

A STUDY OF TRADITIONAL ZULU NAMES
by
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, VUSUMUZI and my children Nqobile, S'lindile, Zinhle and ZabeNguni for their patience and encouragement during the period of study.

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1.0 Introduction

The study deals with Zulu names of people as a prominent culture trait of the Zulus.

It is a universal pattern of culture that every newly born child is given a name to identify his nationality, sex and also his personality from any other human being. Although this is common in all nations, each nation has its own unique concept of doing it. For example in western countries names are maintained and used in the family generation, that is why we always hear of Elizabeth II, George V, King Edward VIII etc.

As a matter of fact the Zulus, like other nations, follow their own concept in naming their children. With them every person has a number of different names by which he/she is known at home and in the outside world. These names include the first name (which is given to him/her at his/her birth or a few days after birth), his/her clan name and also other additional names he/she acquires as he/she grows up. These names are all given from a particular point of view and sometimes with a particular purpose in accordance with Zulu culture. These names are a subject of this paper.

2.0 Motivation for the study

The Blacks have passed through a period during which their culture was infiltrated by western civilization and was regarded as something which belongs to the ignorance and paganism of the past. During this period they also adopted a system of giving their children English names which were referred to as Christian names/school names with which children/people were known in schools, in official documents and in other westernized situations. Lately, no matter how learned and sophisticated a Zulu person may be, because of the re-awakening of Black consciousness, his motivation impels him to give his child a traditional Zulu name or names which will reveal his nationality.

This study considers traditional Zulu names and their implications as important to the Zulus. They give them scope to project

their different inner feelings about the circumstances and events surrounding the child's birth to the outside world.

Nkabinde (1986:4) says:-

"They [Zulu names] have a wider significance than the lexical meaning contained in them".

It may be interesting therefore, to unveil their significance. It is within their cultural, social and political context that a study of this nature is carried, hence the writer finds it very interesting to look into it.

Finally, besides doing this as partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Honours degree in African Languages, it is also aimed at serving as an additional information to future students on this culture trait in this department.

3.0 Purpose of study

The study aims at determining cultural, social and political aspects which are employed in composing Zulu names of people. The researcher will place special emphasis on the classification of different types of Zulu names. Particular attention will be paid on the description and explanation of their uniqueness as reflected in meanings and significance attached to them.

4.0 Methodology

This section deals with the choice of research area, orientation and planning, and sources of information.

4.1 Choice of research area

The area chosen for this study is known as kwaMthethwa in Enseleni district. This area lies within the North Coast Lowland, about 16km north of Empangeni Town. It is adjacent to the writer's place of residence. It has been chosen for the

sake of minimising the cost of transport and of temporary accommodation. Over and above, the Mthethwa area is well known in Zulu history, dating back from the times of Nandi, mother of Shaka, the well known king of the Zulus.

4.2 Orientation and planning

The orientation and planning of this study was commenced in March 1988 and took approximately seven months to complete. It is aimed at obtaining quantitative information concerning different types of Zulu names by which the individuals and groups of Zulu people are identified.

4.3 Information sources

A wide range of rural research studies was consulted in the planning of this study. However a perusal of the available literature shows that not much of good quality of work relevant to this topic has been produced.

The main data sources used in this study are as follows:-

- (a) A study of available literature from the library.
- (b) Personal discussion with individual members of the Mthethwa tribe.
- (c) Oral testimony from elderly people of the Zulu tribes.
- (d) Direct observation by the writer.

5. Classification of traditional Zulu names

Traditional Zulu names which are covered in this study are classified as follows:-

- (a) Personal names
- (b) Clan names
- (c) Regimental names

These names serve to identify and relate a person to different situations throughout his social life as he interacts with

different people in different occasions.

.. Personal names

Here the writer has distinguished four types of traditional personal names, namely:

- (a) Traditional home name (igama lasekhaya)
- (b) Pet-name (isiteketiso)
- (c) Euphonic name (isidlaliso)
- (d) Praise names (izibongo)
- (e) Nickname (isigcono)

5.1 Traditional home name (igama lasekhaya)

This is the name a child receives from his parents or sometimes from his grandparents or other close relatives at birth. Most of these names have a long history behind them, a history that is concisely summarised and projected to the public in a form of a "knot" of a single utterance. Nkabinde supports this idea by describing Zulu names as:

"... a cryptic summary of one of a host of events or circumstances surrounding a person's birth".

In this section the writer is untying these "knots" and displaying their physical components to the reader.

It has become clear that the traditional Zulu names are of social as well as of cultural significance. It is, however, important to note that the classification of these names and their significance are not water-tight, each name can be found or used in more than one instance and at the same time it can have different connotations to different people. The connotation in each name which appears in this study is just one of many thoughts and feelings that might occur in the minds of different name givers at that particular moment. For example,

for one person "Delani" (give up), the name of a male, may be a message from a child's mother to her rivals that they must give up loving "this" young man because he has chosen her as his wife. Here "Delani" is a social statement. For a person/couple who has/have a family of boys only, it may mean "give up hope that I/we shall ever bear a baby girl". In this context "Delani" is completely cultural. The very same name can still have other different implications to other people.

Each name appearing in this study is translated in two forms. i.e. (i) Free translation and (ii) its implication. In cases where there is only one meaning, it means that both forms are borne in it or it cannot be translated any further.

Traditional Zulu home names which are of social and cultural significance can be shown in various ways. This is confirmed by Koopman in African Studies, 38 (1979:68) and Nkabinde (1986:3 and 4) in their very brief surveys of Zulu names. Manipulating this concept the writer has come out with the following classifications:-

1.1 Social significance of traditional home names

(i) Referring to the physical appearance of a child

For example:

Nobuhle (the mother of beauty) - referring to a pretty child.

Mfan'bomvu (red boy) - very light in complexion.

Phanaso (feed-an-eye) - implies that a child is so pretty that one can never get tired of looking at her.
(feeding his/her eyes on her beauty).

S'khundevu - refers to a very dark complexioned child.

S'gaxa - refers to a plumpy and heavy child.

Zenze (flea) - refers to a very tiny but very lively child.

Ntwenhle (beautiful thing) - referring to a delicate beautiful child.

Mhlophekazi (intensively white) - very light in complexion

Mhlekeazi (intensively pretty) - a very pretty child.

S'dudla (very plumpy)

Mlungwana (white-man-like) - very light in complexion

Mnyamana (almost black) - very dark in complexion.

Ntombenhle (pretty girl)

- (ii) Expressing the state of mind of parent/parents at the birth of a child. Such names usually reflect a pleasant state of mind.

For example:Nkosinathi - (the Lord is with us).

Sinegugu - (we have pride).

Thokozani - (be happy).

Sibongiseni - (be grateful with us).

Siyabonga - (we are grateful).

Dumisani - (glorify).

Samukelisiwe - (we have been offered).

Simphiwe - (he has been given to us).

Sinenhlanhla - (we are lucky).

Sijabulile - (we are happy).

Mandl'enkosi - (God's power)

S'busiso - (blessing)

Lang'elihle - (nice day)

Nkosiyapha - (God gives)

Gugulethu - (our pride)

- (iii) Divulging discord in the family, clan or neighbours

For example:Mhlushwa - (the ill-treated one) - mother disliked and/or ill-treated by her husband and her co-wives in the case of polygamy.

Ncengani (begging for what?) - implies "we/I do not beg anybody for anything."

Jabhile (disappointed) - those who hate them have been disappointed.

Jezangeze (punished for nothing) - if the mother was punished or is being ill-treated by her husband for reasons unknown to her.

Phumasilwe (come out and let us fight)

Thandonjani (What sort of a person do you like/love?)

Thandayiphi (which one (child) do you like?) - if the mother feels that her husband likes her co-wives' children the best.

Mzuthini (what does the family say?) - if the mother is ill-treated by her husband and the elders do not try to rectify the case.

Khulakuhlekwa (grow up there being laughter)

Bafunani (what do they want?) - meaning - "why do they (the in-laws) hate me if I can bear children for them?)

Khohlwangezakhe (forget his own (affairs) - meaning that he (that particular enemy) neglects his family's or his own wrong deeds and concentrates on the affairs of other people.

Nengweyini (what has made him angry?)

Sehlulekile (we have failed - to rectify the mistake or to solve the problem).

Mfulathelwa (turned-away-from) - if the mother is neglected by her husband and/or her in-laws.

Vikamatshe (ward-off stones) - refers to a family fight.

6.1.2 Cultural significance of traditional home names

- (i) Giving a reflection of expected or desired behaviour from a child

For example: Nomfundo (mother of education) - expected to learn intensely.

Lwazi (knowledge) - expected to know much through education.

S'bonelo (exemplary) - setting a good example to his siblings and the rest of the family members.

Bhekabakubo (take care of his family).

Thandukwazi (like to know)

Vusumuzi (rouse up the family)

Thanduyise (love his father).

Nhlakanipho (wisdom).

Ntuthuko (progress)

Mphathi (guardian, manager or controller)

Bhekokuhle (expect the good)

Lindokuhle (wait for the good) - the parents are expecting good behaviour/good future from/for him.

Thembelihle (good hope) - hoping for the best.

Mpilonhle (good health).

Gcinumuzi (look after the home/family).

(ii) Revealing a person's birth-rites or position in the family

- (a) Certain Zulu names are meant for children of the royal family. Some of these may suggest that the child is expected to end up as a king. However this does not mean that ordinary people cannot make use of these names.

For example: Bangubukhosi (fight over chieftaincy).

Bhekubukhosi (watch for chieftaincy).

Lindubukhosi (wait for chieftaincy).

Ntomb'yenkosi (daughter of a king).

Bhekumthetho (take care of the law).

Gqokubukhosi (wear chieftaincy) - (the present Chief Zulu of Ntembeni in Melmoth region).

Nkosiyezwe (king of the land).

Gcinumthetho (obey the law).
Velebukhosini (come from the royal family).
Mehlesizwe (eyes of the tribe)
Gcinangokubusa (end up by reigning) - if there
is a family fight over chief-
taincy.
Bukhosibakhe (his chieftaincy).
Gcinisizwe (guard the tribe).
Bhekisizwe (look after the tribe).
Nqobizitha (conquer the enemies).

(b) Some are meant for the eldest child in the family

For example: Bhekifa (look after the inheritance).
Vusumuzi (rouse up the home/family).
Mafungwase (one called upon in an oath).
Lamuyise (comes after his father).
Makhosazane (princesses).
Falakhe (his inheritance).
Qhikiza (the eldest girl in the family).
Ndawokayise (his father's place).
Bhekuyise (look after his father).
Bhekabakubo (look after his family).
Nkosana (prince).
Mondli (nourisher).
Sokhaya (father of the family).
Gcinumndeni (look after the family).
Gcinuyise (look after his father).

(c) Others reveal that the child is the youngest in the family

Some of these may also be parent's way of communicating to God that they would now like to be blessed with children of different gender.

For example: Gcinile (ended).
Gcinangaye (end up with him/her).
Maluju (its enough/I surrender).

Zanele (they (girls) are enough).
Banele (they (boys) are enough).
Sanelisiwe (we have had enough).
Zamagcino (girls) of the last).
S'phelele (we are all here/present).
Gcinakahlè (ended up well).
Sanele (we are enough/we have had enough).

(d) Others reveal the family set up

For example: Ntomb'futhi (girl again) - if a born child,
a girl, comes after another girl
or other girls.

Mfan'futhi (boy again) - if a born baby boy
comes after another boy or other
boys.

Ntomb'zodwa (girls only) - if her siblings
are all girls.

Madododwa (men only) - if his siblings are
all boys.

Mntuyedwa (the only person) - if he is the
only child in the family.

Ntomb'zonke (all girls) - a family of girls
only.

Mzingaye (a home because of him) - the only
boy in the family.

Delani (give up) - if the family consists of
boys only and the parents are con-
vinced that they will never get a
baby girl.

Xolani (be at peace) - a boy - if his
siblings are also boys only.

Xolile (we) are at peace) - a boy-in a family
of boys only and if the parents are
convinced that they will never bear
a baby girl.

(iii) Of historical importance in the life of the clan
of family

For example: Velaphesheya (come from abroad) - if the child was born after the father had arrived from abroad.

Zabala (come while they refuse) - if the in-laws did not like the mother to marry their son.

Gugephi (where (in himself) is he worn out) - implies "how can people say that he (the husband) is of age if he is still capable of producing children?).

Falidlelwaphi (where is the inheritance eaten/squandered?) - if the father ignores his family responsibilities.

Nqobile (have conquered) - the mother has conquered by succeeding to marry the father of the child although she had many rivals or although she was not liked by the in-laws.

Masoka - If the father is very popular to young girls.

Msongelwa (sworn after) - refers to family fights.

Velenkosini (come from God) - he is a gift from God.

Khathazile (pester/annoyer) - if the mother/father had been troublesome.

Phumanyova (back out) - if the father is fond of fighting.

Nozidumo (chaos maker) - if the mother is a chos maker.

Sehlulekile (we have failed) - if the members of the family have failed to settle the dispute within the family or clan.

Phikelela (persist) - if that child comes after a history of miscarriages or still births. Implies that the parents have persisted until they have got the child.

(iv) Serving as a link symbolising the lineage of a clan

For example:Zabenguni (girls) belonging to the Gumedede or Qwabe clan) Mnguni is the address name for Gumedede and Qwabe clans.

Zamangwane (girls) belonging to the Ngwane clan).

Zamashenge (girls) belonging to Buthelezi clan) Shenge is the address name for Buthelezi clan).

Zamantuli (girls)belonging to Ntuli or Mbhele clan).

Bhekamangwane (look after the Ngwanes/Ngwane family).

Bhekamasomi (look after the Msomis/Msomi family).

Donda (address name for Nkwanyana clan).

Shuku (address name for Shangase clan).

Goda (address name for Msomi clan).

Mveni (address name for Mbhamali clan).

The formation of the above names is different from other Zulu names. These have nothing to do with events or circumstances surrounding the child's birth. They are formed from any clan name or clan address name (isithakazelo) in three ways:-

- (a) For females - by substituting the preprefix of the plural form of the clan name or address name (a-of

amaNgwane) by Za- which is the abbreviated form of "izintombi za-" (girls of..).

- (b) For males - (i) by pre-posing Bheka (look after) before the plural form of the clan name or address name.

For example Bheka + amaNgwane = Bheka-mangwane.

- (ii) by using the address name only (and not the clan name) as it is.

For example Shuku (for Shangase clan).

2 Pet-name (isiteketiso)

The first name that a child receives after his/her birth is his/her home name which is discussed in 6.1. When other names crop up this name does not die out but remains in the background and is often referred to as the "real name" (igama lange-mpela). One name that commonly replaces the home name is a pet-name. This is not entirely a new name but it is a form of an abbreviation of the real name. It usually starts from within the family, then it spreads to friends and eventually it becomes used by the entire community. In some rare cases this process can be vice versa. Nowadays pet-names are more commonly used than other personal names.

These abbreviations are chosen in such a way that some are suited for males only and others for females only although the names (of a male as well as of a female) may be from the same stem. For example, Bongiwe (a female) may be known as Bo. or Bongi while Binginkosi or Bongani (a male) is known as Bonga and can never be mistaken for Bo or Bongi. In the case where a pet-name is similar in males as well as in females the distinction in sex is depicted by tone for example Mpúmè for a male and Mpùmé for a female. However, this case is very rare. Pet-names refer mostly to females than males.

The following are examples of pet-names which are commonly used.

<u>Pet-name</u>	<u>Real name</u>
Jabu	Jabulile/S'jabulile
Thandi	Thandekile/Thandiwe
Dudu	Duduzile
Dumi	Dumisani
Zweli	Zwelibanzi/Zwelinzima
Bongi	Bongiwe/S'bongile
Lindi	Lindiwe
Phendu	Phendukile
S'ne	S'nenhlanhla/S'negugu
Thembi	Thembisile/Thembekile
Senzi	Senzekile/Senzeni
Zandi/Za	Zandile
Vusi	Vusumuzi
No	Nonhlanhla/Nokwethemba
Neli	Nelisiwe/Sanelisiwe

6.3 Euphonic name (isidlaliso)

Koopman in his article in African Studies Vol. 38, states that euphonic names are names which have pleasing sounds but which contain no meaning. He calls them "Euphonies". A euphonic name also comes in addition to the child's names. As it is called "isidlaliso" in Zulu, it originates from parents' or grandparents' use of soft play language to the baby. It sometimes originates from a younger sibling's mispronunciation of a real name, for example Yuyu for Dudu; Peye for Phelele, Nini for Lindi etc. Euphonic names are mostly characterised by their syllabic harmony.

A euphonic name sometimes becomes so familiar that it almost superceeds the child's real name and becomes widely used by the community.

Euphonic names

Mimi	Niniza
Mumu	Nini

Nana	Nanazi
Mana	Dululu
Yuyu	Thululu
Muntuza	Ntuntuza
Muntuzana	Nkunuza
Koko	Lele

4 Praise names (izithopho)

Praise names, like home names, are also historical to a very large extent. They are naturally inclined to be in praise of one's personal qualities. They relate to a person's outstanding features of his personality and also to his unique social affairs. Nkabinde (1986:22) says that they are supportive.

Praise names are either self-composed or are a spontaneous tribute of ones peer-group. Other parents and other members of the family also give children praise names. During the military age praise names were also composed by one's co-warriors, in accordance with the code of conduct expected of a warrior, or by the king himself in praise of ones heroic achievements.

A person's praise name may be composed of a compound stem, For example Ntangazamashinga or complete sentence, for example Gqobhoz'itshitshi. If it is a long sentence only the first word or phrase is used as a common name, for example Mthunzi wokuphumula amatshitshi namajongosi (a shadow to rest the young and mature girls) is simply known as Mthunzi (shadow). They are used in full in praise within a particular group in a particular environment such as:

- (a) the peer-group in giya dance, courting sessions and other festivities.
- (b) the co-warriors in battles, in fair-fights and in political assemblies.

It is also a common practice for a person to say his own praise names especially when he praises himself for what he has achieved, for example:

Ngadla mina kababa

Ngadla mina Makhas'omdloti abhenywa onyoko.

(I eat, I of my father)

(I eat, I, leaves of tobacco plant which
are smoked by your mothers).

A number of praise names can be collected and added together to form a personal praise poem (izibongo).

Praise names and the society

- (i) Eziphathelene nobusoka nobuntombi (those which reveal the youth's estimation in his/her personality and his/her relationship with the opposite sex). For example

Fulathela zimbukeye - (turn back and they (girls) gaze at him)
- according to the "respect custom" of the Zulus a female should not look at the male squarely in his eyes, therefore, when the girl has been taken by a young man or her wooer, or if she admires him, she gets the chance to look at him when he has passed her, gazing at him from his back).

Phumazidle - azidli kunesoka - (go out and let them (girls) eat - they do not eat where there is "isoka" (a boy who is popular among girls).

Zulazay'thole - (he who wonders until he gets it) - referring to a persistent person who does not give up courting a girl until he wins her love.

Dumaziy'mbangi - (disappoint the rivals) - referring to a young man who is always sure to disappoint his fellow wooers by winning the love of the girl they woo.

Ntomb'azilal'emzini - zithi zingalala kunuk'umswani -
(girls do not sleep in a strange home, whenever they do, that home smells the contents of the bowels of a slaughtered goat or beast) - According to the Zulu custom, when a young woman has chosen her lover (ukuqoma) she gets a group of girls of her age-group to accompany her to

visit her lover's home. The lover's parents are then expected to slaughter either a goat or a beast for the girls. This is a sign that the girl is accepted by the lover's family.

(The following are additional examples of personal praise names to the above category).

Ntangazamatshitshi - (age-group of young girls).

Mthunzi wokuphumula amatshitshi namajongosi - (shadow in which young and mature girls rest).

Mathand'ezincane - (one who loves/likes the young ones)

Gqobhoz'itshitshi - (pierce the young girl).

Mafund'afobele - mtham'onezinyembezi - (the one who gulps down without chewing - mouthful with tears).

Makhukhuz'inyama kusalamathambo - (one who scrapes meat and leaves bones).

Masok'adlimbewu - (popular (to girls) young men who eat seeds).

Masokakaweneli - (popular (to girls) young men do not get satisfied.)

(ii) Eziphathelene nobuqhawe (those which relate to a man's heroism). For example:

Nojiyelwa kulala - (he who is hindered from lying down comfortable, owing to the wounds he received in honourable combat).

Ndlondlo bashise - (horned viper burn them).

Hlabana bephelele - (fight bravely whilst all present).

Phunyuka bemphethe - (escape whilst being held).

Mkhont'ogwaz'amashinga - (spear which sturbs the ruffians).

Inguluzane ekade beyiguluza - (an experienced fighter).

Phumanyova emzini wendoda - (he who comes out in reverse from a man's kraal) It refers to a person who would not be intimidated to say or do whatever he wants even if he is alone in the enemies' territory, he would rather

leave the place fighting and warding off
the enemies' blows.

Bhukuda kwesinengwenya - (swim in which (dam) there is
a crocodile).

Bashuke balale bezwile - (bray them and let them sleep
having felt (pains)).

Ntangazamashinga - (age-group of the ruffians).

Ingagamela egagamela ngesifuba - (a daring person who
bravely attacks with the chest).

Washesha njengonyazi - (swift like lightening).

Nsungulo zagoba kumfowabo uSohambile (large piercing
needles that bent in his brother
Sohambile).

.4.2 Praise names and culture

- (i) Eziphathelene nobugagu nobushinga (those which reveal a
person's expertness, especially at giya dance, music
and courting) For example

Yahosh'imamba - refers to the swaying of his body when
performing his favourite giya dance -
likened to the movement of the snake.
(usually to a slender and tall person).

Chakide - (weasel) - referring to sharpness of eyes or
expression.

Qolotha kammango - ummango ongadleli nkomo - (a very steep
hill in which even the cattle fail to
graze) - referring to an elderly person
who is still very strong and active, and
walks up straight like a young person).
(Symbolically, an experienced person).

Novanzi (agile-legs) - refers to his skill in kicking
about his legs when performing giya dance.

Washesha njengonyazi (swift like lightening).

- (ii) Eziphathelene nomzimba womuntu (those which relate to a
person's physical appearance). For example:

Yinde leyonyoni, ikhoth' amakhwezi phezulu - (that bird is
tall, it licks the stars above) - referring
to a very tall person.

Nondwayiza - (a tall long-legged person) - refers to his movements which appear somewhat awkward because of his long legs and arms.

Mahlomb'ohlanya - (shoulders of a mad man) - refers to a broad-shouldered man.

Mthwazi lothwishi - refers to a very tall person.

Phuz'ukumila - (grows up late) - refers to a short person.

Gwej'obomv'onjengentolwane - (reddish-complexioned man like a *cissus cuneifolia* creeper).

Fulathela zimbuqe - (turn back and let them (girls) gaze at him). - (has an implication that he is admired by girls).

Ugqunyelana lukaxamu olumehlo mancane (a thin and bony monitor lizard with small eyes). - referring to a very thin person.

Qolotha kammango - (a very steep hill) - referring to a strong and active elderly man.

6.4.3 Miscellaneous praise names

There are other praise names which are used in praise of a person but have no exact meaning or do not have anything to do with the owner's experience or personality. These may also make hint of some events which are associated with him but for which he is not directly responsible. Most of these are self-composed. For example:

Gxabalembadada - (an old tyre-sandal)

Thambo likafishi elihlab'elimzondayo (fish-bone which pierces the one it hates).

S'khumba senj'endala - (skin of an old dog).

Bhay'lengane - (loin-covering-cloth of a little girl)

S'kebhe mketule - (small boat, turn him over/aside).

Silwane sokhuni - (beast of wood).

Ladum'izulu - (it is thundering).

Makhas'omdloti abhenywa onyoko - (leaves of tobacco plant smoked by your mothers).

Nomaphangela, ukhamb'okhulu lukaNoda - (Nomaphangela the big clay-pot of Noda).

Mgqom'ongenankintsho. (barrel without handle).

6.5 Nickname (isigcono)

A nickname is usually in criticism of a person. It is definitely not self-composed but it is a product of how a person is viewed or estimated in the social value system of his community, that is his appearance or his behaviour. Some of these nicknames are not made known to the owners although they may be well known and widely used by the community. Others are at first resisted by the owners but later tolerated. In these circumstances they are tolerated only in context that is, when the owner of the name is praised while dancing.

5.1 (i) Nicknames in criticism of a person's physical appearance

For example

Mhlelude-(beautiful from afar)-refers to a person who is ugly but has a beautiful structure of the body.

Ntsheshelezi-(flat buttocked)-usually a female.

Mconjwana-(thin legged person)

Inguqe-(a limping man).

Mdanyana-(a man with legs unequal in length).

S'funjana-(small hunch-back).

S'gaxa- (short and heavily built man).

Nkuz'ebomvu- (red bull) - refers to a very light-complexioned man - almost reddish.

Mathang'etshitshi- (thighs of a young girl) - refers to a fat man.

Silevu sengane - (child's chin) - a man with no beard.

Mahlek'ehlathini - (he who laughs in the forest)-refers to a man with heavily bearded face.

S'khophoco - a man with protruding forehead.

Mbimbi - ungabe ukhala nje ziph' izinyembezi - (wrinkled folds (on the face of an ugly man) - as you are crying where are tears?).

S'goloz'esimehlwabomvu - (a very dark complexioned man with red eyes).

- (ii) There are also nicknames which come into being through jokingly depicting certain features in a child's body. These usually start during early childhood while the child is still unable to understand and resist the criticism.

These are also in criticism of a child's physical appearance but they are not as strong as the above. For example:

Kuki - referring to a child with big cheeks.
Magwegwe - a child with rickets.
Makhanda - a child with a big head.
Mcondo - thin legs.
Mbomothi - big mouth.
Tununu - big buttocks.
Khanjana - small head.
Fifi - small eyes.
Ntsontswana - a very small (tiny/thin) child.
Madlebe - a child with big ears.

6.5.2 Nicknames in criticism of a person's behaviour For example:

Ndabazabantu - (people's affairs) - refers to a person who likes other people's affairs.
Mahamba nazo - (he who walks along with them (the news) - refers to a person who goes about spreading other people's affairs.
Nondwayiza - (a tall long-legged man) - refers to a person's clumsy movement because of his long legs and arms.
Sandla semfene - (baboon's hand) - a left-handed person.
Mbheka phansi njengesambane - (down looker, like an ant-eater) - usually a shy person and sometimes very cunning person.
Magayay'dlele - (he who brews (beer) and eats (drinks) it himself) - refers to a stingy person.
Phumasilwe - (come out and let us fight) - a quarrelsome person.
Nkom'edla yodwa - (a cow which grazes alone) - a person who is always found alone - usually who has no friends.
Gombela kwesakhe - (dig for his own (stomach) - a selfish or greedy person.

7. Relevance between names and their owners

Zulus believe that a person's name is so important to the owner that it sometimes prescribes to him the kind of life he is to follow as he grows up. His social, political or cultural

behaviour somehow becomes relevant to his name. This is true to some extent.

This idea is supported by Ngcongwane (1987) when he quotes a Sotho idiom which says: "Bitso-lebe ke seromo", meaning a person takes after his name. He elaborates by explicitly explaining the names of the Zulu kings and their relevance to their owners as well as to the history of the Zulu tribe as a whole.

7 .1 Names of Zulu kings and their social connotations

Shaka - (a disease which makes a person's stomach to bulge) - Shaka was a brave king. He became a destructive disease to his neighbouring tribes, he attacked and conquered them all. The name of Shaka brought uneasiness and was a threat to other kings and their tribes.

Dingane - (a wonderer) - Dingane ended up as a wonderer in Swaziland after he was defeated in the war against the Boers.

Mpande - (root/vein) - Shaka and Dingane did not have sons to take over chieftancy after their death. In this way the root/vein of chieftancy descending in the family was in danger of discontinuing. Mpande, their brother took over and thus the vein survived.

Mbuyaze - (return empty handed) - Mbuyaze was defeated and killed in the battle against his brother, Cetshwayo. He is then taken as a person who returned home empty handed from the battle.

Cetshwayo - (the one who is reported) - Cetshwayo's behaviour was against the laws which were laid down to him by the Queen of Britain. He was reported by his own misdeeds that he was not fit to be a king and therefore his kingdom was divided and given to other small chiefs who were not Zulus.

Dinuzulu - (offend the Zulus) - Zulus were offended by the attitude of the Whites and also by Cetshwayo's behaviour. They therefore hated his son, Dinuzulu. Dinuzulu was exiled and he died in Transvaal, far away from his place of origin

Maphumzana - (one who releaves (weariness) - He was also known as "Phumzuzulu" (releaves the Zulus). During his reign

the Zulus did not get involved in fights and misunderstandings with the Whites as well as with other Black tribes. He reigned peacefully and the Zulus had a peaceful rest from previous conflicts.

Mshiyeni - (leave him behind) - He was Maphumzana's brother who succeeded him because he died while his sons were still young to rule. His name implies that he was left behind to raise up orphans, Maphumzana's children and to take care of their inheritance until they become of age.

Bhekuzulu - (look after the Zulus) - This name shows that the Zulus had then started to believe that the owner of the name takes after it. He was given this name because he was going to be a king after the death of his father, Maphumzana and look after the Zulus. He was also known as Nyangayezizwe (doctor of the tribes) which implies that he, like his father, was expected to comfort the tribe with peaceful kingdom.

7.2 Avoided names

Because it is believed that a person is inclined to live up to his name, the Zulus now avoid giving children names with unpleasant connotations for they believe that :-

Dumazile - (disappointed) - will eventually disappoint her parents.

Falidlelwaphi - (where is the inheritance eaten/squandered) will abandon his home and abuse his inheritance or earnings.

Phumasilwe - (come out and let us fight) - will always be involved in fights.

Mziwenkani -(home of stubbornness) - will be very stubborn and uncontrollable.

Mzikawukho - (home is not there) - will be irresponsible and fail to run his home.

Mchithwa - (the thrown away one) - will be rejected by others.

Mzondwase - (the hated one) - will be hated by other people.

Nkathazo - (trouble) - will be troublesome.

Monase - (the jealousy one) - will be jealousy.

Sgebengu - will be a rascal.

.3 Names relating to strength and courage

Names of males during the military age usually related to strength and courage because everybody wanted his son to be a brave warrior so as to be popular. A brave young man at that time became the talk of the tribe. He was loved by the king and other warriors except those who were jealousy of his prosperity. He was also famous to young ladies of his tribe. Nothing could please the young man, his parents and his relatives more.

The following are a few examples of such names.

Qhawe - (hero)

Dumabezwe - (be famous and let them hear/feel)

Nqobizwe - (conquer the land).

Nqobizitha - (conquer the enemies).

Dumezizweni - (be famous among the nations/tribes).

Phumanyova - (come out reversing) - implies bravery.

Mandlendllovu - (strength of an elephant).

Philangaye - (alive because of him).

These names however, did not last long in the lives of young men because they were later overshadowed by their praise names and/or their regimental names.

8. Clan name (isibongo)

A clan is an expanded family consisting of a hierarchy of patrilineal descendants of a single forefather who is its founder. With the Zulus the founding of a new clan was a common practice. Bryant (1967:423) says:-

"Among the Zulus a man was able to found a new clan by separating himself from his parent clan and striking out an independent life for himself in some distant unoccupied territory".

His personal praise name was then used as a new identity, the clan name, for his family and his generation. This system of founding a new clan is no longer in practice. The introduction of the "Pass Law" contributed to the extinction of this system because the "Pass Law" requires that a person must be registered

by his family name and no new clan name from the unknown can be accepted. Only the name of the male could be adopted and used as a clan name as the Zulu family is patrilineal.

Every Zulu clan has two types of names, that is isibongo (clan name) and isithakazelo (address name). These are dealt with hereunder separately.

8.1 Isibongo (clan name)

Isibongo is the name of the clan into which one is born. It is usually the personal name of the clan founder. Prominent Zulu warriors were known and addressed by their personal praise names rather than their home names. Isibongo therefore originates from the clan founder's personal praise name.

Mzolo (1974) states that clan names are often those of natural phenomena, animals, actions derived from verb stems and other miscellaneous objects. To these the writer has added birds, although they are not common, description of people and also plants and natural vegetation.

(a) Natural phenomena

For example:	Luthuli	- (dust)
	Ntuli	- (from <u>izintuli</u> , the plural of <u>uluthuli</u> (dust))
	Nhlabathi	- (sand)
	Mzila	- (track)
	Nyembezi	- (a tear drop)
	Ndlela	- (path)
	Ndaba	- (news)
	Langa	- (sun)
	Mazibuko	-(fords)
	Ndima	- (weeded plot of land)

(b) Animals

For example:	Ngwenya	- (crocodile)
	Nyoka	- (snake)
	Ngwekazi	- (big tiger or tigress)
	Mpisi	- (hyena)

Dube - (zebra)
Nkomo - (cow)
Ndlovu - (elephant)
Mvemve - (calf)
Nyathikazi - (big buffalo)

(c) Birds

For example: Lukhozi - (eagle)
Mvemve - (wagtail)
Msomi - (red-winged starling)
Ndlanzi - (coly, mouse-bird)

(d) Actions derived from verb stems

For example: Chiliza - (push aside)
Linda - (wait)
Shabalala - (disappear)
Goba - (bend down)
Mbatha - (cover the body)
Zama - (try)
Biyela - (build a fence around)
Khuzwayo - (to express disapproval)
Zindela - (be lethargic)
Magwaza - (from gwaza - to stab)

(e) Description of people

For example: Vilakazi - (a large lazy person)
Nkosi - (king)
Gwala - (coward)
Myeni - (husband)
Ndwandwe - (a tall person)
Msweli - (a person who is in want)
Mbongwa - (one who is thanked/praised)
Mehlomakhulu - (big eyes)
Mswazi - (a Swazi person)
Mdluli - (a passer-by)

(f) Plants and natural vegetation

According to Mzolo (1977) clan names which are associated with nature do not include plants and natural vegetation. However, this research reveals that such clan names do exist.

For example:Mngadi	- (watermelon)
Mhlanga	- (reed)
Mthombeni	- (from umthombe, a kind of a tree)
Xolo	- (bark of a tree)
Khwane	- (cyperus fastigiatus used for making mats)
Khowa	- (mushroom)
Makhoba	- (husks of grain)
Mthimkhulu	- (huge tree)
Mthimunye	- (one/same tree)

(g) Miscellaneous objects

For example:Masondo	- (wheels)
Masango	- (gates)
Ngubo	- (blanket/clothe)
Nyanda	- (tied up bundle)
Qwabe	- (musical bow)
Thusi	- (brass)
Thango	- (hedge)
Maseko	- (heart stones for supporting a pot)
Gobhozi	- (empty shell)
Mali	- (money)

8.2 Social functions of isibongo

(a) Isibongo is mainly used for identification purpose. Personal names are common and there can be a number of people sharing the same name within the same community. To distinguish one of them one needs to know or to mention his/her isibongo in addition to his/her name e.g. uNomathemba wakwa Dlamini. Kraals are also distinguished by their izibongo (clan names) for example kwaNxumalo, kwaBiyela etc.

(b) Isibongo is also used as a name of respect to elderly persons instead of a personal name, especially to the third person.

One elderly person may refer to his equal as, for example, uNgcobo or uMnumzane uNgcobo (Mr Ngcobo) and a younger person may refer to him as ubaba uNgcobo (father Ngcobo).

- (c) When a child/baby has been subjected to an unpleasant situation he/she needs somebody to soothe him/her. The comforter may soothe him/her by saying, for example, "Thula Gumede" (be quiet Gumede) or "Phepha Gumede" (recover Gumede).
- (d) Isibongo can also be used as a word of expressing gratitude. If someone receives something from a member of the Mbhele clan, be it a young or an old person, he can simply say "Mbhele" or "Ngiyabonga Mbhele" (thank you Mbhele) or even "Mbhele omuhle" (beautiful Mbhele).
- (e) According to the Zulu custom a married woman can never be addressed by her personal name. In this case her isibongo or her father's name is used, for example, if she belongs to the Mthethwa clan she may be called "MaMthethwa" or "kaMthethwa". Both "Ma-" and "Ka-" are the short forms of "mntaka--" (the daughter of--). If her father's name is Godide she can also be called "KaGodide".

8.3 Izithakazelo (address names)

Izithakazelo are usually a collection of personal praise names of some celebrated personalities belonging to that particular clan. These personalities could include the clan founder's father and other adorable ancestors of the clan. Every clan has its izithakazelo which are used in addition to its isibongo. Every member of the clan is familiar with izithakazelo of his own clan and is expected to know as much of them as he possibly can. They are part of Zulu culture and are transmitted from generation to generation through word of mouth.

It is also of social importance that a person should know izithakazelo of the clans in the neighbourhood because they are held in high esteem by the society to the extent that an elderly person is respectfully addressed by his isithakazelo rather than his isibongo or his home name. For example, when

a person greets a man of the Mkhize clan he will simply raise his hand in salute, to show respect, and say: "Eh Gubhela!" and sometimes adds "Gcwabe! Khabazela!"

The following are a few examples of izibongo and their izithakazelo.

<u>Isibongo</u>	<u>Izithakazelo</u>
Gumede	Khondlo! Phakathwayo! Mnguni! Qwabe! Mpangazitha! etc
Gwala	Nzimande! Vilakazi! Mphephethe! Lugwashu! etc
Hadebe	Mthimkhulu! Bhungane! Mashwabada! Makhulukhulu! Gobizembe! etc.
Makhathini	Xulu! Gxabhashe! Mpangazitha! Nonkosi! Donda! etc.
Mhlongo	Njomane! Makhedama! Soyengwase! Langeni! etc.

8.4 Social functions of izithakazelo

The writer concurs with Mzolo (1977) that with the Zulus the use of isithakazelo is far more common than the use of isibongo in social intercourse. This is shown in many respects such as the following:

(a) For polite and friendly address

Adult persons greet or address each other by izithakazelo peculiar to each other's clans, for example, a male person of the Mthethwa clan may be addressed as "Nyambose" and a female as "Manyambose".

(b) In showing respect

When a male visitor approaches a certain kraal he is expected to shout at the gate the isithakazelo peculiar to the kraal's clan before he is allowed to enter the gate. A woman can never call or address her husband by his personal name or his isibongo. Isithakazelo then serves the purpose in this case and acts as "hlonipha name" for her husband.

(c) In showing appreciation

If someone wishes to show appreciation towards somebody's achievements or even to congratulate him/her, he does this successfully by using his/her isithakazelo, for example, if the achiever is a member of the Ndlovu clan he/she will say "Usebenzile Gatsheni!" meaning, "you have worked Gatsheni". This form of showing appreciation can also be used when someone receives something from somebody, he will simply say, "Gatsheni!" or "Ngiyabonga Gatsheni omuhle!" meaning, "thank you beautiful Gatsheni."

(d) In showing complement

In most cases where isibongo is used (except for official identification) isithakazelo can be added to show complement, for example, when soothing or consoling a baby/child. To a Gumede child one can say "Thula Gumede, thula Mnguni" etc. (be quiet Gumede (isibongo), be quiet Mnguni (isithakazelo)).

Izithakazelo always come first whenever the clan praises (izibongo) are recited such as when appeasing the ancestral spirits, in marriage negotiations and in other ceremonial occasions. For example, if the occasion is held by the Ndlovu clan the reciter of izibongo would say:-

Gatsheni!

Boyabenyathi,

Buyasongwa buyasombuluka.

Ndlov' ezadl' ekhaya

Ngokuswel' abelusi etc.

All in all the utterance and the exchange of izithakazelo in a social gathering creates a favourable climate.

Regimental name (ibutho)

Male regimental name (ibutho lezinsizwa)

A further change of name occurred among the Zulus when a young man became a warrior in the army. This stage was a pride of every fit young man of the tribe. The young men of the same age-group "... about 18 - 20 years of age , as recorded by Bryant (1967)" were all summoned by the king to assemble at the royal kraal and they were given a task to carry out, such as the reconstruction of a king's kraal and/or cattle kraal. After that they were embodied into a newly formed regiment of their own and they were given a name at the king's whim, which was accepted by each one of them as a new tittle of special pride and honour, for example uMadumelana, uPhind'icala.

Each regiment was distinguished from the other by the colour of its shield and its attire. As these names were given to a group of people, each member was distinguished from the other by his kraal name, for example uMadumelana wase Mfangibona and uMadumelana wase Mpuma. UZul' oyedwa waseNkalak'thaba.

The regimental names were composed by the king only. It was one of the Zulu political strategies that the king should divide his worriors into regiments. Regiments were the king's pride because their main duty was to protect the state. A king became famous because of the power bestowed upon him by the bravery of his entire military force. The regiments' capability was shown in the army.

Every king wanted his regiments to burn with zeal for war, in protection of the state, therefore, when naming them, he had to

think in terms of war. This proves that regimental names were completely political. The name given to the regiment usually had a message, either to the named regiment or to the enemies, that is, to the regiment the king prescribed desired behaviour, for example amaShisa (the burning ones-burning with zeal for affray) and to the enemies the king threw a word of threat, for example Ingobamakhosi (that which bends the kings) - implying that they have power to exhaust strength of other kings.

Examples of a few well-known Zulu regiments

Amaphela (the cockroaches)
Ukhangel' amankentshane - (look at the wolves)
Udlambedu - (wild men)
Izinyosi - (bees)
Ukhandampemvu -
Umgumanqa - (heavy influx)
Ingobamakhosi - (that which bends the kings)
Izichwe - (Bushmen)
Umthuyisazwe - (that which makes the land quiet)
Ukhiphabanye - (the expeller of others)

Maiden regimental name (ibutho lezintombi)

Maidens were also grouped into regiments according to their age-groups and they were also given regimental names. The grouping of girls into regiments had nothing to do with politics but it was of social and cultural importance. It helped the girls concerned as well as the whole community to estimate their age as they could not count it by years. Male regiments could not get married at any time they wished but they were given permission (ukujutshwa) by the king at a certain period, (perhaps after their heroic performance in a battle field) and they were given a certain maiden regiment from which to choose their wives, as their honourific award.

Girls were regarded as "flowers" of the tribe. They were loved and cherished for their facial beauty, their bodily shape and for their modesty, especially towards males. A girl who had all these qualities became popular especially among the young men of her tribe. The maiden regimental names were concerned with these qualities.

Examples of maiden regimental names during the reign of Shaka

UMvuthwamini	- (ripen-at-noon), - the name of luscious wild fruit.
IMbabazane	- (self-admirers)
ULusiba	- (the feather)
UNgisane	- (the Englishman)
INhlabathi	- (sand)

The importance of the division and naming of regiments

This philosophy of regimental division was brought about to promote team-work and to effect systematic control, discipline, competition and military training to groups of people.

Each regiment was placed under the control of a leader who was chosen for his eminent signs of leadership and heroism. The leader's duty was to mould the regiment and to assist its members to be honest and loyal to the group itself, to him as a leader, to their king and to the community as a whole. This developed patriotism within them which led them to be responsible citizens who willingly adhered to the obligations of the tribe. People who constituted these groups felt closely associated and thus heavily secured.

Evaluation and conclusion

The study reveals that traditionally Zulu names were all given from a particular point of view and sometimes with a particular purpose in accordance with Zulu culture. Apart from the main function of identification, naming as used by the Blacks, is a special way of recording historical events and circumstances in the life of the family, clan or society. The use of the name causes the events to linger on.

The study has exposed that Zulu names are used to make cultural, social and/or political statements.

Although the Zulus are presently moving along the line of Western civilisation, the study reveals that, as far as naming is concerned, parents are still conscious of adhering to the habit of giving Zulu names to their children. These names are

now used as "real" names in all occasions where identification is required, no matter how westernised the situation may be.

It is also interesting to note that the tendency among the nowadays learned Blacks is to move away from naming their children by "imported" names to vernacular languages. The re-awakening of Blacks socially, politically and culturally is deemed to be the reason of reverting to traditional naming of children.

Traditional Zulu naming is didactic in nature for it encourages people to do what is estimated good and appropriate in the value system of the community. On the one hand people know that their estimation by the community will be reflected in their personal praise names and/or in the names and praise names of their offspring. On the other hand, for the belief that names become relevant to the owners, people are compelled to think and consider all would-be implications of a name before giving it to a child.

Finally, Zulu names (especially praise names) as dealt with in the study, contribute a lot in the enrichment of the Zulu language.

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