixed with some Sotho. Words like Mifhaho instead of Mbuvha, ndavha instead of mulandu, dzi tshi runda instead of dzi tshi tsa mirini betray the author that he is not fully conversant with the proper Venda idiom or if he is then he has written this book while not in a Venda speaking environment.

Despite the vocabulary shortcomings the author uses simple sentences and complex sentences effectively like when he says "lushaka lwa India vha u kuya a vha tsha mila na mare", p. 9.

When he describes the manner in which the cart moves he says: "namusi u ḓo swika khundu dzi tshi fhisa muthu a vhuya a nga a sa ṱanza vhula." For certain, if you are riding in such a cart that goes up and down with no regular movement you can eventually vomit.

When he describes the little lamp he says "muvhili watsho na wone wo dona tshi tshi vhonala tshi tsha maḓuvha". These are the words which give us the picture of an old dirty lamp. It is a vivid representation of the lamp. By such descriptions this novel penetrates into the human psyche i.e. the reader must be awakened

and his deepest feelings, be roused to the extent that he can visualize the state of the characters involved in a novel action.

The author has tried in this novel to bring back the persons who left Vendaland for the urban areas who brought back with them bad imports whose consumption in Vendaland destroys the Venda firm structure culturally. He is trying to restore that which the Venda is gradually losing by coming into contact with the Whites. Masekela's book is a return to the rustic life and culture where the Venda can develop without the hinderance of urbanisation.

TSHA RI VHONE : M.E.R. Mathivha (1958)

(a) Plot:

This is the first novel written by Mathivha. In this book the main theme is witchcraft. This theme is also found in the books of Maumela. The book describes the life in Vendaland. The story takes place in the villages of Mpfumba, Ramaphosa, Ragalvhanda, Rambevha. The vhangome i.e. diviners reveal to us the credulity placed upon the foreigners as the persons capable of stating the bare truth.

The author wants to show that there is no rest on earth. He brings in Venda games which form a brief mirror of Venda life and custom. All the episodes take place in Vendaland. We are told about the marriage practices of the Venda. Tshiwanammbi, Thangavhuelo's first wife wants a junior to her thus she gets a second wife for the husband.

The book dwells greatly on the cultural aspects of the Venda. This is seen by events during the birth of Tshiwanammbi, the main character who was born on the day of the battle. She gets this name which is confirmed by the present of a hen. This is a good practice amongst the Venda speaking peoples whenever a child is born and is given a name. In this book we are taken back to the time when the Vendas were still fighting with other Bantu

tribes. These battles were for survival of the fittest. We meet the Zulu impis which invaded the Nwedo village with the sole purpose of capturing the cattle. The invasion is similar to that which takes place in "Phusuphusu Dza Dzimauli" by Phophi.

The manner in which the naming of a new baby is done is given clearly in the story. Tshiwanammbi was born on the day when the village of Ragalavhanda was invaded. The principle of arranging for the marriage of children by the parents is given. The friendship of the parents lead to the marriage of their children. Tshiwanammbi does not love Nndweleni but the parents want the marriage. She kicks dust and even fought Nndweleni. Tshiwanammbi gets psychologically sick because she is being forced to marry a person whom she does not love. The fact that she has a psychological illness is seen when Thangavhuelo came round and she saw him and there and then improved steadily in health.

The girls went to Tshihanane and while they were there they read something revealed by the stars at night. The stars seemed to Tshiwanammbi to say that your lover is so far away as the stars. The shining stars acted like symptoms of love emanating from a true heart. The twinkling of the stars imitated the heart beat of a lover who is in intense love with a girl.

Tshiwanammbi followed her own choice of a husband and got married to Thangavhuelo the man of her own heart. The first part of the marriage is happy until Tshiwanammbi proposed Mufunwaini to become the second wife. During the early years of Mufunwaini's married life, the two women were happy. They co-operated in many respects. When Mufunwaini's child got sick trouble arose between Tshiwanammbi and Mufunwaini. Tshiwanammbi is alleged to have bewitched the child and she is chased away to her home. Her people got worried and came to find out by getting to the Mungome at Phafula who smelt out that Tshiwanammbi was a witch. This worried Thangavhuelo

very much but he could not help it because his wife was smelt out as a witch. Conditions became worse until the parents of Tshiwanammbi requested that the matter be referred to a person who had 'ludzimu" a mysterious power which does not miss the doer of a thing. The 'ludzimu' revealed that Tshiwanammbi is not the culprit but other persons. The 'ludzimu' disapproved the divination bones and the mungome. The ludzimu also disproves that witchcraft is a power which a person uses against others for his own benefit. The ludzimu shatters the belief that persons can get up at night and then bewitch others in their sleep.

The book ends by Tshiwanammbi being recalled to her husband. The message herein is that never mind how explosive a matter may be the truth will eventually come out and the people will be reconciled. The book further brings out the fact that witchcraft is just a fictitious power which does not exist except in the beliefs of the people. The ludzimu has worked out the truth as it exists in life and not as the lies are spread by illwishers. The lies of the people are exposed to nothing by the ludzimu.

Thangavhuelo receives his wife with a clean conscience because she has been absolved from such a bad name amongst the Bantu people. The book has succeeded in disproving "vhuloi" as a power that human beings possessed.

(b) Characters

The characters in this book are many but many of them are just mirrors through which we are enabled to see the main characters. The following are important:-

(i) Thangavhuelo

He is a young man who does not want to accept what his parents have arranged for him. He is a man of his own mind. We see him following his own choice in the matter of love. He does not love Tanganalo whom the

parents have chosen as his future wife but he loves Tshiwanammbi. He is a cunning young man. He double crossed Nndweleni and Thivhonali in the love affair with Tshiwanammbi. His love towards Tshiwanammbi is strong and he eventually married her. He is a quiet man who takes time to react to a situation. He is typical of a Muvenda man who even when he sees things going wrong keeps quiet until the worst happens. He tolerated the growth of jealousy between his two wives without making efforts to counteract it in time before this human enemy destroyed the human spirit. He feels pity for others as we see what he did by receiving Tshiwanammbi back after the ludzimu had proved that she was not the witch. He rounds off the story at the end and he unifies his family once more.

(ii) Tshiwanammbi

Tshiwanammbi is a beautiful girl. She suffered from early childhood until she reached maturity stage. She is a person with strong convictions of her own. She is strong willed and she can even risk her life in the pursuit of her own goals. She reads the message of the stars at Tshihanane and tried to follow her own choice in marriage affairs.

She has a persevering spirit even when odds are against her. She feels that the diviner has told a lie by saying she is the witch. She fully believed that she was not a witch. Whenever, she is called to go and try and prove her innocence she goes without fear. She really satisfies a statement that in the midst of great troubles you learn to know the person properly and you are able to see the quality of the person you are dealing with. In pleasures you learn to know the highest forms of flattery. Tshiwanammbi's sterling character survives the great vicissitudes which befell her family. She has seen that a person whom you do so much for, may turn against you and the reward may be

a bitter enmity. She has, however, learnt and she may be happy in her revived home.

(iii) Mufunwaini

Mufunwaini is like Mukumela the second wife who comes because of the wish of the first wife. She does not observe the rule that "one good turn deserves another". Her statement is that a good turn is paid by getting rid of your benefactor. She takes in whatever she hears from other people without even trying to prove the truth of it. She does not look for the causes of her children's sickness but accuses Tshiwanammbi of witchcraft. She is very bad indeed with the result that she tried to poison Tshiwanammbi but the poison was vomitted out by Tshiwanammbi. This is a typical Venda woman whose purpose is to destroy others. She represents the type of second wives who try at all costs to replace the first wives. She has her likes and dislikes and therefore she lives as a person of flesh and blood.

(iv) Mpfumba

Mpfumba is a bracelets maker. He knows his trade very well. He was a brave man who fought battles and brought back to Ha Ńwedo victories. He does not pounce upon matters but he is careful in tricky matters. He calculates his strategy. We see this when he heard that a plot for his assassination is afoot. He keeps quiet and plans the ways by which he will meet those conspirators. The author wants to show us that when a person is being hated by many people he is much safe because he does not trust the actions of his enemies. He plans quietly without his enemies knowing what he is thinking. Mpfumba has many war decorations and medals. He is a well disciplined soldier. He however, fails when it comes to his daughter. The daughter goes her way despite the wish of the father and mother. This

illustrates the fact that very strong disciplinarians cannot discipline their families or their wives.

(v) Ramaphosa

He is a jealous man who does not like Mpfumba for the many medals which Mpfumba had won in battles. He conspired with the others to assassinate Mpfumba. Mpfumba and Ramaphosa are arch-enemies but their children are in love and eventually marry each other. By this character, the author brings home the truth that those who meet in the battlefield will end by being great friends.

(c) Literary Comments

The book starts by a confusion caused by tobacco snuffing. This forespells trouble ahead. The sneezing of the people goes right through the book up to the end.

The author uses irony in his style as a manner of presenting different characters:

> "Masia ayo o vha o khokha vhafumakadzi vha mbipo lwe vhadinda vha musanda tshifhinga tshiňwe na tshiňwe vha tshi fhira nga masiani eneo vha di sinyedzana kana vha sinyedza muňwe wa vhasadzi avho uri a lavhelese mbipo ya muňwe. Maambarele a hone a miňwenda na mikhasi ho vha hu tou seyhedza nga tshiphaswi" p. 4. (The wards of the village had collected ugly women which caused the chief's messengers to talk to the women so that each woman should look at the ugliness of the other one. The manner of dressing was just to add colour to their physiognomy).

This is contrasted by the following:

> "Masia ayo o vha e na vhafumakadzi vha lunako lune vhadinda vha musanda na vhaeni vha vha vha tshi u vha vhona ha vuwa mukwetedzano wa u sumbedza makunda ayo ane a pfi o ambarwa tshidele" p. 5. (The ward of the village had beautiful women whom the messengers of the chief together with visitors when they saw them, they would admire the bracelets which were supposed to have been put on nicely).

The first group of women is made up of pretty women while the second of ugly women. Irony is used here.

The language used in this book is not mixed with foreign elements. The author uses Venda words without borrowing. The author uses some figurative language: "...lwe vhathu vha tou lwedzana sa zwiṋoni" (people scramble like birds). This way of expressing ideas raises the language and makes good literature. The author uses ideophones effectively: "tutuluku! levhu! khebu! podo, nyeṯu-nyeṯu". These ideophones make the language more dramatic. The words raise the imagination of the reader too.

The language used also contains interjectives which are typically Venda and they reveal the social status of the person or to the tribe that person belongs: "mvee" "nsoni" in which "mvee" is applied to Senzi noblemen while "nsoni" to the Sena or Lemba noblemen.

An effective way of using reduplicated words is manifested in this book "reka-reka, kwili-kwili, tshirombe-rombeni, tshiṅwau-ṅwau, nyoili-nyoli". The author uses good idiomatic expressions: "wa wana mvana i tshi khana na miṯa", "Vhafumakadzi wa wana vho fhesha mitsikwa". "Ndebvu dza vhakalaha dzi tshi fetwa". "u bata fhasi". "Nzhena ṋanga dza pinzana". "Maipfi a mutoli was ṋotshi". "Vha mu seisa nga marinini a vuluvulo ḽo lindela u shelwa mavu". The author uses alternative constructions. He uses the direct speech at times as alternate to the narrative form: "Tshiwanammbi a ri: "fhumulani khaladzi..." Munna a ri: "Mpheni ḽa vhoiwe ndi dahe". This form of presenting the characters makes the book interesting to the reader. The dialogues become lively and real. For fiction is first and foremost a story but in great fiction the story is subordinate to the rendering of life.

The book delves deep into the bases of Venda superstition and exposes the falsehood of this ignorance by applying Ludzimu which disproves that witchcraft which has been preferred against Tshiwanammbi is unfounded. It is based on lies and mere blackmail of the individual.

The story of Tsha Ri Vhone as the title of the book reveals viz "Let us see" what is hidden in the beliefs of the Vendas on superstitions. It is the Venda soul going through a transformation from ignorance to enlightenment. The ludzimu is an agent for the truth. It is not cheated or influenced by human wishes as it is always done at divination smell out processes.

When Tsha Ri Vhone is read with care and without prejudice its message namely that witchcraft is a man made fear and that when people get something that which follows truth no matter how bitter it may be, they will travel in this world without unfounded worries. The book probes into married life, into Venda superstition, Venda battles and by so doing gives us a mirror or a film of the development of the Venda from the ignorant stage to modern enlightenment.

This novel was followed by W.D. Makamu's NYABELE MUTHIA-VIVHO.

NYABELE MUTHIA-VIVHO : W.D. Makamu (1958)

(a) Plot:

In this book the author tried his hand at novel writing in Venda. The characters who appear in this book are rarely met in real life. We are given the story of Thanyani who starts as a herdboy and during his early work as a herdboy shows some responsibility. He leaves home like any other boy of his day to go and work at Kimberley where he picked up a diamond worth £2,000. He immediately became a rich man. The way he sold the diamond is very unconvincing for he did not know how to read and how to count such a large sum of money. When he came home with the money, we see him exhibiting that character of a man who just falls on wealth but does not know the use of money. It is not money that can do all or can make a person happy, other factors are necessary.

Your neighbours have a lot to do with your happiness if you live a full life. We meet the wife of Thanyani Nyabele although she was married by a rich man, she is very jealous. Her jealousy reveals to us the weakness of the character of Thanyani. Thanyani's money causes him unhappiness but at the same time reveals that deep rooted feelings of the Venda concerning property. The Venda sense of values is also brought out in the story of this book. Women predominate as property in a Venda society that is the reason that makes Thanyani marry many wives.

Thanyani despite the fact that he has been brought up in a Venda environment shows some shortcommings. The way he told his father about his marriage affairs is in opposition to Venda customs. The parents only hint that he should have married at his uncle's place. The parents also show some inconsistency because they were brought up in the Venda culture and they knew what preferential marriage was. They could have taken a stand and refused him permission to marry Nyabele. This attitude causes Thanyani all unhappiness in his married life.

Sometimes the author had nothing to say and therefore he deviates from the plot of the story and starts telling us about Nyabele's desertion: "Vhunga kale tshivenḓa tsho vha tshi tshi tendela zwenezwo". Here the author shows his shortcoming because he reveals that he was not well conversant with Venda law.

In his plot the author gets mixed up when it comes to the period during which the story is taking place. For instance, we are told about Thanyani's journey to Kimberley where he did not stay long not even a year and returns and comes and marries, when he was still a strong man who was working under his rich master Sir Lionel Philip, but when we read the letter that is written by Nyabele which was dated 1954, it really confuses the periods of the story and reveals that the author did not work out his plot well. The novel is an

organised and unified whole i.e. character and plot form a single unity. A plot is a plan of action of a play, a novel, a poem or a short story. The fact that a man can marry many wives in Venda is not surprising since it is in accordance with Venda law to marry more than one wife but when a Xhosa woman bit Nyabele and thereafter she left, and Nyabele after recovery also left with her children is not clear. Thanyani remains alone. He thought of returning to his parents. He found it was difficult too. When we are still surprised at that, we find that when the book ends we bid farewell to Thanyani who in all respects is a good fellow and he is a christian.

The story of Thanyani and his conversion to christianity is like an illustration of a Venda person who has gone through all the practices of his people and has evaluated them all and found that all of them are not better than the christian way of life. The infant stage of Thanyani depicts the early understanding of Christian principles and the second stage of Thanyani's life is the inner struggle of a Venda soul against the ties of Venda customs to free itself for the acceptance of Christianity and Christian living.

(b) Characters:

The book has many characters but the main characters are Thanyani and Nyabele the other characters are just included for the sake of making the story have people. The author has just introduced many people who have nothing to do with the story or plot.

(i) Thanyani

The author introduces Thanyani to the readers and as a very intelligent young man and his name indicates. He looks after his father's property very well with the result that he even earns a cow. He went to Kimberley where he picked up a diamond and sold it to a certain White man and received a lot of money (£2,000) of gold coins. It is stated that the money was very heavy but we are surprised

to learn that Thanyani carried it from Kimberley up to Vendaland on his shoulders without having a rest on the way. He is now a rich man and he is intelligent but only as far as spending the money is concerned. The money was too much for him with the result that he could have done something with it. He could have bought cattle since that was the wealth of the day. For him such a lot of money is for marrying wives and even dissipating it on drinks. He is unable to control his family and we wonder whether he was really intelligent. When Nyabele chases others (wives) he is not worried, he is busy drinking at beer parties. He devises no other plan of controlling Nyabele except to hit her grieviously. His wife's jealousy beats him altogether until he had to leave home. He is very weak as a head of the family.
He cannot settle his family affairs but relies on the Xhosa woman to do it for him. His conversion to the Christian religion seems to come from the fact that he had been disappointed in his marriages and therefore sought a haven in the church. His marriage to Maria the sister of David and his changing of his name from Thanyani to Daniel symbolises a complete change of his soul from the heathen practices to the Christian practices.

(ii) Nyabele

This is a wonderful woman for as a Venda Child who has been well brought up according to Venda custom should have known that a woman must have other women as her fellow beings. She seems to have no notion of that fact in her action towards other women. She is jealous of any woman who comes to her home. The mother-in-law tried to help her to get along with other women but she also failed because of the stubborness of her character. She regarded every old woman as untidy with the result that during her delivery period no old woman came as midwife. That the worth of any person is guaged by his/her interaction with other people in the community is true.

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She has evil plans which she uses against others in getting them chased away from Thanyani's home. She illtreats the other women and causes them to run away. She can tell lies and mislead others for her own protection. Even when the husband thrashes her, she does not improve her bad characteristics. Only the Xhosa woman could drive her away by means of illtreatment meted out to her. Nyabele is a symbol of all the bad women among the Venda who make life unpleasant, women who cause their husbands a lot of waste of their properties. The author wanted to show all the bad characteristics of the Venda women by portraying Nyabele in this story. Nyabele starts life in a bad way and she ends it in a bad way. She, however, shows that she has likes and dislikes but her jealousy outweighs all other good actions. She is more of a termagent than an average Venda woman who is jealous of other women going about with her husband. It is evident that the portrayal of Nyabele by the author was intended for the young to see that a bad character does not last and has no friends.

(iii) Raṱhogwa

Raṱhogwa is the father of Thanyani, he so likes his son that he even rewards him with a cow. He is a drunkard who does not want to keep a secret. He tells his wife everything and as such, he does not behave like a Venda man. A Venda man does not tell the wife everything but only those things which can be suitable for a woman. He does not even maintain Venda law or custom concerning his son's love affairs. It may be that he saw that the child had much money and therefore any move by him to reprimand the son will result in him not getting money for his low types of appetites. He is just a shadow father who performs no function to moderate the actions of his son. He typifies those shadow fathers who are little better than women or children. He has no authority in his own village. He does not shape the destiny of his children, actually, he is just a pawn

on which to hang the title of father of Thanyani. The character in a novel is one of the ways by which we can come to any knowledge of what passes in the minds of others by means of their words and actions.

(iv) Nyadzanga

This woman is Thanyani's mother. She is happy like any mother when the son had money. She feels proud that she can also boast of means at her disposal. She gets worried when Nyabele pushes her left and right until she gave it up and left home without regard to the safety of the grand children. She shows her parental feelings when she commands Thanyani's sister to help in Thanyani's home. She is also to blame in certain actions performed by Thanyani since she had also to do with his choice of a wife. As a good mother, she has made some efforts to dissuade her son when she knew that Nyabele, except that she was a girl, who had nothing that really made a girl a girl. She is an example of a reckless mother and such mothers are discouraged by the author.

(c) Literary Comments:

The author's style of presenting the story does not interest the reader since when every chapter starts, the reader is made aware of the result in that chapter. Reading it is just to confirm what one has already been informed about in the beginning of the chapter. The author indulges in unnecessary narrations of unrelated events and also unnecessary accounts of marriage customs.

The book abounds with proverbs which shows that the author had nothing to tell except to illustrate the proverbs. The proverbs in a book are nice but an over use of them renders the book less original and more didactic in its message. This makes this book confused in its arrangement.

When we read the beginning of the story we find that Rathogwa loves Thanyani and he has a lot of properties but what surprises us is that he only gives one head of

cattle to Thanyani to get himself a wife when he should have given him the full number for dzekiso (Lobola). This reveals that the author was not so versed in Venda custom.

The author sometimes uses the language properly. When he indicates that Nyabele was not a citizen of that area he says "Nyabele o vha e mudi kha shango helo" p. 13. The word mudi means that Nyabele was not well known there since she was foreign in that part of the country and indicates that the author chose an appropriate word for this description. When he describes the anger he says "... a sinyuwa sa daragoni lo tuturuswa nga tshigidi" p. 50, (he was so angered that he was like a dragon which had been missed by a gun). The writer can use the hyperbole when he says "... a hwala lwe ṋala dzawe dza vhuya dza ṱomowa dza nga dza Nebukadanetsara ..." p. 51. (he carried with the result that his nails even peeled off like those of Nebuchadnezzer). We also find good use of idiomatic expressions such as "... phukha dze vha laṱa nga murahu ha ńyamaanda dzo vha dzi na tshivhalo" p. 53. (the animals which thy buried behind Nyamaanda's hut were many). This means the children who died were buried as if they were outcasts. The writer can use exaggerationsin his language for he says "Nyabele vho mu ganulula mulomo nga phuluaere" (they opened Nyabele's mouth with a pair of pliers). By this kind of description the author wants us to realise that Nyabele was a bad character. The author uses one way or similar words in instances where women are chased away from Thanyani's home "... a mbo ḓi puta nnda dzawe ..." (she collected her lies and went away).

Some of the expressions do not fit into the story when they are used for persons: "Kuńwe kwana kwa vhuya kwa moḓa nga ndala" p. 59. (one of the children wilted away because of hunger). This word moḓa does not fit, the author should have used noka, for moḓa is used for plants and especially fruits which do not develop to maturity. He sometimes uses the word mathuko instead

of matsiko or mathina. If he had shown that the persons who were involved showed dialectal variants of the Venda language, one would permit him to deviate from standard Venda. Sometimes he uses foreign words in Venda idiomatic expressions: O mbo ḓi dzhena ḓaka nga ṱhoho a dimela" p. 69. The word dimela is a Pedi word for ngalangala and it is unnecessarily borrowed.

This book illustrates the story of a blundering Muvenda man who starts by not knowing where he is going to but through his blunders and by mere sympathy from other persons who are not directly concerned with his plight, helped him to find a good course in the streams of life. Thanyani is an embodiment of all that is bad of a Venda extravagant man and what befalls him thereafter. Thanyani was only lucky because he adopted Christianity which washed his earlier blunders and forgave his sins.

VHAVENDA VHO-MATSHIVHA : T.N. Maumela

(a) Plot:

The build of the district as well as its physical features are given in Chapter I. Wild animals are mentioned, as well as their activities, particularly when they are in search of food. The place where villages are situated is also given. Cattle paths which lead to the area earmarked for pasture, particularly in summer when fields have been ploughed down, have also been mentioned. Several big trees in the environment have been described.

Then follows the members of the family around which this story is centred, namely Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, his wives and children, some of whom are already married women. According to Venda standards, Old Matshivha, is a wealthy man, because he owns many cattle in addition to being in possession of a large sum of money. The story, however, ends with the tragic death of Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha,

who dies complaining about the unceremonious departure of his son, Thilivhali, who goes to the urban areas after having failed to get financial assistance from his father, so that he might marry the girl of his own choice, Luṱanyani. E.M. Forster says: "The plot, then is the novel in its logical intellectual aspect: it requires mystery, but the mysteries are solved later on: the reader may be moving about in worlds unrealized, but the novelist has no misgivings".[1] It may therefore not be out of order if side-issues should crop into the main theme because they help in completing the whole structure of the story.

In this book the conflict between old Venda custom and tradition clashes with the new approach to the affairs of love. Matshivha is an old conservative die-hard, and cannot sacrifice Venda culture for the interests of the youth. According to Venda custom parents are responsible for pairing their children in marriage. Both the young man and young woman dare not disregard the recommendations of their parents for that can never be reversed. For this reason Thilivhali's father, Matshivha, is not prepared to advance some money or cattle to him so that he might refund the lobola proceeds paid in respect of Luṱanyani by another family. He maintains that he cannot assist his son in this matter since, he says, according to Venda custom, Thilivhali can only get Luṱanyani as his second wife provided that he pays lobola out of his own coffers. He must wait for his fiancée until she becomes of age when he will be in a position to take her as his wife. (pages 13-15).

On the contrary, Thilivhali, whose mother has long died, cannot see the reason why his father cannot help him in this matter. When he realizes that the cattle (40 in number excluding calves) were got from the lobola price paid in respect of his three married sisters, he rages in fury. He complains that all this cruelty is meted out to him simply because he has no mother.

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1) Forster, E.M.: Aspects of the Novel, p. 92.

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"Iṱali ndi tshi khou ḓi zwi vhona nga maḓuvha zwauri a thi funiwi hafhano muṱani, ngauri afhu ndi si na mme na hone-vho. Izwi arali mme anga vho vha vhe hone ndo vha ndi tshi ḓo vhuya nda tambula nga u rali na?" (Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha; page 1, paragraph 3.) Yet if Thilivhali's melancholy remarks are directed to his step-mother it may not be accepted as a correct statement because Maluṱa practices no discrimination against him and even tries to plead with her husband on his behalf, but this is of course all in vain. Thilivhali loses temper and after having uttered unwelcome remarks to his father and step-mother, he dashes out of the village never to return until after his father's death. That night he goes to his elder sister's home and relates to her what has transpired between him and his father. This is the beginning of the conflict in the story and the family is divided into two camps, that of Matshivha and his wife Maluṱa, on the one side, and Thilivhali and his sisters on the other. Only Bele, Matshivha's sister, seems to take no sides, except her inclination to align herself with her brother, particularly during the period of his illness. Thilivhali eventually goes to the cities in search of employment. "Die intensiteit van indruk waarvan ons gepraat het, kan alleen verkry word deur doeltreffende bou. As ons weer een van ons voorbeelde beskou, dan vind ons daarin 'n verwikkeling (intrige) van een of ander soort, wat weer deur een of ander botsing ontstaan".[1)]

The three sisters, Maemu, Masindi and Nyamuneiwa take sides, and align themselves with their brother, Thilivhali. Maemu the eldest sister, however, takes the initiative and a feud precipitates between herself and her step-mother, Maluṱa. Maemu who believes in everything Thilivhali told her and that when he asked his father to give him the money, Maluṱa, twisted her mouth facing Old Matshivha, after which he decided not to advance any money to Thilivhali. Thus, estrangement pervades the family and

1) Malherbe, Dr. F.E.J.: Die Kortverhaal as kunsvorm - IV Die bou van die Kortverhaal (En Intrige) p. 56.

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the novel reaches the highest tension that causes suspicion between Matshivha and his children. The younger children, Ratshilumela and Maemu seem to notice nothing about the disorder that has invaded the family. They are too young to get involved in such matters. Ratshilumela, of course, assists his parents in errands particularly at the time of his father's illness. He remains in charge of ox-spans after Thilivhali's departure, but he is still too young to go it alone; so Raphalalani, Dzaga's son, joins Ratshilumela, and together they plough Matshivha's fields.

In this novel, several issues are involved, namely, the lack of confidence in the powers of healing received at hospitals and clinics, and the deep-rooted belief in the power of witch-doctors and the belief in witchcraft itself. The author introduces natural causes such as rain which fell while Matshivha and his wife Maluṱa were homeward-bound from their fields. The old man gets so wet that that night he had to sleep in the kitchen. This is the beginning of the illness that could not subside. Bele his sister, together with Maluṱa, make all attempts to get the assistance of witchdoctors, but without avail. And in the end they decide to take Matshivha to a mobile clinic at the local school. Matshivha, however, refuses to be taken to hospital, and together with his sister they walk slowly, arriving at home late in the evening. The old man becomes so worried about his son Thilivhali that he cannot help talking about him all the time. The illness reaches higher proportions and Matshivha's daughters are informed of it. When they arrive at their father's village, Bele, their aunt, rebukes but also praises them for having taken the trouble of coming to see their father, rather than make themselves a laughing-stock of the community because disputes or quarrels are not to be coupled with illness (p. 33, paragraph 4).

Matshivha does not only possess a lot of cattle, but also has at his disposal, the sum of R405.50 (£202.15s.0d.). This money is taken out of the leather bag and then counted before all members of the family. They suggest to Old Matshivha that the money be kept in the steel box which is in the hut but he does not accept their suggestion and places the leather bag under the pillow. (pp. 34 and 35). It is now that superstition attains its higher proportions and witchdoctors are called in, each and everyone of them telling his own story about the illness, and names of the potential suspects are suggested to members of the Matshivha family. In Venda society, wealth is envied by those who are in need and in the event of illness or death of that person, they are held with suspicion of being the trouble makers. Exchange of abusive remarks may also be smelled out; hence Mrs. Nyatshisevhe has been named as being one of the culprits because at one time she hired Matshivha's oxen to go and plough her field but they did not go. "I, muthu we a ḓa u dzi hira dzi si ye ndi Vho-Nyatshisevhe vha afho Tshiṱuni. Hu ḓi nga na mutupo wavho ndi Kwiṋḓa" (p. 38).

Man's failure to find an answer or solution to nature's inexplicabilities is said to have been a cause for his belief in the Supreme Being. For this reason, an appeal to the spirits of the family's ancestors is undertaken. Every primitive family in Vendaland has its own gods to whom some form of ancestor-worship is given.
Because Thilivhali does not return home from the cities, and that Matshivha's illness does not improve, Maemu the oldest among Matshivha's daughters performs the 'u phasa' ceremony (p. 36, paragraph 3). In the same way, it is according to Venda custom that after the death of a member of the family a trip to the mungome must be undertaken. The failure to do so may have serious repercussions on the part of the family concerned because the Chief's court may declare that it is they who have bewitched the deceased member of the family. Some of the recitals of the mungome are, however, very interesting because, they

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are full of humorous utterances, stories of which it is difficult to believe, yet the author re-echoes them in a lively manner; e.g.:

> "Hone no tshinya nge na sia muloi hayani nandi. Nna hone ni tshi kha ḓi bva hayani ni tshi ḓa ngeno, a no ngo vhona muthu wa tshilume a tshi' u ni vhona a mbo ḓi pambutshela thungo na?"
>
> "Siyavuma, mungome!"
>
> "O vha a songo ḓi-vhofha khundu nga nowa ya tsikuhuvhili? Izwi ṱhaṅwe a si muloi na?"
>
> "Izwo a ri zwi ḓivhi, na ṋowa a ro ngo i vhona. Muthu ene ro mu vhona." A ano ralo ndi mme. (p. 73, last three paragraphs). The translation of the above quoted dialogues is as follows:
>
> "But your mistake is that you have left the witch at home. Immediately after you had left home on your way to this place, did you not see a male person who, upon seeing you turned aside?"
>
> "Siyavuma, mungome!" (We agree mungome!)
>
> "Had he not girdled his waist with a blind snake? Is he perhaps not the very wizard?"

The most interesting recital is on page 75, where the mungome tells his visitors that Matshivha's money is there and that it has been buried in the ground, but he goes on to say that when he says it is there, he is just saying so because the notes (banknotes) have all been soiled. The coins which were buried at a different spot have been swallowed by an antbear which came and dug there where the money was buried. "But why did you delay in coming to me? After having discovered that the money was missing, why didn't you come to me immediately? I might have helped you recover it immediately". While the author might have heard the mungome himself smelling out some of his visitors, he has to be given some credit for the arrangement made in the book. In this book, the treatment on witchcraft has been well done more than is the case in TSHILILO. After, having finally been told about the persons who bewitched Matshivha, the party agreed upon not divulging those persons' names, and as regards the chief's court, they will say that death has been caused by

the spirits of their ancestors. This is the procedure which is generally followed in Venda society. The money which was hidden by Matshivha was later found on the roof of the barn after it had been blown off by the wind.

(b) Characterization and characters

"The speciality of the novel is that the writer can talk about his characters as well as through them or can arrange for us to listen when they talk to themselves".[1] In Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, Maumela's fourth book, the author has taken a new turn in so far as character depiction is concerned. In her literary critique Marjorie Boulton says: "The novel of character brings out the contrast between appearance and reality, between people as they present themselves to society and as they are. The dramatic novel shows that both appearance and reality are the same, and that character is action, and action character".[2] Although Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha is a novel based on one family, the author has been sucessful in preparing a plot in which there is conflict and extreme tension. The quarrel between father and son, namely, Matshivha and Thilivhali, precipitates into something that almost causes estrangement of the members of the family and eventually develops into an explosion when Thilivhali commits arson - quite a rare crime in Venda society. While still alive, his father was equally tough and would never move an inch at the expense of Venda custom and tradition for the sake of pleasing a boy. In spite of all this difference in opinion between father and son, the novel almost attains the level of a tragedy. One, however, doubts whether Thilivhali had any idea about the total value of forty head of cattle which at that time could have been more than that number, for, it has been said that calves were not included in that total. His temperament is such that if one hears that he has been committed for trial

1) Forster, E.M.: Aspects of the Novel, p. 81
2) Boulton, M.: The Structure of the Novel, p. 47.

for murder one may not doubt the truth about such news.

The women characters are all true to their nature.

(i) Bele

Bele, old Matshivha's sister, is typical of a blood-relative. When information about her brother's illness reaches her, she wastes no time in going to his village. She is in fact the one who tries all kinds of medicines and ends by persuading her brother to go to the clinic. When Bele returns with herbs from the witch-doctor, Tshusa, who lives at Mukhwatoni, she says:

> "Naho zwo ralo, nne ndi vhona uri ndi khwine ri tshi thoma u edzisa nga hei ya vhenevha maine. Huno arali ra vhona zwi tshi kunda-ha, vhunga muthu e ndou a sa tshili nga muri muthihi, ndi hone ri tshi do ruma muthu Tshiulungoma u vhidza maine wanga Vho-Nengudza".1)

Bele even manages to restore peace and tranquility in the family after she had rebuked her brother's daughters for first absenting themselves from their father's home. Together, with Maluta her brother's wife, they shoulder the responsibility of looking after Matshivha throughout his illness until his death. Maluta is in fact one of the few Venda women married in a polygamous marriage who look after orphans well.

Thilivhali's accusation of his step-mother, Maluta that she exercised her influence over his father using signs so that he ended by refusing to give him financial assistance is unfounded.

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, p. 32.

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(ii) Maluṱa

Maluṱa is of a calm disposition and respected her aged husband at all times. She is also trustworthy, for had she been unreliable, she would have embezzled Matshivha's money without any possibility of it being traced at all. Her children, too, seem to have been well brought up for they show no signs of misbehaviour such as may be seen in pampered children.

(iii) Ratshilumela

Ratshilumela is a boy on whom one can rely. During his father's illness, he is the one sent to call witch-doctors who were living nearby or even to inform relatives and neighbours about his father's death. As a herdboy he looks after his father's cattle well and nowhere in the book does one hear of their having strayed to people's fields.

(iv) Maemu

The three Matshivha's daughters by his first marriage also possess human characteristics. Although very little is heard about them, they too react to situations as real human beings do. They can be angry when occasion for such behaviour arises, and they can also become sympathetic to the core. They all react vehemently after hearing that their father is not prepared to assist Thilivhali, their only brother; and their eldest sister, Maemu, even goes to the extent of exchanging bitter words with her step-mother, Maluṱa, to the extent that her father threatens to assault her. Yet, she is the one who is given the responsibility of appeasing the family gods in order that peace might once more reign in the family. She, too joins the party to

Phafula and hears for herself who the culprits of her father's death are.

(v) Malade

There are still a few minor characters in this book left out which, although they are not fully depicted, yet, the part they play also adds something to the workmanship of the whole story. The author does not tell the reader anything about Malade, who is a younger brother to Matshivcha, until after Thilivhali burns down his father's village. Malade, however, plays a very important part in repairing the roofs of the huts of his late brother's village which were burned down. He also takes a part in the trip to the Mungome at Phafula, and when the party returns home, he gives a full report of all proceedings to his sister Bele and other members of the family. The mungome is what one may call a Bantu psychologist. Immediately a group of people arrives at his residence, he studies their appearance and arranges them according to their physical features. To them he is a wonderful man, who has the ability to differentiate people from each other and even group them according to their potential relationship. In his smelling-out practices, the mungome does not straight-away tell them who the culprits are, but he uses the method of supposition, and then listens to the manner of their answering. If they should lay some emphasis on some of the points he mentioned, he then sticks on them. If he realises that the response on the part of the audience is somewhat weak, he drops the point concerned. Much has already been said about the tricks of the mungome in the previous paragraphs, so that this discussion on characterization may be closed.

Furthermore, it should be noted that it is a characteristic of Venda daughters to demand some service from their sisters-in-law as a form of recognition of the fact that the cattle paid in lieu of brides concerned accrued from them. For that reason, their brothers'

wives are expected to stamp mealies on their behalf as some form of homage. Recently, this practise is fading away, because the brothers concerned put a firm stand against this custom.

(c) Literary Comments:

In as far as style is concerned, the author has once more attained, though a little heightened, what he exhibited in Mafangambiti. In Elelwani and in Tshililo, his diction has been said to be somewhat faulty, while in Mafangambiti he does not only make his people (characters) speak, but the language they use is polished and representative of that language spoken in the environment.

In Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, much use has been made of dialogue in which idiomatic expressions as well as idioms and proverbs have been introduced. This heightens the quality of the language as flat sentence constructions are avoided. The ability to use a heightened form of expression can also be heard in the speech of primitive members of the community; so that it will soon be realized that not only is the ability to speak Venda well the prerogative of literate individuals, but even illiterates have been endowed with such qualities. The author will, however, do well to avoid unnecessary descriptions whose aim may seem to be the desire to increase the size of the novel. This is not necessary because quality is not quantity. The repetitions and descriptions used by the author in the chapter where Matshivha and his sister Bele return home from the clinic reduces the reader's interest in the narration; and although dialogue has been used, the attention and the desire to read are somewhat lowered. The following are examples of some of the beautiful examples of satisfactory diction found in this novel:

'ludzul: mukoto' - short-live glory (p. 21);
'ṱhoho i a lwa-vho na mutsinga?' - can one pick up a quarrel with one's seniors? (particularly parents);

'ndi a dza' - I doubt it (p. 24);
'imiwa-imiwa' - get witchdoctors for sick person (p. 22);
'zwithu zwo tou shumiwaho' - this is the result of witchcraft;
'u ḓo amba a sa fhedzi' - he will get into difficulties (p. 33);
'zwe vhutoto' - his aims came to nought.
'nthihi yadzo i tshi tou vhonala na mutumbu' - more than lean (p. 42);
'iṱali muthu i ndou i sa tshili nga muri muthihi' - a patient uses any herb (medicine);
'vha vha fhaṱise muḓi' - to help them dig the grave (p.57);
Ideophonic expressions have also been sufficiently used such as: dzi (reguit), thesu (of the sun, which is believed to move, hence afternoon), ńońońo, ńońońo (doodstil)
(N.B. the Afrikaans version of ideophonic expressions has been given because of their preciseness).

In spite of an obvious improvement in his style, the author should, however, guard against altering the diction of proverbs, since this alteration affects their poetic diction, etc. Throughout books that have been appreciated, one realises that the author sticks to the colloquial usage of 'afhu" instead of 'hufha'. Syllabic nasals have also not been considered. e.g. 'mbudza' instead of 'mmbudza', 'nḓivha' instead of 'nnḓivha'. In conclusion, it will not be out of place to state that in spite of the above-quoted defects, the style surpasses by far that used in books that preceded Vhavhenda Vho-Matshivha.

In Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, the author has been successful in bringing home the fact that in spite of its hold on its youths, Venda custom has to give way to the forces of acculturation. Present-day Venda youths rebel against the dictates of custom and tradition. It is also according to Venda custom and tradition that after the death of a family member, a trip to the mungome has to

be undertaken to go and find the cause of death of the deceased. The failure to do this may result in strained relationship between the rulers (chief, headman) and the bereaved, and this may lead to their expulsion from the area under the jurisdiction of that particular headman or chief. The strict secrecy about the Mavuse family who have been strongly suspected of having bewitched Old Matshivha, is also in accordance with Venda custom and tradition. In this book therefore, the author has achieved much success in bringing into the reader's mind that although it was at one time very powerful and influential, Venda custom is on the verge of extinction.

Much has already been mentioned concerning the craftsmanship of the author, and he has to a large measure achieved his aims. But in spite of all this, Maumela's tendency to include in his books a number of side-issues merely helps to increase the number of pages. This, of course, is the result of his desire to make use of descriptions even where they may not be necessary. One is also left with some doubt regarding Thilivhali's desertion of his father's village after having burned down all dwellings, barring the barn, which if his severe temper is taken into consideration, would not have had remained. Nothing has been said about his father's cattle which under normal conditions, he would have sold to butchers and made off with the money.

VHUHOSI VHU TOU BEBELWA : T.N. Maumela (1961)

(a) Plot:

The story opens with a conversation between Ndaedzo and Tshinakaho. Ndaedzo proposes to Tshinakaho for marriage but Tshinakaho promises to accept his proposal on condition that he will become a chief. It is now seven months ever since his father Ragaḓa died. Tshinakaho's promise that she will accept Ndaedzo's proposal for marriage provided that he succeeds his father as chief, serves as an incentive to urge him on this matter.

He is almost certain that he will ascend to the throne because the eldest child in his father's family, Londolani, is a girl and according to Venda custom ascension to the throne in certain families is the prerogative of the sons. There is however, a younger brother to him namely Mulindathavha who hails from a third house.

Chief Ragada of Ngwenda was already very old when he died. His village was very large and its description has been fully given. His death is mourned by all his subjects. After the information about the cause of Ragada's death, members of the family assembled amongst whom the following were present: Mantsha, the late chief's brother, Mukondeleli, his sister and Londoloani his daughter. They agreed that the information be sent to the paramount chief Thavhakhulu at Thangadzivha, Mubvumela one of the local headmen is also present. Ndaedzo arrived and told them about the advent of Tshikovhi, Ngwedzeni's former husband. Ngwedzeni is a daughter to Mantsha Ndaedzo's uncle. Tshikovhi demands the refund of his cattle and other goods paid to Mantsha as lobola price for Ngwedzeni. Her new husband cannot make ends meet as far as the refunding of Tshikovhi's property is concerned. Each party brings in witnesses.

The messengers sent to Thavhakhulu, the paramount chief return home with the message that he wanted to know who the successor to Ragada's throne is and that he should be informed immediately so that he may appoint a day on which the heir could be installed.

Mantsha who is quite aware of the fact that according to the royal lobola cattle Ndaedzo does not qualify for such an ascension, goes to him at night and acquaints him with the tidings from the paramount chief. The two agree in principle to divert the ascension from the direct or rightful one. According to the royal cattle the chieftainship belongs to Mulindathavha. Mantsha is in dire need of money with which to pay

Tshikovhi's lobola cattle. Ndaedzo is ready to advance Mantsha with such money on the condition that he be installed as chief.

Mantsha succeeds in turning the tables over to Ndaedzo and Ndaedzo eventually gets installed as chief and thus he married Tshinakaho as his wife. He is so reckless and tactless that every body becomes dissatisfied with his rule. Ever since the installation of Ndaedzo as chief at Ngwenda, the two women, Mukondeleli and Londolani fight ceaselessly in trying to correct the anomaly. Meanwhile Ndaedzo's wife Tshinakaho influences him to demand his money from Mantsha. Matters come to a head that even Thavhakhulu the paramount chief is made to understand that the installation of Ndaedzo as chief of Ngwenda is wrong. The court gives judgment that Mantsha should refund the money to Ndaedzo. Mantsha approaches Mukondeleli and Londolani to whom he apologises for having influenced the decision of the succession to Ndaedzo's way. They got reconciled and decided to depose Ndaedzo from the chieftainship of Ngwenda.

The introduction of Tshinakaho as the person who was behind everything that Ndaedzo did, is not quite convincing. Venda girls are usually shy and, may not make such demands on young men who propose marriage to them. At the same time a typical Venda young man may not dance to the tune of a girl. The love affair between Ndaedzo and Tshinakaho is quite possible particularly when one sees Ndaedzo visiting her and whiling the time with her till late at night. Ndaedzo meets nocturnal animals on his way home. This serves as a link with what is to take place between Ndaedzo and Tshinakaho and Mantsha. The love overtures are quite appropriate.

Although Ndaedzo might have had other ulterior motives for wishing to attain chieftainship, his love for Tshinakaho also acts as an incentive. He is, however not aware of the Venda custom that ascension to the throne is determined by the royal cattle.

According to this custom Mulindathavha his younger brother is the next chief. This is the reason why his mother leaves the head kraal with her son and goes to stay at a far off place. This is in accordance with the beliefs of the tribe that if the heir to be is kept at the head kraal he might be bewitched.

The fact that Ragada had almost reached the age of 100 years when he died depends on the good health of the individual concerned. The Venda who look upon their chiefs as temporal as well as spiritual leaders are believed to administer to them herbs which possess some sterilising properties. The chief is usually given three chances of producing his progeny. After this, he is placed in the so-called "u pembela" ceremony (the ceremony where a chief is made impotent) thus they believe he becomes immunised against all dangers of early death resulting from sexual intercourse.

Although women are generally believed to be weak physically, Venda women are until recently proving their worth in that they are the deciding factor in matters of succession to chieftainship. This is due to the fact that they alone can trace the history of the lobola cattle which are responsible for getting the royal brides.

When Mulindathavha replaces Ndaedzo as chief, it confirms the truth that chieftainship has its origin in the birth-right, becomes fulfilled.

(b) Characters:

(i) Londolani

There is not much that can be said about characterisation in this book. Only the two women characters Mukondeleli and Londolani behave like human beings. They cannot tolerate the family disorder that has been brought about by Ndaedzo's installation.

Londolani is a strong willed woman for she says after Ndaedzo had been installed:

"Ndi ṱoḓou amba muṅwe na muṅwe a re fhano khoroni a tshi khou mpfa: Zwaṋu iwe vhathu ni songo pfa zwine vha khou amba havha vhavhili vha no ri vho ruṅwa nga Vho-Thavhakhulu. Hoyo Ndaedzo o dzudzwaho hafha vhuhoṣini hovhu a si hawe, ndi hanga nṋe ndi ambaho".[1]

Although this woman appears late in the story when the family is in disorder, her unwavering attitude makes her appear natural and sincere.

(ii) Mukoṋdeleli

She is also adamant in her convictions. She sides with Londolani in her stand against the wrongful chief who has been installed at Ngwenda. She disagrees with Mantsha on many points until Mantsha sees her point of view and gets reconciled with her and both corrected the anomaly. She struggled for Mulindathavha until she saw him become chief at the end.

(iii) Mantsha

He is an unreliable uncle who is easily bribed by money. He is however a flexible human being who is prepared to change his mind after strong presentation of true facts about a matter. His character as a receiver of bribes stems out of dire need of money for 'necessity knows no law' they say in English. Mantsha could be exonerated from this irregularity because in Venda society some of the members of the royal family have always tried to have the rightful heir by-passed although the truth ultimately prevailed. The fact that Mantsha connived with Londolani and Mukoṋdeleli to have Ndaedzo deposed in favour of Mulindathavha is acceptable because quarrels do occur between persons who once held similar principles even wrong ones. This happens even between states or individuals in modern society. Mantsha shows some human qualities in him. He acknowledges his mistakes and he can see a thing in a new light. He causes the conflict but he is prepared to resolve it.

1) Maumela, T.N.: Vhuhosi vhu tou Bebelwa, p. 29.

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(iv) Ndaedzo

He is an unfaithful person who cheats by bribes. He does not hold strong convictions about love and even about life. He is a hen-pecked husband who does not decide for himself or act in accordance with the dictates of his mind. He is always directed by his wife whom he got, not through love but because he is a chief. He is directed from the kitchen and therefore the expression in Venda that "Dza endwa nga tsadzi dzi wela luombeni" becomes true. He fails badly as a chief because his wife was ruling and not himself.

(v) Ragada

Very little is heard about Ragada who should have been sensible when he died. The fact that he was liked by all his subjects may not be disputed because they all mourn his death. He plays a very little part in the story. He should have left behind him strong followers who had convictions about the chieftainship. He is not a real person who has flesh and blood.

(c) Literary Comments:

In Vhuhosi Vhu Tou Bebelwa the author has been successful in supporting the view that the royal lobola cattle determine among other things the rightful successor to the Venda throne. This is what is still obtaining in the Venda community where failure to observe this tradition may cause some terrible disturbances within the community let alone faction fights which usually resulted before the arrival of the White man in Vendaland.

Ndaedzo and his wife Tshinakaho suffer so much humiliation that they secretly leave the head kraal a night before Mulindathavha is installed. This is what usually happens when the deposition of chiefs takes place. The deposed chief together with his followers go to other places far away from the jurisdiction of the newly installed chief as refugees. This strikes deep into the Venda problem of blood relationship.

Despite the fact that a chief can be deposed at times but the spirit of blood is thicker than water prevails and the deposed chief is recalled and be given some area where he can be regarded as of royal birth.

The deposition of chiefs is usually effected by officials of the Department of Bantu Administration whose duties is to see that justice is implemented and tranquility is maintained.

Thavhakhulu the author's paramount chief is typical of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner who has Departmental mandate to investigate into matters affecting succession.

Tshinakaho's insistance upon Ndaedzo that she will accept his marriage proposal on the condition that he becomes chief is rather doubtful. A claimant to the throne may do so without having entered into an agreement with a girl about a love affair. Ndaedzo's attempt to speak some form of broken English in the desire to acquire some self-glorification, could have been left out, as those words do not contribute anything towards the taste of the Venda language.

The story opens with the use of dialogue between Tshinakaho and Ndaedzo about a love affair but not only does one find such usage between such characters alone, for dialogues are entered into between Ndaedzo and his uncle Mantsha, Tshikovhi and Mukoṋdeleli.

In this book the characters are many, although many of them do not qualify as such, but they make use of the direct speeches. Thavhakhulu the paramount chief, his councillors, Mukoṋdeleli and Londolani make use of the dialogue when finding out ways and means of removing Ndaedzo from the throne.

It has been stated elsewhere in the discussion that the author has the inclination to make unnecessary descriptions. In this book the description about nocturnal animals such as the antbear which Ndaedzo sees on his way home from Tshinakaho's home for

courtship have been portrayed beautifully. The incidents which take place during the installation of Ndaedzo have been well treated. What has been said about the author's sentences, which are merely clauses or phrases, has not been excessively applied in this book.

Use has also been made of proverbial and idiomatic expressions. The following are such examples: "Nṉe a thi funi u ṱwa ndo bandiswa" p. 19, "Naa vhone Vho-Khotsimunene ṉamusi who dzhenwa ngani" p. 36, a re nṉe a thi vhuyi nde kope ....." p. 37, "a hu nga vhuyi ha vha na zwiṅwe ....." p. 45, "vhakale iṱali vho ḓi amba vha ri a i dzwaleli nnzhini", p. 101.

By such expressions in a book of this type, the language makes this book a contribution to the achievement in Venda Literature.

MMANGA MAWELEWELE : E.S. Madima (1962)

(a) Plot:

This is the second book among the novels that Madima wrote. We are told about the layout of the land of Furaulale. This land, the author depicted it as one of the countries in Vendaland. The story is based on two types of persons amongst the Vendas namely the Christian type and the heathen type. It is evident that the Christians despise the heathens. This is revealed by the author in the characters of Mawelewele and Alway or Ailweyi. Mawelewele's life is not a pleasant one from birth although he comes from a Christian home. His behaviour makes him unpopular among the people.

We see this when the teacher said that the pupils should look at her and when she asked questions which were not irrelevent and Mawelewele just said "levhentini" (elevenths) which is not there. This does not please the teacher that is why the teacher asked him thereafter.

His bad manners towards the heathen children are revealed when he provoked a certain girl at school. After school he fought with the girl but the girl defeated him. When he was defeated he started using abusive language and calling the girl's father names and even stating that the father of the girl eats baboons. His sense of despising others is really deep rooted and he even shows it when he does not take good advice from the old men.

At school he is less intelligent, he cannot even do simple arithmetic. The only subject he could attempt was English. His great interest was in sports and singing. Even Ailweyi who started school after him passes his examination and leaves Mawelewele behind. This caused Mawelewele to discontinue schooling and to resort to boxing until he left for the cities to go and look for work. The "makgoweng motif" is expressed here by the author when he sent Mawelewele to town.

He returned after some time and found Ailweyi was already a teacher but he is now a drunkard who plays a guitar. He went to the army for a short while but he boasts too much until one man advised him to keep quiet since he did not know anything about military life. He likes to show off at any moment but to his detriment.

Towards the end of the book he improves a little and appears to be well behaved and he even marries and eventually takes up ministry as a profession.

In this book the author wants to demonstrate to us that Christians should not despise the heathens for the heathens may be converted and become better Christians or the children of heathen parents may do better than children from Christian homes educationally. This is demonstrated by the progress made by Ailweyi at school, who even surpasses Mawelewele as far as good conduct is concerned. It also points out that even if a child is born in a Christian family he or she may become a heathen in other respects. The title of the book is

"Mmanga Mawelewele" which means to admire him. This is borne out by the fact that at school he used to surpass all in High Jump, and indeed every one liked him, even the teachers liked him for he raised the name of the school to fame. Therefore we can realise that the title of the book agrees with the characterization of the chief character. Especially when we find that the book ends in Mawelewele becoming a minister of religion. The acts which are performed by the christians are praised in this book too. The good way in which the Christians receive their guests is very praiseworthy.

(b) Characters

(i) Mawelewele

This is the chief character in this book. He is a boastful person who is full of scorn for others. He looks down upon others and this is revealed when he did not greet the old men at Ailweyi's place. When they got offended by his rude manners and started picking up a quarrel with him he does not listen to them and he says: "Hee vhaṱhannga, ni vhudze zwikalaha zwa haṋu, nda zwi vhona ha hashu tshiṅwe ndi ḓo tou tshi fara nga vhudebvu nda tshi fha feisi nthihi tsha ganama" (you gentlemen you should tell your little old men that if I see them at our place, I will catch hold of one of them by his beard and box him until he lies flat on his back). We also see him as a humourous person because of his boastfulness. This is demonstrated by the High jump event which he thought he could still clear as he used to do in his school days but he could not, despite the many trials he was given. He eventually undressed thinking that his clothes hindered him from clearing the height. The people laughed a great deal when they saw a man trying hard to the point of undressing. He is an impetuous person who likes to fight, he fought the girl from Magwiṋgwi but he was defeated. Here the author wants to show that a person who appears

physically weak can do wonderful things when he is faced with a serious situation like the girl faced in the fight with the strong boy like Mawelewele.

Mawelewele is a liar; we see this when he is at a beer party drinking when he started to tell lies about the stories of the war. He was interrupted by a certain man and then stopped.

He is a full human being because when the book nears the end he changes his character like any other person who learns from experience. His character illustrates something deep in the human race viz. the bad characteristics of a person do not condemn him for ever but with growth and maturing, a person can change for the better. His character is the Venda soul travelling from the heathen state to the Christian state. It is the change of the Venda nation from paganism to Christianity.

(ii) Ailwei or Alway:

Ailwei is a person who is liked by readers, he can relate the story. If it was not because of this Alway the book Mmanga Mawelewele would not have started the way it had done. The manner of speaking of Alway reveals the author's feelings and aspirations. He is a persevering person, we see him attending school until he qualified as a teacher at the school where he attended. He is a person who is fond of jokes, we see this when he closed Mawelewele in the hut and then shouted saying that there was a person who was stealing, although even this does not fit very well. In exception of this, we do not see Alway's mistakes as a character, he is a good person, he respects the old people. He works well with other pupils at school. It appears the author is Alway, for he portrays him as an example of that which he likes or dislikes to see in a good child. He uses Alway to satirize the heathens and Christians alike. He has not completely drawn this character as he should have done. He is not involved

in the fights that took place. He does not show envy when he is amongst other pupils. The other pupils do not talk too much of him as an aggressor or as a coward, he narrates all that the others do. His human qualities are shown by his manner of narrating the whole story.

(iii) Maambazwivhuya

This is the minister whom we meet in this book. He is a devoted minister who does his work conscientiously and he is respected by the people in his environment. The day on which the mad man fought the people we see Maambazwivhuya persuading the mad fellow by means of prayer. Here, the author reveals the character of this minister and as such the character of all the missionaries who worked in Vendaland at that time. It agrees with the story of this book for Maambazwivhuya was himself the "light" of the Christians. It is through this light that progress came to Vendaland through the missionaries who were White. Had it not been the efforts of these devoted benefactors of the Venda speaking people, the Venda nation would still be a primitive nation.

(iv) Mafhalatombo

This does not matter so much, we just see him as a person who does not influence the story or the plot. He only represents cruelty exhibited by men towards boys when the boys do not look well after the live stock. This man fits well in the plot because the life of a boy must have some episodes of herding. His treatment of the boys by "scratching" the stone reveals to us the character of the boys too. A boy who is less persevering will run away. This was the case with Mawelewele.

In the depiction of character, Madima has some short comings which become evident. He gives us the general idea that if a character is good he will remain like that right through. The narrator Alway is all out for good with the result that we do not know him well

because, we do not know how he behaves when he is provoked. The character who is bad to the author remains bad and he rarely changes for good. The only exception to this is Mawelewele who changes his character at the end of the book. Maybe it was because he came from a Christian family and therefore the concept of treating the children in a good way unto the tenth generation applies, in his case and not to the others. There is very little intrigue in this book which would reveal the complexity of life in a Venda community. The characters are streamlined by the plot and they have to conform to the conclusion which seems to have been drawn before the story began.

(c) Literary Comments:

The great shortcoming of this book is its lack of chapters. The book just flows from the beginning to the end as one chapter. This makes the story of the book not to have significant points which stand out as important hills and valleys in the whole story.

The author satirises teachers in the account where the teacher, when he saw a bevy of birds and was embarrased by the presence of the inspectors just asks the pupils the number of birds. The inspectors after that also did not listen to his teaching because they realised that the teacher had not prepared his lessons. It is a great lesson to those who train as teachers to mind their work and to do it conscientiously.

The episode where Mawelewele undressed may be a lesson that a person can expose himself by talking too much about himself. This reveals at the end that a talkative person is empty and that he talks on topics on which he is ignorant. When the people discover that you have been vain they despise you and they lose respect for you.

The language of the author in this book is not very bad but it is not as good as it should have been. The author, however, does use the pure form of the Venda idiom. He says: "...vha tshi u pembela vha vhungedzana

nga zwikapa na madzhasi" (p. 3) (They danced while covering one another with coats). The word vhungedzana makes the readers get the feeling that the dancers were intimate and they were happy. It also brings out the meaning that the age group was the right one, it was not a mixed age group. The idiomatic expressions are used appropriately too: "Vha ḓo lala 'vho tou vhibva sa vhathu vho ṱwaho mugoboni". (They will sleep as if they were people who had spent the whole day sowing in a wet field). The expression "vho tou vhibva" brings out the meaning of total tiredness or totally overworked. He gives us a picture of the angle of the sun when he says: "Ḓuvha... ḽa maora pfeṋe". When he describes the love between individuals he says: "... we a vha tshi nga tou ḽisana mare" (He was like whose saliva he had swallowed) (p.15) When he describes a careless person he says: "Zwanḓa zwo simiṱhela maswa na mulomo wo khakhaṱhela" p. 25 (hands smeared with porridge and the mouth clotted with pieces of porridge) By using such forms of the Venda idiom, the author makes the reader enjoy the language of the book and he reads it with pride and adoration.

Madima uses the ideophone appropriately: "... mililo ya lala i tshi nzhenzhema p. 31. (the fires kept ablaze). The author can describe graphically p. 35.
Here, the imagery created by these words is superb.

He uses proverbs and idiomatic expression with precision: "A sa pfaniho na uyo mulayo muswa dzi mbo ḓi ḓala matemba" p. 13 (This means he can go). Madima has a good command of the Venda idiom, hear him here: "Makole a tevhekana riṋe ro ḓi farana nawo wa pfunzo" p. 30. His use of ideophones cannot be undermined. Listen to what he says: "Khathihi fhedzi ndi pfa 'kha', fhasi 'kubudu' miṅwedzi miṱanu na muthihi 'da'" p. 38 (at once I heard 'kha' down fell and five months finished). "A mbo ḓi na mukalaha wa mukalanga 'gwagwa' (He met a Shona old man straight).

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He sometimes uses words which are borrowed unnecessarily. He says "Ḓanu u ima mani" p. 39 (just wait for a while) instead of saying imani zwaṋu "une nda u shuma ndi wa vhukhingi" instead of saying "une nda u shuma ndi wone-wone".

Another aspect of this book which comes out clearly in the reader's mind is that the author would like to present Christianity to the people above all other convictions. For he says "Zwo bvelelaho kerekeni ni a zwi ḓivha, na vha sa athu u zwi vhona vha ḓo zwi ḓivha wonoyo musi une vha ḓo ṱangana nazwo" p. 56. By so saying, he takes it for granted that every one should go to church where he or she will get an explanation.

The author offers a personal prayer through the characters: "Dzinani ḽa Yesu Kristo, Saṱhane nga shavhe zwino, Mudzimu shuma nga woṱhe Muṋe wanga, Iwe wo fanelwaho nga thendo, nga hu sa fheliho... Amen". It may be that this is the reason why he makes Mawelewele to turn to ministry as a profession.

This confirms the plot namely that no matter what the deviation is for a Christian child, at the end, he will come to the path that he led when he was still an infant.

Mmanga Mawelewele is a book that is different from the other Venda Novels in that it is a satire on the teaching profession. Its message in short may be stated as follows: "Teachers prepare for your work and do not over expect your children that they will be like you in the future".

ZWA MULOVHA ZWI A FHELA : T.N. Maumela (1963)

(a) Plot:

The story opens with the description of Malilele's wife, Laṱani. Malilele works in the urban areas and only comes home during long holidays. Malilele's village is situated at a place called ha Matshidze. Mention has also been made of the foot path that leads

to the spring. Malilele's village is one of the villages situated at an area called Tshagivheni.

Latani, Malilele's wife has a son called Vhangani who is already attending school. On a certain Monday, Latani takes her calabash and goes to draw water at the spring. She becomes feverish and lies down. Mukumela a visitor in that area arrives at the spring. She helps in the carrying of the calabash on Latani's behalf. This was the beginning of friendship.

Mukumela's husband Shandukani is at this time insane. Latani advances a love affair to her friend Mukumela on behalf of her husband, the proposal is readily accepted. Malilele is informed of the proceedings and eventually accepts Mukumela as his second wife. Lobola is paid in respect of Mukumela and this is refunded back to her former in-laws. Mukumela's hut is built and later on she follows Malilele in the urban areas. Her son Ntakuseni remains with his aunt, Nyadzanga. Later, on, she returns home and a few months thereafter she gives birth to a son called Thanyani.

For a while the two women live together in peace until Ntakuseni, Makumela's son is hurt by hailstones during a severe hailstorm. Superstitious beliefs crop in and the gap between the two women widens after Latani has been accused of witchcraft. Malilele aligns himself with his second wife Mukumela. In the end, Latani and her son Vhangani are expelled and they go and stay at Maangani. Vhangani finds it difficult to walk to school at Ha-Sendedza and goes to stay with Mudzunga, Khakhu's wife, who is troublesome.

Malilele goes away together with his second wife and children to Ha-Galavhanda, in search of pasture for his stock. He contracts T.B. after which Mukumela deserts him and returns to her former husband, who has now regained sanity. His son Vhangani is now an ambulance driver at the Gulukunwe Hospital. He is given instructions to go and fetch a patient at Ha-Galavhanda. He discovers that the patient is his own father. Malilele asks Vhangani to tell

his mother that he (Malilele) wishes to come and stay with her, but she is determined never to have anything to do with him. Malilele eventually dies a disappointed man after having lost all his cattle.

The fact that Bantu men leave their homes and go to urban areas in search of work leaving their women folk in charge of their villages, is in accordance with what is going on in Vendaland and other Bantu areas where work for migratory labour and other forms of employment is lacking. The recruits return home at the end of their term of service contract. Ordinary workers usually return home during the Easter Holidays and Christmas holidays. At this time huts are renovated and white-washed in preparation for the return of their husbands. Laṱani is typical of such a women who looks after their husbands property.

The plan of the villages at ha Matshidze and Tshagivheni is in a way representative of present day villages in the Bantu Townships. The villages have many good roads making it easy for transport facilities.

Nearly all children attend school in Vendaland and there is no wonder that one hears of Vhangani, Laṱani's son being very serious about attendance at school. The flu attack on Laṱani is the real background to the story because it introduces to the reader, Mukumela who precipitated the conflict. After Laṱani has been helped by Mukumela she decides to have her as a life partner believing that "one good turn deserves another". The opposite occurs when superstition sets in after Mukumela's son Ntakuseni, has been hurt. Malilele himself fulfills the saying that a "new broom sweeps clean" when he chases his wife and son out of his village after he had accused her of witchcraft for which she is not responsible. This is a result of some human weakness found among all men of all nations who sooner or later degenerate in their rectitude and thus either desert those whom they once loved whole heartedly and become victims of lustfulness.

The refund of the lobola to Shandukani in respect of Mukumela his wife, is in accordance with Venda custom but a sick person such as Shandukani does not make sense because, he does not understand. For this reason, Shandukani although mentally deranged frequents Malilele's village in search of his wife. It is also according to Venda custom that one's wife takes a prominent part in getting a second wife for the husband. This is what Laṱani tried to do although it led to her dismissal from her rightful husband. Every Venda woman is expected to have her own hut where she stays with her children.

Before a woman gives birth to a child, she feels insecure in a Venda community and she may not get proper status. She will remain low in the ranking of women. Therefore after having given birth to a son (Thanyani) Mukumela feels highly honoured. There is no wonder why she captures Malilele away from his first wife, Laṱani. Laṱani and her son went away and stayed at Maangani.

The author here gives a somewhat satirical remark about the treatment. Vhangani receives at the hands of Mudzunga, Khakhu's wife with whom the boy stays while attending school at Ha-Sendedza.

When Malilele is attacked by T B the author reveals to us how persons can waste their properties trying to cure a disease by wrongful means for superstition has blinded them. When Laṱani refuses to accept Malilele into her home, she is paying back to him in kind but it does not fit a Christian who has been taught the dictum "Love thy enemies".

(b) Characters:

(i) Laṱani

Laṱani is perhaps more realistic than any of the other characters in this book. She is a good example of all human beings on whom you can rely. Her proposal

to Mukumela on behalf of her husband is in accordance with Venda custom that the first wife is the only person who has the privilege to get other wives for him. This eliminates friction, since the first wife will always propose a woman whom she agrees with. Laṱani is a faithful wife who does not want to leave her husband without a valid reason. She only leaves her husband after she has been accused of being a witch. She does not forgive when offended. This is revealed by her refusal to accept Malilele back to her home. She paid back what Malilele did to her when he chased her away in an inhuman way. This is a good lesson to irresponsible husbands that one "bad turn deserves another".

(ii) Vhangani

Vhangani is a good example of children who have been brought up well. While still young, he performs his duties well. He looks after his father's goats well and when Ntakuseni is hurt by hailstones, he makes sure that he is taken home. When his father throws his books and articles out into the rain, he still regards him as his father and tells him politely: "Mara -vho Vho-Malilele zwine vha khou ita zwone a si zwavhuḓi". Very few Venda boys may agree to stay with a woman of the character of Mudzunga. In fact had Vhangani been a bad boy, he would have assaulted Mudzunga for her illtreatment. At the Gulunkunwe Hospital, Vhangani makes a good name for himself and even learns to drive an ambulance. He married and stayed with his mother. He feels pity for his father but his mother does not want to get reconciled to him. He is a good natured son.

(iii) Malilele

Malilele is at first a very good progressive worker who looks after his family well. He is able to refund the lobola price paid in respect of Mukumela within a very short time. But Malilele gets confused after taking Mukumela as his second wife. Together they go to the

witchdoctor who smells out that Laṱani is the witch in her absence. She is accused of having been responsible for Ntakuseni's illness. His treatment of his wife Laṱani and his son Vhangani is one of the worst examples of cruelty in human society.

Malilele is an example of all men with unstable minds who usually pay dearly for their moral weakness. There is no wonder that he is deserted by his second wife and later he died a broken-hearted man. He paid for his sins.

(iv) Mukumela

Mukumela is a typical example of an opportunist. She, however appears at first as a kindly person when she comes to rescue Laṱani at the Spring. Because her husband is insane, she makes ways and means of getting another husband by means of befriending herself to Laṱani. In spite of Laṱani's attempt to convince her husband that he should accept her as his second wife, in which attempts some success is achieved, Mukumela turns against her and accuses her together with Malilele of having bewitched her son. That she is unfaithful and ungrateful is evident in her desertion of Malilele when she returns to Shandukani, her former husband who at this time has regained some sanity. It is also unreasonable that she should have returned to Shandukani after her lobola had been refunded.

(c) Literary Comments:

It has already been said that Maumela uses the simple, everyday, language style which renders his books to be easily understood even by junior readers. This is because Maumela's language is not different from that spoken by the rustic Venda community. Maumela does not use archaic words which may present some difficulty to inexperienced readers.

In Zwa Mulovha Zwi A Fhela the author uses the same style as that found in Elelwani, Mafangambiti, Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha and Vhuhosi Vhu tou Bebelwa. Dialogue has

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been extensively used where characters speak for themselves more than it is the case in the other novels. Idioms and idiomatic expressions have also been used unreservedly:

"Na nṋe a thi ḓivhi uri ndi dzhenwa ngani vhone" p. 7.
"Nṋe ndi khou ri vha songo vhuya vha fanywa vha vhudzisa Vho-Mukumela" p. 12.
"Ndi zwone vhunga vhalidzi vha thavha vhe vhanzhi" p. 22.
"Yo no ḓi vha khombo yo ri welaho, ńwananga" p. 40.
"Hai ni songo mmbudza maloto hayo aṋu" p. 63.

What has been said about some of the author's novels regarding the fact that some of his sentences tend to be clauses or phrases refers also to this book: "Mutukana muremanyana a sa tou vha na muvhili nga maanda".[1)]

As far as the unravelling of the message is concerned, the author has to a certain extent succeeded in exposing the animal instinct which is so active in males and the reward of such perpetrators which is always a disasterous end.

Malilele realises too late for tears that one's wife is not a toy but a sensible human being. Thus he dies a melancholic death. It is, however, not quite convincing that Mukumela, Malilele's second wife for whom the lobola price had been paid should desert him and return to her former husband, Shandukani who at this time has regained sanity. According to Venda marriage laws and custom one's wife is the property of the family including immediate members of the clan. That is the reason why a Venda husband may not even divorce his wife on grounds of adultery.

Unless the author intends to emphasize the view that it is not always correct to say that "one good turn deserves another", his plot may then be considered to be quite suitable. The assistance given to Laṱani by Mukumela at the place where the community draws water

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Zwa Mulovha zwi a Fhela, p.

cannot be looked upon as a good contribution to the plot because, any member of the community who might have been first to arrive at the scene would undoubtedly have helped by giving a hand to the distressed individual, namely Latani.

The author has, however, succeeded very well in pointing a finger at irresponsible husbands who eventually become victims of their lust. The contribution of Zwa Mulovha zwi a Fhela does not however rise above the previous attempts by the author. It has even come down when it is compared with Elelwani, his first novel.

MAELE WA VHO-MATHAVHA : T.N. Maumela (1966)

(a) Plot:

The story begins with Maele, the only son of Mathavha, a shop-owner. Maele's mother is Tsańwani. Raphasha is Mathavha's shop assistant and he renders excellent services. Maele is a scholar at the Manzhele Secondary School. Badaga is the Principal, while Ramadanga is one of the assistant teachers.

Maele is in Form II. One day, their teacher, Ramadanga, gives his pupils some home work in Arithmetic. Some of the pupils do not work out the sums and Maele is one of those who did not carry out the teacher's instructions. The teacher sends them out of the class-room to go and work out the sums. Maele, becomes extremely insubordinate, and in the struggle that follows, he goes home and lies to his father that he has been assaulted by Ramadanga. Mathavha ignores Raphasha's advice that the boy might have lied to him and father and son go to the Manzhele Secondary School where the matter is discussed between them and the principal. Mathavha disregards the principal's advice and finally, reports the matter to the school committee chairman. Unfortunately, for Mathavha and his son, the school committee blames his son whom some members call a

pampered child. Mathavha accuses all present at that meeting of partiality and alleges that the school committee members have been bribed by Ramadanga, and then goes home a much disappointed man.

Mathavha and his wife agree upon sending their son to a boarding school. Maele is admitted at the Munanga Secondary school after having completed the necessary documents. His father takes him in his van to the new secondary school. Thathani is the principal of Munanga Secondary School. He has been nicknamed 'Mukunundé' by the pupils. At this school there are more assistant teachers than are found at Manzhele Secondary School, and as usual, almost every teacher has his nickname. Maele is a distinguished athlete and scores many points for the school at the inter-school sports competition which took place at times. This pleases Thuga (Luvhaivhai), the sport-organiser. Maele, however, is not only weak in his school work but he is also lazy, so that he soon quarrels with 'Luvhaivhai' for his failure to do his class work.

Maele possesses a portable radio. One evening, he plays sick so as to be able to listen to the music given by the famous Durban choir. He remains in the dormitory while other pupils are busy studying and preparing their home-work for the next school day. When the teacher discovers that Maele did not do his home-work, he takes him to the principal and he is strictly warned against negligence of his class work. As a result of his laziness, his report for the mid-year examination is so poor that he decides upon having it soiled or destroyed. His friend, Dzialwa, advises him not to do so. He lies to his father, that the report has not been given to him but Raphasha, the shop assistant, does not believe Maele's story. At this time Maele learns to drive a motor vehicle for which he gets a provisional driver's licence, and soon thereafter , he obtains a full driver's licence.

Schools re-open for the second session. Some intimacy develops between Maele and Tshilangano Manenzhe. He writes

to her proposing for some love advances. Dzialwa becomes Maele's private messenger. During routine work Tshilangano throws a stone at Maele who is lying down in the shade of a tree, reading a book. He picks up the stone and keeps it in his tin-trunk.

School closes for the summer vacation. Maele is at home and accompanies his father to town where he buys a seven-ton truck. At the shop business is at its highest peak. Maele helps selling in the shop or drives the truck and the van. A few days after his arrival at home, Mathavha receives Maele's examination results, and finds that his son has failed Form II. Maele is not present at this time.

School re-opens and Maele gets involved in disputes with new pupils, and he is nearly expelled from school. One day, Mathavha goes to Munanga Secondary School and asks for permission to take Maele home so that he might go with him to town the following morning. Permission is granted, and father and son leave for home. Mathavha reveals to his son what has transpired between him and the principal (Mukumunde). Maele is ever in trouble with the teachers because he does not do his work when told to do so. Yet Maele is very much interested in singing and can conduct a choir well.

One Saturday afternoon, two young men arrive at the school in a blue car and inquire after Maele. When Maele comes to see the strangers, Dzialwa is introduced to them. These young men are Maswondaha Mathada and Mabadeni Madzanga. Dzialwa Rabonda proceeds to where he has been sent by one of the teachers and on his return he finds the two young men gone. Maele tells Dzialwa how he has pre-arranged with the two young men that they should come to fetch him in order that they might go to the circus which would be shown in town that evening. He tells Dzialwa to go and ask for permission but the latter refuses to do so. On their way to town, Maele and his friends get involved in an accident resulting

from a head-on-collision, and the car in which they are travelling rolls down the slope. Maele and his friends receive minor injuries, while the occupants of the other car are seriously injured. Maele's absence from school without permission leads him to expulsion and this puts an end to his school career. He, however, returns to the Institute the following morning for his testimonial which he gets after threatening to stab the principal with a dagger.

When Maele arrives at home he induces his father to make extensions to the shop according to modern building plans. After building operations are over, a sale is introduced, whereby all articles belonging to the old stock are sold at reduced prices. The shop is fitted with new glass shelves after which Maele goes to the wholesale to buy the latest fashions. The shop is full to capacity, and Maele is very happy about it.

He writes to Dzialwa with regard to his love deal with Tshilangano, who eventually accepts Maele's proposal for marriage. The inter-mediary (ṋendila) is sent to Tshilangano's parents to go and hand to them the amount of money required when engagement is announced. These proceedings take place during the school vacation. Tshilangano is at home and she accepts this proposal wholeheartedly.

One morning, Maele and Musiwalo go to town in a lorry to fetch bags of mealie-meal, sugar and other commodities for sale in the shop. On their way home they get involved in an accident because the road is slippery as a result of rain which fell during the night and early morning. The lorry rolls down the slope and gets badly damaged. Maele and Musiwalo receive minor injuries. Mathavha the shop-owner is perplexed, and for the first time in his life quarrels with his pampered son. He fails to meet his commitments, such as the payment of his debts. He is declared insolvent after which the shop is sold to a new proprietor, who later

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marries Tshilangano. Maele leaves for Phalaborwa where he has been staying with a Ndebele woman as husband and wife. Thus a once prosperous family becomes financially crippled following the folly of subjecting itself to the dictates of a pampered son.

The introduction of Maele, his father Mathavha, who owns a shop, his mother, Tsanwani, and Raphasha, the shop assistant, is quite satisfactory. The Manzhele Secondary School, where Badaga is principal, assisted by Ramadanga, have also been well treated. The mentioning of other assistant teachers would perhaps have been quite in order since one has the idea that that secondary school undoubtedly had more classes. So far only Form II has been mentioned.

The story begins in a somewhat hasty manner. Ramadanga quarrels with Maele, after the latter has failed to do some home-work in Arithmetic, as well as his refusal to work out sums outside the classroom when told to do so by the teacher. Pupils such as Maele, are found throughout the lengths and breadths of the globe. Such children easily cheat their parents, and this is common among illiterate and semi-literate members of the Bantu communities. It is also not uncommon to come across parents who have no kind word for teachers. Thus in spite of the School Committee's attempts to get into the matter thoroughly, Mathavha is not prepared to listen to their advice, but accuses the members of having been bribed by Ramadanga.

Maele is transferred to the Munanga Secondary School. Of course, the transfer of pupils from one school to another is in accordance with the Departmental regulations. Maele's success in athletic sports and singing competitions supports the general belief that most of the pupils who excel in these extra-mural activities usually fare badly in their lessons. Even at the Munanga Secondary School, Maele is always in bad terms with the teachers following his failure to do his class

work satisfactorily. Perhaps this is due to the fact that Maele sees no reason why he should bother himself with some book-learning whereas his father is well-to-do financially. Pupils whose parents are wealthy tend to make somewhat poor progress at school. Maele also falls under this category.

Maele's possession of a portable transistor radio at the boarding school is quite a common occurrence at present. The unfortunate part of it is that such pupils tend to pay attention to the entertainment they receive from such radios at the greatest expense of their studies. There is no wonder why such pupils fail in large numbers at the end of the year. Pupils who are irresponsible have always cheated their illiterate or semi-literate parents or guardians, regarding their school reports. Maele becomes very angry after discovering that his father has opened the letter in which there was his report. Mathavha, who is a weakling tells his son that Raphasha told him to open the letter. That Maele turns to driving is also one of the defects in parents who are not aware of the fact that children should not be given such responsibilities before they become of age. Such children have always incurred heavy expenses on their parents after their cars are involved in serious accidents in which they get killed or maimed for ever.

It is quite natural to see school boys and girls falling in love with each other. This love affair might have both useful and destructive effects, particularly the two parties who are usually very much affected by it. At times the worst victims are boys who, after having concentrated much on romance, neglect their studies and thus fail in the examination. The second session is always the busiest of all sessions since pupils have to attend to all weak points in the various subjects. It is about this time that Maele and Tshilangano Manenzhe begin to show some interest in each other. The funniest thing

about Maele is that he keeps the stone which Tshilangano threw at him during routine work in his tin-trunk. Nevertheless, an infatuated boy or girl may easily behave in the same manner; hence the retention of handkerchiefs and watches by members of each sex.

The advent of the summer vacation is the scare-crow of pupils. Soon after closing pupils go to their respective homes without having known what the position is about their examination results. Maele is quite aware of the fact that he did not work well in the promotion examination. Children whose parents seem to have thriving business organisations show no interest in anything else. The fact that Mathavha buys a 7-ton truck gives Maele much satisfaction especially as he now possesses a driver's licence. Children usually consider the possession of motor vehicles by their parents as a symbol of wealth. This is, however, not always the case because very few people buy cars for cash. When Maele sees some business activity in his father's shop, he visualises a great future. He is not aware of the fact that the stock in the shop has been bought on a credit basis. He, however, has to return to school and repeat Form II. While it is generally believed that children with some average intelligence make good progress in life, this is not so with Maele.

At the re-opening of secondary and high schools, new pupils in Bantu shools experience difficulties of being ill-treated by older pupils. The seriousness of this ill-treatment or initiation as it is usually called, is that severe injuries or even death might occur. Most of the schools have abolished this maltreatment of pupils and those who still indulge in it might do so at the risk of expulsion from school. Maele tries to ill-treat new pupils and in the scuffle that followed, he is nearly assaulted by a new pupil. He is nearly expelled from school after one pupil accused him of having searched him and taken R4.00 from his pocket. The habit of

parents coming to school to fetch their children after having given this and that excuse is a common occurence. Apparently, principal teachers always sympathise with pupils' parents not realising that some of the reasons given are not realistic. During the conversation which takes place between Mathavha and the Principal, he is told about his poor behaviour, and later on he reveals to Maele what has transpired between him and Mukunande (the principal). While it might not be denied that parents of Mathavha's weakness might not be found in any Bantu community, his behaviour towards his son is a little unrealistic.

A pampered child will no doubt disregard school regulations. It is therefore, not surprising to find that such pupils are eventually expelled from schools year in and year out. Maele dodges from school in his friends' car so that he might go to the circus. The fact that that car gets involved in an accident is proof enough that evil practices breed disaster. Although the three young men, namely, Maele, Maswondaha and Mabadeni sustain minor injuries, at least they had to lie in hospital for two or more days. As for Maele, his absconding from school leads to his expulsion, and the end of his school career. Maele's threat to stab the principal of Munanga Secondary School with a dagger if he does not give him a testimonial coincides with some of the misdemeanors committed by pupils against their teachers. Court cases concerning the murder of school teachers by pupils have been heard in some of our courts. However, Mukunande (Thathani), the principal, saves his life by giving Maele a testimonial.

Although a pampered child might impose his will over his parents, Mathavha's failure to oppose his son in any suggestion he makes leaves the reader with some doubt regarding the possibility of such a behaviour on the part of the parents in question. As a result of Mathavha's submissiveness to his son's wishes, the shop

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gets renovated and extended; yet it is no surprise to find that its splendour is short-lived.

It is now clear that undisciplined children easily get involved in sex matters. Maele acts as he wishes because there is no form of opposition from his parents. On the contrary, Tshilangano, who sees nothing but abundant wealth at Maele's home feels that she must seize the opportunity of becoming his wife. The sending of money to Tshilangano's parents for acknowledgement of love and engagement is however, in accordance with the lobola custom of the Venda. What is surprising is that no mention has been made in the story of the refund of the money paid to Tshilangano's parents in the form of lobola, which is a usual procedure when the girl in question decides to love someone else other than her first fiancé.

That Mathavha's truck overturns and tumbles down the slope, without causing severe injuries to both Maele and Musiwalo, cannot be argued against in view of the fact that similar road accidents do occur in which passengers escape death or severe injuries; hence Maele and Musiwalo sustain some minor abrasions. It is however surprising to learn of the lorry already being used after it has been badly damaged. The author has perhaps forgotten to state that the truck was later towed to panelbeaters where it had to be repaired. It is also a fact that lack of proper keeping of records may result in bankruptcy. Mathavha becomes insolvent after which his son deserted him and goes to Phalaborwa. What is not quite convincing is the marriage of Tshilangano to the new proprietor of the shop which once belonged to Mathavha.

(b) Characters:

In 'Maele wa Vho-Mathavha' one cannot trace any characters which are worthy of the name because a greater majority of them are nothing other than types.

But in spite of all this deficiency a brief description of some of them may not be out of place.

(i) Maele

The most important character is Maele, without whom no such book could have been written. Maele is the symbol of delinquents of all times. He is the victim of poor family control on the part of his parents, who treat him as though he is a doll. At school he finds it very difficult to carry out instructions given to him by the teachers. There is no wonder why he is expelled from all schools he attends. It is also not quite clear whether Maele is dull or not. Yet it cannot be denied that he is expelled from all schools he attends. It is also not quite clear whether Maele is dull or not. Yet it cannot be denied that he is lazy and has no interest in school work. The author, who is a teacher of wide experience, is aware of the fact that pupils who excel in extra-mural activities usually fare badly in their lessons. Although Maele is somewhat a shy type, he, however possesses some human feelings in that he eventually falls in love with Tshilangano. He, too, is desirous of achieving a good record for he is seen threatening to stab the principal if the latter does not give him a testimonial. A real thug would not worry about such a document at all. Maele, has therefore been used in this book for the purpose of pointing a finger at parents who give their children unnecessary liberty. While the author has been quite reasonable in some instances, it is also a fact that there are also Bantu families who will under no circumstances dance to the tune of their children. So that it may not be unfitting to state that the author is becoming satirical about the manner in which some parents spoil their children.

(ii) Mathavha

The importance of Mathavha in this story lies in the fact that like Maele, his son, there cannot be such a story without him. As a parent and head of the family, Mathavha fails badly. He has no mind of his own for he keeps on asking Raphasha, his shop assistant, how he should approach some problems brought about by his son's misbehaviour. Mathavha seems to be completely ignorant of the difference existing between children and parents. He reveals to his son matters which he discussed with the principal of Munanga Secondary School in confidence. Even Maele is aware of his father's weakness for he rebukes the old man for listening to Raphasha's advice. In this story Mathavha has been used as a scapegoat for the purpose of exposing parental weakness on the part of children. Perhaps no such person with the weakness of Mathavha might have lived at all. Therefore, Mathavha is nothing but a type used to represent parental weakness.

(iii) Raphasha

Raphasha stands for men of all times who are level-headed. He sees through human minds and can tell the truth without making any reservations. He is not afraid of criticising Maele's poor conduct in the presence of his father. It is Raphasha who tells Mathavha that his son is a habitual liar. At the shop Raphasha does his work well and customers enjoy his services. When Mathavha informs Raphasha about his son's plans to have the shop extended, he objects to this, although in vain, for, extensions were finally made. After, the shop has been sold to new proprietors, Raphasha still remains there as salesman.

Tsaŋwani, Maele's mother, plays an insignificant part in this story. Very little is heard of her except when she realises that the matter being discussed affects her son. This is typical of the Venda proverb

which says, "A ri laṱi ńwana nga phaḓi" (We do not throw away the child because of scabbies), by which is meant that 'one cannot denounce one's child because of the evil committed'. Although Tsanwani is also a type, she, however, represents mothers of all times found in human society. Women are strange in that when their children are involved in cases of some kind they tend to defend them in spite of obvious reasons underlying their being treated as such. Thus Tsanwani accuses Raphasha of theft after hearing from her husband what was said about her son. The only time when Tsanwani tries to rebuke her son is when Maele defends himself against his father's accusation that he has been responsible for his downfall.

(iv) Ramadanga

The omission of Ramadanga's character depiction might render the story incomplete. Although he appears at the beginning of the story and then disappears, he is the one responsible for the conflict which culminates in Maele's withdrawal from Manzhele Secondary School. Although somewhat short-tempered, Ramadanga is one of the few teachers who cannot tolerate some slackness on the part of pupils. He quarrels with Maele after he has failed to work out sums for home-work. That he is trustworthy might not be denied because even pupils give some good evidence in his favour when asked to do so by the school committee. It is unfortunate that very little has been said about Ramadanga, otherwise a description of his character-depiction would have been given a wider scope. On the contrary, the author cannot be blamed for this because when pupils are transferred to other schools teachers remain behind.

(v) Badaga

The principal teachers of the two secondary schools have all been well drawn. Badaga, the principal of Manzhele, although realising that Maele's behaviour in the class has been unbecoming, also accuses Ramadanga

for having not informed him about Maele's obstinacy,[1] and he further warns him about the danger of throwing pupils' books outside the classroom. With regard to Thathani, principal of Munanga Secondary School, he too, performs his duties satisfactorily. He pays attention to the complaints of both pupils and parents well and has the confidence of his staff. He, however, gives in when threatened by Maele with a long knife, but anyone could have acted in the same way in order to save his life. His school does well in both class work and extra-mural activities.

(c) Literary Comments

With regard to style, what has been pointed out in 'Elelwani' is also applicable here. Although dialogue has been extensively used, yet idiomatic expressions are few, but the following may serve to show the presence of such expressions in this book:

"Haya mafhungo a namusi a ḓo vha lapula, ngauri nṋe ndi khou a isa phanḓa ..." p. 16.

"Heyi khoro yo rengwa, ndi khou amba nṋe ..." p. 24.

"..... Iṯali ḽiṅwe ḓuvha u phigulusa tombo ndi u ḽi isa vhudzuluni" p. 106.

There are also, in this book, some instances of unnecessary borrowing; e.g.

"No, no I nṋe yanga tsheledi i tou yo vhuya". p. 33.

"Hee, mu fareni mani I ....." p. 68.

Of course, while the above quotations regarding unwarranted borrowing may be found to be unnecessary, they have been introduced into Venda as a result of the corrupt Afrikaans or English expressions spoken by males from urban areas.

With regard to the unravelling of the story, the author has been successful in proving what a pampered child can do, and the amount of damage that can be caused on such parents. Maele's father realises too late that his son has involved him in debts which he can

1) Maumela, T.N.: Maele wa Vho-Mathavha, p. 8.

under no circumstances be in a position to settle, so that the family is eventually financially ruined and can never rise up again.

While pampered children such as Maele may be found in Society, it is, however, doubtful whether a man of such extreme folly as that of Mathavha can be a living being. The habit of giving pupils home-work is no longer encouraged in schools since the teacher may not be certain whether the pupil did the work himself or not.

According to Venda custom lobola proceeds are to be refunded immediately the girl chooses a new husband-to-be. This is not so with Tshilangano who, the reader is told, got married to the new shop proprietor. Many of the persons mentioned in this book are untraceable as they appear on the scene and disappear sooner than expected and are then heard no longer.

In conclusion, it may not be out of order to say that "Maele wa vho-Mathavha" is nothing else but a biography of a pampered son.

MUSANDIWA NA KHOTSI VHO-LIWALAGA : T.N. Maumela 1970.

(a) Plot:

The book opens by giving us the playing children who serve as an introduction to the Liwalaga family.

Musandiwa the hero in the book is five years old. She belongs to a family of three children. Nyamueni the mother of Musandiwa died in a car accident. This leads to Nyadzanga staying with Musandiwa. Musandiwa attends school and makes faster progress and even overtakes Nyadzanga.

Nyadzanga has been proposed and the lobola is paid. The lobola caused a conflict between Liwalaga and Mufanadzo. Mufanadzo ran to her parents but returned after a reconciliation price of R10.00 was paid. Mafanedza proposed love to Musandiwa but Musandiwa turned it down. Her rejection of Mafanedza angered her father who was interested in this affair.

Musandiwa's insistence that she does not want to be married but to attend school disturbed her father. She managed to pass Std. VI and even succeeded in obtaining a bursary to continue with her studies. She completed her J.C. and was interested in pursuing the nursing profession. The fact that her mother died at the hospital after an accident deterred her from studying as a nurse. She associated the death of her mother with the hospital. But she later made up her mind and studied nursing, and even accepted appointments at clinics.

Despite the fact that the father ill-treated her, she helps the father to pay off the debts he had. She contracted a successful marriage.

(b) Characters:

There are many characters in this book but the following give the thread of the story:

Musandiwa.

She is the chief character in the novel and she is the cause of the conflict in the family. She is obstinate and she defies her father's orders. She represents the professional women in a Venda Society who have gained some freedom to choose their marriage partners. She is sympathetic towards her father as she shows by paying her father's debts. She also helps other members of the family. She demonstrates that an educated woman can be polished in her attitudes.

Liwalaga.

Liwalaga is portrayed as a typical Venda parent. He however shows some advancement by speaking some Afrikaans and some English which he picked up while working. He is cruel towards his daughter. He beat the daughter in a manner which was not fitting to a girl.

He changes his attituded towards Musandiwa when she has qualified and helps him with the payment of his debts. He now likes the daughter.

Negumela

He is a good man, he advises Ḽiwalaga to educate Musandiwa and to send her to a boarding school. He can act rightly and justly. He helped the arrest of Ḽiwalaga for assaulting the daughter. He served as the inspiration behind Musandiwa's progress.

Mufanadzo.

She is the senior wife of Ḽiwalaga. She does not play an important role before the death of Musandiwa's mother. She tries to persuade Musandiwa to accept the proposal from Mafanedza. She quarrelled with Ḽiwalaga after she had tried to pay the boarding fees with the lobola proceeds in respect of Nyadzana.

The other characters in this book are not very important but serve to develop the story.

(c) Literary comments.

The development of the theme has been hurriedly done and as such most of the characters in the book have not been given a fair chance of unfolding themselves, to show their worth. The plot itself has many digressions and Musandiwa's mother's death in an accident seems to be a fabricated incident, especially when it is taken as the incentive for Musandiwa's progress at school.

The introduction of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner to punish Ḽiwalaga does not fit well into the theme.

The part which Negumela played in the affairs of the Ḽiwalaga family leaves much to be desired. The progress made by Musandiwa at school is not convincing since we are not even given the problems which Musandiwa encountered in her career.

The language used in this novel has borrowings from Afrikaans and English. Some of the borrowings are unnecessary.

The author does use some idioms and proverbs appropriately.

"U vha tshila tshipengo tsho no welela" p. 6. (that madness has subsided) "Inwi Mufanadzo, hoyu ŋwana u khou naniswa u siţa nga u pfa zwine inwi na amba zwone" p. 12. (This child's naughtiness is a result of what you are saying). "Ndi tou vha na mafhungo a no dina" p. 36 (I have an urgent matter) "Itali mulomoni wa phalaphala hu tshi pfiwa nga mune waho" p. 77 (You know better what your needs are.)

The author's use of ideophones is very effective. For instance, he says "Kwata nnda" p. 57 (to get out). The author sometimes does not take care of the proper form of the idiom or proverb; for instance in "Thoho yo fhambana na mpato", instead of "thevhe yo fhambana na mapato" and "U amba livhi ndi uri livhuya li wane vhudzulo". p. 26. Proverbs have a fixed form. Borrowed expressions such as "fosamuthaimi, salafa, bairathi, thiravhuloni and helezethe" are unnecessary because they do not reflect the character of the speakers but just the author's laxity in the use of apt Venda words. There are unnecessary repetitions in this novel. The sentences are long-winded and therefore the book makes tiresome reading. It seems the author had exhausted his matter but he had to fill up the "required pages".

Musandiwa na Khotsi Vho-Liwalaga as a novel is an important contribution in Venda. When it is shorn off all its shortcomings the book has a significant place in Venda literature.

CONCLUSION.

The Venda novel is of very recent origin, and when assessing the achievement we find that the characterization in most of the novels is slightly shallow; very little of the inner part of character is revealed. Most authors give us a side view description of the characters but never a synthesis of the inner and the outer aspects of the characters. The characters are models of window dressing who only look one

side and are seen from one side. The characters are just seen but rarely heard. The likes and dislikes of the characters in some novels are not revealed.

Despite the general shortcoming in our novelists, we do find some of the characters conforming to reality. For instance, Vele and Elelwani are not convincing to one who is used to Venda custom and tradition. It is not possible that Vele could have deceived Ratshihule, Elelwani and all the people around Makovheni when he is supposed to have grown up there. He could have disguised himself by clothes but not his voice, his mannerisms and his home or his relatives. If what Vele did was not discovered by other persons, then the Venda custom of verifying the family of the husband to be, did not work and if it did work, then Elelwani was not a Venda child brought up in accordance with custom and tradition.

The description of Elelwani's beauty does not play a part in the story. If Elelwani were beautiful, then not only Vele would like her to be his wife but others would have been attracted by this beautiful charming Venda girl and even visiting chiefs could have competed for this pretty woman.

Sometimes the Venda novelists try to make the characters real to the reader and to fit them into the plot. But the novelists have other aims than the mere explanation of their plot. They desire to make their readers so intimately acquainted with their characters that the creation of their brains should be to them, speaking, moving, living human creatures. The Venda authors have tried to do this, by describing the characters, but the reticence-attitude of a Venda is seen behind the words the authors use in portraying the fictitious persons in their novels.

In characters like Mushaanzhele, Tshiwanammbi, Nyabele, Adziambei, and Mukumela, we meet with persons who seem to be familiar with the authors and whom the authors knew to be cold blooded, true or false in their intentions.

The Venda novelists have on the whole given us the secrets of the Venda hearts, the love affairs of the Venda men

and women, the Venda conspiracies, the Venda values of life and finally, the purpose for which a Venda lives in this temporal world.

The Venda novels provide the Venda reader with a lot of information about the Venda social surroundings, their weaknesses in moral conduct and also their sense of justice and purity.

The Venda novelists have portrayed the world which they found, and upon it they are building a world of newer horizons. The Venda children have in the Venda novels something with which to enrich their lives.

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CHAPTER VI.

PROSE : THE SHORT STORY

Prose fiction as we have already discussed in the previous chapter consists of the Novel and the short story. The history of the short story in Venda cannot be well traced without taking into account the story or passages given in the readers which are in the form of extended essays.

Some of the stories in Mudededzi II can be regarded as short stories in Venda. The stories are short with one plot and few characters. The short story is a brief narrative in prose.[1] In other words the short story has some common characteristics with the novel. It has a plot, which develops, it has characters, a milieu and language. The difference between the novel and the short story is however clear. The novel may have a main plot and a sub-plot. The short story on the other hand has only one main idea which is developed briefly. The writer of a short story must pay attention to the development of the central idea leaving out all side ideas. The author of a short story must select the suitable subject and clothe it with carefully chosen words so that the main idea may become clear to the reader. The details must be avoided but only details that will make the story clear must be included.

The short story should start with a brief introduction which focuses the reader's attention on the main part of the story. The short story may end by giving a complete view of the story. The short story differs again from the novel in that a novel has chapters while the short story has paragraphs. The paragraphs may be divided by arguments which bring in the new matter. The short story may be long but not as long as the novel, depending on the relevant details the writer wants to include or delve into or on the nature of the story. An attempt by Marjorie Boulton [2] has been made when she divided the short story.

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1) A.F. Scott: Current Literary terms p. 267.
2) M. Boulton: The anatomy of prose.

She divides the short stories into five types according to function:

Narrative.

The narrative tells a story which may be true or invented. The story may be a gathering of incidents resembling those of a thriller or it may be an intricate portrayal of character and motives. In some of Maumela's short stories (as in some of his novels) one may ask the question : Is there any successful portrayal of motives. Take for example the story of "Mavemu a ḓorobo". This is also a suitable example of unreality caused perhaps by the writer's inadequate knowledge of the milieu.

Argumentative.

This is a more abstract narrative type of prose. The main function in this type of prose is to persuade the reader or listener to believe something. Sound reasoning must be used to appeal to the reader's emotions. E.S. Madima tried this in his Mmanga Mawelewele but did not reach the requirements of this abstraction.

Dramatic.

On dramatic prose Boulton says "dramatic prose usually has to resemble ordinary conversation sufficiently, closely for us to accept it as an imitation of life, yet it must also have that improvement upon real life that is found in all art.[1)] Maumela's stories fall short of this demand.

Instructive or informative.

The sole function of the short story is to communicate information but it can be raised so that it is of literary merit. The art of communication must be of such a nature that it becomes interesting. The message of the short story may be such that it can be expanded into a novel later on if the artist has the imagination.

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1) M. Boulton: op.cit.

Contemplative.

Under this heading we include the essay and some writings of religious meditation, political speculation or fantasy. An aspect to be taken into consideration is the three trends in prose writing which has a short story. These are realism, romance (idealism) and unreality. Unreality may be called false realism, a kind of inverted sentimentality, we may cite Maumela's story "O tshidzwa nga pholisa" in ZWIITAVHATHU.

To be realistic the writer must have a feeling of truth and a sense of proportion. The above principles have not been well employed by our short story writer. A writer who observes realism is one who paints life phenomenally as the majority would see it and one who observes realism and draws life's presentment of mankind in a large degree from his inner consciousness.

Realism therefore seeks to give the knowledge of truth, it attempts a portrayal of reality, idealism or romance gives a sense of glory, it is a thrilling and inspiring aspect of reality.

We may now turn to our only short story book in Venda viz

ZWIITAVHATHU : T.N. Maumela

(a) Plot.

As the title implies, the stories in this book generally treat the human activities which are in the various forms. In order to give some scope for a more comprehensive discussion of these short stories, it will be feasible to group them into types.

The following are the types of stories found in this book:

(i) Those that treat ignorance.
(ii) Those that treat obstinancy.
(iii) Those that treat the behaviour of prisoners.
(iv) Those that treat irresponsibility.
(v) Those that treat fraud and deceit.
(vi) Those that treat custom and tradition.
(vii) Those that treat theft and marriages.
(viii) Those that treat ritual murder.

(i) Those that treat ignorance.

There are three stories that may be grouped under this sub-heading viz Nndoweni na tshikolo, Vhakoma Vho-Madzhuta and Vhuṱali ha Vho-Ravhutsi na Vho-Mbave.

Nndoweni behaves like all infants of all times who get confused when they find themselves confronted with situations not familiar to them. After having been given the necessary articles of clothing and writing materials for use at school by his mother, Nndoweni proceeds to school with Mmbengeni, his elder brother. Mmbengeni takes him to Sub Std. A class and then goes to his own class. During break Sub A pupils go home while those for the second session get to the class room. It is then that Nndoweni enters the classroom and finds strange faces except the teacher who is still the same person he saw in the morning. He dashes out of the classroom and starts crying, looking for Mmbengeni his elder brother, whom he at last finds in the other classroom. After school he went home and told his mother that he will never go to school again because the people there run away from others.

While at face value this story appears to be too simple yet what happened to Nndoweni on his first day at school happened to all of us even at adult stages when confronted with new situations. A South African visitor in London or New York may find himself completely lost not only in the manner of behaviour of the people with whom he comes into contact, but also their way of conversing may be completely strange to him.

In Vhakoma Vho-Madzhuta ignorance is coupled with superstition. Old Madzhuta approaches the paymaster for old age pensioners, asking for a card which will entitle him to draw some money from that fund. When he is told by the officer in charge that he does not qualify to draw some money from the fund he makes reference to old Thakhathi, who already receives some money from the fund although he is his junior in age. After some long argument the paymaster gives him a letter to take to the medical officer after which he is diagonised as a T.B. suspect. He ignores the doctor's instructions for

admission to hospital and goes home. A nurse who is sent to go and fetch him returns to hospital alone. Finally the hospital superintendent reports the matter to the Police who immediately go to the old man's village and take him to hospital where he recovers from the T.B. attack. He is given a card with which to go and draw some money from the old age pension fund. Before his departure he promised to give a chicken to the nurse who was first sent to his home.

Old Madzhuta's reaction to what he is told by the officer in charge of the old pension fund is typical of aged persons who are not fortunate enough to qualify for payment. It may also happen that some of the drawers of money from this fund are younger than those who do not receive it. This is of course the result of their condition of health which may cause the person to be considered medically unfit for work. His complaint about Thakhathi is no fault of the Department which pays old age pension but his own. The story of old Madzhuta is typical of the aged Muvenda who is superstitious of medical treatment at hospitals. This is the reason that makes him desert the hospital since uneducated people believe whole heartedly that serious patients are left alone in hospital to die.

(ii) Those that treat obstinacy.

There seems to be one story of this type namely "O tshidzwa nga pholisa". This is the story about the transportation problems in big cities. Mushaisano and a few others are waiting for a bus at a bus stop. It is in the morning and they are almost late for work. Buses that go past that bus stop are full and cannot take in any more passengers. Mushaisano however forces matters and tries to get into the bus but he is pushed outside by the bus police. The bus pulls off and a few minutes later news is received that the bus has overturned and that there are only ten survivors. The inclusion of the police is open to criticism because there are no bus police or controllers along the bus routes. The author shows his ignorance of urban transportation systems.

The author's aim still echoes towards the end of the story that Mushaisano's life has been saved because of the controller's

or the police's attitude towards him and fortunately when the bus capsized he was not there. How often do we complain when motorists do not offer us lifts and how happy we are when we learn or find the very car having capsized a few miles ahead of us, injuring or even killing the poor occupants.

(iii) Those that treat the behaviour of prisoners.

There is only one story that treats the behaviour of prisoners in this book, namely "James wa Amerika". James is a habitual criminal who has a string of records of cases of house-breaking and theft. He is serving a long-term goal sentence of 14 years. One night the prisoners started fighting and when the jail keeper heard some noise he went to see what is happening. The light in the cell is extinguished and the jailer is assaulted. The jailer is a sergeant and his stature and features are almost like those of James. James took the clothes of the jailer and put them on and walks out of the gaol without difficulty. Soon thereafter other prisoners go out but they are driven back to the cells. It was later discovered that James was missing and information was diffused to the public through the Radio and the press. Meanwhile James, who at the time was very hungry, enters a farm house looking for food. The lady he found therein gives him a chair so that he might sit down while she is busy preparing supper for him. At this time she had already communicated with the police and soon thereafter James was re-arrested.

The arrest of James when he was unaware fulfills the saying that "the law has a long arm and crime does not pay". Habitual criminals are still found in an ever-increasing number in our prisons today. How many times are we reminded of this by the many prison excapes in our gaols. It is unfortunate that prisoners are able to break through fortified buildings to the greatest disappointment of the prison authorities and the police.

(iv) Those that treat irresponsibility.

The following stories may fall under this category: Ndo vha tshidza ndi sa zwi ḓivhi, Vho-Makhado vho shuṅwa tshiṱavha-tsindi, page 92, Dovha u toolole, page 30, Mulingo u lugiselwa hu tshe na tshifhinga, page 34.

In "Ndo vha tshidza ndi sa zwi ḓivhi" the author deals with the irresponsible behaviour of servants. Suṱho was the driver of a lorry that belongs to the owner of Tshitululu Store. His conductor is Sundani and together they used to go to a town called Tshiṱiriri to buy mealie-meal and goods. These two servants had a bad habit of stopping on the way to drink beer, particularly when they were on their way home. One day as they were returning home they found one man who asked for a lift. They offered him [illegible] and proceeded on their way. When they had gone a little distance the man asked to get down, he was badly scolded for making such a request. At this time the lorry was moving very fast and thus overturned and killed the conductor and injured the driver severely. Three days later the man who asked to get down went to the hospital to see the driver in question.

In the story of Vho-Makhado vhoshuńwa tshiṱavhatsindi we are told of the habit of Makhado and Tshimbiluni of parking the bus on the way and getting into villages to get some beer for drinking. The information concerning the misbehaviour of these servants reached the ears of the manager who sent his inspector with duplicate keys to drive the bus away. Makhado lost his job and Tshimbiluni replaced him after having begged for pardon from the manager.

From the above stories one can easily notice the effects of irresponsibility on the part of servants. In spite of traffic regulations which are against driving under the influence of liquor, heavy tolls of death are encountered on the public roads. In the same way bribery ruins some individuals when workers who are paid next to nothing are robbed of their meagre salaries by those who are by far in a better position financially.

(v) Those that treat fraud and deceit.

In this group of stories we find the following: Thomani na Kanu, Maṋvemu a ḓorobo, page 55. Zwo itwaho Vho-Nndileni, Ndila dza u tswa a dzi fheli, page 25.

In the story of "Ndila dza u tswa a dzi fheli" we are given the story of a barber who was cheated and lost R30.00 on the

pretext that he will be given a new set of clippers. This happened during the second World War when it was very difficult to obtain some scissors. Dick Tapani discovers too late that he has been cheated when he finds toilet soap and salt in the parcel.

In the story of Thomani and Kanu who are employees in a factory we are given the fact that Thomani had the habit of sending a portion of his salary home but he could not write. Kanu asks Thomani to lend him R100.00. Thomani is sorry that he could not lend him the money as he had already sent the money home to be used for lobola for his new bride. He had already sent word through Ravhutsi that the money must be paid to the in-laws. Kanu tells Thomani that his master will be sending him to Natal the following week. Instead of going to Natal he goes to Thomani's home and tells Thomani's father that he is in need of R100.00 to pay for the costs of Thomani's legal defence. Rangolo, Thomani's father follows Kanu to town but does not see him. He tells Thomani everything about the money. The son and the father met Kanu in a bus and when Kanu alighted they also alighted and Thomani caught hold of Kanu and pointed a sharp knife at him, demanding his money. Kanu gave him the money which he was going to give his in-laws too and he gave the money to them there and then.

The other stories are also concerned with fraud and deceit. These stories about fraud are quite common in large urban centres. The author must of necessity be quite aware of what goes on there. Not only are pedestrians cheated but people go to the extent of losing their cars. Some doubt might be cast upon the sincerity of the story of Thomani and Kanu particularly their coincidence in the bus to Phafula. Yet the truth about the manner in which Kanu got hold of Thomani's money from his parents might have some truth in it.

The deceit which Muguru made at becoming chief makes his brother faint.

Because of the polygenous marriage, the late chief's sons aspire to the chieftainship. Should one qualify for such a position the others will keep on plotting against the new chief

particularly if he is a weakling or an alcoholic. In this way Muguru has been so successful in cheating his elder brother up to the eleventh hour without his schemes being discovered.

(vi) Those that treat custom and tradition.

There is only one story of this nature in this book namely "Ntakuseni na Vho-makhulu". Mutshinye is a married woman whose husband works in the urban areas. Her husband does not support his children and the wife finds it very difficult to make ends meet. She has three daughters, the eldest of whom is Maemu. There is a great famine in that area and Mutshinye borrows R10.00 from a young man called Ntakuseni. Two months later Mutshinye sends a person to go and tell Ntakuseni that her husband Rabele has written to state that he will not refund the money but he wants him to be his son-in-law. Ntakuseni is very happy about it and chose to marry Maemu the eldest daughter. From now onwards he supports the family without fear. Later on Ntakuseni takes Maemu to his home as wife. Towards the end of the year Rabele returns home and when his wife tells him of his daughter's marriage to Ntakuseni, he goes there without delay and accuse Ntakuseni of having stolen his daughter. The matter is brought to a tribal court. Ntakuseni loses the case after Mutshinye had admitted that she took the money because the children were suffering from starvation. The court finds Ntakuseni guilty because he paid lobola to a woman. The fact is that the Venda society follows a polygenous marriage system, so that family matters are the concern of the husband and other members of his family. According to Venda law and custom Ntakuseni is wrong in paying money to Mutshinye who has no say whatsoever in Rabele's family for she is only a married woman.

(vii) Those that treat theft and marriages.

There is one story that deals with theft viz "Mbava ndi nnyi" page 66. This story deals with the buying of stolen goods. Ḽitheu is a butcher at a place called Mvari. One day a young man who gave his name as Mubvafhi came to Ḽitheu's butchery with a big ox for sale. After having reached agreement about the price Ḽitheu slaughters the ox. Mukatshelwa, a woman resident of

Mvari accuses Ḽitheu of telling her that he will not slaughter anything a day before. He tells her that he too was not certain until a certain young man brought the ox that morning. Mukatshelwa then tells him that that morning she met Mpofu driving an ox at dawn when she was from drawing water. When she was asked by Ḽitheu of the kind of ox, she gave him the description similar to the one he slaughtered. That morning a man called Ravhanga of Ha-Sikhanukha entered the butchery and asked if Ḽitheu did not see his stolen ox. After having given its description Ḽitheu realises that it is the one he has slaughtered that morning.

Ḽitheu is now aware of the mistake he has made when he bought an ox without a permit. A few days later Mpofu is arrested and brought for trial. Ḽitheu gave his facts but Mpofu is a habitual criminal and when he laid his defence he did it so well that he was discharged and Ḽitheu is found guilty of theft for having bought an ox without a permit.

The moral behind this story is that no one has the right to buy stolen goods and that he might do so at the risk of being dubbed a criminal himself. Stock theft is in itself a serious criminal offence punishable by law for which severe sentences may be imposed on the culprit. Ḽitheu has committed a serious crime and under normal conditions his licence as a butcher may be cancelled. In this story all meat dealers are forewarned about the danger of buying stolen stock.

Concerning marriages the story of Malindi is a good illustration. Malindi after he had given his sister some money to take to his in-laws' home proceeded to Klerksdorp where he found some employment. For the first few months Malindi sends money home regularly. But it was towards the end of the year that he fell in love with Sethanthana a mosotho girl who was a domestic servant. Later Malindi hires a house at the location after which Sethanthana discontinued working for whites. At this time Malindi does not send money home any longer. Together with Sethanthana they furnish their house well. Malindi becomes a henpecked husband and accepts without reservations everything Sethanthana tells him. Finally he goes home together with Sethanthana and claims the lobola proceeds of his girl after

which they return to Klerksdorp. One day when Malindi was still at work Sethanthana hires a lorry which carries all the furniture they had bought and goes to her home which is unknown to him. He could get no trace of her. Eventually he goes home and marries the girl to whom the sister had proposed marriage on his behalf.

The moral to be drawn from this story is that Venda males, old and young have always suffered untold hardships resulting from indiscriminate love making in urban areas. These men who go to the cities with the aim of supporting their families soon forget the aim and then indulge in love affairs with unreliable women. Some of these men who managed to save their money bought sites where there were free-hold stands after which buildings were erected. The men lost such properties by being poisoned or the children of the woman to whom they made love chased them away.

What happened to Malindi is still happening up to this day. The author is making an attempt to disuade young persons from making such love in foreign environments and to strange women.

(viii) Those that treat ritual murder.

These stories give us the aspect of Venda life and how the Vendas view life as a whole. For our purpose let us take the story of "Vho-Tshinondiwa". Tshinondiwa lives in her own village at Mulondoḓi. She is a widow and has one son Zwiitavhathu who at this time is working in the urban areas. Tshinondiwa's friend is another woman called Nyatshisevhe. Tshinondiwa has a brother called Jack Ramukhadi who is a shop owner.

Tshinondiwa had the habit of spreading gossip. She frequently pays visits to Nyatshisevhe and the two argue on human nature and the behaviour of humans. Tshinondiwa who is not quite clear what men can do cannot agree that one's relatives may commit criminal acts against one. She denies the truth about the story that a certain Rannziḓa stole his in-law's (Ṋengovhela) head of cattle and sold it to the butcher.

Tshinondiwa still cannot believe the story that at one time another man once stole his in-law's goat which he slaughtered. Tshinondiwa is very fond of boasting. At this time her son Zwiitavhathu has returned home from the urban areas. She tells Nyatshisevhe that her son Zwiitavhathu loves his uncle very much and that he gave him a pretty shirt. Nyatshisevhe who does not deny anything said by Tshinondiwa goes further and tells Nyatshisevhe that Zwiitavhathu is due to build a five roomed house after which he will wed a Swazi girl. News is received that Zwiitavhathu's uncle Ramukhadi wants to send him to Tshavhavha to go and hire a lorry from Thomas Phalandwa. Zwiitavhathu is murdered on the way and the following day Tshinondiwa's brother Ramukhadi comes to her home weeping. He breaks to her the sad news of the death of her son who has been killed in a ritual murder manner. Tshinondiwa faints following the shocking news she receives. Both brother and sister go to the place where Zwiitavhathu died. At the scene they found Manyelo's reference book under the corpse. The police investigated the murder and got from Manyelo that Ramukhadi is an accomplice in the ritual murder so that his business may prosper. This story embodies all that is found in this collection of short stories. The story entitled "ZWIITAVHATHU". The story of Ramukhadi's involvement in the ritual murder of his nephew is typical of Venda ritual murders. The Venda in their superstitious beliefs firmly believe that if you get human flesh it will bring about peace and prosperity. They believe that if you get the blood of relatives it will be very useful. This is the cause of many deaths after the installation of a new chief amongst the Vendas for they believe that if the royal blood is not shed there may be no peace in the reign of the new chief. This has been the order of the day in the past.

In the Bible a story is told of the manner in which Abraham nearly sacrificed his only son Isaac for the purpose of fulfilling God's demands. It is not clear whether the Vendas have this concept in their minds.

It is quite unreasonable in modern times why such sacrifices should be practised and therefore Ramukhadi's murderous acts should be punishable by death.

(b) Characters.

In this book it is not necessary to discuss characters seeing that each story has its own characters and is mainly not meant for the development of characters but just to give an aspect of life as briefly as possible.

In his book Dr. F.F. Malherbe says "Die kortverhaal moet flink begin. Hier is geen ruimte vir eers "op dreef" raak nie, eers "opwarm nie". Die begin het dikwels reeds iets uit 2 (a) spanning, en win dadelik die belangstelling van die leser wat kom; en help hom daardeur oor die voorstelling heen. Die voorstelling laat ons voldoende verstaan waar ons ons bevind en met wie ons te doen het ...."[1)]

(c) Literary Comments.

In almost all his short stories in Zwiitavhathu Maumela drives his point home by hitting the nail on the head. The stories contained in this book reflect both rural and urban environments. In each category of stories reflecting such environments the author has in a way been successful in trying to be romantic and unrealistic in some of his stories.

Regarding style the author, however, seems to go down compared to his earlier works in the novels. He sometimes does ascend to some literary heights. He says in one of the short stories: "Mudzia-maaṋda, phiri-magagule" when he describes a powerful person and he says "Suṱho na Sundani ho vha ho ṱangana madele-mapfani". He has expressed very aptly what he would have taken many words to state the friendship existing between the two fellows.

Most of his stories are narrative in character such as he has given us in "Mavemu a ḓorobo" which is a good example of unreality caused perhaps by the writer's inadequate knowledge of the urban areas. He can use his language effectively: "Vho-Tapani

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1) Malherbe, F.E.: Die Kortverhaal as Kunsvorm p. 58.

vha tshi zwi vhona u vha vha pfa vho sokou ṋoka nandi", page 29. He continues in other stories with such good expressions: "mushavha mvula vhilula, u songo shavha ḓumbu ḽo no swika", page 34. "vhomba sa ḽiguluvhe ḽi tshi khou mamiwa". When he wants to emphasize certain statements or convictions he says: "Nṋe nda tou mu wana u ḓo tou pfa u ḓifha", page 95.

The rural atmosphere in his short stories seem to fit well into reality but his attempts into urban life does not meet with success. When the author describes something based on folklore he does it with fair success. In "Muhoha muhulu a u na ṋama" we meet scenes such as the meeting of Sumbana and his sweet heart. The words the author uses express reality: "Ni a ḓivha ndi khou ni funa lune a hu tshe na muṅwe muthu wa nnḓa ha mavu ane nda mu funa u fhira inwi". The reply to the statement is: "Haa, nṋe a thi zwi tendi lini. Ngauri afhu ni sa ambi mafhungo a u ṋea thundu vhabebi vhanga ya u mmala" page 107. Such reactions in traditionally brought up characters are appropriate.

The language of this book has some unnecessary borrowing such as: "Mielekanyo hei ya dzhenwa nga tshitavhili tshihulu tsha u tama u yavho hafha fhethu hune ha pfi 'tshikolo'" page 7. The word 'mielekanyo' should have been 'ngelekanyo'. The form mielekanyo is of a Tsonga word viz 'mihleketo'. The writer also repeats this borrowing when he says: "Vha tshi khou tshimbila u vha ene u khou panya-panya hafha murahu ha mukomana", page 8. The word 'panya-panya' is a Tsonga word and could have been replaced by 'gidima-gidima" which is a Venda word.

Despite the borrowing which the author did in his stories the language of the author is the sweet flowing Venda.

The author has tried to show us the realism in his stories. Realism therefore seeks to give his knowledge of truth, it attempts a portrayal of reality, idealism or romance gives a sense of glory, it is a thrilling and an inspiring aspect of reality.

In conclusion it will also be noticed that an appropriate usage of proverbs as well as ideophonic expressions has been made. Nevertheless an improvement has still to be made on the author's sentences which tend to become clauses whenever such usages have been made.

For the achievement of Venda Literature this book is a contribution worthy of note, since we do not have any other book to compare it with in Venda. The other short stories which appear in folklore were not specifically written as short stories but as informative pieces of literature.

FOLK STORIES AND PROVERBS

The Venda folk stories were first recorded in NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA in 1918. The stories of Sankambe (Ngano) and other versions were narrated in sweet Venda idiom. The stories come out clearly without being forced. The stories usually end by a proverb to emphasize the moral effect of such stories.

Refrains are sometimes used but these preserve the natural flow of the language. This book has already been treated under school readers. It formed the source of wisdom teaching in the Venda society which had no other books of information.

In MUDEDEDZI II by P.E. Schwellnus published in 1938 folktales are included which formed interesting reading. Some of them can serve as short stories. The language in the folktales is good Venda idiom which is sometimes punctuated by some little songs to break the monotony in the narration.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus has made adaptations of the European folktales into Venda. He did it in such a way, and in such a language that the reader may hardly recognise that the tale is an adapted one. His Venda idiom is such that even what he has translated sounds like original Venda.

In 1949 G.P. Lestrade and W.M.D. Phophi published "SOME VENDA FOLKTALES" with English translations. The book makes easy reading for the English speakers since every story is translated. The folktales have hunger as their theme and base. There is always a lack of something that makes the story to go on. From the beginning the book starts with a man who had no clothes. He struggles to get the skin of a dog as attire but he is disappointed at the end. The story is very humorously narrated and the moral is appropriate.

The tales in Some Venda Folktales are typical of the Venda speaking peoples. The author has narrated them very well too. The language used is good Venda. The sentences are attractively constructed and they make interesting reading. Even those who listen to the rendering enjoy the prose style of the author or narrator.

This book is significant since it was the first book in Venda literature to be specific on tales. The book fulfills a great need of the social background to the Venda community.

In 1960 P.H. Nenzhelele published NGANO (folktales) a book containing folktales. The book contains folktales and riddles. The stories have been told in a straightforward manner with the result that even the small children enjoy the stories. The sarcastic way in which Nenzhelele speaks is present in the narration of the stories.

Nenzhelele's language however does not flow as in the books Some Venda Folktales and Nedede ya Luaambo Lwa Tshivenḓa. The language in Ngano sometimes jerks as one reads it. The riddles are an interesting puzzle in Venda. They serve as mental tests for quick imaginary associations. Some Ngano can serve as short stories in Venda.

The folktales are a mirror through which we can see the mind of the Venda, his philosophy and his ideals. The wisdom of the people is revealed through the folktale. The difficult concepts of wisdom, disobedience and trickery are put in a language and in a form which offends nobody but which is easily understood.

The folktale is a piece of literature which is enjoyed by both young and old. The Venda have preserved their wisdom in the folktales which Nenzhelele and Phophi have given to us in the two little books stated above.

The proverbs in Venda are found in the readers and in the language books which are used in school. The proverbs are philosophical statements which embrace a lot of meaning or they summarise the experience of the Venda community through the ages.

The proverbs also form part of the sentence in a Venda court since the proverb is used to shorten the argument for instance "ya longa khwanḓa yo nwa" when it is stated that a young man had intercourse with a young women once or once did it but it was long ago.

The proverbs in Venda have been collected by Dr. van Warmelo in his Dictionary; Tshivenda-English Dictionary. The other person who wrote about proverbs is L.T. Marole in his book MIRERO YA VHAVENḒA. The school readers from Std. I to VI each contains a number of proverbs. A large collection is found in ṮHAHULELA LUVENḒA and recently also in NZHELE YA LUVENḒA Std. I to VI.

The proverb in Venda may form an interesting study for the future. I am here concerned with the recording of it in the development of Venda literature but not its analysis.

Books on folktales and proverbs in Venda have just begun and a wide field lies ahead and Venda authors will do well to try their hand at collecting these forms and reducing them to writing.

The idiomatic expressions have been recorded in Ṯhahulela Luvenḓa and recently in Nzhele ya Luvenḓa. In the old books few idioms were fairly given in the stories which were related. This form of expressions is gaining popularity these days because it makes language lively and vivid. The idiomatic expressions help in the figures of speech in Venda.

CONCLUSION

The Venda short story has just been introduced as a substitute for the folktales which the Venda children learnt in the olden days.

When one assesses the achievement we find that the portrayal of the actors is on the surface and very little attempt has been made to reveal the inner side of the characters.

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Most of the stories give a side view description of the characters.

The short story should reveal its characters through the actions they do and not by mere description of the author.

The themes of some of the short stories are based on customs and traditions of the Venda speaking peoples.

Despite the shortcoming in character depiction Maumela has succeeded in portraying some of the people in his short stories whom we can meet in urban and in our rustic environments.

The short stories are really amusing pieces of literature and their publication is an achievement in Venda literature.

CHAPTER VII.

DRAMA

The word Drama is a much abused term. In the history of literature we hear it applied to tense moments in human life, in phrases such as "the drama of human life".[1] The newspapers writers often find "the drama of everyday life" in common situations which are charged with emotion: the faithfullness of a dog to a dead master, the bewilderment of a lost child. We often hear statements such as "Let me dramatize this for you etc."

Such varied and inexact uses of the term drama, do have at least one thing in common : they associate the dramatic with some effect-vivid, moving or sensational - which, events or objects may produce. By strange transference, drama comes to refer not to the thing but to certain of its results, not to an interaction real or supposed but between events and spectators.

The reaction of the audience as an ultimate end towards which drama is designed, is a necessary consideration to the dramatist. To the dramatist it is a compelling consideration, for drama is a form intended for presentation in an action before an audience or group.

The word drama originated in the Greek verb dran: to do, to act, to accomplish. From its beginning the drama of the western world has had action as its essential element. Action is vital to drama in two ways: as its matter or content and as its matter, or as its manner or form of presentation. Therefore action is an important aspect of Drama.

Structure of Drama.

In subject matter, a play is about an action, a happening in human life. Like other kinds of art, it seeks not to furnish a mere stenographic transcription from life, but to order its materials in a form from which emerge meaning and significance.

The complete career of any man encompasses a great number of episodes, many of them seemingly insignificant. There is too little meaning or too much - apparent here. Therefore the

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1) Webster's New World Dictionary, p. 1004.

dramatist is faced as any other artist with the problem of selection. He must choose from the confused wealth of materials available to him, a chain of events which centre on a particular action with logically determined limits. He must discover or impose a unity.

One meaning of the Greek word dran is to accomplish and in this meaning lies a further key to the structure of Drama. A play concerns a human agent attempting to accomplish some purpose. In tragedy his attempt is in personal terms at least unsuccessful, in Comedy it is successful, in the problem play final accomplishment is often either ambiguous or doubtful.

This action, from the beginning to the end of a movement towards a purposed goal, must also have a middle, it must proceed through a number of steps, the succession of incidents which make up the plot.

Since the dramatist is concerned with the meaning and logic of events rather than with their causal relationship in time, he will probably select his material and order it on a basis of the operation in human affairs, in laws of cause and effect. It is in this causal relationship of incidents that the element of conflict is present in virtually all plays.

The central figure of the play, the protagonist encounters difficulties, his purpose or purposes conflict with events or circumstances with purposes of other characters in the play or drama or with cross-purposes which exist within his own thoughts and desires. These difficulties threaten the protagonist's accomplishment, in other words, they present complications and his success or failure in dealing with these complications build through the play in order of increasing difficulty, one complication may add to another or may grow out of the solutions of a preceding one. At some point in this chain of complication and solution, achieved or attempted, the protagonist performs an act or makes a decision which irrevocably commits him to a further cause, pointing towards certain general consequences. This point is usually called the crisis,

the complications and the solutions which follow, work out the logical steps from crisis to final resolution or denouement.

This then is typical dramatic structure: a human agent is presented in a situation which necessitates the removal of certain difficulties for the achievement of his purpose, the manner in which he meets these difficulties, in combination with the nature of the difficulties themselves is vital. Within this general pattern, however a dramatist has wide latitude for arrangement and in a sense each play has its own particular structure.

Character in Drama.

The concept of character in drama is a more familiar one than that of action and to many people it is a more interesting one. Character is rather easily discernible, and it engages a natural interest in personalities. Our reactions to "people" we recognise immediately and make us verbalize easily. The things that character do and say are more obvious than are the logic and meaning of the pattern in which they say and do them.

For these very reasons it is easy to over emphasize those aspects of characterization which although important are not necessarily of greatest importance. In most cases it is readily apparent whether figures in a play are simple or complex, typed or unique, naturalistic or romanticised, realistic or artificial, sympathetic or anti-pathetic. Characters must not only be analysed for qualities which they possess and the attitude which they embody, but they must be judged within necessary limitation imposed upon them by demands of art, in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness in the particular plot which provides them with a dramatic life. It is the only life they have which the characters will show.

The generalizations on structure have already suggested the importance of character in the pattern of complication and solution. The initial situation assumed for any particular play limits, in some ways the nature of the characters and the modes of action open to them. Their solutions come in answer to problems which help to form their dramatic environment.

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But a particular character is expected to arrive at particular solutions rather than at other available ones because of the kind of character that he is, because he has been given one set of qualities rather than another. In them, the solutions which a character provides may create further difficulties for himself. Dramatic logic is the plausible working out in terms of cause and effect of this mutual relationship between plot and character.

When a dramatist violates probabilities, interest in this relationship, in order to achieve a happy ending or surprising theatrical effect he has violated his own assumptions, tricked his audience and has badly betrayed his art.

The history of drama in Venda starts with the publication of Tshililo by T.N. Maumela in 1957.

TSHILILO : T.N. Maumela.

In producing Tshililo Maumela made an important contribution to Venda literature seeing that it is the first book of its kind ever published in this language. Once more the appearance of Maumela's pioneering work on drama paved the way for other authors to make an attempt in writing this type of literature as was the case when the first novel Elelwani, was published. Thus at present there are already four books on drama in Venda.

At face value one may think that the art of producing books on drama is a simple affair because the message therein contained has to be delivered to the audience by means of dialogue if it is being acted on the stage, but in order to make such a book worth reading, diction also plays an important part. The writing of books on drama also requires a knowledge of many other factors found in real life such as human activities. In his contribution to the Publications of the University of Pretoria (Nuwe Reeks, Nr. 44) Professor G. Cronje says: "Waar die drama oor kontemporere gebeure en mense handel, is ewewens kennis en begrip noodsaaklik. Dit is byvoorbeeld ondenkbaar dat 'n drama te make hê met byvoorbeeld die hedendaagse misdadigerslewe of seemanslewe,

sonder dat die outeur die nodige feite (kennis) daaroor het en veral begrip van die samehang van die feite openbaar".[1)]

(a) Plot.

Maumela's personae dramatis are all members of the Venda community. Three families are involved in this drama, just as their children also take an important part in love affairs. Foreigners are few e.g. the messenger of the Chief's court, the Chief, the witch-doctor and the 'mungome' at Phafula and his apprentices. Witchcraft eventually crops in, following the illness of one of the male parents. The matter goes to the Chief's court for permission to proceed to the 'mungome' for the smelling out of the culprits. The 'mungome' fails to point out who the culprit is, and ends by blaming the family gods of the patient, stating that they are complaining about sacrifices which have been ignored, for a long time. The drama ends after the two parties have returned from Phafula and Tshililo is then sent to her proper in-law's place where she becomes reconciled with Tshifaro, who is her former fiancé.

In her book 'The Anatomy of Drama', Marjorie Boulton states: "The plot of a play like that of a novel, a short story, or even a narrative poem, is the actual story. It is generally a mechanical exercise to summarise such a story, and a more interesting exercise to study the skill of its construction. In a play, however, both the outline and the details of the plot are governed largely by this key fact of the three - dimensional nature of drama (i.e. time, action, place); the plot must be of a kind that can mostly be represented by ordinary human beings on a public stage."[2)] A poorly prepared plot may cause the play to fail to hold the audience in suspense; and where it has to be read for enjoyment or entertainment, the reader may lose interest and put it away before reading it to the last page. Thus the success of the drama depends entirely on its plot, which is the plan

1) Cronje, G.: Die drama as siening en weergawe van die lewe. Die drama as siening; p. 9.
2) Boulton, M.: The Anatomy of Drama; p. 38.

of the play.

That Rammbuda goes to Masindi's place early in the morning so that she might go to Ramuntshi's place and make love advances to Tshililo, is in accordance with the custom of the Venda that allows pre-arranged marriages for their children. Ramuntshi himself is long dead, but Tshililo's uncle, Khethani, acts as guardian in this matter after Nyamalwela had declared herself not responsible, and that she is not to be bothered about lobola matters, since she has only been married to the Ramuntshi's, by which she implies that she has no final say (Tshililo, page 11). The Venda adopted a system of pre-arranged marriages so that they might have a check on (i) leprosy, (ii) lunacy, (iii) witchcraft and (iv) unwelcome behaviour. Witchcraft is off course connected with their superstitious beliefs.

The conversation between Tshililo and her younger brother Thizwilondi is very interesting in that it reveals to the reader, the difference between someone who has had some schooling and another who did not go to school. Thizwilondi works arithmetically his sister's age after his mother had told Tshililo that when Thizwilondi was born she was 8 years old. Thizwilondi then adds his age which is 10 years to 8 years and tells Tshililo that she is 18 years old. Tshililo cannot understand how this happens as she has no knowledge of number work. This scene is (Act I, Scene III) extremely interesting because of its comical reactions.

The depiction of the characteristics of boys begins in Act. II, Scene I. While Tshifaro and Tshisamphiri seem to have the ability to observe changes in weather conditions and also their desire to converse about love affairs as boys of all times do, the diction usually falls short of dramatic rendering. The love between Tshililo and Tshifaro is somewhat cold. There is therefore no wonder why Tshisamphiri eventually grabs her and together they elope to Rustenburg where his father works. No mention is made of the trip to Rustenburg just as Tshisamphiri's reason that he could not remain in Johannesburg for fear of Tshifaro does not convince the reader, because Tshifaro appears to be inactive and without any human reactions to adverse situations.

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In their book "Inleiding by die studie van Letterkunde", Grove en Botha say: "Die roman sowel as die drama beeld konflik uit. Soms is dit 'n uiterlike botsing waar mense mekaar handtastelik te lyf gaan, maar dit hoef nie altyd uiterlik te wees nie".[1)]

Similarly the various families mentioned in this book seem not to be alive. No reaction occurs until Ramatsea becomes ill, and the party goes home. This is the usual procedure of the Venda who still believe that their own witch-doctors can offer their patients the best treatment. When no improvement takes place in Ramatsea's illness, his brother Ramathuthu and his sister Pandeani agree upon calling a witch-doctor, who blames Tshililo for the incurable illness. The result is that she goes home and the whole family after hearing that they have been accused of witchcraft, embark upon demanding, as custom goes, to be cleared of this accusation. The Chief instructs Dali, the messenger of the court to accompany them to the 'mungome' (smelling-out witch-doctor) at Phafula (Pafuri). Blood is thicker than water, they say. Khethani who at one time was cheated by Nyamalwela aligns himself with his late brother's widow and her daughter.

The 'mungome' arranges the two parties according to relationship. Of course it should be realised that he usually compares them according to physical resemblances, yet they tend to believe that he is the real mungome. He starts his smelling-out business, but when he realises that Nyamalwela cannot be convinced after he has pulled her by her toe, he informs the complainants that Ramatsea is ill because they do not offer any sacrifices to the gods of the deceased members of their family. So the parties later on return home, they are not quite satisfied with the results of the smelling-out. Dali, the Chief's messenger, rules out the idea that they proceed to another mungome. So ends the story of our drama and according to custom, Tshililo is sent with a beast (R10.00) to her fiancé.

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1) Grove, A.P. & Botha, E.: Inleiding by die studie van die Letterkunde, p. 121 (3)

In his contribution "Die Drama as Siening en Weergawe van die lewe",[1] Prof. G. Cronje, says: "Met weergawe word hier representasie bedoel. Die drama is geen presentasie van die lewe (soos dit is) nie, maar wel representasie van die lewe (soos die dramaturg dit sien), deurdat hy die lewe inlewend artistiek verwerk het. Die drama gee dus nie die lewe (soos dit is) nie, maar gee dit weer (soos die Kunstenaar dit sien). Wanneer dit dus gaan om die drama as weergawe van die lewe, moet voorop gestel word dat in die weergawe (representasie) die dramaturg se eie siening van die lewe opgesluit lê."[2] Under normal conditions Tshifaro should put up some sort of resistance when Tshililo is brought to him, moreso as she comes to him with the child she bore with Tshisamphiri when they were living as husband and wife at Rustenburg, but he shows no reaction at all, and Tshililo, as custom allows it, enters the Rammela's family as Tshifaro's bona fide wife.

Characters.

In as far as character depiction is concerned, there seems to be not much of it here. The people in this drama appear to be not fully-blooded human beings at all. While:-

(i) Tshisamphiri and Tshifaro show signs of some friendship when they are still young men, the attitude taken by Tshisamphiri against Tshifaro through eloping with his fiancé, reduces him to the lust of a monster which believes in the law of the jungle. There is no wonder that when Tshisamphiri's father, Ramatsea, is seriously ill, he quickly believes in the story of the witch-doctor (Mudzhiba) that Tshililo is a witch and must be returned to her mother.

(ii) Tshifaro, on the contrary, does not behave like a human being. Together with his father they do nothing to show that they have been wronged by the Ramatsea family. According to Venda custom, if a girl who is already engaged stays with another lover as husband and wife, her fiancé has the right

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1) Cronje, G.: Die Drama as Siening en Weergawe van die lewe - Weergawe en representasie; p. 11 - Publikasie van die Universiteit van Pretoria, Nuwe Reeks Nr. 44.

2) " " " " "

to demand the refund of property (money, clothing, cattle, etc) paid in respect of lebola. This the Rammela family does not do. Tshifaro himself does not even put up a struggle when Tshililo is sent to his home as his wife.

(iii) Tshililo herself is one of those females who suffer from indecision. She cannot say 'no' to Tshifaro and does not reject Tshisamphiri's proposal to her, yet when asked whether she wishes to return to her former lover she answers readily: "Ndi funa u ya vhuhadzi hanga ha kale...") (I wish to go to my former home-in-law).[1] In a drama the main character or protagonist does not only reveal his importance in the play through his manner of acting on the stage, but he does this in his dialogue. This does not happen to Tshililo, and the only time we hear of her temerity is the night she prepares herself for elopement with Tshisamphiri when she shows much arrogance to her uncle Khethani. Grove and Botha say: "Ons lees nie net 'n beskrywing van die soldate nie, maar ons sien hulle: die oues, die jonges, die opstandiges. Met ander woorde ons kry toneelspelers op 'n verhoog - karakters. Hulle woorde word ook nie slegs aan ons gerapporteer nie, maar ons hoor hulle woorde uit hulle eie mond. Met ander woorde ons kry dramatiese dialoog. Ons lees nie slegs wat hulle gedoen het nie, maar met ons eie oë sien ons hulle gebare, hulle houdinge. Met ander woorde ons kry handeling. Die woord "drama" beteken dan ook handeling".[2]

Three families have been mentioned in this book, and all of them play a part in this drama because the little conflict (there is very little of it of course) that occurs, originates in their children.

(iv) Rammela - this family has been poorly represented in this drama in that the part members of this family play is so insignificant. Rammela does not appear frequently in the drama, and surprises the reader because he does not even report Tshililo's elopement with Tshisamphiri at the Chief's court or that a refund of lobola be made. This man is not even a type.

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Tshililo, Act VI, Scene V, p. 66.
2) Grove, A.P. & Botha, E.: Inleiding by die studie van Letterkunde; p. 121 (2)

(v) Ramuntshi - In spite of the weakness and looseness of Tshililo, her uncle Khethani, stands in the place of his late brother, Ramuntshi. He is not a shirker and keeps a check on his late brother's widow and her daughter. When he discovers that Tshililo is about to elope with Tshisamphiri, he tries to discourage her but in vain. Once more he shows his responsibility towards his ward after Tshililo has been accused of witchcraft, for he heads the family when they go to Phafula. Finally, he makes arrangements for the return of Tshililo to her proper home-in-law. This is in accordance with Venda custom which allows the seduced girl to be sent to the place where she is supposed to stay during her married life. Khethani is not a hypocrite and represents Venda royal society in the true sense of the word. His totem is Singo (Elephant's trunk) and therefore stands for the senior royal houses in Vendaland. Nyamalwela, Tshililo's mother, is a widow. Although she appears to be an irresponsible person she remains loyal to her late husband's younger brother, Khethani. That she receives the R10.00 from Tshisamphiri given her by Tshililo, could happen to any woman of her social standing, in Vendaland. That she appears to dance to the tune of her daughter, is a typical weakness of women of all races, particularly widows. She asks her daughter what she will do if told to go and look for her (i.e. to follow where she has gone to). She tells Khethani everything about Tshililo's determination to elope with Tshisamphiri. She is also not a coward because when the 'mungome' pulls her by the toe and asks her: "Are you not a witch?" She answers: "Tell me how I do bewitch people!" and the mungome fabricates a new story that the illness is being caused by Ramatsea's departed relatives spirits.[1)]

(vi) Ramatsea - This family is conspicuous by the dramatic conflict it causes in the drama, although it is not so dramatic in the true sense of the word, such as is described by Grové and Botha, when they say that tension has to be aroused.

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1) Maumela, T.N.: Tshililo; p. 61.

"Beide die aangehaalde stukke bevat elemente van spanning. Dit lê in die situasie. In albei gevalle voel ons: daar is 'n botsing aan die kom. Wat die aard daarvan gaan wees, weet ons nie presies nie. Maar die atmosfeer is gelaai, en dat daar iets aan broei is, is seker. Dit wek spanning." [1)]
Ramatsea himself has no control over his son. Under normal conditions no Venda parent can allow his child to stay with somebody's daughter for whom no lobola has been paid, lest she falls ill or even die, and then the family concerned gets into difficulties. What usually happens after a young woman or girl has eloped to a strange family, the head of the family immediately sends a mediator or go-between with any amount of money varying from R10.00 and above, to report the whereabouts of their child. This Ramatsea does not do; yet he and his brother Ramathuthu waste no time in returning Tshililo to her parents after she has been accused of withchcraft. In spite of Ramatsea's protestations that no mention of witchcraft be made when sending Tshililo back home, Ramathuthu insists on that the Ramuntshi family be informed of the evil. Pandelani, their sister, is also not a woman of honest opinion.

(vii) Dali - He is one of the few trustworthy messengers of the Chief's court in Venda society. He faithfully fulfills the instructions given him by Chief Thavhayamipfa. He abides by the decision of the first mungome, and when the other party suggest that they must proceed to another seer (mungome), he refuses. He is by far better than his Chief whose appearance in the personae dramatis has no reason. No one feels his presence in the drama.

(c) Literary comments.

What has been said in Elelwani concerning style may be repeated here. This, however, does not mean that the author did not make use of idiomatic and proverbial expressions in this book. The contention put forward is that they are rather meagre for a drama. And while it is acceptable that drama is

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1) Grové A.P. & Botha E.: Inleiding by die Studie van Letterkunde, p. 122.

in the form of dialogue, it goes without saying that there has to be some poetic diction as well as tension, let alone forcefulness in the speeches of the actors. Whether the book is just being read or acted, one must feel its dramatic movement. This is not so in Tshililo, and the speeches given are in simple prose statements in the form of a dialogue. In writing about what speeches in a drama should look like, Marjorie Boulton says: "The dialogue or a play must be such that the normally competent actor can speak his lines without stumbling, stopping for breath in the wrong place or speaking with too little animation or such a false intonation that it is obvious he does not understand what he is saying; it must also be such that the audience for whom the play is written can take in most of what is being said in the time available." 1)

The somewhat dramatic diction occurs where the witch-doctor, Mudzhiba (Tshililo; page 49-52) speaks or praises his bones when popular Venda proverbs and idioms are used e.g. "muthu ndi nḓou: ha tshili nga muri muthihi" (muthu ndi nḓou, ha ḽi muri muṅwe fhedzi); Arali zwa kunda zwi ḓo kunda (alliteration); "Nṋe ndi Mudzhiba, Ḽimvumvu, 'muri u sa kavhiho makhwitha" .... On page 60-63, the manner in which 'vhangome' (plural of mungome) who are usually members of the Tsonga tribe, seem to bring about some form of rhythm when they tell the audience to agree to what they say e.g. 'Vumani! Vumani Vhanyai! - the rhythm may of course, be a matter of exclamation rather than being rhythmic. Maumela's tendency to use the conjuction 'afhu' instead of 'hufha' has also been frequently used in this book.

The unraveling of this drama is far from being satisfactory. No reason is given why the two parties did not report back to the chief's court on their return from Phafula (Pafuri). Before the parties that have accused each other of witchcraft undertake the journey to Phafula, they leave behind, usually at the chief's kraal, the amount of money or cattle, the party that loses shall pay; hence they have to go there before returning to their respective homes so that the chief may finalise the matter.

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1) Boulton, M.: The Anatomy of Drama; p. 100.

In Tshililo the warring parties return to their respective homes. Some of the cattle the parties promise to pay have to be slaughtered at the chief's kraal (also headman's kraal) and the meat is shared among those present at the chief's court.

The sending of Tshililo to her former fiancé after she has begotten a child with Tshisamphiri is not quite clear. The Ramatsea family should have been liable to pay the fine for the damage done to the Rammela family. This payment of the fine has not been mentioned anywhere, let alone the payment of R10.00 when one's daughter is returned to her proper place. In Venda society people who have paid lobola for a girl or woman who goes to stay with another man as husband and wife may demand the return or refund of their lobola proceeds immediately. The Rammela people do not do this.

In this drama, although there are other books on Venda drama which are in no way a match to it, the dramatic requirements have not been fully implimented. This may perhaps be due to the lack of proper dramatic diction and the plot which is somewhat a little unconvincing. Characterisation is also not quite to the point, and one is left with the doubt whether the book may have any chances of being acted upon the stage.

One cannot also see the reason why the author finally decided to introduce the cause of the illness of Ramatsea as the failure of the family to continue practising the art of a witch-doctor; and that his spirit is not resting well. Or is it that the author intends to disapprove the Venda community's belief in the power of smelling-out? The usual belief is that if people go to the Mungome to find out about the death of any member of the family and the mungome smells out one of their relatives, they decide upon what to tell those who remained at home for the fear of causing some dissension or disagreement in the family. They then come to an agreement and say that death has been caused by the spirits of their ancestors. In spite of some apparent defects in dramatic diction and character depiction, T.N. Maumela has once more paved the way for the production of drama in the

Venda language, which because of its simple style, even primary school children are able to read it without any difficulty.

The book opens with lines which do not strike the reader or listener.

Ram: Ndau-nduna! Kholomo! Muhali!

Mas: Aa! Tsho, izwi ndi vhone? Kha vha dzule zwavho kha wonoyo mutuli iṱali fhano hu tshi dzulea na nga vhathu vha vhanna hu si na na izwo zwidzulo. Ho dovha ho tswuka nga urali". page 7.

It is not realistic that a Venda man will greet a woman with the words which are used to greet chiefs. The woman cannot just be addressed in borrowed words like the author has done in the case of Masindi.

No wonder Masindi re-acts by saying "Tsho!" which reveals that the words by which she has been addressed are unfitting to her. When she says "Kha vha dzule zwavho kha mutuli" she reveals that she did not have respect for Rammela. This does not agree with the time and the milieu of the play. The Vendas of the period given in this play were well brought up in form of etiquette and therefore the reaction of Masindi seems to be that of a detribalised Venda woman.

It is also surprising that Rammele goes to Masindi and tells her to go as a medium to Nyamalwela Tshililo's mother. It would have been better if he had called her to his place and in the company of his wife, requested Masindi to be Nendila.

When Masindi presents the case to Nyamalwela she mentions that the boy and the girl have already agreed:

"Vha ri ri pfa mutukana washu Tshifaro a tshi ri vhudza zwauri u khou funana na Tshililo uno wavho. Kha vhone vhane vhana, mutukana a tshi amba, mafhungo o no di fhela, vho no ita na a fulufhe-dzisana zwavhudi." page 11.

This statement could not fit well at the first meeting of these two women before Tshililo has been consulted in accordance with Venda customs. Nyamelwala's reaction too does not impress the reader and may not even impress the audience on a stage if the book is acted.

After the meeting of the two women the author digresses to tell us of the ages of the children instead of linking up the matter brought by Masindi in a dramatic manner. Masindi could have been made to utter statements which would have made Nyamalwela to be forced to pursue the matter.

Then we are introduced to Tshifaro and Tshisamphiri. We meet them discussing about the weather and Tshifaro mentions the name of Tshililo and that he loves her. The manner of giving this part of the story is not dramatic, it is just a mere conversation and even Tshisamphiri's reaction does not show that Tshililo is an attractive girl. This part of the story could have been more dramatically rendered. When Tshililo is seen by Tshifaro she reacts as follows:

> "Zwino ndi lavheleswani sa ndi no nga ndo ponyokiswa madekwe? Nne zwa u zwondololwa ndi tshi khou tshimbila a thi zwi funi iwe vhathu". page 18.

This is said by a Venda girl who is well brought up. This does not agree with what Masindi and Rammela stated when they discussed the matter of the proposal. Tshililo shows her feelings about the young man who wanted to speak to her. This part is dramatic when it is said on the stage.

The play continues in a prose style and more or less as a novel: The reaction of the audience as an ultimate end towards which drama is designed is a necessary consideration to the dramatist:

> "Ndi a vhona nga tshifhinga tsha zwenezwi hu tshi vho ri swaṱhaswaṱha, hu si tsha vhonadza zwa kule."

This passage is just a narrative of events and has nothing to do with the dramatic flow of the story. The play proceeds from Act I to Act IV without giving us the crisis of the conflict.

From Act V the play gathers some vim. The conflict between the characters start. Tshililo is alleged to be a witch and a decision is arrived at that she must be sent home. A play concerns a human agent attempting to accomplish some purpose. In tragedy his attempts is in personal terms at least unsuccessful in comedy it is successful.

In Act VI the prose of the author gathers some dramatic effect but does not reach the height of dramatic prose. The author is still describing to us the actions of the characters instead of the characters giving it to us in their words and actions.

In Scene V and Vi of this Act the play seems to be starting. The curtain opens with emotions of the characters rising.

"Vha ḓo tenda na izwi? A ri ḓo sokou ḓi-ṱoḓela maime mafhango ngeno ri tshi khou bva kha maṅwe na"?. page 66.

This paragraph shows that Nyamalwela is worried about the matter and that she does not want to commit another blunder and when Tshililo says "Ndia funa u ya vhuhadzi hanga ha kale. Mbilu yanga a i tsha funa muthu" she really speaks from the bottom of her heart and on the stage this can be seen by her facial expression and her heart beat. The words carry with them a bitter experience for lovers who are not trustworthy.

The characterisation in this play is not satisfactory. The characters speak but with little dramatic effect. The author here is busy trying to make the characters speak but they speak as if it is the author describing them. We do not find the characters revealing their real nature. They do not show us their likes and dislikes. The book is a dialogue and it could have been a novel which uses the dialogue.

In Act I we should have been introduced to the conflict and in Act II the conflict could have started to become complex and in Act III we should have been given the climax of the conflict. In Act IV the drama should be showing the trend of thought towards the solution while in Act V and VI the solution should have been brought out being based on the preceding Acts. In this book the author got into difficulties and was unable to solve the problem of Tshililo's marriage affairs and then brought the scene where the divination bones had to suggest the return of the girl to her former husband. Tshililo returns to Tshifaro's home because she is now forsaken in this situation. She does not show herself as a person who has feelings and aims in life.

The dramatist did not order his materials on the basis of the operation in human affairs in laws of cause and effect.

As far as Venda Literature is concerned the book is the first to be published in this kind and has this significance that Venda was put to a dramatic form.

The second drama book to be published in Venda language is

VHAMUSANDA-VHO-DZEGERE : E.S. Netshilema

(a) Plot.

It is very difficult to state what exactly is the plot of this book. It is written as a tragedy. The story revolves around chief Dzegere and his right-hand-man Nyelisani.

The author brings to our notice what can happen if we are not very careful in our lives. The chief wants some one to help him with the administration of his country. He gets him alright but what happens is that people started telling evil stories about him. They told the chief that his right-hand-man Nyelisani was planning to overthrow him.

Nyelisani however, had turned to be a hardworking man. Under his jurisdiction everything is going smoothly. But with people like Thanyani, Mususumeli and Zwiito all good deeds of Nyelisani are twisted to mean exactly the opposite. They spread rumours that Nyelisani wants to take the chair. When such rumours reach Dzegere's ears he easily believes them, without verifying their truth. What happens next is that even witchcraft is dragged in. The witch-doctor Neswiswi confirms the rumours and promises the chief some medicine that will protect him for the time being. He recommends that the chief must leave his country and go across the Limpopo River. Dzegere believes this story. He leaves his people and goes away to a far off country only to die after a few days.

After remaining for a few days Nyelisani also goes back to his home where his people wanted him to rule his people. The chieftainship of Dzegere remains vacant.

(b) Characters.

(i) Dzegere.

This is the main character of the book. He is chief of a certain country. Dzegere although he is a leader has no characteristics of a leader at all. When we meet him for the first time he speaks like a man who has already given up hope "shango ḽanga ḽi khou fhela. A ḽi tshee na tshileme tsha maḓuvha". He is already confused, he does not know what to do about his country.

This is a man who easily gets influenced, he is advised to have a right-hand-man, he jumps at the idea without even thinking of what will happen later. Although this was not a bad idea he bungles it later when he again believes in hearsay stories about his right-hand-man. Dzegere has no stand point and he is a man who does not think for himself. He is swayed by the ideas of other people. He even went to an extent of running away from his people. This is not what one would expect from the main character. One would have expected that Dzegere would stand his grounds. He could have faced all the troubles more so that he was a chief who was born in the kraal. He does not show the discipline that is usually noticed in such characters.

Dzegere is a human being who shows some enlightenment but his ideas about the ability of young persons ruling the country is shatterred by suspicion.

(ii) Nyelisani.

He is a gentle hard working man. He is called for an assignment which he faithfully carries out. People liked him and he made them develop loyalty towards their chief. Unfortunately in all his troubles he is rewarded by evil stories from a few who did not like him for selfish-ends. These people wanted him to clash with the chief. Nyelisani however being a wise man does not rush into action. He goes over matters steadily and tries to prove the authenticity of such stories. Through the foolishness of the chief however, this procedure did not achieve the desired goal especially when the chief had disappeared.

We find that Nyelisani does not remain in power for long since it is difficult to lead a community without the rudiments of that community forming part of your leadership.

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Nyelesani's part in this drama agrees with the statement that the central figure of a play, the protagonist encounters difficulties, his purpose or purposes conflict with events or circumstances, with purposes of other characters in the play or with cross-purposes which exist within his own thoughts and desires. These difficulties threaten the protagonist's accomplishment, in other words, they present complications and success or failure in dealing with these complications which build through the play in order of increasing difficulty, one complication may add to another or may grow out of the solutions of a preceding one. Nyelisani's departure to his home reveals him as a less determined man who accepted the responsibility of running the country with an aim of just trying. He should have persevered on andimproved the administration as he had been requested to do by Dzegere.

(iii) Other characters.

The other characters in the book play a minor role. They all help to build up the story. The witch-doctor for instance, plays the role of causing confusion by his bones which he says can tell him what is going to happen or being planned by evil doers. The other persons in the play help in the spreading of rumours which later on misled Dzegere.

(c) Literary comments.

When the play opens we meet a worried Venda chief Vho-Dzegere:

"Shango ḽanga ḽi vho nga ḽi khou fhela. A ḽi tshe na tshiḽeme tsha maḓuvha."

From this paragraph the dramatist opens the curtain by a picture of a spiritually disturbed ruler. These words make the other characters to re-act in a way which agrees with the sad words of the chief. The other characters reveal that times have changed and the others say that his divination bones show that wise men are needed in these changed circumstances. In subject matter a play is about an action, a happening in human life.

The first act opens to us the problem facing the country of Dzegere. We are introduced to the supposed wise men who restore

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the dignity of Dzegere's country. Nyelesani is introduced to Dzegere's family and eventually to the public. In this act doubt is expressed by Thanyani who is Dzegere's son. The act closes by Nyelesani showing his assumption of duties and by giving rules and regulations of procedure. Dzegere's doubt is latent in these words:

> "Hafhu Muvenḓa ha tondwi. Wa mu tonda u mphe ńwana ndi..... Nne ndi a tenda hayo. Ndo no ḓi pfa vhanzhi vha tshi ri khosi ndi Nyelisani. Vho-Maine mafhungo aya a nkela maṱari."

When one compares these words and the opening words of this play where Dzegere is asking for a wise man to guide his land, one realizes that Dzegere is developing a sentiment of hatred towards his supposed right-hand-man Nyelisani. His subject Ṋeswiswi gives his verifying attitude by saying:

> "Vhafuwi, muhulwane ha tevheli.....(vha a tsamula). A vha vhone; a ri na vhuṱanzi ho ḓalaho. Naho zwi zwone ya kanda kańwe i yâ rewa."

when the character says "ya kanda kańwe" he reveals his considered opinion on hearsay stories and takes a manly attitude of weighing things properly. The feeling of hostility on the side of the family of Dzegere is mounting. Nyamavhuya says:

> "Zwi zwone vhuhosi fhano vhu ḓo ri fhelela..... Vha tshi ṱhoda Nyelisani uri ndi khosi yavho a hu na na ṅwe..... Zwiṋo arali a sa vhonwa hu tshee maṱsheloni a hu nga ḽiwi lu ḓifhaho."

With these words Nyamuvhuya is instigating an action against Nyelisani, whom he thinks has made himself the chief. The loss of power by Dzegere makes him become resentful and he starts plotting against Nyelisani whom he had asked to come and rule his country. This ill feeling of Dzegere towards Nyelisani is springing from his past status which has been submerged by the popularity of the new ruler. A play concerns a human agent attempting to accomplish some purpose, in tragedy his attempt is in personal terms at least unsuccessful.

Nyelisani also suspects that there may be some plot underfoot but he is courageous:

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"Ndi ḓo tshi ita fhano ndi vhone hu no ya phuna na..... Vho-khotsimunene vha rambe vhathu vhoṱhe."

and further shows that he is well doctored when he says:

"Nṋe ndi mboho khulwane. Ndi matenda dzo nwa ndi kholomo dza mvulani. Arali ya sa raha i ḓo ḓadza. Nṋe a tho ngo tou lilela, ndo tou mvakiwa. Arali vha tshi khou tsmutshudzwa nga vhathu zwi ḓo vha dina. A re nṋe vha ḓo ṱangana na tshigekhe tsha munna."

These words reveal the character of the man. He is courageous but at the bottom he also feels insecure, that is why he fears those who are using drugs against him. Nyelisani's power grows and Dzegere feels it. Nyelisani goes about telling the people that it would be better if Dzegere is got rid off. At some point in the chain of complication and solution, achieved or attempted, the protagonist performs an act or makes a decision on which irrevocably commits him to a further cause towards a crisis.

Dzegere says:

"Nṋe mafhungo aya a vho nkela maṱari. Ndi vho tou ri nga vhe ndi ḓivhe ndi musi ndi songo mu vhidza. Ndi amba ngauri ndo tangwa nga ḓuvha na mulilo."

The phrase 'ndo tangwa nga ḓuvha na mulilo, reveals the pains he was suffering, for he was being pushed from his family side and also from Nyelisani's side.

Nyelisani later on falls ill too and suspects that Dzegere's medicines are working. He even feared to go and meet Dzegere. His fear fades away when he says:

"Ndo pfa tsevhi zwauri khosi iyi i na vuvu, kana muthu u ṱoḓa u fela kha nṋe; fhedzi u ḓo fela kule."

By this paragraph Nyelisani points a dramatic device which he will use, for Dzegere also has already hinted that he will go away to far off places as a protest.

Nyelisani's character is revealed by his perseverance under difficult conditions. His people want him for his good administration. He summarised his good qualities when he says:

"Ndo livhuha nga afha he ra shumisana ngaho na afho he ra khakhelana nga hone, ri farelane."

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He reveals that he is a human being who has good and bad points. This is then the typical dramatic structure; a human agent is presented in a situation which necessitates the removal of difficulties for him to achieve his purpose.

Dzegere on the other hand regrets his action of asking Nyelisani when he says:

> "Zwithu zwi a fhela shangoni. Nne ndo vha ndi tshi ri zwothe ndi zwanga. Mapfura ndi la ndi tshi lata. A ri kondelele. Kha musi ri do fhata mishasha tsini na thavha dza Ha-Makandinganya. Ri do tou fa nga ndala zwiliwa vhunga zwi tsini na u fhela, ri do tshila nga thawi na mbubulu. Itali ri tshi do fela khomboni. Ndi mafhungo a Nyadzawela."

This state is what is called in Afrikaans "Spyt kom agterna". He has come to the end of his plotting and all that he did resulted in nothing. The story of what Nyelisani meted out to Dzegere and what Dzegere meted out to Nyelisani is very characteristic of the Venda. Whenever one has an opportunity he does not consider others. In Venda chieftainship when a new chief succeeds to the throne his main aim is to oppress others and cause them untold sufferings.

This book as a book of Drama has the opening act as the exposition and it develops into a climax in Act III when Dzegere plots with his family to oust Nyelisani and when he has not been able to do that he decided to leave his country to go and die in unhappy conditions.

From Act IV we see that Nyelisani's power has reached a climax and he also gets worried and decides to accept the request that he should return home to Tshafhome. Dzegere develops some tragic characterisitcs and his death is reported in an undignified manner. The characters speak out their own minds and from statements the action or conflict develops on until the climax. This book can be presented on the stage with some success if the actors are well trained.

Vhamusanda Vho-Dzegere as drama is a worthy contribution despite the shortcomings in language and style. Comparing this book with Tshililo this book is better and even its dialogue, to a certain extent, can fit dramatic levels while Tshililo is a novel written in a dialogue form.

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The third book in the form of a drama to be published in Venda is

MUOFHE : U.M. Ramaite.

(a) Plot.

In this drama Ramaite set out to show the conflict between the traditional beliefs and the influence of modern culture on the young generation.

Muofhe fell ill and she does not believe that witchdoctors can cure her. She does not believe in witchcraft and believes that only a doctor scientifically trained can help her. Her mother however, holds a different opinion quite opposed to her daughter's.

This conflict between mother and daughter's beliefs is the result of modern influences, the mother is clinging to the old traditions while the daughter is being influenced by modern ideas. As a result she does not have confidence in the medicines she is given to use by her mother, she instead throws them away at a later stage. In this way the subject matter in a play is about an action, a happening in human life.

We also find that the good manners that were basic in our culture have degenerated. Nyelisani does not respect the local court of law. He despises all those present. This is the result of modern life because fewer and fewer children find a chance to be culturally educated.

The uselessness of witchcraft is also exposed. The clash between scientific methods and primitive methods is illustrated in this play. The love episodes are given a prominent place in this drama. The social come together in a Venda community is well given and gives us a mirror of the basic values in Venda culture.

(b) Characters.

There are two main characters worth mentioning in this drama. They are Muofhe and Nyelisani.

(i) Muofhe.

This is the main character of the book. Her parents still believe in witchcraft. When she was ill she had no alternative

but to take the medicines which were given by her parents.

Muofhe has been painted as a typical Venda girl of her age. The way she talks reveals this for characters must not only be analysed for qualities which theypossess and the attitude which they embody, but they must be judged within the necessary limitation imposed upon them by the demands of art, in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness in the particular plot which provides them with a dramatic life. When she was speaking with Nyelisani about love she says "a ri ḓi oṱhe a na inwi muṋe wazwo. Kana ndi u ladza nṋe nga bai, zwoṱhe zwi na inwi muṋe wazwo" page 9. In these lines she implies implicitly that whatever they are talking about, she completely aligns herself with such ideas or with such an agreement.

Muofhe, a modern girl who does not believe in witchdoctors is confronted with the belief the parents have in such persons When she is ill she is still prepared to choose the kind of doctor who must treat her. "Maine wa ḽikhuwa a no dzula ngei Musibi nṋe ndi vhona e ene a ngaho u na nḓivho ya khwine ya malwadze manzhi" page 13. This choice is refuted by her mother who still believes that witchdoctors can do better than medical practitioners. Muofhe tells her mother straight in the face that her ideas and belief on witchcraft is wrong: "Mmawe, ni na mihumbulo i songo zwaho.... ṱuwani ni nditshe ndi eḓele uri ndi si dzhenwe nga mihumbulo i ngaho yaṋu" page 14.

Although she finds herself between the traditional beliefs and modern beliefs she still obeys her parents: "zwoṱhe ndi ḓo zwi ita unga no mbudza... ni sa ḓo ri ndo no vha khunda-vhalai" page 15. Muofhe is a thoughtful girl. Her ideas are pure and she plays with the language much to the pleasure of the ear: "zwitshele a zwi fhaṱi muḓi; muthu vha vhenga zwiito..... u anetshelwa ndi u dzinwa." page 23. Here Muofhe was involved in a discussion with Nyelisani about their future plans. They plan to run away together. Although they are about to elope, she still loves and respects her parents: "nṋe ndi ofha maipfi a vhabebi vhanga, nda pfuka ndaela dzavho hu ḓo nga u vha nyadza". page 23.

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Like anybody in love, Muofhe becomes excited and reveals everything her parents had told her, she told to her lover Nyelisani. She feels relieved after this. She remained faithful in this love, even after Nyelisani had left her. In this aspect it is apparent that figures in a play are simple or complex, typed or unique, naturalistic or romanticised, realistic or artificial, sympathetic or anti-pathetic depending on the part they play in the drama. Muofhe becomes a character of life and blood in this play.

(ii) Nyelisani.

This character is just the opposite of Muofhe. He is a man but now and then he finds his philosophy challenged by that of the women. When he was talking to Muofhe and Mulalo he finds himself having no stand point. Nyelisani finds it difficult to solve their clash with his friend Matevhu over Muofhe. He chooses to do it the aggressive way: "amba wo ḓi-geḓa murathu Izwi kha nṋe a u nga ḓo laṱa Matevhu?" page 12. The two had clashed at Muofhe's place one evening. He is not intelligent as Muofhe and also not as wise as a man should be. He plans to elope with Muofhe to his uncle's place regardless of the consequences which will follow. In the portrayal of Nyelisani the author did not take into consideration the fact that a play concerns a human agent attempting to accomplish some purpose, in comedy his attempts are successful. In Muofhe the comic aspect which the author aimed at is not clearly brought out as the author leaves us in the lurch.

(iii) Other characters.

The other characters viz Matevhu, Mulalo, parents of the other two main characters help to keep the story going. The witchdoctor is brought in to show how useless witchdoctors and their crafts can be. The witchdoctor only provides a platform on which Muofhe's parents base their ideas. At the end the witchdoctor is the centre of trouble. These characters are mediums through which the main characters pass their messages.

(c) Literary comments.

The play deals with love between Nyelisani and Muofhe.

The two main characters depart from the traditional way of making love and the conservative Venda community tried by all means to make them toe the line but with little success. The conflict was brought by superstitious elements. The book ends abruptly and therefore violates the principles of dramatic logic. When the book opens Nyelisani says:

> "Ndo sedza nda zwi vhona zwa u vhubva tshaho ndi u beba fobvu. Ndila yanga yo ḓi vha nthihi fhedzi. U shuma ndi sa neti, muvhili wa muthu a u ṱhukuwi nga u shuma. A furaho ndi a shumaho, onoyo u tetemelwa nga vhusiwana."

In this passage the character through his words gives us the impression that he is a hard working man who owns whatever he has, through the sweat of his brow. When he says "vhubva tshaho ndi u beba fobvu" the character states a true statement for, a thief is born out of laziness. A person who is busy has no time for committing evil.

When we are introduced to Muofhe we hear her saying:

> "Ndi u vusa-ḓe inwi Nyelisani? Na zwino tshi hone tshine na kolisa tshone tshine tsha si ḓo ni fhelele-vho, khaladzi, khefhano ri hone."

his sentence gives the likes and dislikes of Muofhe as a person. Nyelisani re-acts as follows:

> "Ni ambani ni tshi ralo? Ni a kola khaladzi, Ndi zwi fhio zwine na ri zwi ḓo mphelela? Kani u amba na nwi ndi u khakha, tshiseo tsho no shanduka samba kani?"

when he says to Muofhe

> "Ni a kola khaladzi."

Provokes the girl's deep seated pride and she reveals her emotional state and she is at the same time prickled as a girl to some love affair which is up to Nyelisani's sleeve. Through the words of the other characters we know something about Nyelisani:

> "Iina! Ri vhudze Muofhe. Ndiwe wo kungaho ili ḽihwarahwara! Hafhu wa amba 'vhulapha-lapha' ndi ḓo u likita vhusiku honovhuno. A thi tambi na ṅwana we nda beba lini."

(Mawela) This statement reveals the impression Nyelisani made on the father of Muofhe and he in turn gives the other side of Muofhe by saying:



M.E.R. MATHIVHA : A writer of Drama, novels and Language bo

> A thi pandelwi sa mmbwa lini. Kani ndi vhone vhane vha mu ruma uri a tshimbile a tshi ri 'galatsha!? Fhedzi kha nṋe ńwana wavho u ḓo laṱa. Ndo vha vhudza nṋe ḓaba-ḓaba ḽa Vho-Musundwa!

From these words the character reveals himself as a person with means and his wealth makes him feel much offended by the words of Mawela.

The love affair between Muofhe and Nyelisani grows and we find the girl's words:

"Zwa mbiluni yanga iṱali ndi tshi ḓo ni hashela zwoṱhe."

With these words the girl reveals her secrets which were hidden for sometime while she was testing the young man's love.

The scenes in which Venda court procedures are depicted are not very well done. The artist seems to be not very well familiar with such trials in Venda courts. Women are easily moved to tears when they are faced with a problem and in this play we see Muofhe's mother doing the same:

> "Ene Muofhe ndi ane ra kha ḓi ḓo mu vhona-ha? (vha amba vha tshi vho tswimile). Muofhe ńwana 'nga, Muofhe ńwana' nga! U ngafhi zwino Muofhe."

These words are the pains which a parent feels after something has happened to the most beloved and valued viz the child.

This dramatic book is a contribution to Venda literature. The characters speak although their language is more prose and not much of dramatic prose. Muofhe like Tshililo is given in a style of the novel and both could have been novels. In Muofhe the conflict gathers momentum but the ending of the play does not give the reader or the audience the chance because it just ends. The play does not allow the curtain to fall slowly as it happens in real life.

The language used in this book is not always good Venda idiom but some mixture of Venda idiom and other languages.

The fourth drama book in Venda is Mabalanganye.

MABALANGANYE : M.E.R. Mathivha.

(a) Plot.

The play opens with a scene at Tshikhwani where some important characters are introduced. A remark about Mabalanganye the main character and his attitude towards certain things is mentioned.

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Sengeza the great chief is busy planning the reception of important guests. Messengers are sent out to make the necessary preparations for the visitors. We are given the activities of the women and the men and the way in which the women can mislead men in love affairs.

In subject matter, a play is about an action, a happening in human life. Like other kinds of art, it seeks not to furnish a mere stenographic transcription from life, but to order its material in a form from which emerge meaning and significance. The play is set in human affairs and tries to express the feelings of the Venda society concerning life.

The beautiful women are the touch stones of the drama. Their attractiveness even makes Sengeza the great chief to admire them. The women at Tshikhwani are well vested in the culture of the Venda. The women say:

> "na hone iṱali Vho-Ńwasundani who fuwa vhukuma, na hone musi ro vhulawa ri tou khana muthu a wana ri tshi tou gagamisa zwo fanelaho, na u khotha ha hone muthu a tshi tou podo! minwe ya sevhedza". page 8.

We are given the manner of drinking beer and the remarks made in such social come-together. The Tshikhwani women are contrasted with the Tshogovha women:

> "Nangoho-vho vho inwi vhaṱanuni ni nga tou tibwa nga vha Ńwasundani? Ni fanela u tou dzi hwasa thuthu na mikheṱhengwa i tou vhina mikhasi uri na vha Tshikhwani vha żwi vhone uri ni vha Thavhani." page 15.

The women together with the heir Mabalanganye plot to poison the chief Sengeza so that Mabalanganye could be installed as chief. The pretty women are used as bait to entice the young prince. The complete career of any man encompasses a great number of episodes, many of them seemingly insignificant. In this conspiracy episode we meet Nwafunyufunyu, Nwasundani and Mabalanganye. For a conspiracy to succeed there must be a few persons who are concerned. The plotters enlist the help of Gadamipfa who is the witchdoctor to Sengeza but they do not tell him that they want to use the poison against the chief. They pretend that they have been sent by the chief. In this act the activities of Venda chiefs towards their enemies are exposed. In primitive societies the only way

of defeating ones enemies is by means of poisoning them or by killing them. The women influence Mabalanganye by the words they use:

> Naa ndi mini Mabalanganye? Kani inwi-ha itali ni songo fanela u imba mutsho? No tshewa nga lufhanga sa rine-vho, na hone khe ni tshi nga no la mbilu ya khuhu inwi", page 38.

These words make the ambitious Mabalanganye more daring. This makes Mabalanganye the central figure of the play, he becomes the protagonis who encounters difficulties, his purposes conflict with events or circumstances and with purposes of other characters. His ambition to become chief exists within him and the chief is a stumbling block to his ambition and therefore he is easily won to the side of the conspirators. The conflict gathers momentum as Mabalanganye gets more and more encouragements from the women.

The play reaches a climax when Mabalanganye succeeds in poisoning the chief Sengeza, Sengeza feels the poison eating his intestines. He took his assegai and killed many persons whom he suspected. Mabalanganye ran away with the chief's assegai and went and organised an army and a battle ensued between Tshikota's army and his. Mabalanganye and Tshikota fell in this battle. Makheila says: "O! vhahali vho wa nga zwitiko maphwea a sala o tika matswia" page 70. From this point the drama starts coming down. The tragic situation grips the characters. The complications are the worries of Sengeza about Tshikota's death and the loss of an heir. From these, one complication adds to another or grows out of the solutions of the preceding one, Sengeza in trying to get Mabalanganye he lost Tshikota and many members of his family.

The death of Tshikota worries Sengeza and his close men. The ghosts of Tshikota and Mabalanganye reveal the truth about the place where the poison was obtained.

Gandamipfa is called to the chief's kraal and asked to take care of the village with his herbs. The tragic elements of the play reveal themselves. Sengeza is a sad man, his family is sad his glory is shattered. He is gloomy and sickly in his health.

Matshephula the diviner is consulted and he confirms that Gadamipfa is responsible for the misfortunes which have befallen the Tshigovha kraal. In a furious mood Sengeza calls a big meeting of all his people for an important matter. Gadamipfa is also called unaware of the danger hanging over his head. The last crisis is approaching and the reader feels his hair standing as he sees the people gathering not knowing for what he or she is called. The blood of those who suspect Gadamipfa is boiling to a point of eruption.

Sengeza without any warning kills Gandamipfa by stabbing him and says:

> "Ane a si vhone ndi ḓo mu ita zwenezwi. Ndo laṱisa mubalanganyi wa muḓi wanga, madekwe a thongo lala nga zwirunzi zwa vha muṱa wanga vho faho nga mulandu wawe" page 85.

The drama ends by showing that the over ambition of Mabalanganye is a bad course to pursue. The fear of the chiefs for witch-doctors and what they use comes to a bad end.

The truth that a chief is the greatest witchdoctor and cannot be bewitched is confirmed by Sengeza surviving from the deadly poison administered to him by Mabalanganye. Another point brought home is that chiefs are appointed by God and that they are God's representatives on earth. The death of Mabalanganye is a confirmation of the statement which says: "haastige hond verbrand sy mond". Sengeza remains despite the conspirators who wanted to usurp the throne from him by any foul means. This is a lesson to aspirant princes.

(b) Characters.

The drama has many characters but the following develop the play.

(i) Mabalanganye.

He is the heir apparent to the chieftainship at Tshigovha. He is an ambitious young man who wants to become chief without a waste of time. He is known for his overbearing attitude. Nematandani says of him:

> "Naho Vho-Mabalanganye vhe vho-mukumba thole na u kumbisa havho ri ḓo ḓi hu vhona" page 2.

He is a complainant when he is sent on errands while others remain at Tshigovha: "Hafhu Tshikota ni a thoma, Ndi uri inwi no sala no dzula" page 19. He is jealous about any one visiting Tshikhwani because there are pretty women. He would like to be sent there:

> "Naa vhone Vho-Tshikota vha ḓi ri ndi zwone zwenezwi zwine. Kululu a vho ḓo tou dzula ngei Tshikhwani, naa a hu rumiwi muṅwe. page 22.

He is a stubborn young man and this is shown when he says: "Thi zwi pfesi vha ri ri iteni? Vha ri ri tou ita'ni? page 38. But his firm stand is soon changed by the words promising him a pretty woman:

> "Izwi tshinyeke Mabalanganye tshi a ni fhira no ṉewa nga yone mbilu ya tshiangaḓela". page 40.

This awakens Mabalanganye's emotions of love and he says:

> "a vha swaswi Vho-Ńwafunyufunyu, vha ḓo mpha ene Musha-a vha wanga". page 40.

No man can resist the pull of a pretty woman or can deny the pretty face having its way. He enjoys the confidence of the woman behind him "Mabalanganye ndi munna u kona zwithu zwawe". page 50. These are the words said by Ńwafunyufunyu. He is a good organiser who gathers an army in a short time. He is a brave man. He sees no man in the other soldiers, "kuala kwokwo kwaṉu Tshikota ndi ḓo ṱhafhisa ṉamusi. Nga ri vha wele maḓali ri songo sia na mmbwa ya lungano" page 69. Even at the point of his death he is still full of vengeance "Tshikota ndo ṱuwa nae salani" page 70. In the portrayal of Mabalanganye's character dramatic logic is plausibly working out in terms of cause and effect of the mutual relationship between plot and character.

(ii) Tshikota.

He is a faithful subject who carries out the commands of his chief. He is a well cultured Venda. We meet him saying these words "fhumulani Nḓoulume yo swika khedebu ya maḽazwivhisi, nga ri tshete vhaṉe vha mavu vho swika" page 1. He is a well disciplined man and he is not attracted by women to the extent that he loses his balance as did Mabalanganye. He is a kind person and he feels pity for others: "Muhali ndi zwithuḓe vho

huvhadza muthu wa vhathu" page 56. He is not easily moved by emotions "vhathu humelani madzuloni anu a hu na tshithu ri khou ḓa afho muṱani" page 57. He said this when he was cooling down the tense situation immediately after the poison attempt.

He is a brave experienced soldier and we see that when he speaks to the men from Munanyi who were aiding Mabalanganye, "he inwi vhanna vha ha-Munanyi ni mini ni tshi kutela muloi o bvaho nga u shavha? Arali i nndwa ambani ro luga" page 69. He has the idea of royal blood in him. He orders the soldiers not to kill Mabalanganye when he was knocked down. He has that sympathy of a nobleman but he forgot that a snake is not dead until its head is crushed to pieces. He is stabbed unaware because he thought he was protecting Mabalanganye.

(iii) Sengeza.

He is a famous chief who loves pretty women. He keeps a powerful witchdoctor Gandamipfa. He has a strong character which makes even his relatives fear him and few even dare to make an attempt: "Vhe ndi ite'ni, inwi vhone vha bva'fhi ṋamusi vhone? Vha nga mu kwama ene Sengeza vhone? Ene mu-monwa nga vhomasia-ndaitwa" page 38 (Mabalanganye). He loves the pretty women from Tshikhwani. In this matter he reveals that chiefs in Venda society indulge in love affairs indiscriminately: "A hu na a humaho, zwe nda amba ndo amba. Tshikhwani ndi ḽa nnyi, arali ḽi ḽanga a hu na a humaho, noṱhe ni dzula fhano u swika ndi tshi ri ṱuwani" page 36. He could be vulgar at times: "Maḓithu anu Gandamipfa, iwe mundalamo u tshe fhano muloi ndiwe" page 55. When he is suffering he can give up hope, "Nnditsheni ndi fe nandi dangani ḽanga nandi ni songo zwi pfa" page 56. He can be merciless when he is feeling pains "Ndo u wana muloi ndiwe (e nga pfumo nziri kha thunzhi, Mushanzhoni e gosi a tshi khou bidigama na ḽiḽa pfumo)" page 56. He can be very sad when he has lost many of his royal family members.

> "Tshikota, Ńwafunyufunyu na Mushanzhoni vho ṱuwa nga mulandu u si wavho, u wa tshivhimbili tsho swifha-dzaho mbilu dza vhasadzi vhanga uri tshi vha pimbidze vha sale vhe vhatsho. Mbilu yanga a i tendi uri Ńwafu-nyufunyu u na tshimbvevha na nne. Ndo sokou mu ḽisa tshivhindi ngavhe ndi mu litshe. Zwino ndo sala ndi noṱhe, thi na wanga". page 78.

He is now a real tragic figure to be pitied.

(iv) Makheila.

He is a good and fast messenger of the chief's court. He is impressed by the beauty of the women from Tshikhwani: "Ngevha vhana vha hone vha khou swika Vho-Tshikota Vho-Mbalanganye vha amba zwone iḓani u vhona mavoḓa a hone, wa sa vha na danga u nga tou mini henefho? Ngoho Tshikhwa tsho fuwa muhali" page 16. He is not afraid of an enemy and at the same time he obeys instructions of his chief. He wants to demonstrate that he has defeated Mabalanganye's army and has even captured him: "Nga tou farwa a iswe a tshi tshila uri vha mu mu vhone uri ro mu fara" page 70. Makheila can describe the battle and this shows that he is an experienced soldier,

> "muhali sa zwenezwi vha tshi vhona nguvho dzanga i malofha, zwi sumba uri nndwa yo vha khulu vhukuma lwe nne nda sa ḓivhe uri ndi ḓo vhuya naa. Tsanga yo vha i tshi wa kha shaḓa, kha nḓevhe, kha iṱo, kha ningo, malani na hoṱhe huvhi". page 76.

He can bear a revenging grudge for a long time. We see when he becomes jeering at the death of Gandamipfa, "Ṋamusi mulalo u ḓo vha hone ho tekulwa dendele ḽa vhadenya hu ḓo dzhena muya na nyofho i ḓo vha hone" page 85.

(v) Nwasundani.

She is a wealthy woman who has married other women. She takes interest in love affairs of her wives. She says at the beginning of the play: "Nangoho Mabalanganye iṱali i tshi tou vha vhamuṱani vha fhano Tshikhwani ni pfa vhabvana vha sa tou ṱhaḓulana nga dzina ḽawe" page 6. In these words she becomes a typical Venda woman who encourages the young women to enjoy the company of men. She is a well cultured Venda woman who treats her husband Sengeza very respectfully. When Sengeza has important visitors she sends her wives to give hand in the catering, for, she says: "Katelani vhasadzi ni bve ni kha ḓi mona-mona ni tshi itani? Mifaro ngeyo ndo fhedza." She suspects the women in their dealings with Sengeza, "kuambele kwa Mushanzhoni na Munaka vha tshi amba Kululu a ku mpfushi.

Phanḓa i tshi ḓa hu ranga ṱhoṱha" page 29. She gets worried by the double crossing the women are meting out to her love affair with Sengeza, "ndi khou lalwa nyalilo nṋe wa ha Sundani, ndi vhona zwone vhafumakadzi avha vha sa tsha dzula hayani" page 30. She conspires with Mabalanganye and Ńwafunyufunyu to poison Sengeza. In this act we get the aspect of Venda life which the women folk do when their husbands do not respect their properties. She devises a plan to get the poison: "Nna tshitamba vhathu vha tshi wana'fhi? Ro vha ri tshi tou fhirisa dongo, dongo a ḽi ambi" page 38.

She is an emotional person and she can become tense in her persuasion: "Mabalanganye, Mabalangye, na zwino u vha musadzi na hone wa dovha wa vha na mbilu ya tshisadzi ndi khwine u songo bebwa" page 39. By these words she reveals her burning desire to get rid of Sengeza and she incites the young prince to commit murder. She can use her wives as bait to get Mabalanganye to carry out the plot: "Naa ni nga kundwa nga Mabalanganye khomba dzo tou raliho. Nṋe ndi ri mboho i na maanḓa i tshi thudza dzikhura dza madanga maṅwe ya ḓa hayani tshiṱangani a si tsadzi i na maanḓa afhio" page 46. She is a cruel woman, "Muloi u ṱoḓa wau ńwana fhedzi no lapula no ri awedza. Ngavhe ni tshi ńo vha vhuye vha ni dzhenise ni ḓo kona u ita zwaṋu" page 63. She is concealing a cruel act which she has performed with Mabalanganye.

She cannot reveal out a secret even when she is facing death "Ebo! nṋe thi zwi ḓivhi u sokou ntshata" page 68. Her death confirms that crime does not pay.

(vi) Gandamipfa.

He is an important witchdoctor who protects Sengeza with his medicines. He has dangerous herbs and poisons. He uses his poisons to kill whoever does not agree with Sengeza. He wields great power in the area of Tshigovha. He is a typical Venda witchdoctor who is feared even by chiefs. The fact that he possesses the medicines which can kill, makes him a dangerous man who can even claim the chieftainship. His powerful medicines are the cause of his death. No wonder Tshikota's ghost says,

"Gunununu ndi ri ni farese muhulwana. Gandamipfa u ṱoḓa u mu ita "Liḓuxwani" uri hu sale hu tshi vhusa ene vhunga o kona nṋe na Mabalanganye" page 83. Those are words of the dead who never tell lies but the truth. This statement makes Sengeza more superstitious about Gaḓamipfa.

Gaḓamipfa is a cunning man and even his talks reveal him as a man who has something up his sleeves: "Ngei thavhani zwi tou khithi-khithi ṋamusi?" page 84. These words reveal that he is restless about what he knows. He makes the tragedy move fast to its close.

The other characters are very important and they represent Venda life and its ups and downs, but they will be commented on below.

(c) Literary comments.

This drama opens the curtains by giving us the great day for which the characters are preparing themselves, which is an important visit by important personalities. The main character Sengeza says in the opening scene "Ndi mini zwine na khou goḓombolana ngazwo vhailafuri"? The persons who are "goḓombolana" are competing for some position and the character reveals or predicts the future troubles ahead. The second main character namely Mabalanganye is hinted at by Gunununu when he says: "Ndi hone ro ḓi tshoka kha Mabalanganye u ḓo ramba na vha ha-Ratshilavhi" One of the women characters says "A vha ḓivhi uri arali mukukulume u siho tsadzi mabesu adzo ha tou kuna?" By this statement the dramatist prepares us to expect women mingling with men when Gunununu asks about Mabalanganye's duties at the chief's kraal. Mushaanzhoni says:

> "Naa vhone a vha mu ḓivhi uri ndi nnda i lumela shevhoni. Ndi ene wa Dzima-u-see vhukuma. Na musi ro ya u hwedza pfumbavhulo ngei Tshigovha ri tou shanyukanywa nga ene, ri tshi dzudzwa na u takuswa, wa fhindula u ḓo fhingudzwa wa vhuya we ṋala dza vhathu."

This is a report about Mabalanganye's attitude towards the women and the way he treats them. The women are fed up with Mabalanganye and his activities. The things that characters do and say are more obvious than are the logic and meaning of the pattern in which they say and do them.

Mabalanganye himself too reveals his own characteristics when he says:

> "Kululu hafhu inwi ni na luńwe kana ndi izwi ri vhaḓinḓa roṱhe? Naa ngei Tshikhwani kani vho ni pandemedza?" page 19.

In these words he shows that he is quarrelsome and provocative. Mabalanganye is jealous about those who go to Tshikhwani, he says:

> "A ni dzhii nga muṋe? Muthu a tshi ya Tshikhwani u tou hina-hina na u lenga muthu ha lengi" page 22.

Ńwasundani one of the characters suspects the women and their activities at Tshigovha, she reveals this when se says:

> "Kuambele kwa mushanzhoni na Munaka vha tshi amba na Kululu a ku mpfushi. Phanḓa i tshi ḓa hu ranga ṱhoṱha. U tshina havho hu tshi kanyelwa na minwenda zwi isa fhi zwenezwi?" page 29.

When Ńwasundani and Ńwafunyufunyu plot to poison the chief they also hesitate for, Ńwafunyufunyu says:

> "Ni amba zwone, fhedzi ra tou wanala Sengeza ni a mu ḓivha ro lovha na vhana." page 38.

These lines reveal the fear the Vendas have on touching the person of a chief. The chief is divinely appointed and any one who touches him may endanger his or her own life. Mabalanganye doubts the success of the plot for he says:

> "Vhe ndi iteni, inwi vhone vha bva'fhi ṋamusi vhone? Vha nga mukona ene Sengeza vhone? Ene-mu-monwa nga vhoma-siandaitwa. Vhone nda linga afho ndi fa ndi sa athu no u swika tshikhuvhani a hu kandwi hafhala." page 38.

In these words the character is trembling with fear and he seems not ready to carry out the plot. In subject matter a play is about an action, a happening in human life.

The beautiful women are now causing the crisis of the play. The love that Mabalanganye has towards women from Tshikhwani clashes with the love Sengeza has towards the same women. This clash also confirms the Venda statement "Nyamavhuya ha shayi thando a sa vha mbava ndi muloi". The Venda philosophy concerning the beautiful women is illustrated and once more emphasized. Mabalanganye gathers tragic elements or characteristics and the women have exploited his wish to become chief. He says "Nṋe ndi

mabala nda sa rumula ndi a wasekanya." page 40. Ńwasundani reacts as follows:

> "Ni a ri hanyela nna arali na ita izwo, ni sa ambi Mushaisano kani ni ḓo tou ndi muṱuku, na hone ifha ni tshi ḓo vha Thovhele, page 40.

The ambition in Mabalanganye is incited and he moves tragically towards the committance of a serious act, and at some point the protagonist performs an act or makes a decision which commits him. In Act III the Drama reaches the crisis. Mabalanganye and the women carry out their plot but the plot has some uneasiness when Mabalanganye says:

> "Vhone ṋamusi vha a fhufhumela nga maanḓa ndi a vhona uri vhá nga ri farisa."

This is a view of Mabalanganye about Ńwasundani's excitement about the conspiracy. The poison is administered secretly and the women and Mabalanganye are happy that it has been done but are also doubting about the absolute effect and the danger in which they may be involved if Sengeza does not die. The conflict mounts with great momentum and the characters of the conspiracy and those who are not aware clash and the others die in the crisis. Mabalanganye's fears are fulfilled because he is killed in a fight. Members of the conspiracy are traced through the revelation of the ghosts. The Drama moves steadily towards a close as the curtain closes we see the invincible Sengeza once more exerting his authority and kills the master mind of the medicines which the conspirators used. When Makheila says:

> "O! Vhahali vho wa nga zwitiko maphwea o sala o tika matswiya. Vha lovha hani vhana vha Tshienduulu". page 70.

These words ring dramatically as they express the tears of a heart. He further says:

> "Ngoho ḽo kovhela ḽa Tshigovha masiari tshivhangalala, tshusa dzo rumula tshusa, tsanga dza ṱuṱula tsanga, maḓi a vha malofpa a vho-Mabalanganye na Tshikota." page 71.

The metaphors used here are effective and they convey a sombre mood which was going to prevail in the royal family.

When Sengeza says:

"Vho Gandamipfa nga vha sendele ngeno ri ḓo nyeṱu." page 85

the audience who have listened to the ghosts and their story feel their blood running cold and when Sengeza says:

"Khebu, kheru tshetu, ndo luvhedza nne wa masingo". page 85

their blood shiver right through the whole body and on the stage this scene can be tragic indeed. Then Mbalanganye says:

"Yowee Tshigovha! Ngozwi mubeba a tshi tanya mudi wa mbalanganyo, mudi wa u shaya tshilidzi," page 86.

The personification is appropriate and the audience or the readers feel that the evil has been uprooted and that all conspirators did not succeed and it remains a lesson to those who continue to live with Sengeza.

This drama book opens by exposing the conflict. The main characters are introduced and some dramatic statement are made about characters and the conflict. From Act I to Act III the play builds up to a climax. In Act IV the play reaches the climax. The crisis is reached and the main characters meet their deserved fate and the chief who has been divinely annointed survives. From Act IV to V the play moves fast but logically to a close. The form of this drama conforms to the plays in other languages and the characterization is superior to the other three plays mentioned before. This book has exposed the like and dislikes of the Venda and it reveals the sense of justice which is at the bottom of Venda life. Mabalanganye is the last published drama in Venda and all the Venda authors who made an attempt at Drama writing have only given us one book each maybe when they make second and third attempts they will give us some improvement on what they laid as their foundation.

Drama has just started in Venda, its future is pregnate with promise. In conclusion mention must be made of Radio Bantu plays by S.E. Moeti and S. Ramunenyiwa

I have not

included them here since they have not been printed but have been acted with good success in the Venda service.

CONCLUSION

The dramatic works in Venda are still in their infancy. The authors should increase their knowledge of the stage and then improve their manner of presenting their new attempts.

The four published drama books indicate a fair attempt by Venda authors since these are original works and no translations. It is encouraging to meet authors trying to write drama books in their own language.

Some of the scenes are very vividly presented and they satisfy the requirements of drama. Some dramas have been able to bring out the conflict and the clash of purposes of characters well depicted. Characters such as Tshililo, Muofhe, Nyelisani and Mabalanganye have been portrayed in such a manner that they conform to the human beings whom we meet in our daily lives. The blunders which they have committed are human blunders and under normal circumstances these blunders can be committed by human beings.

At the bottom of all these dramas in Venda is witch-craft, that greatly feared monster amongst the Venda speaking peoples.

The tragedies of Mabalanganye and Vhamusanda Vho-Dzegere delve deep into the bases of the troubles in the Venda community.

It is significant that in the Venda drama the women characters play an important role. They colour the scenes by their love affairs well-intended as well as ill-intended.

The reading and the acting of these dramas in Venda will reveal the sobs of the Venda heart within and the acting will reveal the Venda aspirations and anticipations in this world.

CHAPTER VIII

POETRY

Venda poetry orginated with the traditional verses found in the readers already discussed. The influence of the psalms is also found in Venda Poetry.

Poetry may be defined as a believe to be "a possible way of gaining and imparting knowledge - a son of the same father as science : the brothers may quarrel from time to time, but each in his own field they are working towards compatible ends." 1)

Poetry in any language should be "a ritual, a mystique, detached from morality from factual and topical, from any religious preaching or scientific teaching. Its job was to be beautiful and useless." 2)

Poetry was born out of the rhythmic dances of the primitive man. Even animals dance about when they are happy. Man shouts when in pain. He is excited and creates some imaginary images with which he associates words. Man's awarencss of life is expressed in poetry. The sorrow in man's heart is given out in the words which are used in poetry. C.D. Lewis says "that poetry is that art which seeks to express a peculiar fusion of ideas and emotions which are normally on the edge of consciousness or even beyond it." 3)

Poetry is "an art and like all great art is more than transient refreshment. It is something which adds to the permanent riches of the soul's self-attainment. It justifies itself both by its immediate enjoyment, and also by its discipline of the innermost being. Its discipline is not distinct from enjoyment, but reason of it. The fertilization of the soul is the necessity of art." 4)

Poetry being art may be a record of the mind experiencing itself and thus developing a way of knowing better, of understanding and of interpreting our feelings, moods and our passions.

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1) C.D. Lewis: Poet's way of knowledge p. 3.
2) C.D. Lewis: Poet's way of knowledge p. 4.
3) C.D. Lewis: Poet's way of knowledge p. 7.
4) A.N. Whitehead ..... p. 7.

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The poets must concern themselves with the exploration of life at its most intense and they must give us the feel of it.

Sometimes the idea of poetry is often contrasted with that of thought and particularly 'abstract thought'. "People describe poetry and abstract thought as if they say Good and Evil, vice and virtue, hot and cold. Most people without thinking any further believe that the analytical work of the intellect, the efforts of will and precision in which it implicates the mind, are incompatible with that freshness of inspiration, that flow of expression, that grace and fancy which are signs of poetry and which reveal it at its very first words."[1)]

This is to say that the state of poetry is "completely irregular, inconstant, involuntary and fragile and that we lose it as we find it by accident. But this state is not enough to see treasure in a dream to find it on waking sparking at the foot of one's bed."[2)]

The poet has to borrow language - the voice of the public, that collection of traditional and irrational terms and rules, oddly created and transformed and strangely codified with variations which are understood.

These public collections may be of value to one person while it may be of no value to the other. A poem is really a kind of machine for producing the poetic state of the mind by means of words. The poet uses the public collection and in that use he also coins his own which return or add to the public collection from which he picked up his tools.

Poetry in a general sense may be defined as "the expression of the imagination and it is connected with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever changing wind over an AEOlian lyre."[3)] Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest minds.

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1) Paul Valery : The art of poetry p. 52.
2) Paul Valery : The art of poetry, p. 60.
3) C. Norman : Poets on Poetry, p. 180.

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Poetry turns all things to loveliness, it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things.

Prose speaks to the senses while poetry speaks directly to the mind. In poetry the mind instantly acknowledges the truth and feels the force of words and is moved and filled and elevated by them. Poetry is a special way of using words in order to create a special effect upon the reader and to light up the world for him. Poetry may be compared to science which is concerned with the finding out and the stating of facts, but poetry's task is to give a person the look, the smell, the taste and the feel of those facts which science has given. The poets carry within themselves a kind of supersensitive apparatus which records the best acute feelings of the human mind. It is through poetry that many good cultural aspects of human life have been preserved ever since the earliest days. We can see that man used poetry to express his passionate feelings about the world, to comfort himself amid the dangers and hardships of the world, to direct the world's natural forces by prayer and magic, to human ends and to understand the world.

The technique which a poet uses is to use the words as his raw materials, he shapes the words and hammer them out into a story of beautiful patterns. The poet uses language to reproduce fine shades of feelings or make us see familiar things through our imaginations as though we were seeing them for the first time. Poetry acts as if it is putting part of us to sleep in order to wake up and excite another part of us. It puts to sleep the part of us that reasons and argues, it awakens the part that remembers, feels and imagines. For both the putting to-sleep and waking-up process, rhythmic repetition of sound is powerful instrument. This makes poetry possess the power to universalize experience which means that it opens up to every one an experience that was originally the private property, so to

speak of a few people to a wider audience. Poetry was once said to be 'simple sensuous and passionate."[1] This means that the imagination of the poet must be passionate at white heat, if it is to burn away all impurities in the poem, get rid of what is irrelevent or second-rate and fuse his words into a single, shapely utterance. His senses must be all alive, so that he can feel things keenly and make the reader feel them through the sensuous quality of the poem.[2] Sometimes rhythm and metre are elements of poetry but poetry can be made without metre and rhythm, while it cannot be made without inner excitement which so often comes out in the form of metaphor or image, that poetic spirit, which makes lines such as "brightness falls from the air" the metre of these lines doesn't really matter so much, it is their inner radiance, their magic power of evoking a deep emotion in us, that proves their poetic quality.

Some good poetry has no rhyme. "The wildness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blosom as the rose."[3]

Poetry must always be read with the aim of finding what its task is. Poetry has the task of creating out of words the poet's experience, a special kind of world, quite separate from the ordinary everyday world, yet illuminating it and making you more aware of its inner nature.

It may be certainly a fact that the highest function of poetry is not to impart knowledge or persuade you that certain things are right or wrong, but sharpen your senses and to give you a special kind of wisdom - the kind that comes from exercising your imagination. Robert Fort says, "A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom" page 91. Every good poem, in fact, is a bridge built from the known familiar side of life over into the unknown. For poetry enlightens us in a different way from science: it speaks directly to our feelings and our imagination.

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1) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for you, p. 62.
2) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for you, p. 62.
3) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for you, p. 28.



P.H. Nenzhelele : A pioneer in Venda poetry.

The findings of poetry are no more and no less true than those of science.[1] What poetry does is to draw the lines, make the bridges from point to point, in our experience and thus reveal the pattern they form. This is indeed poetry's great gift to man - the revealing to him that every human experience, instead of being isolated or meaningless, is part of an intelligible pattern.

Unless the poem thrills the reader it is not likely that he will be able to make a fair criticism of it or to comprehend fully its meaning (for meaning, remember, reaches you through the emotional effect the poem has upon you).

Poetry in Venda has just started and Venda poets are busy trying their hand at narrative, and lyrical poetry. The poetry is recorded in four books which are briefly commented on chronologically:

Zwirendo na Zwiimbo zwa Vhana vha Vhavenda. This is the first published book on Venda poetry. Its significance lies in the fact that it records the traditional poetry of the Venda, traditional songs and some creation of the author. Nenzhelele finds inspiration in a variety of topics such as Vendaland, Venda ancestors, nature, animals, insects, religion etc.

ZWIRENDO NA ZWIIMBO ZWA VHANA VHA VHAVENDA : P.N. Nenzhelele.

(a) Plot.

In the writing of this book the author has divided it into two parts namely poems and little songs. For our discussion it would be better to divide the poems into kinds.

Kinds of poems.

The poems by Nenzhelele are grouped according to different kinds and subject matter which may be as follows:-

1. Poems about (i) animals (ii) birds and (iii) insects.

(i) Animals: Rathavha. This poem is about a baboon. It is an ugly animal which lives on the mountains and eats raw things

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1) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for you p. 92.

and hides from people when it steals the crops from their fields. Thabelo ya Tshikwavhavha. This is the lizard that complains of the human hatred and cannot understand why the people hate it. The people speak bad about it when it does not know of it. Thanganyoni ya Luvuvhu na Vhembe. This is about the big crocodile which used to catch even dogs accompanying their masters. Luvalo lwa Nowa. The snake does not understand why the people hate it. It says its cleverness came from the time when it misled Eve but it says the people must be careful wherever they move because it can kill them. Ndou ya fulu. It is about the elephant its power and size. The totems it holds in its name. Mbila-thomboni. The dassies say they are laughed at by other animals because they have no tail. No harm will be done to them since they will hide in the cave. Mbwanana Ńwavhoni. The little pups relate that they were born being five and they could not see but they could only suck from their mother. The thieves hate them because they bark at night.

(ii) Birds: Makukulume. The poem gives the fact that the cock regards itself as the head of the family and it protects its group. Kuŋoni na Tshidula. In this poem the bird says that the frog did not give the bird sweet water and it says that it does not complain because it will get more food from the field. Tshiŋoni na makumba. The bird knows that it has four eggs, but the eggs are no longer there, the boys have broken them.

(iii) Insects: Mmbo. The person thinks of the year when he saw Mmbo it is the year in which bed bugs were many. Bvumbani uvhu vhusunzi. This poem describes the red ants from overseas which live on islands which have no fear. They construct ships while the black ants are just staring. Nzie. The locusts destroy especially the red locusts. Buvhi. The spiders are very proud about their works. It is even stated that even the rats are less compared to them.

2. Poems about places and objects.

(i) Places: Afrika la Vharema. This continent of Africa belongs to the black races. It is having minerals in aboundance. Many fruits for many tribes. Shondo. It gives the activities of the persons working at an iron smith. They produce iron, etc. Vhuongelo shondo la muvhili. When a person has some pains he runs to a hospital and gets help. Magondoni ashu. In this poem the young are requested to attend to the rules of the road.

(ii) Objects: Dongololo la tsimbi. This is a description of the train. Fundudzi isha la Venda. A description of Lake Fundudzi is given. Madzanga a Venda. All the interesting things of Vendaland are described in this poem. Maluvha. A description of flowers and their uses is given.

3. Poems for morals and instructions.

Pfanelo yau. This poem lays down the ways of how a person can live with others.
Mulayo kwawo. In this poem the boys and girls are given instructions on rules of life.
Khuthadzo yanu. A person who despises others will be unhappy.
Tsiwana rudza mbilu. When the rich men boast of their riches the orphan must keep quiet and when it has things it does not boast about them.

4. Poems on religious topics.

Goko musika vhathu. In this poem praise is given to God who created the heaven and the earth.
Razwinzhi (Ńwali). A person requests God to give him all that he prays for or asks for.
Vhusiku vhukhethwa. This poem describes the birth of Christ in Bethlehem when He was a small baby.

5. Poems about time.
Zwifhinga zwi a amba. Here the author or poet lays the emphasis on the months.
Mukalaha na zwifhinga. Here the poet recalls the ages past when he was still strong but when he gets old he has no teeth and he even likes to die.

Zwi takalelaho mutsho. In the morning music is heard which comes from birds, music creatures etc. but at sunset each goes to its hiding place.

6. Poems on war.

Nndwa. The young men boast about their strength while some are weeping on account of the death of relatives.
Mushavho Dambudzo. The bad effect of the war is described.

7. Poems on natural phenomena.

Mukosi u a huma. This is a poem which describes the echo of the voice in the valleys and cliffs.
Mvula Tshilimo. A description of the rain is given. The rain from the North is the real good rain.
Ḓuvha. The sun gives the people heat, to the old and the young. It also supplies energy and vitamin D.

8. Human things.

Vharwa na vharwana. The poem is about the short people who are found in forests and dry places.
Ri vhona nga mitshelo. The good fruits of a person are seen or realised in what he does and in what he achieves.
Thi ḓivhi zwo bva'fhi. In this poem the poet tries to trace and evaluate the origin of the names, e.g. "Thanyani o thanya".
Thambulo ya mme. At dawn the mother carries the baby on her back and goes to plough in the field and in the evening she will do the same.
Khombe ya mutshelukwa. The unmarried man is happy during the day but at night he is sad because he has no money to purchase cattle so that he could pay lobola for a girl.
Tshilombe. The master jester is found in all feasts.

9. Little songs.

These are the songs which the author composed for the Venda children to sing as a form of whiling away their time. Here they are: mueni, funguvhu, lwendo lwashu, vhomme vho ya fhi, mambembeḓa, tshihwilili.

Some of these little songs express great truths in human life.

(b) Characteristics of the poems.

The poet in this book writes poems on various themes of which he has some experience. This is revealed when he groups his poems into poems and little songs.

The poems on animals are his early experiences as a child which he portrays to the readers. He tickles every one who reads them to laughter by his words. Many of the animals are described with some sentimental love while others he dislikes.

Poems on other themes are characterised by the moral aim in them. Most of them are aimed at teaching the young a certain moral lesson.

Some of the poems by this author shows Venda characteristics. We may demonstrate by some extracts from some poems in this book:

"Ro swika hayani hashu,
U ḓo tsa nda u ṅusa,
O ima ha nga wi,
Tendele ha nga wi
Ḓa ṅdi u ṅuse.
Ńee, evho, evho" page. 43.

When a reader recites this verse you get a picture of a woman who is insistantly trying to calm down the child. This is the Venda custom of calming down children.

The author also gives the feeling of a young man who is not married in these words: ".. vhusiku khofhe thi fari
Ndi fhahea dende ḽanga kha
tshifhande" page 46.

It is true indeed that such persons have many musical instruments which they use in whiling away their time.

The author is a religious man and he expresses his faith in his poems. The little songs are rhythmically composed so that they can be accompanied by some actions when the children are singing them. Here is an extract which shows the little songs:

"Tshihwilili tshanga, Mambo!
Tshanga a tshi lili Mambo!
Hu lila tsha Gole Mambo!
Vuu-vuu-vuu! page 68.

The "tshanga" "hu lila" "gole" maintain the rhythmic flow of the language and makes this song very interesting to the young when they are playing.

(c) Literary comments.

Nenzhelele reveals his knowledge widely when he uses figures of speech. In this book we do not get great poems which are philosophical, although the author had tried here and there to compose poetry. Since it is a book for young children.

In some of the poems the author uses some philosophical representation by criticising the subject and finally stating what the correct thing is. We find some good ideas expressed in this poem "Halwa" page 10 as follows:

"Vhu a lutanya,
Vhu a ondisa,
Vhu na gonobva
Vhu na bonelelo,
Vhu na mazwifhi,
Vhu a vhulahisa".

It is true that beer causes death or disrespect for a person who drinks excessively. The poet does not only give the dark side of the beer but also the good side of it:

"Inwa u lale,
Inwa u ele,
Inwa u see,
Inwa u shume" page 11.

If a person follows the instructions of this last verse he can drink but still retain his personality.

In certain instances there is a lesson that a person should accept, what God gives:

"Makwanda ndi mini?
Ndi do tshila hani?
Hufha ndi sa tambi,
Hufha ndi sa biki,
Ndo sikwa ndo rano" page 15.

In this poem the lizard accepts what God has given to it. The rabit too accepts the nature it has received from the Almighty in these words:

"Ri sewa ro rano,
A ri na mitshila,
Ndi wone muano,
Wa rine who mbila" page 45.

The poet usually uses the onomatopoeia in his poems:

"Hu tshi pfala musi,
Gi-gi-gi-gi,
Tshoko, tshoko, tshoko.
U midza vhathu na mihwalo,
U ṱanza vhathu na mihwalo" page 16.

This is repeated in the poem on rain when he says:

"Yo vhea mutsindo nga Devhula
'Ngindi, ngindi!
Ye ndo vhuya, waa-waa-waa, washa, washa" page 16.

The author can also use personification. Here it is given in some of his poems:

"Ahee! o bvelela musadzi-muhulu,
U dadamala kha vhutsimbi" page 15 (train).

"Ndi muṱonga kaṅwe,
Ndi thumbu ya bvani" (watermelon)

"Ndo hwala a maḓi,
Ndiri muthu a anwe" page 32.

The simile is also one of his devices in his poems:

"Ri pfa u ambelwa,
Sa mbale dza muṱana" page 32.

He uses ideophones in order to make his style emotive:

"Nda pfa ḽine 'ṅe" page 24
Ndi ḓo pfa 'phasha' phasha'
Nde muomva kezhu' page 27.

Some of the poems can be sung easily due to their fast rhythm and also in some cases he uses one rhyme scheme:

"Nyamutsa-nga-davhi (a)
Ṱongisa-makovhi (a)
Luwa a tshi shavhi (a)
Ṱhongela vho-ndovhi (a)

Sometimes the rhyme scheme is altered:

"Mubva-nga-mapfuvhi (a)
Muratha-maombe (b)
Musanda thi luvhi (a)
Ḓuhulu ḽa lombe (b) page 8.

The author succeeds very well as far as imagery is concerned in poem 26 "Dzelehana Shoni":

"Senenga, senenga!
Huu ..... huu!
Yo no swika
Eeee, eee, hafha!
.....
Muthu mbuno 'khadu'
Kha matavhi 'tshoto'
Ya vhuvhili 'tshoto!
Nde lavhu 'kwizi!
A ri ye Senenga,
Na nṋe na nṋe.
Zhuvhu, thunu, thuu'
No-o-o-o-o-o-o-o" page 28.

When reading this stanza the scene almost becomes a real thing. In the poem "Mafhuwe" the imagery is also satisfactory:

"Ee-ee-ee!
Ndi ri iḓani ri you vhona-vho!
Ri ye Gondeni ri yo vhona-vho.
Ee-, hee, hee!" page 43.

When one is reading this poem one gets the image of a woman stamping mealies firmly.

In some of the poems the author adopts a negative attitude similar to that adopted by Bernard Shaw in his book "Arms and the Man". The author does not like war and this is the same case with Ṋenzhelele in his war poems which in most cases end by: "hu na tshinyalelo khulusa". In his poem "Rathavha" the author gives a description of a baboon:

"Mubva-nga-mapfuvhi,
Muratha-maombe,
Musanda thi luvhi,
Ḓuhulu-ḽa-lombe.

Ndi mafuka-tsika,
Tshengedza-vhalindi
Muila-nzho-vhusiku,
Mufhunga-vhasinḓi". page 8.

With words such as "muratha-maombe, ḓuhulu-ḽa-lombe, muila-nzho-vhusiku" the author succeeds in giving us a caricature of a baboon which conforms to the expression "Nyamutsa-nga-davhi-wa-lombe, wa sa farelela davhi u-a wa". The author also expresses patriotism:

"Afrika, iwe Afrika:
Iwe shango ḽa Vharema,
Mutanwa nga vhatshena.
Afrika iwe Afrika.

Afrika iwe Afrika,
Haya ha dzindimi,
Haya ha vhalimi
Afrika.... Afrika. page 12.

The author can get at times under the feelings of an animal and reveal to us his observations:

"Kha vhathu ho anda,
Zwiseyo na ṱamba.
Tshinyadzo zwigoḓo,
Zwa u goḓa nṋe,
Ndo khuda nga tombo.
Ndo fholisa ṱhoho". page 14.

The feelings of the lizard are clearly given in this verse and the author shows keen observations of this animal. When he looks at the unfortunates he pities them:

"Litsha vho pfumaho vha zuwe,
Vha zuwisa thundu,
Iwe mbiluni yau u fhumule,
Zwi ḓe tumu!

Litsha vho takalaho vha ṱonge,
Vha tongisa muvhili
Iwe mbiluni yau i fhole
Ṋama ndi sili" page 31.

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Tsiwana i na maano,
I sedza zwithu.
Tsiwana i na tshishavho,
A i ṱongisi tshithu".

The lines express the state of an orphan and one feels pity for the orphan when one reads these lines. The words are appropriate and they convey the meanings and feelings of an orphan.

The author can imagine the world to come and picture it in his words:

Misi ndi tshi ḓo ṱuwa
Thi nga hangwi inwi matavha madala.
Thi nga hangwi inwi malwanzhe madala.
Nda ri : Salani!

Na zwoṱhe zwa vhusendeka.
Zwine zwa vha dzinekwa.
Kana ni thavha-mahaḓa.
Ndi ḓo ri : Salani!

Ḓivhani ri vha fhiri,
Ri nga khungu-muṱavha.
Ri nga maṱari a muaṱaha.
Ri ḓo ri Shango:
Sala!, Sala! page 38.

The last verse is a farewell that sounds universal to any one who has lived an appreciative life on this beautiful world.

The author remembers his early upbrings and the necessary rhymes and songs that he sang:-

Hee mpeherege!
Mpheni gumba ḽanga.
Nne a ḽi na nne
Ḽi na Langa-langa. page 40.

This is a good description of the message that a dove makes when it coos. The rhythmic movement of its throat comes out in the words which the author has recorded. The author's love of nature is revealed in the poem Maluvha.

Vho takalaho vha ṱonga nga 'nwi.
Vha lilaho vha fhumudzwa nga 'nwi.
Zwimimani ni hone.
Lufini ni hone.
No ṱanganya yoṱhe mishumo. page 53.

The publication of this book awakened in the Venda the love of original poetry and of composing poems on various topics. The Venda started to read poetry which was not translated. The second poetry book in Venda is:

NNDELA ZWIXELE : P.H. Ṋenzhelele.

(a) Plot.

The book is arranged according to the following kinds of poems:-

(i) Domestic things, animals and persons.

Ńwana wavhuḓi, Hayani, Lufhanga, Wa hanga ndi nnyi? Kubevha, Ha-Ravele, Goya na Demba, Mbudzi, Nguluvhe, Mme a vhana, Vhana vhe vhothe, Nndu ya pfunzo, Shubini, Vhasidzana, Ńanga Tshirema. Mbongola, Ṱhalane, Vhengele.

(ii) Wild animals and natural phenomena.

Ranngwe, Mulema, Luaviavi, Goni, Pfuko mudavhini, Ḓuvha lashu, Tshilimo, Mutoli wa Ṋotshi, Zwigome na mabvunwa, Tshiṋoni, Vhukhohe, Sodzini, Tshiṯaha, Randevhe, Tshipata isha, Tshifunga, Masiabundu, Nungu, Ṯharu, Khokhonya mutanda, Tshikhwitha, Ḓula.

(iii) Games and duties.

Alilali mulisa muhulwane, Mitambo tshixele, mulindedzano. Mitambo, Bonelelo.

(b) Characteristics.

(i) Most of the groups of domestic things and animals and persons give a message which has a moral lesson. The poems are characterised by a rhyme scheme which the author is trying to apply to Venda poetry. For instance the first poem viz "Ńwana Wavhuḓi".

"Ńwana wavhuḓi u ofha vhabebi (a)
Nwana wavhuḓi ha teledzi (a)
Mashudu (b)

Ńwana wavhuḓi ha levhi (a)
Nwana wavhuḓi ha xeli (a)
Mashudu" (b) page 7.

This is also confirmed by the rhyme scheme used in the poem "Wa hanga ndi nnyi":

"Zwiṱa ndi tshi lwala (a)
A no ngo zwi londa (a)
No mphira zwaṋu (b)
Nde ńwavha (a)

Khonani dza nga misi (b)
Ndi thovho dzanga (a)
Ndi nguvho dzanga (a)
Dzo ndela". (a) page 16.

Most of the poems are objective descriptions of domestic things and persons. The descriptions fit the small children and they are clear to the young active infants.

(ii) The group for wild animals consists of poems which are characterised by an objective description with rhyme employed.

In the poem "Ranngwe" we get the following rhyme scheme:

"Ranngwe ndo u vhona (a)
U songo shavha (a)
Ee, u vho shona (a)
Zwe wa ita ndi zwihulu (b)
Gwana yashu ila khulu (b)
Wo i la lini" (c)

Ri sumbedze mukumba (a)
We wa sia wo ponda (a)
Ri sumbedze-vho marambo (b)
E wa sia u tshi la (a)
Ea, ea, ro u vhona (a)
U songo hanedza (a) page 17.

This is a description of the activities of the tiger and the poem's meaning is enhanced by the illustration of a tiger above it.

Descriptions of objects and animals is very interesting to the infants and they enjoy the poems when they recite them accompanied by actions.

(iii) Games and duties.

In this group the poems are also of a descriptive nature. When we look at the poem "Mitambo" we find that the same description is being given:

"Yawee, inwi vhana vhashu,
No hangwa mitambo naa?
Hu na tshanzunguluwe,
Hu na tshisikagole,
Ra fhiledza nga bune,
A si mitambo kwayo naa?

Hu na vho-Ramavile,
Vha sa ofhi na lufu,
Vha panda mashango,
Na vho-Rakhororo
Vhothe a vha tati lufu,
Mali i a vha kunga" page 46.

The good points of the games which have been enumerated are given but also the dangers in playing those games are rendered. For poetry may be defined as a believe to be a possible way of gaining and imparting knowledge.[1)]

1) C.D. Lewis : The poet's way of knowledge, p. 3.

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(c) Literary comments.

The book Ndela Zwixele is a book containing poems which fit the infant. The majority of the poems are descriptive poems which put the picture of the object in front of the infants in words. Poetry was once said to be 'simple sensuous and passionate therefore the author in Ndela Zwixele uses the simple language which is easily understood by the infant. In the very first poem we find the following:

"Ńwana wavhuḓi ha zwifhi,
Ńwana wavhuḓi ha dini,
Mashudu" page 7.

The words "ha zwifhi" and "ha dini" emphasize the word "zwavhuḓi" which means goodness. An infant when reading this feels encouraged to do good so that those words could be used on him/her. "For findings of poetry are no more and no less true than those of science."[1)]

Sometimes the author uses archaic words:

"Nda lu doba,
Nda lu khotha
Tshilandani 'tswee'" page 13.

The word "tshilandani" means a place where the knife is kept but in modern Venda the word tshikwama is used so that this word is not appropriate for the small children. He uses another word which is not commonly used in everyday speech of the people:

"Vhulwadze ha hone
Ndi mutambo-tambo
Ha ni godombela
Ni ḓo lora no pfuna
Ni ḓo ṱwa no khotha
Ni tshi raha milimbe".

The word "milimbe" is an old word and not easily understood by the infants. The simple word milenzhe would have been preferred.

When the author uses the word "onya" in:

"Si ri sale murahu,
Wo rema thavni
Wo onya vhuṱambo nashu"

1) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for you p. 92.



Mr. D.M. Ngwana : A Venda poet who died at an early age.

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he has given a concept which will not be within the comprehension of the infants.

The word tshinya here could do. The poet must concern himself with the exploration of life of an infant at its most intense stage and he must give the infant the feel of it.

The poems have short verses or stanzas which the infants can memorise with ease.

The publication of this book has brought Venda poetry to the reach of the Venda infant and its constant use will encourage the love for Venda poetry at an early age.

The third book published in the field of Venda poetry is:

VHAKALE VHA HONE : D.M. Ngwana

(a) Plot.

The book Vhakale Vha Hone is a poetry book containing mainly collected poems. These poems can be divided into two main categories viz:

(i) Traditional poems (ii) Modern poems.

The two main groups can further be divided into a number of sub-divisions for instance modern poetry can be divided into: historic poems, nature poems, and those which concern themselves with animals. Traditional poetry can be divided into traditional poems and little songs. The two main kinds of poems contained in this book are:-

(i) Traditional poems.

The first part of this book consists mainly of the traditional poems and traditional songs. Most of the traditional poems were meant to be sung, for poetry was born out of the rhythmic dances of the primitive man.[1] In this group we usually find songs that are sung in the evenings when the children are seated round a fire. Some are sung by the herdboys while looking after

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1) C.D. Lewis : The poet's way of knowledge p. 7.

cattle, sheep and goats. To narrate the accounts it is an art and poetry being art may be a record of the mind experiencing itself and thus developing a way of knowing better, of understanding and of interpreting our feelings, moods and our passions.[1)]

In this book the traditional poems are from 1 to 50. In poem 1 the Venda teaches the young people the system of counting from one to ten in verse form "poṱilo, hàngálá, hángálá, nda tema, temiso, tshiṉoni, tshaᶜgala, mutanda, manḓule, Gumi-wee".

When one listens to these short lines one finds that the repeating and alternation of certain words, the use of the high and low tones give effect to the different numbers. For instance "tema" is followed by "temᶜiso" which has three syllables which take the same number of syllables with "nda tema". "Tshiṉoni" is followed by "tshagala" a three syllabled word which will keep the rhythm similar to the forementioned words. Words used in this manner make a lasting impression on the minds of the young. For a poem is really a kind of machine for producing the poetic state of the mind by means of words.

The traditional poems cover a variety of themes such as bats, baboons, persons, crows, birds, pigs, visitors, and insects. The poems are arranged according to the grades of the children at school.

These public collections may be of value to one person while it may be of no value to Another. These poems convey different messages and play different roles in different individuals. Some like poems 1, 5, 8 and 12 are meant to teach children to remember certain things. The traditional poems in this book may be classified into two viz (i) Educational poems i.e. those that teach children to count up to a certain number, the value of certain skills, cunning and intellectual tricks (ii) Recreational poems i.e. those that are meant to be sung for the sake of entertainment although their message is not very clear.

(ii) Modern poems.

The greater part of the book consists of modern poems which are composed by modern poets. In this section we meet various

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1) C.D. Lewis: Poetry for You, p. 62.

poems by many poets covering almost the whole human life. It can be better to look into these poems under their respective groups ignoring the grouping which the author did according to school grading. The poems may be grouped according to the subject matter:

The animal poems.

The following are the animal poems or poems which have as subject, the animal: 40, 41, 42, 43, 54, 59, 69, 75, 77, 81, 88, 98, 100, 140 and 150. The majority of these poems are on birds. These poems use animals in a personified manner. We find animals being addressed and sometimes being praised as if they can hear and appreciate what is being said. Sometimes these animals are made to complain or tell stories of the past. For instance in poem 140 wherein dogs tell us of what happened in 1952 and also of their complaint.

Praises.

This is a group of poems that concerns itself with the praising of things, they may be persons, animals or nature. In general this group of poems covers a large field in Venda poetry. In most cases all the historical poems are also praises. The poems in this group are: 37, 39, 57, 72, 73, 81, 84, 89, 96, 97, 107, 112, 120, 131, 123, 137, 138, 145 and 146. In this group all poems about rivers are included.

It is in these poems where we find many authors revealing their feeling and love for nature. It is not only nature that is praised but, animals, birds, people, etc. In most of the poems we find that gratitude is expressed to God for having provided rivers or animals with food and beauty.

Historic poems.

Very few historic poems have been recorded in this book. The poems which fall in this group are: 114, 120, 122, 128, and 143. These poems tell us of some events of the past with a touch of humour that is saddening. Some poets have tried to put them in a lively way but the deep-rooted sad mood cannot be completely avoided. In all these poems it seems there is a

deep-rooted sadness in the poet's heart, that say why did such happy moments fade away, and why did things become changed today.

Poems about people.

In this group we find poems that directly refer to specific human beings or their behaviour patterns. These are: 55, 68, 83, 101, 106, 151, 118. In these poems we find that a person is telling us of what happened to him or that the poet is addressing somebody on a certain topic or giving advice to someone about certain things. We may also say that one is being praised for something he has done.

Poems about natural phenomena.

This group of poems mainly concerns itself with nature or natural things. We find here poems about the moon, sun, the various seasons and months. It includes the following poems: 74, 76, 90, 105, 113, 115, 119, 149. Some of these have a biblical base and they reveal the religious aspect of the poet.

Besides the five mentioned groups of modern poetry in Venda we also find a number of poems in this book that do not fall under any of the tentative grouping. They are poems that have been written about a number of things, creatures etc. They are sometimes about abstract things that are purely the author's creation. These are poems 60, 62, 63, 65, 70, 80, 116. These poems do not cover a specific field but portray many unrelated things.

(b) Characteristics of the poems.

(i) Traditional poems.

The few traditional poems in this book are characterised mainly by archaic words. It becomes very difficult for the present day child to grasp the meaning of the old words such as "tema, gala, etc. which are original words from Karanga. These words were common in the early beginnings of Venda Literature but at present they need explanations.

Most of the traditional poems have a tendency towards analogy. The behaviour of animals is taken as analogous to that of human beings. They portray things from plants, rivers, mountains, people and rain.

One may find it very difficult to interpret the message conveyed by these poems. Some of the poems seem to be like the songs of the children but containing in them a deeper meaning and message to the adults while some seem to be like ordinary herdboys' songs. We may distinguish the following poems in this category:

(i) The poems which portray or speak about animals.

(ii) Those that portray or speak about birds.

(iii) Those that portray or speak about people.

(iv) Those that portray or speak about or refer to various things.

It is characteristic of these poems that they have no author but a common property of the Venda speaking people. They have been handed down from generation to generation, from our ancestors by word of mouth.

In traditional poetry we find that the high and low tonemes give effect to the poem where they are used:

"Ndé ndí ngéí thávhání
Ndà pfá múkósí á tshí lílá
Ndà tàngànà nà màmbèbèdà
Mbébédá ó hwálá ɲámá
Ndé nthúkhúlélé-vhò ndì yó gótshà
A ʇùngèdzà ngà kùrámbo kwáyò"

The change of the toneme patterns in this verse brings out the meanings of the words and eventually that of the whole stanza.

Venda traditional poetry has some rhyme scheme which is effective:

"Funguvhu ʇanzwa mulomo (a)
Ʇanzwa mulomo (a)
Ri kone ri tshi ʇa roʇhe (b)
Ri tshi ʇa roʇhe (b)
Vho-mme vha ka enda pi (a)
Vha ka enda pi (a)
Vho lima davha ʇa khombe (b)
Davha ʇa khombe (b)

The rhyme scheme of aabb is changed at the end of the poem where it is now abac:

"Kula kwe ndi vho-nnyi vhala (a)
Kula kwe ndi vho-Murangeni (b)
Kula kwe vha itani fhala (a)
Kula kwe vha via kholomo yavho (c)

The change of the rhyme scheme brings out the poetic effect and the collection of ideas and the stress laid on them on the mind of the young. This rhyme scheme is also found in:

"Hee mpherege (a)
Mpheni gumba ḽanga (b)
Nne a ḽi na nne (a)
Ḽi na langa-langa (b)

(2) Modern poems.

The Venda modern poetry is characterised by personified animals which are praised and the expression of the inner feelings of the poet. The poems are not as rhythmic as the traditional poetry. Sometimes the poems do not apply rhyme scheme but maintain the rhythm of the language. The Venda poet becomes lyrical in this group of poems. The poets are also subjective in the poems which we find in this book. For instance when Ṋenzhelele bids us farewell he says:

"Misi ndi tshi ḓo ṱuwa,
Thi nga hangwi inwi matavha madala,
Thi nga hangwi inwi malwanzhe madala
Nda ri salani

Ḓivhani ri vhafhiri,
Ri nga khungumuṱavha,
Ri nga matari a muaṱaha,
Ri ḓo shango; sala sala".

When one reads this poem with the proper toneme patterns and rhythm one feels the sombre mood and the last part moves one almost to tears. This form of the poem is used by many poets in Vhakale Vha Hone.

D.M. Ngwana says:

"Vhuswina ndi dwadze ḽi si na ńanga,
Muthu u wana a tshi ri,
Muṱani wa mugede a thi tsha ya,
Mugede a thi tsha amba nae.

Mugede nda ṱangana nae ndi ḓo mu shonisa,
Mushaaṱhama iṱali a tshi nengisa".

Here the poet is grappling with the sentiment of hatred and he brings out the inner feelings of a person who hates as similar to the symptoms of any illness which has attacked a human being. The poems are descriptive and lyrical and are decidedly on a higher level than those found in "Zwirendo na Zwiimbo zwa Vhana vha Venda".

(c) Literary comments.

In this book we have a collection of the art of some of the minds of the children of Vendaland. Their ability to praise, comment and to talk about things they see and hear are revealed in the poems in this book. They do not leave the beauty of nature unchallenged. They have tried to challenge all the aspects of life from a Venda point of view.

The traditional poems give us our little songs which we sing for pleasure when we are with the young people. For instance: "Funguvhu":

"Funguvhu ṱanzwa mulomo,
Ṱanzwa mulomo
Ri kone ri tshi ḽa roṱhe,
Ri tshi ḽa roṱhe

Vho-mme vha ka enda pi,
Vha ka enda pi,
Vho lima davha ḽa khombe,
Davha ḽa khombe".

This short poem fits very well into a song which the young people sing with great joy for "hierdie skematiseringwyse kom egter baie selde voor omdat die singreus in Noord-Sotho meestal 'n versreelgrens daarstel".[1] The traditional poems do not leave wild life unchallenged. The life of the birds is challenged and the feelings revealed in many of the songs about birds such as the one given above.

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1) P.S. Groenewald : Die Struktuur van die verssisteem in die geskrewe woordkuns en in die geskrewe Letterkunde van Noord-Sotho, p. 85.

The traditional poems contain however a message to both the young and the old. It may not be easy to grasp this message at a first glance but a second glance may reveal the finer meanings of the words. In the poem "U dzima" the adults are reminded that selfishness is a bad thing amongst the people:

"Wa wana tshau,
Wa hina-hina,
Wa nga gukwana;
Ḽo fara ndodo;
Itshi ndi tshanga,
Ndi a lavho, hammu".

The traditional poems follow their own pattern i.e. they do not follow a forced rhyming scheme. They follow a natural flow controlled by meaning and logic of the words used.

The modern poetry contained in this book consists of good and bad poems. Bad poetry is caused by the poet who forces European metre into Venda poetry. Some of the bad poetry is caused by trying to give stories as poetry. Although it is important to remember that poetry is not a thing separate from ordinary life but poetry must portray intense emotion or it must condense human experience.

Although there are some shortcomings in some poems here and there many of them represents good poetry worthy of the name. The taste of good poetry is represented in the poem "Ḓuvha Vhuria". In this poem the poet gives a lovely description of a typical winter sunrise. It starts thus:

"Ahaa wo ḓa iwe ḓuvha ḽavhuḓi,
Iwe nguvho ya vhasiwana,
Ro u lila musi u tshee vhubvaḓuvha,
Iḓa u thathe phepho ri takale;
Riṋe na vhana vhashu ri ḓi-phine
Iḓa, iḓa uri tshidze kha murotho hoyu". page 117.

This poem makes every Venda child as well as an adult to recall a cold day when he or she needed the warmth from the sun. When the poet expresses the pleasure enjoyed by the creatures after the sun had risen he says:

"Ipfa zwine zwiṉoni zwa ita;
Zwi miedzini na mivhunduni.

Zwi u khoḓa zwi nṱha ha miri;
Zwi 'wo ḓa, wo ḓa, ro takala ro takala',
Zwi tshi pfa vhududo hau".

The poet has not worried about following the European rhyme in Venda poetry. Whenever rhyming occurs in Venda poetry it is incidental and is in most cases not the effort of the poet.

In the above poems we find a series of figures of speech. The poet speaks of the sun as the blanket of the poor, he gives also the ideophones to express actions and the state of the mind: "Hu tshi ṱothola hu tshi tou thwee," "ya ima ye wuu' wuu' wuu'." Vhakala-ha na vhakegulu vha tou mbaa."

This poem is one of the tasteful poems found in this book. The poem: "Maḓakani a Hashu" by D.M. Ngwana is a good one too. Here the poet praises the forests of Vendaland. When one reads the poem one finds that the beauty of the forests, wild animals, wild fruits, wild baboons and their behaviours one cannot fail to get a picture of the forests of Vendaland:

"Dzithavha dzo phaphwa nga miri ya minombelo;
Ndi hune tshungeda-vhathu munna wa makovhi;
Munna a sa dzheniho nga mvula khofheni
A wana tshiṱwiṱulo tshawe na vhana vhawe hone,
Ndi hune a ṱanela ḓuvha li tshi ṱavha hone,
Ndi hune a funza vhana vhawe milayo hone", page 112.

The poet can turn common everyday things into great truths for instance:

"Zwivhuya ndi zwinzhi,
Zwivhi na zwone ndi zwinzhi,
Zwine zwa wanala ndilani,
Ya u ya zwiṱiwani,
Ri mihi-ha nga ha zwiṱiwa".

Indeed there are many pleasures and dangers along the path or within the methods of obtaining food.

The Venda poets can also create poems with imagery:

"U leleḓa ha maovhelwa ' shikhalani
Hu vho sendela na ngeno vhurwa,
Ngauri u kovhela ha ḓuvha Duthuni,
Hu sumbedza tshilimo u vhuya".

This poem can be compared with the ideas expressed by Keats when he refers to the darkling. It may mean the hovering of dangers in the distant horizon or dark clouds before a terrible storm.

In this book we get good descriptions of nature and its wonders:

"Mulambo wa Mutshindudi u khou huwelela,
Duvha hu tsha la manzara-nzara,
Ngwasa dza makole dzo vhambela,
Lutomboni ndi levhu-levhu ya makole,
Muya wa tshipembe wo takuwa,
U khadela makole vhukovhela". page 51.

The abstraction in Venda poetry is developed in this book. The Venda poets struggle with the explanations of certain concepts by rendering those concepts in the form of a poem. E.S. Madima in expressing gratitude says:

"Duvha li tavhaho musi lo kovhela,
Ravhududo munna o faraho tshifhinga,
Mudihwa nga zwitshilaho na zwo faho,
Kha phukha na zwivhanda hu pfi,
Ri a livhuha". page 71.

The poet's technique of using the contrast of words to bring out the meaning and the image conveyed by those words makes his poem great. "Duvha li tavhaho" may mean the rising sun, the beginning of life, the beginning of a custom etc. while "musi lo kovhela" may mean the end of life, the day or the day on which one is born. Any one who comes to life already expects death as his/her end and when we come to "ravhududo munna o faraho tshifhinga" we come into grips with the abstract world. Here the sun is the possessor of warmth but at the same time does start and end life. In other words everything starts in time and ends in time. Time continues from the beginning of things and goes beyond the end of things.

The poet can give us a good description of the manner in which the rain falls:

"Ye pho-pho-pho-pho, ye bwara-bwara-bwara,"
Ya na ya gi lila,
Ye' "waa" he "mwau" kelengede;

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In this verse we are given the rhythm of the rain and the manner in which the raîn falls and also the manner in which the rain abated. The words "pho-pho-pho" stress that the rain was falling in big drops while "bwara-bwara-bwara" show that the rain water was just flowing all over while "waa" indicates that the manner of abating is a slow process and not just a sudden stoppage.

At the close of the poem the poet collects the ideas about the early rains:

"Ya dovha ye kii-ngindi", page 85, these words are used to remind us that this rain falls peacefully without storms. The word "tshiluvhari" reminds us that it is spring and that the old order changes yielding place to new. The poet can also feel pity for the dogs:

U fhela hashu hu ni vhudza'ni-ha mashaka?
Vhuṱungu he ra vhu pfa na vhoinwi ho ni lungama;
U gungula hashu honohu hu vho nga dzithabelo.
Na lalama-vho ni ḓo fa no vhona zwiṅwe zwithu,
Ndi maṱula a Ramakole a si na vhutinyelo. page 106.

Indeed this is a prayer of the dogs to the creator to protect them from the cruelty of human beings.

In this book we get poems by Z. Mutsila who has composed narrative poems on various themes. He has a vivid picture of the advent of summer rain or the coming of summer.

U leleḓa ha maovhelwa tshikhalani,
Hu vho sendela na ngeno Vhurwa;
Ngauri u kovhela ha ḓuvha Duthuni;
Hu sumbedza tshilimo u vhuya. page 41.

The word "Tshilimo" has been used here to symbolize, the beginning of life or the birth of new life.

Mutsila can give a vivid description of a war scene:

Phanḓa! Phanḓa! mukosi wa ṱahwa;
Vhanna vha vhuhali vha ya nga u gidima;
Shango li tshi dzinginyea;
Dzibomo dzi tshi wa;
Ganunu dzi tshi bvuma;
Ngei Alamein. page 87.

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Ngindii! Bummm! Ngindii! Bummm!
"Nga u vhe shubi swuhane."
Mukosi wa vhuswina wa ṱahwa;
Mme na ṅwana vha fhandekanywa;
Khotsi a shavha a tshi lila;
Henengei Alamein. page 88.

The last verse gives the seriousness of war. The explosion of the bombs and roaring of cannons.

Sadness is a common characteristic in Venda poetry:

Ku ri: hu Khotsi anga, hu mme anga
Vho fa ndo sala nde
Tuhu-tuhu-tuhu-tuhu.
Nde' duu! nde' duu-duu!, page 58.
(A.P. Sigame)

With these lines the sadness of an orphan comes out clearly. The ideophones "tuhu-tuhu duu-duu" bring out the emotion of sadness.

This idea of sadness is also brought out in Ngwana's poem "Tsiwana".

Vhusiku hoṱhe ndi lala ndi tshi ḓi-hwenga;
Phepho ye' nṋe-vho ndi a vhaḓa;
Dzintho idzi dzi re kha muvhili wanga
Dzo ḓiswa nga honohu vhusiwana hanga. page 108.

Venda poets grapple with abstract concepts viz enemity:

Vhuswina ndi dwadze ḽi si na ṅanga;
Muthu u wana a tshi ri:
Muṱani wa mugedo a thi tsha ya;
Mugede a thi tsha amba nae;
Mugede nda tangana nae ndi do mu shonisa,
Mushaṱhama iṱali a tshi nengesa. page 106.

The future worries Venda poets and they express few ideas about the state of affairs when they depart:

Musi ndo livhana na zwi shushaho thungo dzoṱhe:
Hune nda ri afha zwo kunda tshoṱhe;
Maḓumbu a tshi kuma phanḓa hanga;
Miri mihulu i tshi fhambenywa na matavhi ayo;
Tshanga ndi u fungelela na u konḓelela;
Hu pfi "Konḓelela zwi ḓo fhela." page 123.

In this verse the Vendas are encouraged to persevere even when it is dark. The poet does this without being sentimental. Venda poetry is gradually gaining ground and its traditional



R.R. Matshili : A budding venda poet and novelist.

basis is felt in many of the poems in "Vhakale Vha Hone".

European poetic forms have been adopted for Venda poetry but with little success. In some we get rhyme schemes but not naturally inherent in such poems. The Venda poets will do well to keep to the natural flow of the language.

ZWIALA ZWA VENDA : R.R. Matshili.

(a) Plot.

This book contains fifty original poems composed by the author on various subjects. He has tried to reveal to the readers his inner feelings about objects in the natural environment and also his inner feelings about the subjective world of man. One may group the poems tentatively as follows:-

(1) Objective descriptions.
(2) Lyrical and partly descriptive poems.

(1) Objective description poems.

A zwi Litshwi, page 7.
Mbelengwa, page 14.
Ndou, page 41.
Dangala, page 50.
Mmbwa yanga Tshamato, page 35.
Vhunyunyu, page 11.
Tswane, page 32.
Lilambelo, page 42.
Tshikolobulasi, page 68.
Mbuyavhuhadzi, page 68.

(2) Lyrical and partly descriptive poems.

Muhota, page 13.
Pfunzo, page 16.
Nwananga, page 22.
Tshidakwa, page 27.
Mufunwa wanga, page 34.
Mudededzi, page 37.
Muhanganei, page 45.
Khonani vhukuma, page 49.
Mulingo, page 58.
Mbumbano ya Afrika Tshipembe Tshelede, page 21.
Likholwa, page 25.
Tshisiwana, page 28.
Zwo nndina, page 36.
Mberegoni, page 40.
Thangule, page 47.
Zwi difha hani, page 55.
Vhubva, page 63.

The author has tried to reveal the principles of virtue in some of his poems. Perseverence is also given as an aspect of virtue in some of his poems. Some of his words are striking, for instance:

"Wa vha na zwivhuya a u shai muthu,
Vhanzhi vha ḓo vha khonani dzau,
Vhavhi na vhavhuya vha ḓo u takalela,
Phukha na zwikhokhonono zwi ḓo ḓa tsini hau."

By this verse the poet summarises the activities of the bad and the good persons, for poetry is not a thing separate from ordinary life and that matters with which poetry deals are matters with which the ordinary person is concerned. When the poet describes the deadly bites of the mosquito he says:

"Ni ri ita'ni ni tshi ri moṋela tshifhinga tshoṯhe,
Na vhea mukosi ndi u ri nyundedza."

The poet gives a good description of the death that results from the bites of mosquitoes. The author can describe the feelings of an orphan aptly:

"U ya hayani ndi ramba miṯodzi vha hashu,
Ndi fhiwa muladza vhaṅwe vha tshi ḽa vhududelaho,
Mafhi ane nda hama ndi sa vhuyi nda a vhona,
Ndi vhoniswa zwithu hezwi nga hone vhusiwana", page 29.

The author can instil courage in people when they become hopeless and by his words the readers also summon their very deeprooted darings:

"Mipfa i tshi vaya u ṯomole wo fhumula,
Zwi tshi vhavha u fhodzise,
A hu na tshi sa vhavhiho fhano shangoni,
Na u ḽa vhuswa zwi a dina ro tou ḓowela".

(b) Characteristics.

Zwiala Zwa Venda is a modern poetry book in which we meet many innovations on various themes. The poet can give us his inner feelings and his interpretation of life. We find his descriptive power and imagination being equal to any poetry in other languages. His poetry is characterised by abstraction in such passages as:

"Ndi ṯoḓa ndivho na vhuṯali,
Muṯali u na maṯo ṯhohoni yawe,
Tsilu tshaḽo ndi u tshimbila swiswini,
Ndo farwa nga ḓora ḽa pfunzo". page 16.

The metaphor "muṯali u na maṯo ṯhohoni" is very appropriate in this piece. It uplifts our senses to realise that one can see

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with the inner eyes of the intellect. The poet contrasts the knowledge and wisdom by using the words "ndivho and vhutali".

His poems are also characterised by the love of some aspect of Venda culture. He tries to preserve some historical facts in verse thereby immortalising those facts:

"Hangei Vhukalanga hangei Mbelengwa,
Vhalemba vho dzula hone u bva kale,
Vha sa li nyamafu na tshidu,
Vha sa dzei dzitshaka dzisili,
Vha sa di-nekedzi kha zwi negisaho,
Vha lushaka lu khodwaho nga Raluvhimba."

In these lines customs and taboos are preserved and ring out like the bells of the new year.

Some poems express the love sentiments of the Venda and such sentiments are brought out in the words and phrases used in the poems of the author. Poetry tends toward concentration and the poet tries to convince his readers by the sharpness of his selected words which make a direct appeal to the imagination.[1] Poetry puts us in touch with the freshness of things, it restores our originally unprejudiced life of the senses. It gives a mood which implies a certain attitude towards the world and may shade over imperceptibly into thought, into general statement or a system of philosophy which may imply a certain drift of feeling. The ideas and moods are in our ordinary process of living.

Matshili tries to ascend to some height in his poetry. His words make the readers see a new world, for poetry exists in the medium of words and it is through words that details of the human mind may be revealed to the outside world:

"Mufunwa wanga mufuwa wa mbilu yanga,
U tshivhoni matoni anga,
Mbilu yanga yo tshena sa mahada,
Lufuno lwanga a lu na muvhali". page

The words bring out the sentiment of love and the simile "mbilu yanga yo tshena sa mahada" gives us the intensity of love existing between the lover and the loved.

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1) Cleanth Brooks : Understanding poetry, p. 76.

The poet has some detest of certain aspect of life for he says:

"Ńwana wa vhubva ndi tshiala tshi-shaa mulululu,
Wa tshikhuna mme awe vha zwa ntswi,
Wa tshipimbi khotsi awe vha zwa ntswi,
Mbilu dza vhabebi dzi dzula dzo hwala gwikwilo", page 11.

The poet here gives us a picture of a lazy child and what happens to such a child in relationship to its parents.

Matshili's poetry gives us the two sides of life, love and hatred.

(c) Literary comments.

Matshili as a poet has contributed to the advancement of Venda poetry by creating his own way of portraying Venda life and philosophy. An outline comment is given on the poems which are scattered all over this book:

Muhota Poem 4.

This poem expresses the miseries experienced by the sickly person, who admires healthy human beings. He says "Tshilonda tshi sa fholi ndi malisa-mbilu".

The above quoted line gives one the impression of illness that is almost incurable, e.g. cancer. The sickly person describes the attitude of medical officers when faced with a patient whose illness is incurable, and while they do not wish him to die, yet they feel very much disappointed because this does not enhance their medical profession.

Just as weavils destroy maize and other agricultural produce, the sickly person foreseesno improvement in his illness but death that threatens his existance. "Tshawe ndi thovho masiari na vhusiku".

Tshelede - Poem 10.

This poem expresses the undisputed fact about the utility of money. At a glance the reader may think that what has been expressed in this poem is somewhat far-fetched in that no human being is devoid of the knowledge about the importance of money and that with money, economic and industrial development may not be impeded.

The writer goes further to point a finger at people who squander their money unnecessarily, in addition to the miseries meted out to their family members. The good and bad points brought about by finance are also brought to some light. The danger of keeping money at home has also been fully dealt with.

Mmbumbano ya Afrika-Tshipembe.

This poem expresses the poet's feelings about the after effects of the formation of the Union of South Africa.

The poet's flexibility in the use of Venda language is evidenced by ability in the use of metaphors and similes, e.g.

"Madendele a vhanna a dzula a langana."
"Tsinde ḽa muri ḽa vha ḽithihi."
"Matavhi a phaḓalala na muri."
"Mifhululu ya lila zwilombe zwa ṱhakha makole."
"Dzitshaka dza wedzana sa ndiane i tshi nwa maḓi."
"Zwidimela zwa rarekana mavunduni oṱhe."

Not only is the poet's workmanship superb, but some poetic expression, e.g. alliteration, have also been given -

"Tsinde ḽa muri ḽa vha ḽithihi."
"Matavhi a phaḓalala na muri."

By the expression "Mavhuthu a ungisa khuwa na phalaphala," one can almost visualize how the first "Union Day" was celebrated, which day has now been replaced by The Republican Day (May 31.)

The poet has therefore succeeded in trying to convey to the reader the importance of unity.

Zwo nndina - Poem 22.

In this poem the narrator laments the desertion of his wife whom he once loved so well. He is now able to realize how useful she has been to the family for, while staying with him she performed all household duties assigned to Venda women, but now there is nobody to make good these responsibilities. He has even lost his once best friends for he says:

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"Khonani dzi vho mmbonela bodeloni,
Dzi' ndo pandela musadzi nga vhuvavhi."

He has not as yet got his lobola costs refunded to him and as such he is in a perplexed state of mind.

The poem is highly pathetic and the tone is a sad one.

Mbuya-vhuhadzi - Poem 49.

In this poem the message is centred on the bride who has returned to her parents from her husband's home, which is usually considered by the Venda as a very bad thing, moreso as it lowers the dignity of the family concerned.

In the first stanza the poet asks this young deserter what actually induced her to return to her former home:

"Tsho u totaho ndi tshi'ni munnani wau?" The word "tota" gives an idea about what might have caused this young woman to desert her husband.

In the second stanza the poet describes the manner in which her desertion has caused some ill-feeling and disappointment as well as suffering particularly to her husband, who no longer has anybody to prepare meals for him.

In the third stanza the poet asks, this young deserter if it is laziness that caused this young woman to return home. He strives to show her as to how much trouble she might have caused to her parents since all expenses paid in respect of lobola will have to be refunded following Venda law and custom.

In the fifth stanza the young woman is advised to return to her husband and that she should ignore hatred meted out to her by the husband's senior wives, and that she should by all means try to persevere.

In the two last stanzes the young woman is advised to work hard. The difficulties that result from desertion have also been given.

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Tshidakwa - No. 14 (The drankard).

In this poem the poet deals with the irresponsible attitude of the drunkard. After having taken intoxicating drinks the drunkard finds it very difficult to walk on his way home. He wabbles and is therefore likely to fall a prey to traffic.

A habitual drunkard is indeed not only committing a social offence but he is also ruining his bodily constitution because we are told that he does not drink normally.

"Mulenzhe ṋdilani, mulenzh ḓakani." Because of taking heavy sips of concoctions his eyes are now red as though he were a "dagga smoker".

"Maṱo o tswuka ndi a dzwiri-gondo." The drunkard does not look after his wife, children and other dependants and never buys decent clothes for use by himself. His trousers is full of patches. "Musadzi zwiambaro ndi malakhaṱhana." He cannot tolerate to be criticized and any advice results in quarrels. Because of his excessive drinking habits the drunkard sometimes gets involved in seduction cases, and when the matter goes to the tribal court he blames drunkenness.

The poem abounds in idiomatic and proverbial expressions, e.g.

"Vhana hayani vha wela tshivhasoni."
"Tshelede yo ya'fhi Tshidakwa-nyalombe yo
undudzwa nga muvanya na thothotho."

The whole of the last stanza but one is an ironical remark on the after effects of drunkenness and its unpleasantness because the poor drunkard commits some acts of immorality and is then subjected to a fine at the tribal court.

The poem is rich in imagery and in this way the poet has succeeded in his efforts of depicting evils underlying drunkenness.

Tshisiwana - Poem No. 15.

In this poem all the miseries experienced by an oprhan have been vividly given.

An orphan is so loathed by humans as though he is responsible for the loss of his parents. The conditions under which

he grows are so miserable that he does not seem to understand why he should be living and not dead. His name "Musiiwa" is indicative of the fact that he has been left behind to face difficulties, he is now experiencing.

"Ndi tshi lwala ndi vhonwa ṅga nnyi?" Although young he is quite aware of the fact that his dead parents have been relieved of all adversity and that they are now having a good rest in their graves. Apparently a dead person neither craves for food or wealth.

"Vhabebi vhanga vho lala murunziṅi u si na ḓuvha,
ẓwa nnḓa ha mavu vho fhambana nazwo."

The poet goes on and mentions the splendour experienced by kings (chiefs) who seem not to worry about his plight, but their earthly glory will also come to an end.

The poet ends his narration by stating the orphan's steadfastness on the help given him by the Almighty and his firm belief that his tribulations will one day come to an end as was the case with his deceased parents.

The tone of the poem is an extremely sad one, but this sadness is rather reduced to a minimum following the orphan's faith in that all life will eventually come to an end.

Vhubva Poem No. 46.

In this poem the poet starts by criticizing all the evils of laziness as well as the failure to obey instructions given to children by their parents.

A disobedient child is further compared to the carcass of a rotting donkey near which nobody likes to go lest the bad smell disturbs him. This child is also likened to a lonely baboon that has been forsaken by the group.

"Ṅwana-muhana u ruṅwa,
Phanḓa ḽa vhathu u nga mbongola yo sinaho."

The poet goes further and compares the good rewards of a hardworking child with emptiness found in a lazy child and that one gets nothing through folding one's hands.

"A tshiho tshi ḓaho wo dzula ṅwana washu."

Postponement of some work is severely criticized, and that what has to be done must be done on that particular day.

Lazy people are further loathed by all in that they do dream working although they are not employed. This is an ironical remark since it sounds silly that someone who does not work should dream working.

"Ndo neta ndi ya vhabva vhashaya-nungo."

Comparison between lazy and hardworking people goes through the whole poem, and the poet sums up by warning, the so-called "would never work" to imitate the hard-working individuals and thus become useful members of the community.

In this book Matshili has composed poems on various themes and topics. Some of them have been based on folklore:

Ndi sankambe mula-muthathalidzhane,
Nda kumedza muzhou matsilu ndi luvhande lwa vhaṱali,
Nda mu vhulahisa nda suṅwa nga tshivhindi,
Vha nṱoḓa vha tswukisa maṱo ndo khuda, page 33.

In this poem a knowledge of the fable Sankambe and Muzhou must be consulted. Another poem based on the folklore runs as follows:

Ndau yo nnyita tshixele nga u sa ḓivha,
Nda fholosha vhakololo vhoṱhe,
Nda kumedza Rathavha na mashaka,
Rathavha a vhulahwa na vhaḓuhulu, page 33.

In this folktale the hare was given the care of the cubs of a lion but the hare ate them up and transfered the blame on to the baboon.

The poet praises animals and birds. For instance when he says:

Ndi nne buka ḽihulu, phukha dzi a nnduvha,
Ḓaka ndi ḽanga ndi tshimbila nga u kona,
Vho-Ndau vha mmbona vha vhuvha nga zwiṱaka,
Nda iswa mutshoi iṱoni ndi vuwa mukundu, page 41.

which he also compares with the praise which he has for the lion when he says:

"Phukha dzoṱhe dzi tshi mmbona dzi khotha mitshila." page 41

When he describes his lover in Mufunwa Wanga he says:

Mufunwa wanga, mufunwa wa mbilu yanga,
U musuku wa mbili yanga,
Maipfi au a ḓifha sa mutoli wa ṋoṱshi;
U nga nkhangwa hani mufunwa wanga. page 34.

Vhuṱunguni na khomboni a ri laṱani,
Mubvumo na mukumbela a zwi iti tshithu;
Lufuno lwashu lwa vhoxwa nṱha na fhasi,
Zwa konea ri ḓo bwelwa dindi ḽithihi. page 35.

In this poem he uses all words and associations which reveal the loved one, such words as gold, mirror, stars, flowers, all these give a good association for a beautiful person.

The poet like his predecessors has sadness in his heart when he says:

"Nda zwi funa ndi nga ḓi-hunga nda hangwa zwoṱhe." page 36.

Here he gives us his bad feelings when he is disappointed in life.

When the poems are based on the traditional poems the poet gives us a satisfactory standard of poetry:

Ahee, aheḽeḽeḽee!
Ndo ṱaha nṋe Ḓangala
Ndi a fhufha ndi musiwana
Thi londi u tshinyala.

Ndi nṋe ńwana wa Nyamuṱonga,
Ha shai thando,
A sa vha mbava ndi muloi,
Vhusiwana ndi ṱwa naho masiari na vhusiku. page 50.

Ndi hamwa nga nnyi
Mulisa wanga a siho?
Mukhaha ndi tivha ḽa Fundudzi,
O kheṱhaho ndi vhuswa ha mugayo. page 51.

Matshili also grapples with abstract concepts in his poems:

Ńwana wa vhubva ndi tshiala tshishaa-mufhululu,
Wa tshikhuna mme awe vha ńuńuna sa phele,
Wa tshipimbi khotsi awe vha zwa ntswi,
Mbilu dza vhabebi dzi dzula dzo hwala gwikhwilo. page 63.

Mushumo a u vhetshelwi ḽa matshelo,
La matdhelo ḽi ḓa na zwalo,
Vhubva vhu ya kha mubva ngae,
Mufhufhura-vhubva zwiṱoma ndi zwawe.

Nwana mubvafha-u-shuma u tambula ndi hawe,
U ḓo doba zwa fhasi na mṁbwa ya mutshila,
Muvuwa-na-mushumo vhufhungu ndi hawe,
Biko ḽawe ḽi ḓo mu fha zwine a lila.

Vhabva edzani vha ndivho na ṱhalukanyo,
Mutevhela-lukuna u ya huvhuya,
Wa ndila dza makombikombi ha na mukhoḓi,
Mushumi-muvhuya ndi tshiala tsha ṱhohoni, page 64.

In this poem the evils of laziness are brought out and the injunctions that those who work hard are rewarded by being crowned.

The poet also reveals to us that he has the fears of any Venda child. This is brought out in his poem "Vhamusanda Ṋeswiswi".

> Ahaa! ahee! vhamusanda Ṋeswiswi,
> Vha tshusa vhathu vho eḓela vhukati ha vhusiku.
> Vhe "huu-huu, swoo, swoo,"
> Mukoma e, "kuluu" ndi muloi. page 69.

This fear of the owl by Venda children is deep rooted in their upbringing and the sound made by the owl is an omen to persons.

Some poems are on customs and the poet encourages the good side of traditional life:

> Hee mbuya-vhuhadzi zwa vhuhadzi a zwi shavhiwi,
> Shumai u shishe mabiko a roṱhe,
> Vha vhuhadzi vha u khoḓe mishumoni,
> Ndi hone vha tshi ḓo rẽnda vhe' thundu
> yashu yo vhuelwa. page 68.

In this verse the poet tells us that a woman is married to a family and not to an individual. "Ndi hone vha tshi ḓo renda vhe' thundu yashu yo vhuelwa."

In Venda poetry we find that the form of the verses is that of the praise-poem. The Venda poet praises animals, the country, birds, etc. Sometimes even if the poem does not follow the praise-poem style it keeps to the rhythm of the praise-poem. When a poem is based on the rhythm of Venda traditional poetry you find that the poet succeeds and the poem attracts your imagination. The poem evokes your emotions and your feelings. The lines:

> Ndi ya nga ndoṱhe musanda thi luvhelwi
> A hu na gota ḽi no luvhela ḽiṅwe

retain the traditional rhythm and melody. The flow of melody is natural. When one reads lines such as:

> Nyamungozwa haṋwani hu kiwa mapfura,
> Mufari wa deu, u farese u si fare deu madebe.
> Muvhumbi wa thavha ha koni,
> Ngavhe a vhumbe Nzhelele muṱangaumani, page 30.

In most of his poems the poet is inclined to traditional poetry or praise-poems. Many of his poems start with the forms:

Ndi nṋe .....
Ndi .....

He sometimes overdoes this traditional forms and then his poetry is spoilt. Some of his poems have no depth of thought and diction.

In some poems the poet moralizes and teaches us something about life:

Kondelela naho zwi tshi konḓa,
Mipfa i tshi u vaya u ṱomola wo fhumula,
Zwi tshi vhavha u fhodzise,
A hu na tshi sa vhavhiho fhano shangoni,
Na u ḽa vhuswa zwi a dina ro tou ḓowela. page 7.

He continues in this strain in his poem "Vhubva" when he says:

Mushumo a u vhetshelwi ḽa matshelo,
La matshelo ḽi ḓa na zwalo,
Vhubva vhu ya kha mubva ngae,
Mufhufhura-vhubva zwiṱoma ndi zwawe.

Ṅwana mubvhafha-u-shuma u ṱambula ndi hawe,
U ḓo doba zwa fhasi sa mmbwa ya mutshila,
Muvuwa-na-mushumo vhufhungu ndi hawe,
Biko ḽawe ḽi ḓo mu fha zwine a lila. page 64.

The poet uses the Venda language well, his idioms and figures of speech are appropriate and flow naturally in his poems. His similes are good: "Ndo hula sa thavha ya Luonde" while his metaphors too are suitable: "Musingo ndi mutatapa-tapa wa thambo."

Ṅwiala Zwa Venda is a worthy contribution to Venda poetry. This book is an improvement on the previous attempts in Venda poetry.

CONCLUSION.

From the foregoing discussion we may conclude that Venda speaking peoples share the intense feeling which is common to all nations when they are happy or sad. They can show their happiness or sadness by means of rhythmic language.

In the development of Venda poetry we find the influence of the valleys and steepy mountains inspiring the Venda poets

and driving them to give praise to what they saw and experienced.

The undulating plains and the lofty mountains reminded them of the great debt which the Venda poets owed to nature and to the Creator.

The history of the people is better preserved in their poetry. The traditions and customs are better preserved in poetic form.

The Venda traditional songs are better preserved in poetry. The descriptive effect of poems is found in short poems which use association:

"Kula ndi nnyi ku no nga Rammbuda,
Kwa makovhi a no nga a pfene,
Ndi ya nga ndoṱhe musanda thi luvhelwi,
A hu na gota ḽi no luvhela ḽiṅwe. 1)

We find that this poem give us that sense of responsibility which a Venda expects from an adult. The word "pfene" as used here brings in the height of the mountains while "gota" brings in the idea of an imposing chief's kraal where people climb up to go and pay their homage.

From the simple children's songs Venda poetry developed and when we come to "Rathavha" by Nenzhelele we find that Venda poetry can offer a good description of the baboon. The Venda poets have developed in the subject matter too.

We find poems which reveal the feelings of the poet. When Nenzhelele says:

"Vho takalaho vha ṱonga nga inwi,
Vha lilaho vha fhumudzwa nga inwi,
Zwimimani ni hone,
Lufuni ni hone,
No ṱanganya yoṱhe mishumo,
Notshi ndi khonani dzaṋu,
Ni dzi fusha nga zwoṱhe,
Ee ndi mahodze,
Ee ndi maḓembe,
Ndi ḽone ifa ḽaṋu." 2)

He gives us his feelings and desires through the symbol of the flowers. Venda poetry has developed to the extent that Venda poets can compose poems about war and about the

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1) D.M. Ngwana : Vha ale vha Hone p. 23.
2) P.H. Nenzhelele : Zwirendo na Zwiimbo , p. 53.

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disadvantages of the present urban areas which are a drawback to the Bantu:

"Ndi tshi swika Goli malovhisa vhathu,
Mbilu yanga nda wana yo no vha hanengei,
Fhedzi mbilu yanga yone yo vha i hayani" 1)

This expresses the feelings of loneliness despite the fact that the person is in a party of people, for if your heart is not in a party when you are physically there it means that you are really lonely.

When the poet says:

"Zwiṋoni zwa tshenuwa,
Mbevha dza dzhena milindini,
Musi i tshi likitana ya makhotho,
Dzibomo dzi tshi phusula,
Ganunu dzi tshi bvuma,
Ngei Almein."

He is giving us a vivid picture of the battle of Almein. The awesomeness of the war is brought out by the words: "Shango la reremela."

Figurative language is well used by the Venda poets: "ndo gagaḓela zwifhungu zwa maṱali." This is a metaphor which gives a good picture of the concentration of the best brains in Pretoria. The poet says in another poem: "tshifheṱi i la mavhele u tende" wherein he symbolises the illness of a person by a weevil and gives in these words the pains a sick person feels in his mind.

The Venda poets have contributed to the advancement of Venda poetry by creating their own way of portraying Venda life and philosophy. The rhythm of their poetry is satisfactory, their diction is appropriate, their use of the metaphor and simile is good. For instance one of the poets says "a shumaho nga tshanda tsha thiḓza u ḓo shaya" in which the word "thiḓza" fits properly in bringing out the meaning of a selfish person who is also lazy.

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1) D.M. Ngwana : Vhakale vha Hone, p.

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The Venda books on poetry considered as a whole have improved the poetry which is found in school readers.

From the few extracts from Venda poems it can be seen that Venda poetry has taken its place in the world of poetry.

The Venda poets are getting up and their imaginations are already showing signs that there is a great promise in the development of Venda poetry.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS:

A Synopsis of the Literary Achievements

Since the earliest times the Venda people have had a literature, although then unwritten, which they regarded as their own. This literature consisted of narrations from generation to generation and from tribe to tribe, such narration took the form of poems, songs, proverbs, folktales and legends.

From the analysis of these narrations it is evident that the content of many of them is of a religious character, since most contained a moral, particularly of the triumph of good over evil. These stories were regarded by the early missionaries as barbarous, superstitious and of pagan inclination. As a result of the verbal repetition of the old literature of the Bantu, including the Vendas and the variations which developed in the course of time, some of the important aspects of the literature got lost. It was only with the advent of Lutheran Missionaries, those devoted benefactors of the Lemba and the Vhasenzi tribes, that a beginning was made of the written literature of the Venda speaking people.

Since the initiative came from the missionaries, it became closer to western christian thought than to the more heathen religious beliefs and practices of the primitive Vendas. For a long time (and even to-day) the initiative as regards written Venda literature has its basis in the hands of the missionaries and those intrinsically interested Bantu lore students.

Although there is little information to guide one as to the origin of Venda literature, it is still possible to form a reasonable picture of the development of written Venda literature by perusing the early manuscripts which were left by C.F. Beuster and his co-workers (see appendix), and the first translation of the Gospel of St. Johns into Venda,

published in 1895 as well as the first publication of the "Spelboek ea TŠiwenda" in 1899. The publication of these books laid the foundation for the publication of the first Hymn Book in Venda by C.F. Beuster.

The reducing of Venda to writing created the problem of orthography, Beuster tried to use an orthography which included many Pedi forms but this orthography developed gradually until C. Meinhof formulated the phonetics and phonology of the Venda language in his book "Das TŠivenda" in 1901.

The folktales and fables were reduced to writing by Th. Schwellnus in his book "Ndede Ya Luambo Lwa Tshivenḓa", between 1913 and 1918. These folk stories are still very interesting forms of literature in Venda.

The translation of the New Testament into Venda, and finally the translation of the complete Bible into Venda by Dr. P.E. Schwellnus consummated the achievements of Venda literature, made the form of Venda used in it the standard Venda, which is now the official language of the Venda speaking people. As such it forms the vehicle of their spiritual and philosophical ideas.

The Venda Speaking People are greatly indebted to the Schwellnus brothers for the great literary contributions which have been unequalled in the literary achievements in Venda literature.

Dr. P.E. Schwellnus's love for the Venda people and the Venda language makes him a Venda literary giant. He may be appropriately called the father of Venda literature. He has tried his hand at various forms of Venda literature with some fair amount of success.

The Schwellnus brothers and a sister cannot be separated from the Venda language without destroying the language completely or without shattering the firm foundation on which the Venda language is based. The school readers are entirely the product of the efforts of the Schwellnus and Giesekke families. The language used in the school readers may be

regarded as the unadulterated form of the Venda language.

Only recently did P.R. Ngwana publish the "Muratho series", which is based on the frequency principle with interesting forms of the Venda language.

Since 1950 the Venda language has developed steadily literarily. This was brought about by the A.P.B. publishers who took the trouble of publishing many novels in Venda. This firm did a lot of good for Venda literature.

The novels in Venda have just started but some of the attempts are of great merit and the Venda character is revealed through the novels. Some of the novels portray the life that a Venda once lived while some portray the life that a Venda lives to-day.

The characterisation is in general a side view description with few synthetic descriptions of characters in some of the characters in the novel. The likes and dislikes of characters are not clearly brought out in some of the novels but in some novels we meet with a fair portrayal of the characters.

When we come to drama we find that the Venda authors have tried their best in portraying conflict in the dramas that have been published. The books expose the likes and dislikes of the Venda people. For the drama portrays a human agent in a situation which necessitates the removal of certain difficulties for the achievement of a certain purpose and the manner in which he meets the difficulty will determine his action and eventually his character. The dramatic structure of 'exposition, crisis and denoument' has been taken into account by some of Venda dramatists and these drama books have made Venda a language that can be acted on the stage. A further development in Venda literature is the writing of poetry. Venda poetry started with the primitive man, for the folk speech cannot be separated from the life of the people who are living at present because they are a part and also a product of the preceding generation. It is the

speech itself which is almost poetry in that it is closer to the emotional life which is saturated with concrete wisdom and the experience of the people.

The most important features of Venda poetry such as a repetition of words, developed a technique which helped to prolong, develop, stress, unite and round off related ideas and the use of simile, metaphor and other devices of compound words heighten the sensation felt and dramatize the valuable experience.

Many of the Venda poets use images in their poetry to make their poetry functional. The images are used as means by which the poets reveal the Venda weaknesses and also to suggest ways by which such weaknesses can be eradicated.

Some of the poets have the ability to imitate their heart beat by using words which make the reader feel, see, touch, or taste the smell of flowers on a gentle spring day and to experience rhythmic movements of natural objects, the clatter of hooves of horses, the clapping of wings of birds and the falling of leaves in winter.

The poetry of the Venda does arrest one's attention even if it is for a short while by the thrill of passing experience. The words which are used by the poets determine the form of the poems, for poetic language has its unique force that sets it apart from everyday dialogue. Its characteristics are intense emotion and deep feeling, strong conviction and a penetrating unravelling of the images and circumstances.

There are basic features in Venda poetry such as a repetition of words, the use of parallelisms, simile and metaphor from which the modern Venda poet cannot free himself. These are deep rooted in the structure of the Venda language.

The Venda poets have tried to preserve important facts in verse. The reason for this is that poetry outlasts prose, historical events are better preserved in poetry and the function of Venda poetry is extended to the religious sphere when it is desired to unite the living members of the

community and members of the ancestral world.

There are many difficulties in the history of Venda literature but difficulties are there to be overcome, and it is here that Venda intellectuals can play a vital role as people who are well versed in the culture and that they can penetrate into the secrets of the Venda hearts in a way that no outsider can. The Venda authors should delve deep into the cracks and crevices of Venda life and dig out the gold that lies deep down in the Venda proper. From these inaccessible areas authors should collect and collate all that they can find and bring it to light for a proper assessment and evaluation.

Right through the novels, dramas and poetry in Venda there seems to be a running message of the verse "Shango ḽa Venḓa fhaṱuwa ndi kale wo vhidzwa, vhahuweleli vho ḓi ri iḓani u tshidzwa." This statement is provoking the thinking minds of Vendaland to perform some creative artistic work that will remain beckoning to the future generations as a watch tower does to ships on a dark night.

Venda translators, Venda novelists, Venda dramatists and Venda poets have added courses of bricks on to the wall of the History of Venda literature.

SUGGESTIONS

The history of Venda literature is beset with so many problems: its struggle to defend itself and to propagate its cultural influence amongst the Venda intelligentsia.

The Venda language must awaken the Venda soul still further as dramatist and poets have already done in their attempts. The Venda speakers must get out of the "shell" where they have been hiding and they must put on an offensive attitude in the spread and the use of their language in the various aspects of their life. The Venda must be encouraged to write in their own language so that the best thoughts of a Venda may be given in a vehicle in which the Venda is clear in thought. This will make a Venda think instead of

memorizing words and sentences which create in him the sense of uncertainty when the dictionary meanings of the words cannot help him.

The Venda philosophy will be well systematized when the concepts are well rendered in Venda and the Venda speaker can feel and smell the meanings of the words he/she uses to express thought.

For a language to develop it must settle down to a stable orthography which must be practical and easy to write. The Venda orthography is one of the stable orthograpies in the Bantu Languages of South Africa but the following may make it more practical and easy to write:

Present symbol		Suggested symbol
ṯ (ṯaṯa)	>	tl (tlatla)
ṯh (ṯhaṯha)	>	tlh (tlhatlha)
ḏ (ḏala)	>	dl (dlala)
ṉ (ṉama)	>	nl (nlama)
ḷ (ḷa)	>	ll (lla)
ṅ (ṅanga)	>	nx or nh (nxanaga or nhanga)

The suggested symbols can easily be written by means of modern devices such as typewriters, and it will not be necessary to make special characters in the printing of Venda books. The phonetic symbols may be retained in the study of phonetics as such but in the practical orthography the suggested symbols used. The second suggestion I wish to make is that literary competitions should be held as a form of testing how much the Venda have read of the published books and others.

In order to test the art of original works in literature a programme in Radio Bantu can be asked for, so that an exchange of opinions on literary topics may be encouraged. The third suggestion is that of establishing a theatre where Venda dramatists can produce their plays on the stage for the benefit of the Venda speaking people. Venda literary

festivals should be held occasionally for their encouragement of the development of art.

For the production of Venda literature, the Venda forces should encourage the Venda literary movement amongst the Vendas, a movement which will bring up writings of the best kind in all types of literature.

The Venda language must be used in the writing of history, poetry, biography and drama so that the Venda dormant spirit may be awakened to realise the potentialities around it. A Venda literature Buro should be established in which a good standard of Venda may be maintained and initiative encouraged. It will be a boon to have a printing press in Vendaland, for Venda books which will cater foremost for the interests of the Venda speaking people.

The Venda literature Depot that was a stimulating factor at the beginning of our Venda literature should be developed and expanded. Its funds should be used to develop the literary attempts of the people whose language it has already done so much in the past. There must be a Venda literary centre where all Venda published workd may be deposited or may be obtained.

The little that has been done has been mainly supported by outsiders. The time has come when the Venda must do something for himself, and take his rightful place in the search for, and the scientific analysis of things that concern him.

Through the help of councillors of education and culture, chiefs, headmen and teachers, an effective national machinery can be set up for the collecting of materials for intensive investigation.

In the stories that deal with the relations between man and man as well as those that have formed the folktales etc. one finds those literary qualities that constitute the bone and marrow of all that is truely great and lasting in literature. These are the qualities of simplicity, utter

selfishness and a total disregard for the interests of others, the vindictiveness of despised love, retribution for upsetting the willingness to sacrifice all on behalf of others, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Finally it must be remembered that what is basic in life, like in literature, is truth. The truth is painful but it must be faced and Vendas must sooner or later take pride in things which are their own and produce creative works in their own language. Let us preserve our language heritage and unite it with the light and learning that we have been acquiring in this world.

In our survey of Venda literature in the past let us remember that history is not only a march of time forward and a record of change, but that it is also a study of something unchangable namely, the truth.

Let the Venda hearts and Venda emotions express themselves honestly and truely so that the gold which is in the Venda real self may come out.

A glimpse into the Future

In conclusion let us have a glimpse into the future of Venda literary attempts. It is clear from the discussions in the preceding chapters that our readers (school) in the primary school need new orientation and adaptation for the developing Venda child since new ideas demand new forms. The books must be made more attractive to the pupils and the subject matter must be well graded according to the vocabulary development of the pupil. More illustrations must be used in the books for the children but these must be reduced gradually as the child advances into the upper classes.

The novels in Venda have started to come into life. The attempts which have been made are satisfactory. The future Venda novelists should try to write on the problems of the day. The Venda speaking people need social novels which will help them to reform and eliminate the evils which are gnawing the community from within.

The Venda personality must be challenged to come out and express itself without fear of a counter attack. For the real character of a person comes out when he or she reacts to adverse situations.

The Venda novelists should try and delve into the problems of urbanisation and to reveal the process of interaction of the different types of persons in complex environments.

The detective novel is really desirable in Venda literature. The Venda are good detectives in the cities and novelists should portray that in the novels. Some of the novels should reform the evil minded urban society. The novels which had the "makgoweng motif" created the unrestful atmosphere in our cities. The readers of those novels took it for granted that if they imitated the characters portrayed, they would enrich the life and yet the opposite is true.

The novels of the future should delve into the heart of a Venda and purify him from within. These should be novels which can exploit the Venda gossip and make it a factor in the improvement of the social life of the people. The novelists should write novels on adventure so that the imagination of a Venda should be increased and enriched. This type of novel wil encourage the inquirying spirit in the Venda community to be accelerated. It is also the time of the political novel to help in the formulation of ideas which may stabilise the Venda community.

The prophetic novels are needed for the upliftment of Venda spiritual ideas or values. The biographical novels should highlight some of the Venda historical personalities which in turn may serve as models worthy of imitating by the upcoming generations. Some myths and fables in Venda need exploitation by Venda novelists and a new look into them should bring something to the surface. Some novel translation should be done in Venda so as to encourage the Venda novelists to develop certain themes in novel writing.

The dramatic works in Venda are inclined to tragedy.

This seems to indicate that the Venda are pessimistic in their outlook in life. The novels, too, show this tendency. It is time that we have dramas which may be inclined to comedy so that optimism may grow in the Venda philosophical make up. This will be a reconstruction of destroyed actors who could not make the grade in adverse circumstances.

It would be better for Venda dramatists and novelists to learn to turn their disadvantages to advantages and to portray these in their dramas and novels. The Radio Drama should increase as this gives the Venda a chance to evaluate what he or she can do if given a theatre. Radio serial stories should be encouraged so that the novel may be represented more vividly in sound.

In poetry the Venda poets are showing signs that they are gradually maturing and that more poems should be composed to fit important occasions. More lyrical poems should be composed. The epic should be recorded and composed for the sake of the Venda national pride and self dedication. The historical accounts dealt with in the preceding chapters can serve as inspiring bases for the Venda epics.

Some recent Venda poems show literary promises:

"Ndo ʇungufhalela u ʇuwa haŋu,
Nga u elelwa maḓuvha aɬa,
Ndi tshi vuwa nga matsheloni;
Musi ɬi tshi bvisa mulomo,
Zwa nnḓadza dakalo ɬihulu,
Nga u vhona lunako lwaŋu"

Ḓuvha ɬaŋu ndi hone ɬo kovhela,
Ni ʇuwa na zwifhaʇuwo zwo puta,
Ndi elelwa zwiɬa ndi tshi ni kwama,
Nda pfa vhutete vhu elaho na ŋala,
Mbilu yanga i swela zwo ni welaho,
Ndi hone no ntsia zwililoni zwihulu"

(Maluvha Vhuria by M.N. Nemukovhani).

The images created by these lines of the flowers make the reader see the plight of the flowers in winter; the beauty which the poet wants to retain but all in vain.

The poet goes further in his poem "Vivho" when he says:

Wa vivho ndi a tataho u fhirwa,
Tshine a lila ndi u fhahea dzina,
Zwi mu kundaho u vunḓa vhakoni,
Ene a fhedza a si vhe muiti,"

These lines give a good picture of a jealous individual in few words. The imagery is satisfactory.

Venda poets are starting to express themselves on many aspects such as:

"Iwe vhudzimu ho katanaho Guvhukuvhukuvhu,
Zhambani ni simese,
U unga haṋu hu ḓo wela zwirendi-ṋambi,
Zwa akha maipfi-dembettiti,
Ḓambuwo ḽa vhuthu na vhudzimu"

(Guvhukuvhu by W. Sigwavhulimu).

The word "maipfi-dembetiti" gives a picture of a forward-backward movement. It suggests a continuous movement to and fro, therefore forming the bridge between humanity and Godliness (vhuthu na vhudzimu). The word ḓambuwo (drift) means here a medium between the gods and the people, it is the communication medium between the physical world and the spiritual world. The Venda poets are awakening up to poesy. When a Venda poet looks at the effect of starvation he says:

"Nngwe yo dzena musanda,
Vhana ndi ṅwee-ṅwee,
Thumbu ndi vhukhobokhobo,
Vhula vhu khanani, ganda ḽo onyana,

I ya pala khwali ha vhakoma,
Vhana vha wela tshivhasoni,
Vhakegulu vha ḓivhofha khundu nga labi,
Vhanna marukhu o vhoxwa mikomboni"

(R.R. Matshili: Nḓala).

The words "thumbu ndi vhukhobokhobo, vhula vh khanani ganda ḽo onyana" convey the physical appearance of a starving person nearing death. The words create a vivid image before the reader and the words become emotionally intense and are striking deep at the base of the memory of any person who understands Venda.

Venda poets of tomorrow will write on all topics under the sun but it seems those on natural phenomena will abound. The sunset is given as:

"Muḓifho wo no fhira nḓifho,
Mutakalo wo guma tshigani tsha dakalo,
Mihumbulo i tshi mona ya vhuya he ye thoma,
Tsini na kule zwi si na mukano mufhandakanyi,
Ri ri ḽo kovhela"

(P. Tshindane Mashuwa: Ḽo KOVHELA).

The beauty of this poem lies in its contrasts in the use of words and the intensification of the meanings of words. The rhythm of this poem is similar to that of "RI A LIVHUHA" by E.S. Madima. When the poet says "Tsini na kule zwi si na mukano mufhandakanyi" he is expressing a universal truth about the demarcating line between daytime and night-time. This line goes further and imply that it is difficult to draw a line between the beginning of life and the ending of life of an individual.

Venda poetry of the future seems to be going to be a compromise between traditional poetry and modern poetry.

The short story is still a virgin ground for writers. Writers of short stories should pay attention to plot, character and language. In conclusion it is evident that the directions of Venda Literature are:-

(a) Drama books i.e. all kinds.
(b) Biographical novels.
(c) Poetry (especially lyrical and epical).
(d) Social novels (detective etc.)
(e) Short stories.
(f) Essays and Letters.



Mr. O.E. Schwellnus : The son of Dr. P.E. Schwellnus who has kept the photos and all documents of his father.

da memoaha mētano na meve,,
li ea ndala ee Yosef a amba
honno ndala eo oa masangone
ote; fēdzi šangone la Egipte
ho va ho ~~o~~na zu:leoa. Honno
mose va Egipte va tsi pfa
ndala na vone; vathu vote va
vidzelela vare ha Farao: re fē
zu:leoa. Honno Farao a vodza
va Egipte vote are: Cane ha
Yosef, zune ~~a~~do vodza ne
zu: ote. Honno Yosef a vula
nga hote ndu dza mavele
a šelela va Egipte; ~~vote~~
nga ova ndala eo hola šà,,
Egipte. Honno vathu
va [illegible] ote va da Egipte o
r'enga ha Yosef, nga ova nda,

Honno monne oa oe a tši pfa na
fongo a mosadzi oaoe, a sinyoa
zulholo a fara Josef a mo longa
torongone, hafo ho dzulaho va vo
yoa va khosi. Honno Jehova o
va e na ene a mo eta nga vohoa
vo, a mo fa kathotselo matone a
ndona ea terongo; Honno a nea
yoandane yoa Josef vo voyoa
ho sote, honno omešumo eote e e
toaho hone ea etoa nga ene, nga
ova ndona ea terongo a eo ngo
ta lavelesa tšethu. Ngaova Jehova
o va e na Josef, honno mešumo
eaoe eote eo fatotšedzoa nza Jehova.

26 Josef a tši tálokanya meloro.

Honno ha eta morako ha ma
longo haea, mošeleli oa khosi ea
Egipte na mobikeli va tšenya ha
monne oaso khosi Honno Farao
a sinyoa a va longa torongone e ne

SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The main object of this study is to try and trace the attempts made at reducing the Venda Language to writing and to give a tentative grouping of the printed books in Venda. The study aims at:-

(a) indicating that the Oral Traditional literature formed the bases of the Venda school readers and other books.

(b) indicating the possible origins of the Venda language.

(c) pointing out which are the earliest manuscripts in Venda in 1876.

(d) selecting the first printed books in Venda.

(e) the role played by the early missionaries in the creation of Venda Literature.

(f) indicating the attempts made by Venda authors who are the products of the missionaries.

(g) providing a general appreciation and a record of what has been attempted in Venda Literature.

(i) Myths (ii) fables (iii) folktales (iv) legends.

The first manuscripts in Venda are hand-written exercise books in the possession of Rev. D.W. Giesekke of Tshakhuma and the first printed book in Venda is "EVANGELI NGA YOHANNES NA DZIEPISTOLA DZA YOHANNES NA DZIPSALME DZIMOE DZO KHETHOAHO NGA TŠEWENDA" which is a translation of the Gospel according to St. John published in 1895.

The Venda orthography took three stages to develop viz Beuster's orthography, Meinhof's orthography and the Schwellnus brothers' orthography. Beuster's orthography is characterized by the absence of dental diacritic marks, Meinhof's by diacritic marks and five vowels and the Schwellnus Brothers' by dental sounds and consonant combinations to represent previously underlined sounds in Meinhof's orthography.

The publication of MIKANZWO in 1911 stabilized the Venda orthography while the complete translation of the HOLY BIBLE (BIVHILI) stabilized the literary form of written Venda.

The school readers viz SPELBOEK EA TŠEWENDA 1899, NDEDE YA LUAMBO LWA TSHIVENDA, MUDEDEDZI A to II SERIES, NDEDEDZI A to VI SERIES and MURATHO A to VI SERIES provided all the needs of the reading matter in the Primary school.

The following books provided the grammatical base in Venda: LUVENḒA GRAMMAR, PHENḒALUAMBO YA ZWIKOLO ZWA VHANA VHA VENḒA, KHA RI AMBE LUVENḒA, NḒILANA DZA LUVENḒA, ḒENZHE ḽA LUVENḒA, ṮHAHULELA LUVENḒA and NZHELE YA LUVENḒA.

The dictionary books in Venda laid the foundation for the correct spelling in Venda. Dr. N.J. van Warmelo's "TSHIVENḒA-ENGLISH DICTIONARY" remains to date, the standard dictionary in Venda.

The books on VENDA LAW, FOLKTALES, PROVERBS, HYGIENE and SHORT STORIES have revealed that the Venda authors can compete with authors who wrote on similar themes in other languages.

The Venda Novels reveal that some authors cannot portray their characters well but others have succeeded in portraying characters. The plot in most of the Novels is satisfactorily done. The Novels are treated chronologically each under the following headings:

(a) plot (b) characters (c) literary comments.

Venda novelists have given us the secrets of the Venda hearts, the love affairs of the Venda women, the Venda conspiracies, the Venda values of life and finally the purpose for which a Venda lives in this temporal world.

The Venda novelists provide a person who reads Venda with a lot of information on the Venda social surroundings, their weaknesses in moral conduct and also their sense of justice and purity.

The drama books are discussed chronologically and from the discussion the following may be concluded:-

(i) that the dramatic works in Venda are still in their infancy.

(ii) that the four published books indicate a fair attempt made by Venda dramatists, since these are original works and not translations.

(iii) that some of the scenes are very vividly presented and that they satisfy the requirements of drama.

(iv) that at the bottom of all these drama books in Venda there is witchcraft, that greatly feared monster amongst the Venda speaking peoples.

Venda poetry developed from traditional verses which accompanied rhythmical dances of primitive ancestors. From a discussion of Venda poetry it is concluded that:

(i) the Venda people share the intense feeling which is common to all nations when they are happy or sad and that they can show their happiness or sadness by means of rhythmic language.

(ii) in the development of Venda poetry we find the influence of the valleys and the steepy mountains inspiring the Venda poets and driving them to give praise to what they saw and experienced.

(iii) the undulating plains and the lofty mountains reminded the Vendas of the great debt which the Venda poets owed to nature and to the Creator.

From the whole discussion of the literary achievement in Venda we may conclude:

(i) that from the earliest times the Venda people have had a literature which they regarded as their own.

(ii) that from the analysis of the narrations it is evident that the content of many of the narrations was of a religious nature because each account contained a moral of triumph of good over evil.

After a survey of the literary achievements in Venda has been made we may suggest the following:-

(i) that the Venda language must awaken the Venda soul as dramatists and poets have done in their attempts and that the Venda speakers must get out of the "shell" in which they are hiding and that they must put on an offensive attitude in the spread and the use of their language in the various aspects of their life.

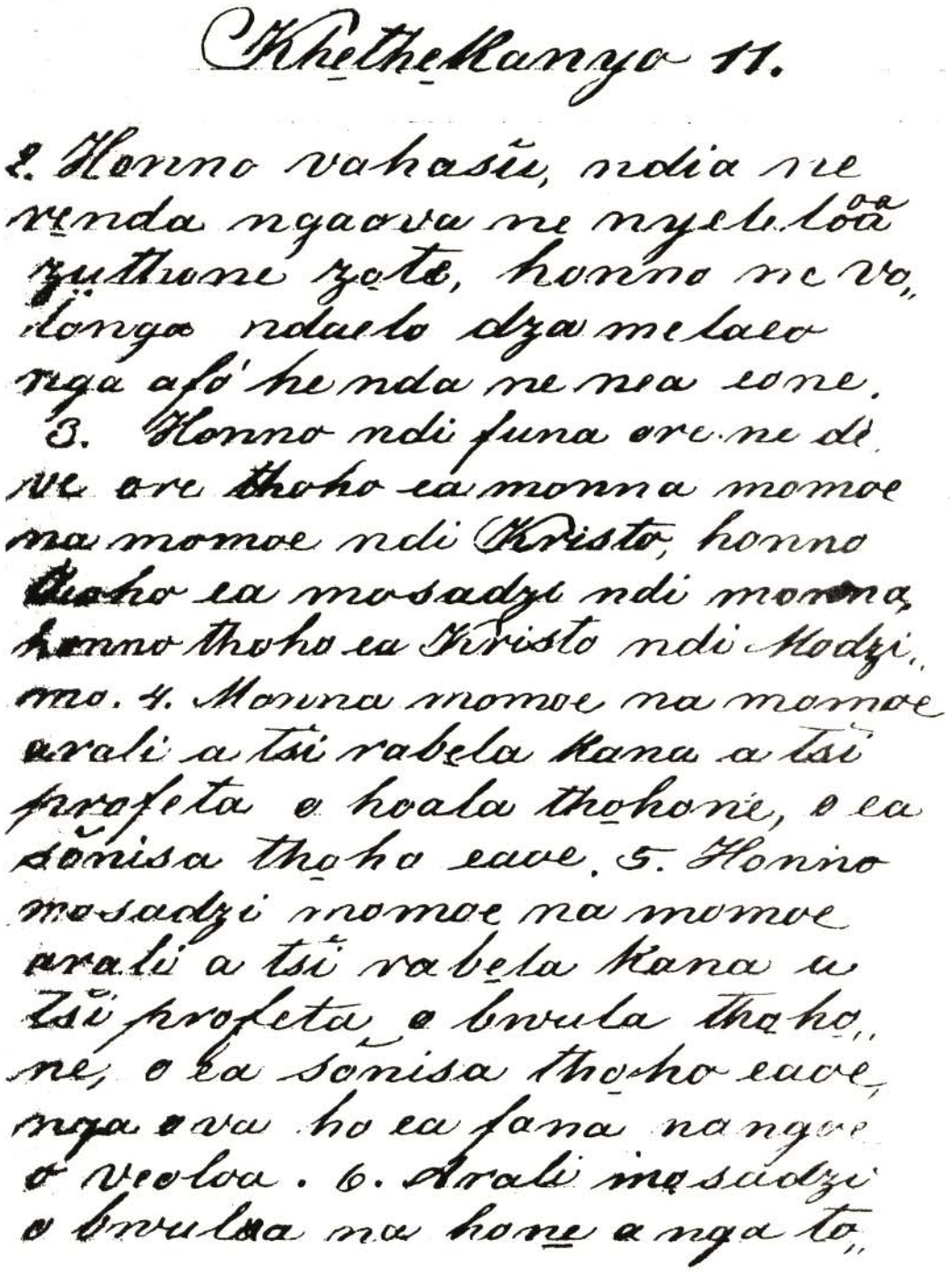
(ii) that the Vendas should be encouraged to write in their own language so that the best thoughts of a Venda may be given in the vehicle in which the Venda is clear in thought. This will make a Venda think instead of memorising words and phrases which he must use if he has to use a foreign language.

(iii) that the dental speech sounds may be eliminated in the practical orthography.

(iv) that translations will benefit Venda literature.

In conclusion I would like to say that in this milky way of VENDA LITERATURE there are shining stars which future scholars may turn to and expand the glare of those stars in the form of a detailed research.

APPENDIX 1



Khethekanyo 11.

2. Honno vahasĕu, ndia ne
venda ngaova ne nyelekoă
zuthune zote, honno ne va,
longa ndaelo dza melaelo
tega afó he nda ne nea eone.
3. Honno ndi funa ore ne de
ne ore thoho ea monna momoe
na momoe ndi Kristo, honno
thoho ea mosadzi ndi monna,
honno thoho ea Kristo ndi Kodzi,
mo. 4. Monna momoe na momoe
erali a tsĕ rabela kana a tsĕ
profeta e hoala thohonĕ, e ea
sŏnisa thoho eave. 5. Honno
mosadzi momoe na momoe
erali a tsĕ rabela kana a
tsĕ profeta, e bvula thoho,
ne, e ea sŏnisa thoho eave,
nga e va ho ea fana na ngoe
e veloa. 6. Erali mosadzi
e bvulea na hone a nga to,

BEUSTER C.F.: THE FIRST HANDWRITTEN TRANSLATION OF ONE OF THE BOOKS OF THE HOLY BIBLE in +1876.

APPENDIX 2

P Mwunisa kha e ve ka Khōlas ne ka Mōri.
Tsebwuma

E. Na ka Moca ōr Modrima.

P. Onga ka va o kona masikone

E Na zino, na nga o va Jeleko Am.

P Moreni E. O ve khatotaela.
Kristo - - - - -
Morena . . . . . .

P. Mwunisa kha e ve ka Modrima tadola.

E Renda Modrima tadola
Tenda vahvava kaba
Re do volongoa nga vōtho.
Nga sina ve se kandōa
Re tahulelaa nga Konne
Re ne pfamedrana nae
Re na khonane khola.

P. Jomi'nus vobiscum.
kha ve na moca odo,!

Gebet.
Epistel

H H H.

Ev. . .

Amen

Kurfürstenbund.

3 X Amen

Honno monne oa oe a tši pfa ona
fongo a mosadzi oaoe, a sinyoa
zulholo a fara Josef a mo longa
torongone, hafo ho dzulaho va vo
voa va khosi. Honno Jehova o
va e na ene a mo eta nga vohoa
vo, a mo fa kathotselo matone a
ndona ea terongo; Honno a nea
zoandane zoa Josef vo vopoa
ho vote, honno meshumo eote e e
toaho hone ea etoa nga ene, nga
ova ndona ea terongo a eo ngo
tša lavelesa tsethu. Hgaova Jehova
o va e na Josef, honno meshumo
eaoe eote eo fatotsedzoa nga Jehova.

26 Josef a tši tálokanya meloro.

Honno ha eta morahoha ma
fongo haca, mosetsele oa khosi ea
Egipte na mobekeli va tšenya ha
monne oaoe khosi. Honno Farao
a sinyoa a va longa torongone e ne

APPENDIX 3

Liturgio. nga dgna la Mwdzimo Khalgi na la Mwea na la Mwea oakhethoraka

P. Mwumiwo kha e ve ka Khotsi na ha Mwwa

g. Na ha Mwea oa Mwdzimo (oakhethoraka)

P. Onga ho va ka hone masikone.

g. – Na zino na nga mese e sa felitho. Amen!

P. Morena – g. – O re khakholičele!

P. Kristus – g. O re khakholičele!

P. Morena g. O re khakholičele!

P. Ngaova dzikhava dai do loa na mevundo e do oa, honno khakholičela langa e nga se ngi a loa na khonano ea voaoela ha-nga – e nga se nge ea oa Yehova o a vodza (a ~~oaho~~ o khakholičelaho) o valo.

Mwumiwo kha e ve ha Mwdzimo kavola!

g. Renda Mwdzimo kavola
Tenda vohovavo hoe,
Re vo volongoa nga valku.
Nga (Sahon) re se kandoe.
Re ka khakelova nga Manne
Re na pfumi drano nae
Re na khonane khalo.

P. Morena kha e ve na enoe.

g. Kha ve na Mwea oao!

P. Khá re rabelene! Morena Mwdzimo oa manda ote, o movolongi oa vote va o fulufadzako, re ši šaca vohovavo hao a re khone o logoa phanda hao. Re a o rabela, a re khakholičele ~~ivala ka oši~~, o re nga o pfiva ha Mwea oaoe re elelove zu a logaho, homo nga manda ao re zu ede nga mulando oa Jesus Kristo Morena oašu. Amen!

g. Aman!

P. Re ea vala Epistola ea na mwe e oinvalaho (—) o rendoe Kristus Amen!

g. Aman!

APPENDIX 5

115.

Gott ist die Liebe.

1. Yesu oa vothu o ea mpholosa,
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

2. Ndo va nda voχoa nda vaisala,
Ndo va nda voχoa, nda kundesoa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

3. Yesu o ndẹla, o mbọfọlola,
Yesu o ntsẹla, o nkanyisa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

4. Ndo tọda o fa nda tetemela,
Ndo va na nyọfo, nda tọvōa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

5. Yesu, Morẹna, ene o mfẹla,
O ea mpholosa nga malọfa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

6. Yesu o mbidza, o funa o mpha,
O tọda o mpha na mašudu.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

7. O tọda o mpha na voaoẹlo,
O funa o mpha na votšilo.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

APPENDIX 5

14.

nd	nda	nde	ndi	ndo	ndu
ng	nga	nge	ngi	ngo	ngu
nk	nka	nke	nki	nko	nku
nkh	nkha	nkhe	nkhi	nkho	nkhu
nt	nta	nte	nti	nto	ntu
nf	nfa	nfe	nfi	nfo	nfu
nf	nfa	nfe	nfi	nfo	nfu
nth	ntha	nthe	nthi	ntho	nthu
ny	nya	nye	nyi	nyo	nyu
nz	nza	nze	nzi	nzu	nzu̱
nż	nża	nże	nżi	nżo	nżu

ndao ndona! re na ndala. ndelandela a se e! ńanda nthehe. ndere ndilo. ndoho. moeada ha divone. ndou a se e! e ngafe? lonanga loa ńanga a so lo. u nkanele. u nkele made. u nkise. u nkhanyise. u nkhoalele. u nkhangoele. ne ntakalele. ne ntevele. ne ntikele. vo nfala. vo nfoela. nfomelene! nfakhele. u nfavele. nfukhulele. va nthabelele! ne nthivele. ne nthule. ndi nye? va nyalela. nyemolo. vonyonyo. kholomo nzane? mavele a lonze. nzie. no nzufela. manzuti. nżakele! lonże.

APPENDIX 5

115.

Gott ist die Liebe.

1. Yesu oa vothu o ea mpholosa,
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

2. Ndo va nda voχoa nda vaisala,
Ndo va nda voχoa, nda kundesoa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

3. Yesu o ndẹla, o mbọfọlola,
Yesu o ntsẹla, o nkanyisa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

4. Ndo tọda o fa nda tetemela,
Ndo va na nyọfo, nda tọvoa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

5. Yesu, Morẹna, ene o mfẹla,
O ea mpholosa nga malọfa.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

6. Yesu o mbidza, o funa o mpha,
O tọda o mpha na maśudu.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo:

7. O tọda o mpha na voaoẹlo,
O funa o mpha na votśilo.
Ahe, ahe, ahe, ndi ralo hafo:
Yesu oa vothu o mfunavo!

WISSENSCHAFTLICHE BEILAGE

No. 1.Februar 1927

Aufstellung ueber den Malombotanz von Missionar Ch. Endemann.

Der Malombotanz ist das Mittel, mit den Geistern der Verstorbenen in Verbindung zu kommen.

Solche Geister, die noch nicht den Weg ins Totenreich gefunden haben, bevoelkern das Land.

Ihr Aufenthalt sind Hoehlen, Bergspitzen, Wipfel hoher Baeume, Dickichte (Zwifho).

Diese Geister suchen Ruhe und finden sie nicht. Darum suchen sie Gelegenheit, in einem Menschen Wohnung zu nehmen, derselbe muss aber von der Sippe sein.

Die Besitzergreifung durch die Daemonen bewirkt Krankheit, besonders deuten Ohnmachtsanfaelle, Fallsucht, Schwindel auf einen Daemonen.

Midzimu ya Malombo.

Die Goetter der Malombo.

Musi vha tshi thoma u tshina, ndi uri ha lwala muthu.

Wenn die Leute anfangen zu tanzen, dann bedeutet das, dass jemand krank ist.

Vha mu alafha, vha vhona a sa fholi, vha ya thanguni.

Sie behandeln ihn, wird er aber nicht gesund, so wenden sie sich an die Wuerfel.

Mudzia thangu a vha vhudza a ri: u na mudzimu wa malombo.

Der Wuerfler sagt ihnen dann: Er hat den Gott der Malombo.

Ndi hone vha tshi vhidza munwe a tshinaho uri a de, a "wise" mudzimu wa malombo.

Daraufhin rufen sie jemand, der Malombo tanzt, damit er den Gott des Kranken zum Vorschein bringt.

Ha kuvhangana vhathu na mashaka awe, vha thoma nga u lidza: "Tshele dza magala nga pasi".

Darauf versammeln sich die Leute und seine Anverwandten und fangen an zu spielen die "Tshele dza magala nga pasi" d.h. Klappern, die man sitzend spielt.

Khamusi vha do lidzela mulwadze vha vhuya vha ita maduvha a sa "wi".

Es kann sein, dass sie mehrere Tage dem Kranken spielen muessen, ehe der Gott faellt, d.h. ehe er sich offenbart.

Vha mu vumbela, ndi uri vha mu dodza mishonga yothe i dihwaho nga vhone vhane.

Dan salben sie ihn, d.h. sie schmieren ibn mit all den Medizinen ein, die ihnen, den Malomboleuten allein, bekannt sind.

Arali a takuwa, a wa fhasi, sa muthu wa tshifa-khole, a kuma, ndi hone vha tshi zhamba vha lidza na mifhululu na phalaphala, na dzinanga, vha pembela vha ri: "o wa Mudzimu".

Wenn die Kranke nun aufsteht, dann hinfaellt wie eine Epileptsche und "kuma" d.h. wie ein Stier bruellt, dann stossen die Anwesenden ein Freudengeheul aus, sie jodeln und blasen die Fanfaren und Floeten, sie fuehren einen Freudentanz auf und sagen: "Der Gott ist gefallen" d.h. "er hat sich offenbart".

Vha gidima vha rola madi vha mu tanzwa.

Sie laufen eilig hin und holen Wasser und waschen ihn.

Zwino na zwiliwa vha vho la, ene ha li tshithu, na vha no mu tshinisa a vha li.

Nun duerfen sie auch essen, er und die, die sie tanzen lassen, sonst geniessen sie nichts.

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