

THE STUDY OF THE POETRY  
OF J.P. SIKOUWE

2001

SEONGILE C. MSIBI

Z 808 MSI



A0100736A

**THE STUDY OF THE POETRY OF  
J.P. SHONGWE**

*by*

**SIBONGILE CONSTANCE MSIBI**

**Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**in the**

**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

**at the**

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**

**CO-SUPERVISORS : P.M. LUBISI  
PROF. L.Z.M. KHUMALO**

**DATE : JANUARY 2001**

## DECLARATION

I, SIBONGILE CONSTANCE MSIBI, hereby declare that "THE STUDY OF J.P. SHONGWE'S POETRY" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE**  
**(S.C. MSIBI)**

12.01.2001  
**DATE**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to thank first and foremost those who contributed in various ways in the accomplishment of this dissertation, Professor L.Z.M. Khumalo and Mr. P.M. Lubisi.

I am indebted to Mr. T.M. Khoza for encouragement and excellent guidance and scholarly insight.

The support, love and encouragement I receive from my husband and family is without measure. I thank them dearly for that.

Lastly, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength, ability and wisdom to complete this work.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my loved ones and my husband, Mveli S. Msibi for his moral support, love and encouragement. I also extend my dedication to my daughter, Qedusizi, my mother, Mercy Sabatha Makome and my father, Samuel Mashaba. A special tribute to my late grandparents, Grace Ngomane (Makome) and Paul Makome who nurtured the virtue of endurance, the love and desire to learn. They sacrificed all they had in order to lay in me the foundation of what I am today.

## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the study of J.P. Shongwe's poetry. The introductory chapter reveals the actual aim of this study. Shongwe's biographical note clarifies his whole background and social life, factors and circumstances that influenced his writing specifically of poems.

In chapter 2 the focus is on some of the related political issues particularly given that educational issues are highly politicized in the South African context. This chapter also gives a short background on cultural, social, religious aspects and beliefs in Shongwe's poetry.

Chapter 3 focuses only on Shongwe as to whether he is a metaphysical or not.

Chapter 4 discusses the different types of imagery. The poet employs imagery, which enables him to express his thoughts vividly and concisely.

In chapter 5 we focus on the external structure of Shogwe's poetry.

Chapter 6 is a concluding chapter with the evaluation, findings and recommendations.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	2
1.2 Aim of the Study	2
1.3 Research Methodology	3
1.4 Delimitation of Study	3
1.5 Value of Study	3
1.6 Outline of Chapters	3
1.7 Biographical Notes	4
1.8 Books published and edited	7
1.9 Translated Books	8
1.10 Involvement	8
1.11 Work Profile	8
1.12 Hobbies	9
1.13 Development of Modern SiSwati Poetry and J P Shongwe's Position and Contribution	9
1.14 A Survey of Critical Studies in Modern SiSwati Poetry	11
1.15 Honours Articles	11
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>12</b>
2 Reflection on some influences on J P Shongwe's Poetry	12
2.1 Educational Situation	12
2.2 Political Situation	23
2.3 Social Situation	27
2.4 Cultural Situation	30
2.5 Beliefs and Religion	35

<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>42</b>
3 Metaphysical Poets	42
3.1 Characteristics of Metaphysical Poets	44
3.2 Shongwe as a Metaphysical Poet	46
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>50</b>
4 Poetic Devices in Shongwe's Poetry	50
4.1 Imagery	50
4.2 Simile	51
4.3 Metaphor	56
4.4 Personification	59
4.5 Irony	64
4.6 Sarcasm	66
4.7 Hyperbole	67
4.8 Euphemism	70
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>72</b>
5.0 <i>External Structure of J P Shongwe's Poetry</i>	72
5.1 Parallelism, Linking, Refrain and Rhyme	72
5.1.1 Parallelism	72
5.1.2 Linking	76
5.1.2.1 Vertical Linking	76
5.1.2.2 Oblique Linking	78
5.1.2.3 Horizontal Line Repetition Pattern	80
5.1.3 Refrain	82
5.1.4 Rhyme	85

## VIII

5.1.4.1	Initial Rhyme	87
5.1.4.2	Middle (Internal) Rhyme	88
5.1.4.3	Terminal (End) Rhyme	89

## **CHAPTER 6**

6.0	Conclusion and recommendations	91
6.1	Findings	91
6.2	Recommendations	93
6.3	Conclusion	93

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>95</b>
---------------------	-----------

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a complete scope of the extent of work to be covered. There are also biographical notes that clarify Shongwe's whole background and other external factors that have influenced his writing.

Creative writing in siSwati is still at its infancy. Literature development in this language needs more attention from scholars of this language. Almost all books published in siSwati are geared for school consumption and are syllabus bound. The shortage of books written in siSwati stems from the fact that siSwati is one of the marginalized languages in South Africa. Even in Swaziland where there are two languages namely English and siSwati. The latter is neglected to the extent that pupils have a choice to choose between siSwati and French at schools. It is therefore not a mere coincidence that there are few poetry books in siSwati; many adult Swazi's even in Swaziland never learned siSwati at school as isiZulu was taught in all the schools until recently. It is therefore imperative to make a thorough study about one of the few poets in siSwati who never learned the language at school.

Unlike the European languages, siSwati has recently become a written language. In Mpumalanga it started in grade 1 in 1976 and gradually until in grade 12 in 1987. Many students were a little bit confused since many of them were still doing isiZulu but there were those who were excited, those who were speaking siSwati. SiSwati belongs to Nguni group. Many people think that it is a dialect of isiZulu whereas students like Lubisi (1997) have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that there are salient differences between these languages.

The only two Universities, which offer siSwati, are University of South Africa and University of Zululand. There was a demand from students that such universities should offer siSwati.

Shongwe's style is unique. He has used more appropriate and effective techniques. They are simple and straightforward and cannot be separated from the feelings expressed by the poet. His techniques will be analysed thoroughly in chapters 5 and 6 of this study.

Many siSwati books have been consulted to check on Shongwe's work. Research has shown that he is still ranked the best in writing siSwati books. According to Cope (1974:64) as cited by DBZ Ntuli, (1984:9) Vilakazi is still the most successful Zulu poet to write in the Zulu language. This statement shows that Shongwe still follows in the footsteps of Vilakazi by not letting down his African language.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

SiSwati as a marginalized language has very few poets to date. Of these few poets one can count more than ten veterans in this genre. It is only then that the name of J.P Shongwe seems to top the list of siSwati poets. He is regarded as a veteran in this genre as he has published great siSwati poetry books or anthologies so far. No one has endeavored to make an in-depth study of J.P. Shongwe's poetry. It is therefore vital by important that an in-depth study is made on this great poet.

## **1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The research aims at studying the poetic techniques employed by Shongwe in his poetry. Another aim is to look into the factors that influence Shongwe's poetry. This study also purports to investigate or find out as whether or not Shongwe is one of the best prolific writers, especially of siSwati, of the last few years.

### **1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The main research methodology to be used will be literature study. The focus will be on poetry with a critical analysis of Sihlengi Setinkondlo and Inkondlo Yembongi. The other main method to be applied will be interviews with the author himself as the main source of information.

### **1.4 DELIMITATION OF SCOPE OF STUDY**

Amongst the numerous books written by Shongwe, this study focuses on only two of them, namely Sihlengi Setinkondlo (an island of poems) and Inkondlo Yembongi (the poem of a poet).

### **1.5 VALUE OF THE STUDY.**

The study is invaluable to students of literature in general and poetry in particular. Students of poetry will use the study as a base for comparative purposes. Any person interested in the development of siSwati poetry will find this study handy. There is no doubt that prolific and budding poets alike will benefit a lot from this study especially the techniques used by Shongwe in his poems. The dissertation will be available in most libraries of tertiary institutions that teach poetry. Moreover, articles will be published out of this study. There is no doubt that research findings will be presented in conferences.

### **1.6 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS**

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter, which explores the study of J.P. Shongwe's poetry, historical background and how this environment influences his writing. It deals with the aim of study, delimitation of scope of study,

definition of terms, research methodology, biographical notes, books published and the development of siSwati and Shongwe's contribution to it.

Chapter 2 deals with educational, political, cultural, social aspects, religion and beliefs in Shongwe's poetry.

Chapter 3 focuses on Shongwe whether he is a metaphysical poet or not. Characteristics of a metaphysical poet are discussed.

Chapter 4 reflects specially on the imagery mostly used by the poet in his poetry, dealing specifically with simile, metaphor and personification. A wide range of imagery will be assessed and evaluated like irony, sarcasm, hyperbole and euphemism.

Chapter 5 reflects specifically on how the poet uses external structure in his poems. The chapter assesses critically the extent to which the author succeeded in the use of parallelism, linking, refrain and rhyme.

Chapter 6 critically evaluates the findings; make recommendations on future research and the directions that form the basis for future studies. It is the concluding chapter.

## **1.7 BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

John Pempela Shongwe was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1951 at Schoemansdal (kaShongwe) in the Malelane area of the scenic Province of

Mpumalanga. This settlement is about 6km to the Matsamo border post of Swaziland. His parents were very humble and soft spoken, just like their ancestors, the Swazi nation. They were devoted Christians hence his upbringing<sup>1</sup>.

He is from a family of seven, three brothers and four sisters. One of the latter is already late. The family is blessed with very strong family ties. It was then common for Swazi children to go to school. In 1959 he registered for grade 1 at New Consort Mine School until 1960 when he completed grade 2. He was only eight years old. In 1961 he went back to Schoemansdal where he was born and had to attend grade 3 at Jeppes reef, which was 4 kilometres away from his home. Life became very difficult for him since he had to herd cattle in the morning and collect them on his way home from school. His hardship was compounded by his age, the school books he was carrying and hunger<sup>2</sup>.

In 1967 he passed grade 8 (Standard six) with a first class and was one of the top ten students in the White River Circuit in that year. He then proceeded to Emjindini Secondary School (Barberton) in 1968 where he completed his Junior Certificate with a first class pass in 1970. At Emjindini he had to adjust himself to a new environment since he was from rural area. Residential permit was a serious problem then. Municipal police at Barberton used to harass students from rural and farm areas<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> This emerged in an interview with J P Shongwe.

<sup>2</sup> This emerged in an interview with J P Shongwe.

<sup>3</sup> This further emerged from an interview with J P Shongwe.

Like many other young African men and woman of his day, Shongwe went to further his studies at Botshabelo Teacher Training Institute near Middelburg in 1971 and matriculated in 1972. He proceeded to the University of Zululand in 1973.

He completed his B.A degree and UED in 1975 and 1977 respectively. His B.A Hons in Geography was completed in 1979 at the same University. He furthered his studies with the University of Durban-Westville and completed a Master's degree (Geog.) in 1988. His dissertation was on Rural Development in the Inkanyezi District in KwaZulu-Natal. In 1991 he completed a diploma in Leadership Training which is offered in Singapore, South- East, Asia.

Geographical by Shongwe is from Schoemansdal where there is a beautiful range of mountains and famous Mlumati River. He had a chance when he was young to admire beautiful natural vegetation as he grew up. That is why at school he decided to study geography for which he has now graduated for D.Phil with the university of Pretoria. The fact that while he was doing his primary education, he had to herd cattle in the morning and collect them on his way home made him understand nature and be more concerned about the Swazi people. He is able to narrate all what happened long ago when he was still a teenager.

Shongwe has written a number of creative works including poems, novelettes and language manuals on siSwati. He also edited and translated several publications.

## 1.8 BOOKS PUBLISHED AND EDITED

*Kugeleta Imicabango* (1982) Via Afrika, Pretoria

*Sihlengi Setinkondlo* (1985) Shutter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg.

*Luhleko Lwemahlokohloko* (1989) Shutter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg (co-author).

*Inkondlo Yembongi* (1996) Simsho, Nelspruit.

*Tinkondlo Tayitolo Netanamuhla 1* (1990) Centaur, Pietermaritzburg.

*Tinkondlo Tayitolo Netanamuhla 2* (1991) Centaur Pietermaritzburg

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 5* (1991) Centaur, Pietermaritzburg (co-author)

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 6* (1992) Centaur, Pietermaritzburg (co-author)

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 7* (1993) Centaur, Pietermaritzburg (co-author)

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 8* (1996) Centaur, Pietermaritzburg (co-author)

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 9* (1996) Heinemann, Isando (co-author)

*SiSwati Sasegumeni 10* (1996) Heinemann, Isando (co-author)

*Bangani* (1984) Shutter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg

*Abangani (Zulu)*(1988), Shutter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg

*Ayinabudzala* (1988), Shutter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg

*Inhlulo* (1992) Via Afrika, Pretoria. This book won a Nasou Via Afrika literary Prize in 1997.

## **1.9 TRANSLATED BOOKS**

His book called *Bangani* was translated into isiZulu, *Abangani*. He also translated a book of Charles Dickens', "A Christmas Carol" to *Sibhuluja Netipoko*.

## **1.10 INVOLVEMENT**

J.P Shongwe served as a member of siSwati Language Board, member of the South African Geographical Society, Development Society of Southern African and in-Service Policy Initiative. He is also involved in community activities. From 1991 to date he serves as a Chairman of the council of ex-KaNgwane College of Nursing and, as a member and Chairman of Umhlahandlela Writers' Guild. He is involved in a number of rural developments, educational and church projects.

## **1.11 WORK PROFILE**

The uprising of 1976 interrupted his studies when doing UED, therefore from July to December he taught at Shongwe Secondary School. After working at Shongwe Secondary School he was employed as a Senior Laboratory Assistant at the University of Zululand from October 1977 until December 1980. In January 1981 he was appointed lecturer in Geography and Environmental Studies at Umlazi Campus in Durban until January 1989.

In February 1989 he was appointed as Rector of Mgwenya College of Education at KaNyamazane until May 1997. Presently, Shongwe is Campus Director of the Pretoria Technikon in Nelspruit, the post he is occupying since June 1997. Shongwe has since been awarded professorship by the Pretoria Technikon.

## **1.12 HOBBIES**

Shongwe visited many overseas countries, like Brazil, France, Singapore, United State of America and Southern African countries. Shongwe likes writing, swimming, listening to music and fishing. Shongwe is married to Ethel Ruth and God blessed them with three children, Buyisile, Lindzi and Sivile.

## **1.13 DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SIWATI POETRY: SHONGWE'S POSITION AND CONTRIBUTION**

The first modern poetry anthology to be written in siSwati was published by J.V Dlamini in 1977 entitled: *Asive Ngwane* (let's hear Ngwane) the anthology includes poems by N.D Ntiwane, S.D Maziya , E.N Khumalo and J.V Dlamini. Another writer who wrote very long poems, some of up to 5 pages each, is S.S Mkhathshwa and his book *Mofi Uyahleka* (Mofi is laughing) was published in 1982. In the very same year J.P Shongwe published his own book, with various kinds of poems, called *Kugeleta Imicabango* (Thoughts are flowing). Another book followed in 1985 which was entitled *Sihlenge Setinkondlo* (Island of poems).

Some of Shongwe's poems are found in O.A Bhiya's book, *Impalampala* (The Trumpet). As recently as 1996. J.P Shongwe published *Inkondlo Yembongi* (The poem of a poet). He edited S.A Mahlalela's book called *Ligwalagwala* (The Loerie). Mahlalela's poetry book includes, *Asiyi ESwatini* (we are not getting to Swaziland) and *Msheshelengwane* (sell out).

There are also many more writers of poems like J.S Ncongwane, *Tikhululeni MaSwati* (Swazi's release yourselves or free yourselves); J.J and J. S Ncongwane, *Kuyophela Situnge* (There will be no solitude); J.S Ncongwane, A.H Magagula and Stolz, *Emahlungu Etinhlungu*; and M.S Mbuyane, E.D Mokoena and J.J Ncongwane, *Emagalelo*.

J.P Shongwe, J.J Thwala and B.S Khanyile together wrote *Luhleko Lwemahloko* and T. Hlongwane wrote *Lusinga LwaNgwane*.

J.P Shongwe is a writer of novels and poems. He has contributed a lot in siSwati. He has written mainly for the Swazi speaking community which form one of South Africa's 11 official languages.

Writing in the vernacular assists in the development of the hitherto neglected languages and is encouraged. One of the advocates and leading African poet in Africa Obi Wali maintains in Adewale Maja-Pearce (1990:viii) that until African writers and their Western midwives accept the fact any true African Literature must be written in African languages they would be pursuing a dead end which can lead to sterility, uncreativity and frustration. He maintains that many African poets are writing in English and try to translate into their

languages and thereby killing creativeness. Obi Wall's statement has since been extended and refined by other African writers and most notably J.P Shongwe by embarking on a campaign to write in the vernacular and not be influenced by theories that do not fit in our languages.

#### **1.14           A SURVEY OF CRITICAL STUDIES IN MODERN SISWATI POETRY**

It is important to have a critical study of different poets who have written work of specific poets. So far none has written a Doctoral thesis, Masters' dissertations in modern siSwati poetry (a study of J.P Shongwe's poetry).

#### **1.15           HONOURS ARTICLES**

Up to so far only J.J Thwala, who did Honours articles in modern siSwati poetry, wrote about Shongwe. J.J Thwala in his article entitled *IMAGERY IN THE POETRY OF J.P SHONGWE* (UNIZUL, 1986) examines the use of imagery which enables Shongwe to express his thoughts vividly. He has his own vision and sensibility that is why he is able to handle his imagery in his own way.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.0 REFLECTION ON SOME INFLUENCES ON J P SHONGWE'S POETRY**

#### **2.1 EDUCATIONAL SITUATION**

The educational and political situations that influenced the poetry of Shongwe are the focus of this chapter. These two issues are inseparable twins. It is difficult to write about education in South Africa without mentioning the politics thereof. Education cannot be separated from political issues. They are two sides of the coin. We cannot forget that it is our young people who in 1976 courageously stood up against the government concerning the appalling state of education. It was our young people who stood up against an inferior system of education that had been designed for the intellectual oppression of the Blacks.

Some were arrested, detained, tried and sentenced, while others were exiled. They sacrificed their academic careers so that the future generation could have access to an equitable education system in a just and free society. Education is primary site of political change in South Africa. This chapter reveals clearly Shongwe's views on the basis of the policy of this country concerning education especially during the apartheid era. The arguments are further influenced by cultural and social factors of the time. There are very close connections between culture and society. No culture could exist without society but equally no society could exist without culture.

Without culture we would not be “human” at all. We would have no language of expression. Another focus is on religion and beliefs. Shongwe is a Christian<sup>4</sup>. Although he is a Christian, he also respects his culture. He knows his roots.

During the olden days people were channelled to certain fields of study. Many students opted for teaching, nursing and policing because they were being prepared to work within the black communities in their own areas. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 recommended for inferior education for Africans. Dr. H F Verwoed, the then Minister of Native Affairs said the following in Parliament, as cited by Wilson and Thompson, (1969:227):

Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to sphere in which they live. Further more, education should have its roots entirely in the Native areas and in the Native community. The Bantu education will be able to give itself complete expression and these it will have to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has its aim absorption in the European community which he cannot and will not be absorbed there. Up until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and partially misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European but still did not allow him to graze there

---

<sup>4</sup> This emerged during my interview with him.

In the former KaNgwane (Mpumalanga Province) there were two Teachers Training Colleges and one Technical School which were and still situated in the so-called townships. It was a strategy designed to make people work on their locations and immediate environments after completing their training.

The teacher training colleges were producing many teachers in the humanities and social sciences and not in the natural sciences. Hence there are so many qualified teachers who have no jobs presently. There was also in-service training where teachers were trained part time to further their studies. There are so many teachers who are qualified but the years of training are insufficient because most of them were trained for a year or two. Shongwe showed concern about these during an interview with him. He even mentioned that he was encouraged by a poem titled "*Umthandazo Wembongolo*"<sup>6</sup>

Many blacks trained as teachers because it was one of the only three job opportunities available for them. In order to work after you have completed your studies you had to do teaching, nursing or policing. Shongwe opted for teaching. There are Technical schools but there are no facilities for training. Sometimes practical work is not done due to lack of facilities. There were six technical schools in 1964 that were provided for Africans and European areas with 385 pupil's total enrolment. What is absurd is that there was a suggestion from White Unionists that Africans who qualified as Motor Mechanics should only work in the townships at lower rates of pay. There was also a great pressure that Orlando Vocational Training Center should discontinue offering that course and it did. People were debarred from attending the so-called

White Universities except by special permit. They established three university colleges in rural areas offering low quality education to Africans. Shongwe went to the University of Zululand for his tertiary studies.<sup>6</sup>

In most cases Blacks were studying to get the certificates but not trained for the skills. Whites were at the advantage because those who were at Technikons were also doing practicals while still studying. The training period did mean something profitable because people were training just for the mere sake of *training without considering the number of years*. When they tried to find job they started with a White man because he had already acquired the necessary experience from the Technikon. This is a problem in Black schools because Blacks are given standard grade in English, Mathematics and Afrikaans. The perception is that Blacks cannot pass these subjects in higher grades. This is a problem when they have passed their matriculation and contemplate to continue with tertiary education. Sometimes you find that they do not reach the required aggregate. The aim of lowering the standard in African education was made clear by the then Minister of Education who said:

*To train Bantu to be of service in the European area simply means that you train him to come into competition with the European.*

(Wilson and Thompson L 1969:227).

It is clear that Europeans were afraid of Black domination in every sphere of life. Bantu education did not give Blacks the freedom to choose the stream of

---

<sup>6</sup> He related this during an interview.

subject they want. They think that Blacks cannot cope with science subjects or higher grades in their subjects. According to H F Verwoed's policy outlined in the Senate in June 1954.

*What is the use of teaching the Bantu child Mathematics when it cannot use it in practice?. That is quite absurd.*  
(Hirson 1979:45)

Shongwe too was no exception to that state of affairs. He trained as a teacher and is a specialist in Geography. It is worth noting that he is able to practice Mathematics in his field of Geography. He is able to draw maps and also put some measurements, as has been observed in his D. Phil. thesis.

Shongwe had a chance to write something about his studies. He was studying very hard with the hope that one day he would finish and be able to tell this as is evident in his numerous poems where he relates the hardship of studying. Even if there are green pastures for him he knows where he comes from. He knows that education is a necessary investment. Shongwe expresses his hard work and investment in a poem entitled *Lukhula*. The first two stanzas are as follows:

*Ngisilimile sivandze sami  
Libalele, linemoya, ngavukuta kwemvukuzane  
Nasebusika lihlaba ngemoya  
Sivandze ngisilimile ngelitsemba*

*Engcile emalanga, yahluma inhlanyelo  
Ibe yihle ihluma emva kwenhlupheko  
Tajabula titjalo titjetjemuka  
Luhlata lwawuhlobisa umhlaba esivandzeni*

(Shongwe 1985)

(I have ploughed my field  
On sunny, windy weather, digging like a mole  
Even in winter during chili breezes  
I ploughed with hope.

Days passed seeds germinated  
It was wonderful as grew after the pains  
Seedling were wonderful as they grew  
Green pastures decorated my field.)

In the same volume there is a poem entitled *Bhaca Loluhle*. Shongwe refers education as *Lubhaca*. *Lubhaca* is a traditional twig/splinter that was used by our ancestors. He refers to education as *Lubhaca* because this *Lubhaca* opened and lit the mind since time memorial until this present day. Education has also lit his way of "*Buntfu*" (humanity). Education has shown him the right way. Even in sharp curves he is able to walk straight. He is appealing to *Lubhaca* to keep on lighting even if it is too dark. He likes education. He encourages people to further their studies. He is not against education. In his poem *Bhaca Loluhle* he says:

*Bhaca lami*  
*Sekuyiminyaka unghanyisela*  
*Kusukela emandvulo kute kube lamuhla*  
*Usiphefu sami.*  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(My splinter*  
*It is years since you are lighting*

*Since long time ago until to date  
You are my lantern)*

Education has open his way where there are threads entangled. He even uses the ideophone “*nge-*” to show that education has wide open the way. In the very same poem he (*op cited:45*) stresses that:

*Uyivule nge indlela lapha kucangene  
(You open the way clear where there are complications.)*

In the poem “*Mphikelele!*”, he encourages people to learn. He expresses the difficulties and the hardships that one experiences when one wants to acquire higher education. He also mentioned that the road towards higher education is a steep one. Only through perseverance and hardship can one achieve it. Hence he (*op cit: 45*) says in that poem:

*Lapho usubatsile uphikelele embili  
Nalapho usebenta uphikilele kuyo imphumelelo  
Ungifundzisa ngekubeketela  
Ungikhanyisela ngelitsemba  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(When running looking forward  
And when working looking forward for the results  
You teach me of perseverance  
You light for me with hope)*

Shongwe’s field of interest in education is that he admires nature. According to him nature relates to life. He likes environment (nature). He excludes

enthusiasm and mostly writes about nature. Shongwe sees the breeze as the only way which can cool him especially in hot days. He says in a poem entitled *Wena*.

*Uyawupholisa umtimba wami  
Ngemuva kwekungcongciswa emini  
Kwemlilo belilavuta  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(You cool down my body  
After a very hot day  
Like fire when it is hot)*

Shongwe shows how people respect *mahogany*. At the same time they are afraid of *mahogany* because there is a belief that *mahogany* do attract owls at night. In African culture an owl is a bad omen. It is the bird that is not supposed to be at home. This is indeed in contrast with Western culture, as in the latter an owl symbolizes wisdom. At the same time he appreciates that tree because it has a very nice shadow and it protects people and houses from the wind. Shongwe also wants to know where did this tree washed its self and he also wants to know its movement. Shongwe in a poem entitled *Umkhuhlu* avers that:

*Ngitjele Mkhuhlu ugezepi?  
Ngicolele ngemicabango,  
Ngatise ngetindlela  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Tell me Mahogany where  
did you wash yourself.  
Tell me about thinking  
Tell me about ways.)*

Shongwe describes the bushes as too dense. Nothing can get inside the *mahogany* because of its denseness. It is impossible to get inside or to cross over it because the branches are so close and it is dark inside. The leaves are so close to each other. He does not see the sun or the rain when it pours. In the poem entitled *Emahlatsini ase-Amazon* he says:

*Hhayi! BoNgwane, ngisemahlatsini e-Amazon  
Lapho imisebe yelilanga iphelel' emacembeni  
Lapho ematfonsi emvula aphephuka nemoya  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Alas! The Swazis I am in Amazon Forests  
Where the sun's rays diminishes within the leaves.  
Where rain drops fly away with.)*

Shongwe regards mountains as natural living phenomena. He sees a mountain as something that knows everything that happened long time ago before there were human beings. He trusts everything that will be highlighted by a mountain. He imagines things in a very critical manner. He believes that the sea was created after the mountain because in a poem entitled *Esicongweni SeTable Mountain*, Shongwe has this to say:

*Ngitjele ntsabakati ngetigameko  
Tonkhe talelive lowatibona  
Kusukela Umbumbi  
Emisa lwandle etinyaweni takho,  
Yebo, kusukel' emandvulo.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

(Tell me big mountain about shocking  
experiences  
All things of this world, which you saw  
Since the Creator  
Created the sea and placed it besides  
your feet  
Yes, since long ago)

Shongwe regards nature as a source of knowledge. When he is in need of information, he asks for it. According to the Bible, Luke (1:1-3), God is the founder and creator of everything. The mountain cannot tell everything. He even made us to believe that the mountain is speaking. Slightly according to him God created the mountain. Shongwe wants to know the history of the Whites and Blacks. He is appealing to the mountain to tell him what it saw when Whites arrived in South Africa in 1652. He even wants to know what happened when both Blacks and Whites met. That demonstrates that Shongwe is also a historian. He says in the poem entitled *Esicongweni SeTable Mountain*:

*Wabonani mhla kuhlangu  
Lebebalubhadza phasi ngelunyawo  
Bambetse tikhumba bahlobe ngebuhlalu  
Nalabafika bantanta?  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(What did you see when they met  
Those who were walking by feet  
Wearing primitive clothes decorated by beads  
And those who came floating?)*

Shongwe states that he would not believe anyone except the mountain. He will not leave the mountain unless the mountain tells him the story of the South Africans. He elucidates that:

*Anginawusuk' etitsendzeni takho  
Ungakangitjeli ngemlandvo waleli  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I will not leave you heel  
If you did not tell me the history of this land)*

He will only believe the history of the South African when narrated by the Table Mountain. He wants the truth from the mountain. He also wants to have the knowledge in order to study the history of the Whites in South Africa. He (*op cit:2*) supports his statement by saying:

*Phefumul' emaciniso ngiweve  
Khafula lwati ngilufundze  
Ngiyobonga ngawe Table Mountain  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Breathe the truth so that I hear  
Cough your knowledge so that I read  
I will thank with you Table Mountain.)*

## 2.2 POLITICAL SITUATION

Shongwe is not a politician but he writes on politics. Some of the themes in his poems are based on politics more especially in his book *Sihlengi Setinkondlo*. Although the literal meaning of this book is the island of poem but if we look into deep structural meaning of the book, one can conclude that it is Robben Island. Not long ago this island was the home of political prisoners like Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki and others. It was not easy to utter the name Robben Island for no apparent reason. Shongwe did not want to say his opinion openly. He decided to write poems in which he will tell people his message. In his book *Sihlengi Setinkondlo*, in a poem entitled *Umkhosi Wanga-1968* he tells us how the Swazi people got their independence in Swaziland. He mentioned that people have received their land that was taken away by the English people (Britain). He writes that:

*Libuyile Maswati libuyile  
Lebeseligwinywe badzeshi beNgilandi  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Our land is back MaSwati  
The land, which was taken by the Europeans  
of England)*

Shongwe is glad that finally the Swazi people have received their land though they have split it because of the boarder posts which are in existence. He is happy that Sobhuza II had gone to England to negotiate for the land and eventually he got it back. He (*op cite:14*) says in his poem:

*Lalandvwa nguSobhuza wesibili*  
*Ulilandzile ngesheya kwetilwandle*  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(It was recovered by Sobhuza the second*  
*He recovered it overseas)*

Shongwe is appealing to the Swazi nation to be united, to trust one another and to respect one another. Together they can build one nation. Hence in the very same poem he says:

*Simunye sibumbe sibe munye*  
*(We are one build us to be one.)*

If they are divided, they will fall. Shongwe sees equality as an important thing in the Swazi nation. That is why he says he senses a very beautiful smell when all races are equal and together.

*Liphunga lebunye betive netinhlango*  
*(The smell of unity of nations and organisations.)*

Shongwe mentions that King Sobhuza II was a very peaceful king. He is proud about his character. Even the whole world knows that Sobhuza was so peaceful. His nation loves peace. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Tinyembeti Tamuva* stresses that:

*Ithulile imbube, Sobhuza wesibili abethulile*  
*Thulani Maswati nithulise kweMbube yenu*  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(The army is quite and Sobhuza II was also peaceful  
Be quite Swazis like your peaceful King)*

People respect and honour their King. They respect their culture and customs. They adhere to norms, values and standards. Shongwe also highlights the release of political prisoners from jail. The day they were released, people were singing political songs with happiness. They were dancing traditional dances and chanting when hearing about the new freedom. Shongwe mentioned that people have crossed the wide rivers and now they have landed on the green pastures with joy. They will graze with a new leader, a Black president. Shongwe emphasizes in his poem entitled *Atibuye Emasisweni*:

*Tiyawudla luhlata lwato ngenjabulo  
Tiyawudla nalomusha umelusi  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(They will eat their green pastures with joy  
They will eat with a new sheperd)*

Shongwe calls people as animation because there were many exiles during the days of apartheid. He calls men as *imishiva* (cattle without horns) and women as *emahlawe* (black cattle) because they were not in a position to fight. He is asking all exiles to come back home because they are now free. As stated by Shongwe in a poem entitled *Atibuye Emasisweni* in which he states the following:

*Ayibuye imihlambi yakitsi yelikhetselo  
Ayibuye imishiva nemahlawe akitsi  
Awabuye emahinikati netinkhonekati takitsi-  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(Our chosen herds should come back  
The hornless and our black ones  
Our mill - yielding and the black and  
white coloured herds should come back)*

It also emerged that Shongwe is sceptic about politics. He has serious reservations about it. Politics cannot be trusted and as such he is scared of it.

In his poem entitled *Politiki* he states thus:

*Uyimphicabadzala,  
Uyingwijikhwebu  
Ngiyakwesaba feleba  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(You are a mystery  
You are a twist-in-a-tale  
I am scared of you tough guy)*

He further mentions that politics is a dirty game. He sees politics as something very dangerous. He confirms that when he (*op cit: 17*) says:

*Mamba! Ngiyakwesaba  
(Mamba! I am afraid of you)*

He associates politics with a Mamba which is a very dangerous snake and kills mercilessly. Shongwe loves nature and prosperity. When he was a Rector at Mgwenya College of Education, he decorated the premises of the college to look more beautiful than before. He eradicated corruption at that college. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Mphikeleli* he says:

*Mphikeleli ungulogwaja lotikhundlakhundla*

*(Mphikeleli, you are a Jack of trades)*

Shongwe compares a human being with an animal (hare), a clever one too. He reckons that people tend not to appreciate efforts of successful people. Such people are usually labelled negatively.

### 2.3 SOCIAL SITUATION

Shongwe is deeply involved in his church activities. He is worried about people who do not believe in God. He is also worried about those people who disorganize the society. In a poem entitled *Phumula Langa*, Shongwe shows his worry about darkness when he says:

*Selebets' ingubo lilanga*  
*Nemigulukudvu seiyaphuma*  
*Ekubhaceni etihosheni*  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(A blanket covers the sun*  
*Gangsters are coming out*  
*Of their hideouts in caves.)*

When it is dark gangsters want to do evil things. Shongwe (*op cit:30*) expresses these clearly in his poem *Phumula Langa*:

*Nato netahhukuli setibhimba*  
*Tidvons' emehlo tetfukile*  
*Atikholwa kahle, lilele lilanga.*

(Shongwe 1985)

*(Here are the owl singing out of tune  
Their protruding eyes shivering,  
They do not believe the sun has set)*

Shongwe is also warning the nation to finish whatever it is doing during daylight because when it is dark people are hunting other people. He puts it in a poetic way. He associates people with *nkhonyane* (calves) and gangsters as *emabhulubesi*<sup>7</sup> (lions) he (*op cit:30*) says in his poem:

*Hamb' uphangise nkonyane  
Emabhulubesi ekuhlwa ayakhasa  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(Go fast calf  
The lions of darkness are crawling)*

Shongwe maintains that if you socialize you grow up not only physically but also emotionally and even mentally. In his poem entitled *Lapha Ngitintile*, he states it clearly that when he comes to join these people, and he was young and innocent.

*Ngefika ngitobotela kwematabhan' avutsiwe  
Ngitsambe kwelijingi leluswana  
Ngilula kwelicembe  
Ngibakutela kwemehlw' emntfwana  
Ngilungise kwengilozi.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

---

<sup>7</sup> *Emabhulubesi* as used by Shongwe is in fact *emabhubesi* in the correct siSwati orthography.

*(When I come here I was like cooked potato  
I was damp like a soft porridge of an infant  
I was light (weight) like a leaf  
I was not tough like baby's eyes  
I was innocent like an angel.)*

He is now an adult. People are wondering because he is brave enough. He can stand whatever problem. Shongwe is flexible. You can put him wherever you want, he will fit. Listen to his (*op cit:29*) poem when he says:

*Sengihlala emantini ngicandze  
Ngihlal' elangeni ngishise bhe,  
Ngifakw' emlilweni ngivutse ngibebovu tju,  
Ngibekw' emathayeleni ngisindze ngiwagebe sengaba litje.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I stay in water and cool off  
I stay in the sun and heat up  
They put me in fire and I become hot and red  
They put me on the roof, and the weight bent the roof  
Because I am as hard as a stone.)*

Even in windy or hot days, he does not change. He remains strong. He has learned the hard way. He contradicts himself in a poem entitled *Emagagasi Etikhatsi* when he says people are changing, change goes with time. Shongwe says, he will teach the young generation that life is like wave of time.

You live and enjoy life for that particular time. This is illustrated in his poem titled *Emagagasi Etikhatsi*.

*Sengiyaphuma njengempunga,  
Ngiphumela kuwonkhe emagumbi emhlaba,  
Ngifundzise intalelwane yesive,  
Imphilo ingemagagasi etikhatsi.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(I am going out like an old man  
Going all over the direction of  
Teaching the generation of the nation  
Life is like wave of time.)*

He concludes by saying that he will listen to authors who will teach him about change.

## **2.4 CULTURAL SITUATION**

Culture refers to the way of life of the members of a society or a group within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage, customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits (Giddens 1994:31). Culture consists of values, members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create. Norms are nothing but are rules which people are expected to observe. Shongwe is appealing to people to stick to their culture in *Bambani Maswati*.

*Bambani ninokoshele kuw' emasiko;  
Nidl' emicwembeni yabokhokho.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Hold and stick to your customs*

*Eat from the dishes of your forefathers.)*

Culture also includes the goods they have created which are meaningful to them for example bows, arrows, ploughs etc. Shongwe (*op cit.*35) says:

*Tinkhabi tihudvula tihlphi*

*(Oxen are pulling traditional wagon.)*

Culture exists in a certain society. No culture could exist without society. Without culture we would have no language in which we can express ourselves, no sense of self-consciousness. Our ability to think or reason would be limited or low. Shongwe is worried about people who are westernized. He says in a poem entitled *Bambani Maswati*:

*Nicaphele tintfuli neludzaka lwekufika*

*(Beware of foreign dust and mud.)*

They are looking down upon their culture. He is appealing to the Swazi nation to hold the wealth of the Swazis with strong hands so that no one can take it easily. It is the only nation that still follows their culture. He says:

*Sekwaba ngini kuphela*

*Lenisasina ngeligwalagwala nelisakabuli*

*(Shongwe 1985)*

*(It is only you who is left*

*Who is dancing with Loerie and black-tailed finch)*

Shongwe is warning the Swazi nation to be aware of other cultures because they sometimes mix their style of dressing. He states in the same poem that:

*Gcamani ngajutjwa neligcebeshe*  
*(Shine with your traditional way of dressing*  
*and bead works)*

Shongwe encourages the Swazi people to go on with their traditional dance, to respect their culture, to observe their ceremonies like *Umhlanga* in the same poem:

*Nihlehle majah' eMbube*  
*Lukhiwe lusekwane nemhlanga*  
*(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Dance soldiers of his Majesty*  
*Cut the grass and reeds)*

Shongwe is asking the Swazi nation to teach children to dance the traditional dance. Adults must encourage the young ones to dance the traditional dance in order to pass it to the next generation:

*Bakhutsateni bagiye betiv' emandla*  
*(Encourage them to dance in order to gain strength).*

He is asking the people to allow them to dance in front of their traditional houses so that elderly people could come and praise them. Elderly people will

laugh to their satisfaction until one sees the last tooth. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Ingadla Yebantfwana Besikolwa* writes that:

*Khweshani bagiy' egumeni kabo;  
Kuphume lesebaphetse lundvondvolo;  
Bagagatseke kuvele leselasala lodvwa chwaba.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Get away so that they can dance on their traditional corridor  
So that those who use walking sticks can come out;  
Laugh loudly until we see the last teeth)*

Culture also includes the goods they have created which are meaningful to them. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Khona* supports this statement:

*Uyobona kubenyetela emakhuba;  
Tinkhabi tihudvula tihliphu  
Inhlanyelo itsite phamu titja  
Umshayeli asho ngesiswebhu selifosi.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*You will see ploughs shining  
Cattle pulling their traditional wagon;  
Dishes full of seeds;  
The driver of a wagon carries the whip.*

Shongwe is very proud of people who are proud of their culture. He is happy about the way they dance because they are not afraid of what they are. Shongwe contends that in a poem entitled *Imbongi yeNkhosi*.

*Uyangicedza lapho sewuphoseka  
Ushaya phasi ukhahlel' umoya  
Sengats' uvukwa lusinga lolujulile.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(You challenge me when you get in  
Beating down and kicking the air  
As if you are motivated by deep inspiration.)*

In the African world, the historical necessity in which the poet as a man of culture devotes his art and life to the pursuit of justice and freedom has become part of the very legitimacy of the poetic undertaking, Amuta (1989:177). The significance of a poet in Africa at a time like this is in the struggle against foreign domination and class and racial injustice. Poetic form is a strategic answer to culture and social conditions. The poem draws upon the language and ideas of given culture and share the values, norms, standards and perhaps the confusion of its environment.

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Vumani Ngigiyiye* voices his opinion as follows:

*Ngiyagiya ngaMswati  
Lowaswatel' emaSwati siSwati  
Nalamuhla asaswatile  
Asabambelele kuyo leyonkhulumo  
Leyashiywa bokhokho besive  
Babonis' indlela yesive.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I am proud of you Mswati  
Who speaks pure, perfect siSwati*

*Even today they are still speaking siSwati  
They adhere to his words  
Words, which were left by our ancestors  
Show them the way of the nation).*

## **2.5 BELIEFS AND RELIGION**

Nkosi (1981:152) says that the poem does not finally achieve a proper synthesis of the diverse religions and cultures which African writers often profess to be their goal that just as the Christians imagery dominates the poem in its conclusion. The poem also presents us with the triumph of that uncorrupted Christian ideal. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Khaya, Khaya Lami* writes thus:

*Kuw' akunamawa;  
Kuw' akunatikhilikitsi;  
Kuw' akunatisele, migodzi nentsaba;  
Kuw' khaya lami.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(To you there are no dungeons  
To you there are no sharp curves;  
To you there is no furrow, holes and mountains;  
To you my home.)*

Shongwe states it clearly that he heard about religion because there are those who have passed the message telling them about the way which is getting to David (heaven) because they are professing. Shongwe in the poem entitled *Tinkhanyeti* says:

*Ngivile ngabosiyati basendvulo  
Ngekubayalela kwenu indlela  
Lecondz' ebukhosini kaDavide wakadzeni  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I have heard about the prophet of ancient  
times  
By the way you showed them the way;  
Which leads to the kingdom of David of  
Antiquity.)*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Emtfonjeni Wemfula* is begging people to come and drink in this (borehole) religion. He tells people to come and drink pure clean running water. He is also asking the Africans to come and have taste of that pure water. He says this water is life, happiness and all those who drink in this borehole are well fed physically and even spiritually. Shongwe (*op cit* :42) says:

*Uyimphilo mtfombo!  
Mtfombo uyinjabulo  
Lonatsa kuwe uyondleka  
Ondleke umtimba nemphefumulo.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(You are life fountain;  
Fountain you are happiness;  
Those who drink from you are well cared for,  
Cared physically and spiritually.)*

Shongwe is not necessarily afraid of death but he is afraid to die by fire. He is asking God not to send fire in Africa. He emphasizes in a poem entitled *Intsabamlilo*:

*Ungeti kitsi e-Afrika  
Siyoba yini loku sesaba matsanjana  
Siyoba yini loku sesingemajwabu  
Siyoba yini lenye lokusesaba yimihambima  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(It must not come to us in Africa  
What are we going to be because we are skinny?  
What are we going to be because we are lean?  
What are we going to be because we are wanderers?)*

He is telling the fire not to come at the present moment. It must wait until it is given another chance somewhere on another day:

*Hhayi, hhayi, Ntsabamlilo  
Lindzela lelitako, loyoliniketwa kulo bakho.  
Lapho uyokwenta ufeze wakho umsebenti  
Kwanyalo thula - ulindzele lwakho lusuku lekugiya  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(Alas, alas volcano  
Wait for the coming day, which you will be given your own  
Where you will do and confirm your work.  
At the present moment keep quite, wait for your own day  
where you will dance.)*

Shongwe is telling people how great God is. Pharoah used to ill-treat the Israelites. Pharoah's decision was final but through the mercy of God people were saved from Pharoah at last. Shongwe says in a poem entitled *Sililo saFaro*.

*Makhatsaleni wefika umlayeto, kuye  
mlomo - longenamanga waseGibhithe:  
"Badedele!"  
Khumu tilwabhu!  
Saphuma sihuba sive.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(At the end the message came  
to him who does not lie from Egypt  
"Release them!"  
Everything was uptight  
The nation came out singing.)*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Cola Mhlaba* is telling us that God is love. He loves us. When he is angry he can punish a person and his punishment lasts for a long time. He confirms that:

*Lulaka lwakho ngiyalwesaba  
Luswati lwakho lwemivimbo yeminyaka  
Imivimbo lengunembeza wemihla  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(I am afraid of your cruelty  
The scars of your punishment last for years  
Scars for remembrance  
Scars for guilty conscious daily.)*

He agrees that we have done wrong. Even if we have done wrong, God must forgive us because we are afraid of his punishment. We respect God and love him. No matter how wrong we do but we are afraid of his punishment. The only thing which disturbs us, is that we are still immature mentally and spiritually. We cannot easily differentiate between wrong and right. We do not live what we are expected to. Shongwe is of the opinion that God must forgive us. Shongwe says:

*Cola mhlaba waMvelinchanti  
Ucolele emahlongandlebe akho  
Sifundzise mhlaba  
Usifundzis' imikhondvo lesingahamba ngayo  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(Forgive us Creator  
Forgive your naughty children  
Teach us  
Teach them the correct way.)*

If God cannot forgive our sins we will die an eternal death. We will vanish. No one can see that people existed before. His cruelty shows us a way because people understand much better if you tell them in a harsh way. Shongwe writes:

*Cola mhlaba lapho sikuhlubuka,  
Singahlubulwa nguwe siyoshabalala  
Lulaka lwakho lusifundzis' indlela;  
Indlela yemfihlakalo nenhlalakahle  
Shongwe 1996)*

*(Forgive us when we pull away from you  
If you go away we will vanish  
Your cruelty shows us a way  
The way of hidings and social welfare)*

Shongwe is telling us that he wants to be a child of God. He wants to be the same as God although we know that no human being can be God. The evil spirit is the only thing that disturbs him because we are living in the world of sin. Shongwe wants to go with God in wherever places he can go because if he goes alone he finds himself in a place that is not conducive for a word of God. Even then God always forgives him. He says in a poem entitled *Mhla Kukhala Lichudze*:

*Ngiyatsandza kuhamba nawe  
Emadlelweni ngiyalahleka ngingen' ehlatsini  
Uyangifuna angitfole, angicolele.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(I like to go with you  
In the grazing land I disappear and enter into  
the bush.  
You search and forgive me.)*

Shongwe has already accepted the word of God. He wants to be a child of God in times of happiness and sorrow. He has accepted God and would love to live that way for the rest of his life. Shongwe confirms that when he says:

*Lamuhla ngiyamvuma Yena*

*Enjabulweni nasemenweni ngivumile*  
*Shengatsi ngingamvuma mhla kukhala lichudze*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(Today I accept him*  
*In times of joy and in difficulties I have accepted*  
*I wish to accept him even on the day the cock crows ).*

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. METAPHYSICAL POETS

Poets in metaphysics use common thoughts and style no matter what themes are used. Metaphysics use diction and meter designed on the actual speech and facts. It is a study of the objects to determine meaning, structure and its principles. This study is popularly conceived as being subtle and highly comprehensive of inquiries to reality as a whole. Metaphysical poets are aware of feelings but are mainly concerned with analyzing such. The poet explores his consciousness. The boldness of literary devices used, especially irony, paradox and pun are always herein. In his anthology Shongwe has a poem titled *Umkhumbi Wemtingeli*, which is a reflection of Shongwe as a metaphysical poet. He chooses very simple words but his writing startles the reader in many ways.

*Nang' umtingeli lowagola  
Wabuts' emajaha netintfombi  
Wabagcush' emgodleni wakhe  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(Here is the hunter who collected and  
took gentlemen and ladies  
put them in his bag)*

The *Ship of a hunter* he is referring to here is not the literal ship but the human deeds and behavior, more especially when the politicians were imprisoned for life at Robben Island. Shongwe also uses initial linking to enhance the rhythm and diction. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Inkondlo Yembongi* says:

*Inkondlo yakho mbongi  
Iyinkondlo yebumbongi belikhetselo,  
Iyinkondlo yembongi lengiyivako  
Iyinkondlo yembongi lengiphambako.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(The poet's poem  
It is a poem of chosen poetry  
It is a poem of a poet, which I understand  
It is a poem of a poet that "baffles" me.)*

Shongwe in this poem emphasizes that it is of a high prestige and it is a poem which he understands well. He also contradicts himself when he says it is a poem which baffles him. The style he has used in this poem has been perfectly arranged. In the very same stanza he has used the middle linking. Shongwe writes:

*lyinkondlo **yembongi** lengiyivako  
lyinkondlo **yembongi** lengiphambako  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(It is a poem of a poet which he understand  
It is a poem of a poet that baffles me)*

He has also been able to use initial rhyme in the very same stanza. Look at his style:

*lyinkondlo y**ebumbongi** belikhetselo  
lyinkondlo lengiyivako  
lyinkondlo y**embongi** lengiphambako.  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(It is a poem of chosen poetry  
It is a poem of a poet, which I understand.  
It is a poem of a poet that baffles me).*

### 3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF METAPHYSICAL POETS

Shongwe is very much creative. His work develops the mind. One cannot fully appreciate a metaphysical poem unless one sees both "brain and soul at work". Kermode and Hollander (1973:106) has this to say in this regard:

*The best way to understand what is meant by Donne is to work at poems. For they require work, they depend upon one's understanding how the fantastic argument is advanced, by the pseudo-logic of analogy and far-fetched allusion. After that one can begin to admire the complexity of tone, the countercurrents of secondary meaning, the ingenuity of the prodigally invented stanza forms and the muscular persuasive force of the language.*

This quotation appeals to the reader at work on Shongwe's poems in order to understand Shongwe's wit and his far-fetched allusions. It is really interesting to study and analyse Shongwe's work, to come to grip with the complexity of tone and analogies. I have no doubt that Shongwe is a metaphysical poet. It is very possible that he was heavily influenced by work of John Donne, Marvell, Cowley and the other. His poetry is peculiar in the sense that he does not relate but the relations that he perceives are more often logical than sensuous or emotional. The relations he uses constantly connect the abstract with the concrete, the remote with the real, and the sublime, with the common place.

Shongwe is one of the greatest Swazi thinkers of this time. His education helps to introduce him into field of higher learning of religious education, geography, languages and other subjects. Metaphysicians exploit these fields in their works. Shongwe's religious commitment gave him a life view that is deeper than that of a common man. More so his giftedness enables him to be

seen as a real metaphysical poet. Another prominent characteristic of metaphysical poetry is concentration. The reader is held to an idea or line of argument throughout the poem. It ends brief and is always closely woven. Let us look together the following poem *Emtfonjeni Wemfula* in order to illustrate this point.

*Mtfombo locwebile cwe, ngicwebise nami*  
*Mtfombo locandza mpo, ngiphotise nami.*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(Fountain which is purely clean, clean me*  
*Fountain which is very cold, cool me.)*

The lines are very much concentrated yet exploding with meaning. He is contrasting pure white with very cold. Shongwe has used ideophones that one does not find in English but which is a linguistic gem of the Swazi language. It is very difficult to translate to English. In both cases he uses ideophones that indicate superlative degree that is **cwe** and **mpo**.

Shongwe's poetry is something which one must be proud of when analyzing. His craftsmanship and cleverness is well appreciated in his work. His conceit is clearly defined in his work. According to Hunter (1965:28) a conceit is metaphor or simile intellectually contrived and drawn out in this unostentatious way. Shongwe in his poems uses metaphor, simile, personification, animalisation and symbolism. Metaphysical conceit is organic rather than decorative. It develops the mind. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a poem which did not require brainwork would not be admired. Conversely, to write a poem not because pressing emotion demanded it but, as a technical exercise for one's wit was a completely acceptable possibility while today it is thought to be vaguely fraudulent.

### 3.2 SHONGWE AS A METAPHYSICAL POET

Shongwe uses conceit and wit in his two anthologies. According to Johnson and Adams (1981:29):

*A kind of discordia consorts, a  
combination of dissimilar images or  
discovery of occult resemblance's in  
things apparently unlike the most  
heterogeneous ideas are yoked by  
violence together*

According to Shongwe's observation in his poem entitled *Umkhumbi Wemtingeli* (the ship of hunter) he is referring to, is a police van which took all the politicians to the custody hence he says:

*Nalo lusoti lolwahlwitsa  
Emantjwel' akitsi  
Lawabutsa lantanta nawo.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Here is the vulture, which  
took all our chicken, collected  
them and flew away with them.)*

Shongwe is punning again. He uses "ship" to emphasize what he wants to say. The ship according to Shongwe is something that they do not like because it took all people (politicians) to the place where they are not free to do their free will. He feels sorry for the Xhosa people who saw this tragic event. Shongwe (*op cit:18*) says:

*Yebo simanga sengcanawe  
Lesabonwa bafo be Koloni  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Yes strange ship  
The people of Cape saw that)*

Shongwe is very much philosophical and his language is very simple. He associates things that a common man would never associate. He moves from the literal idea to the figurative one without confusing the reader. This sounds as though it could be confusing but this persuades and enables a reader to see these likeliness and we do. He says in a poem entitled *Lamuhla Siyandiza*.

*Yebo-ke mcambalali lobhabhalal'  
emoyeni*

*Yebo-ke mntjwezi lontjweza  
kwenhlant' emantini*

*Yebo-ke maphendvuphendvuka.*

(Shongwe 1985)

*(Yes you who sleeps in the  
atmosphere*

*Yes you swimmer who swims like a  
fish in the water*

*Yes you who are very unpredictable.)*

This highlights Shongwe's attitude to life. In life Shongwe sees bad things overshadowing good ones. His education also helped him to have these farfetched ideas. Shongwe highlights the contrast that is common in life. He denotes the struggle that is there to reach reality and truth. In this poem he employs one of his most important conceits. There is initial linking that enhances continuity or rolling of the wheel of life. He also uses cross parallelism to bring out clearly the confusion in life. Some people see education as a solution, some see politics as the solution, and some think going back to their roots is the answer. Shongwe does not think religion is the solution that is why he says in the poem entitled *Tinyembeti Tamuva*:

*Cola mhlaba waMvelinchanti*

*Ucolele emahlongandlebe akho*

*Usifundzis' imikhondvo lesingahamba ngayo.*

(Shongwe 1985)

*(Almighty's earth forgive us  
Forgive your naughty people  
Teach us the path, which we must follow.)*

Shongwe is afraid of God's punishment hence he says in his poem entitled *Cola Mhlaba*:

*Lulaka lwakho ngiyalwesaba  
Luswati lwakho lwemivimbo yeminyaka  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Your anger frightens me  
Your punishment is of scars for years.)*

Shongwe is also afraid that God might swallow us all that is why in the same poem he says:

*Nalapho ukhamisa sigwinyeka  
(And where you open your mouth  
and we are swallowed.)*

He uses initial and medial linking for rhythm and to bring into focus his realisation of the truth. In Shongwe's anthology there is a poem titled *Esicongweni se Table Mountain* where he uses personification to emphasize the age of politics. He uses images like "Mountain" which signifies instability on this earth and within people. The mountain has never talked before but he is asking the mountain to tell him the truth, he says:

*Ngitjele ntsabakati ngetigameko  
Tonkhe talelive lowatibona.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Tell me big mountain about the events  
of this world that you saw.)*

That metaphysics is of highest order only people capable of metaphysical perception can perceive this. This is an oxymoron used for effect.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. POETIC DEVICES IN SHONGWE'S POETRY

#### 4.1 IMAGERY

In Shongwe's poems, the image is part of living growth. It is a picture which is made out of words. A poem can be a picture or image of different kinds of images. Imagery can be regarded as that which is seen otherwise than by the eyes. The poet uses imagery in his poetry in order for us to be aware of his impression. His art and feeling are more powerful with experiences he has as a poet. Imagery is very important in a poem because if there is no imagery, it will be the flow of ordinary words instead of exciting images so that the reader becomes so much fascinated by meaning as stimulated by sensation. Peck and Coyle (1984: 39) regard imagery as working in two ways: an association of something negative with negative images creates a more forceful sense of unpleasantness in life. The association of something positive with positive images creates a forceful impression on the preferred alternatives. In all these two instances the idea is made richer, more complex and more interesting through association.

Myers and Michael (1989:139) define imagery as

*the use of pictures, figures of speech or description to evoke action, ideas, objects, or characters.*

I personally view image as comprising of two types, namely evocative and descriptive. In evocative image we find: -

- Visual imagery.
- Auditory imagery.
- Tactile imagery.
- Gustatory imagery.
- Olfactory imagery.

For this study we shall only discuss the descriptive imagery under the following: -

- Simile.
- Metaphor.
- Personification.
- Irony.
- Sarcasm
- Hyperbole and
- Euphemism

## 4.2 SIMILE

7 According to Von Staden (1975:14) simile has the following characteristics;

- *Die twee sake wat met mekaar in 'n vergelyking vergelyk word, word deur 'n vergelykingswoord (komparatief) geskei.*

- *Daar moet 'n verskil en 'n ooreenkoms, tussen die sakke, wat vergelyk word, bestaan.*
- *In die vergelyking word twee sake figuurlik eksplisiet met mekaar vergelyk.*
- *Die teenwoordigheid van 'n komparatief (vergelykingswoord) is nie genoegsame bewys dat 'n bepaalde uiting 'n vergelyking is nie.*

When we have a broader look from the characteristics of a simile, it shows that the objects or persons compared must be comparable. In Shongwe's poems this comparison is introduced by *njenga-*, *nganga-*, *sa-*, *fana-*, *kuhle kwe-*, *kwe-*, etc. In a poem entitled *Esicongweni SeTable Mountain* (at the peak of Table Mountain), Shongwe gives us a living picture of the Table Mountain. He describes to us the way in which the mountain looks like, the flatness and attraction:

*Wendlaleke **kwelicansi** lekulala*

*(You are laid down like a sleeping – mat.)*

The poet compares the flatness of the mountain with that of a sleeping mat. In the poem titled *Politiki*, Shongwe tells us about the sweet tongue of the politicians when they want to convince people about what they want from them. He compares the sweet tongue as like honey dew. He says:

*Emav'akho anongotela **kweluju** lwetinyosi*

*(Your words are as sweet as honeydew).*

He **appreciates** summer very much because everything is green and beautiful in summer. **Grass** and leaves are evergreen. Everybody likes summer because everything is clear and beautiful. Shongwe in his poem titled *Emahlatsini Ase-Amazon* says:

*Hhayi, umuhle kweluhlata ehlobo hlatsikati.*

*(Alas, you are as evergreen as summer grass.)*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Lapha Ngitintile* (I am settled here) displays the use of “*kw*–” in siSwati which is synonymous to ‘like’ in English. He tells us about his situation when he arrives in this place. He compares the situation on his arrival to the present one. He compares his softness with that of the overcooked potatoes and he also compares his lightweight with a leaf. This can be witnessed in the following stanza of the above poem when he says:

*Ngefika ngitobotela kwematabhan’ avutsiwe*

*Ngitsambe kwelijingi leluswane,*

*Ngilula kwelicembe,*

*Ngibakatela kwemehlw’ emntfwana,*

*Ngilungise kwengilozi*

*(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I came soft like overcooked traditional potatoes,*

*Soft like the soft porridge for a child*

*Light like a leaf,*

*Move the eyes nervously like a child*

*Honest like an angel)*

According to Thwala (1986:25) many similes are used not primarily to illuminate but for their own sake to enhance the beauty of a poem. They indulge a taste for

ambitious descriptive effects. Sometimes they become digressions by having little organic connections with the poem or exaggerate the situation. In his poem entitled *Ngime Elugwini Shongwe* describes the movement of the sea waves and the noise that the sea makes. He compares the sea wave with that of the calf and the sea sound with that of the lion. The following lines bear testimony to that;

*Litjekula licetfuke **njengelinkhonyane,**  
Libhodle **njengengwenyam'** ehlanzeni  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(It runs and jumps like a calf.  
It roars like a lion in the lowveld)*

This shows that Shongwe has an art of writing which makes people to admire his work. Shongwe feels that there are remarkable changes in his life. To emphasize this change he even uses the ideophone – '*nkwa*' to its extreme roughness. He says in his poem entitled *Lapha Ngitintile* (I am settled here):

*Ngicine nkwa **kwelitje,**  
Ngisindza **kwemtfofi**  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(I am extremely hard like a stone,  
Heavy like a lead.)*

If we look at the poem *uMkhuhlu* (mahogany), we find that the poet has used the word '*sitfuntî*' (shade) to emphasize the weight in which he grants dignity to the *Lukhahlamba* (Drakensberg Mountain) and he even used the word '*intima*' to

emphasize the darkness of the blanket. The use of simile is seen in the following lines:

*Sitfunti sakho sisindza kwesitfunti seLukhahlamba,  
Ingubo yakho intima kwejimu yesikolwa.*

(Shongwe 1996)

*(Your heavy weight, weigh like a Lukhahlamba mountain  
Your blanket is dark like a black school uniform.)*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Emagagasi Etikhatsi* (waves of time) tells us that time rules life. It takes life higher like a bird flying and brings it down like a snake crawling in the grass. He compares life with birds and life with snakes. These two cannot be compared very well because a snake is able to crawl through the grass while a bird feels more comfortable when it flies. The poet's style of writing makes us admire his work and the use of language especially where he has been able to use metaphor in a successful way. In the same poem he (*op cit: 20*) shows us that he can compare:

*Ayenyusel'etulu kwenyon'phapha  
Ayibhabhalalise phansi kwenyok'inyelel'etjanini*

(Shongwe 1996)

*(He lifts it up like a flying bird  
He lays it flat like a snake crawling in the grass)*

The poet in his poem *Khaya, Khaya Lami*, tells us that his home (heaven) is higher than the clouds and the stars. The home is more shining than a diamond. This shows that, he knows that the Heaven is incomparable that is why he gave heaven more glitter than the diamonds:

Uphakeme **kunemafu** netinkanyeti  
Uyacwebetela **kwedlul'idayimane**

*(You are higher than the clouds and the stars,  
You are glittering more than diamond.)*

### 4.3 METAPHOR

Myers and Michael (1989:178) define metaphor as;

*A rhetorical figurative expression of similarity or dissimilarity in which a direct, nonliteral substitution or identity is made between one thing and another.*

According to Brook and Warren (1960:205)

*Metaphors are often defined as implied comparisons and this view has its element of truth, though some authorities see an essential difference in that metaphors boldly assert an identity.*

Explaining a metaphor, Murray (1978:83) says:

*Metaphor is based on a combination of two Greek words meaning 'to carry across'. A term or expression is carried over from its common usage to another uncommon one, or some qualities or attributes of one object are carried over to another in such a way that the second object is then referred to as if it were the first. All metaphor implies the recognition on the part of their*

*user/s of some point of identity or comparison between normally unconnected objects.*

Metaphor is a Greek word derived from META meaning, 'to carry over' and PHEREIN 'to carry across'. It refers to a particular object that is transferred to another object in order for the second object to be spoken as if it was the first. The poet in his poem, *Umfula INkhomazi* (Nkomazi river) compares the braveness of the Nkomazi river with that of a lion. A lion is a very brave and strong animal but the poet gives us that picture in order for us to see how brave the Nkomazi river is. This river feeds black and white people. It also feeds the highveld as well as lowveld. Shongwe is surprised about the braveness of this Nkomazi river hence he says:

*Sibindzi sakho selibhubesi*

*(Your bravery is like that of a lion.)*

In the same poem the poet is saluting the Nkomazi river by flowing into the high and low veld. He even mentioned that this river crosses many border posts feeding people around those areas. The river is great and it is so powerful in such a way that he compares it with a very strong elephant. He (*op cit:10*) supports his statement by saying:

*Hhay' umandl' endlovu nkhosikati.*

*(Alas, you are strong like an elephant my wife)*

In a poem entitled *Esicongweni SeTable Mountain*, Shongwe displays the highness of the mountain by saying that it is so high like a giraffe:

*Weluleke waba yindlulamitsi.*  
*(You are as tall as a giraffe)*

Shongwe in a poem entitled *Ematfunjini Emhlaba* encourages all men who are working underground to keep on working and should not forget where they come from, hence he says:

*Ngishaya sibhaca ngemajaha akitsi*  
*Lanesibindzi selibhubesi.*  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(I do traditional dance with fellow men*  
*Who are as brave as a lion)*

In a poem entitled *Lapha Ngitintile* he uses the image of the stone to show his heaviness, therefore the image is a suitable one. He stays wherever without any fear and he is ignorant of any pain hence he says:

*Sengaba litje*  
*(I have become a stone)*

The poet is afraid of hunger because it washes everything away. He compares the energy of the hunger with that of the elephant hence he says in his poem entitled *Inkhelemane*:

*Emandl' akho endlovu.*  
*(Your strength is like that of an elephant)*

Shongwe is afraid of volcano. He compares the hotness of volcano with that of hell. The volcano is as hot as hell. In a poem entitled *Intsabamlilo* Shongwe has this to say:

*Ntsabamlilo usihogo.*  
*(Volcano you are hell)*

The poet is worried about the death of a prominent figure. A person who showed them hope, life and light. This person was so innocent as a baby and they were hoping that one day this person would lead them. Now this person is gone forever. He is now no more. The poet uses the image of a tiger because we are all aware that a tiger is associated with leadership that is why in a poem entitled *Phumula Sihlabani* he says:

*Kitsi bewuyingwe.*  
*(To us you were a tiger).*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Tibongo Tembuzulwane* is concerned about the cowardness of the mosquito. It bites people during the night while they are asleep. People uses blankets even if it is not necessary just to escape from it. It is so poisonous and it kills people like a mamba. He supports his statement by saying:

*Inhlitiyo yakho ilitje.*  
*(Your heart is like a stone).*

#### 4.4 PERSONIFICATION

Bhiya (1990:80) has this to say about personification:

*Kumuntfutisa (personalification). Lesinongo senta  
intfo lengaphili yetfulwe kungatsi iyaphila futsi tento  
tayo temukeleke njengetemuntfu.*

In this definition Bhiya supports Pretorius (1989:42) who describes personification as a type of image which gives human qualities to inanimate objects.

Kreuzer (1955:100) defines personification as,

*A special form of comparison, it is defined as representation of an inanimate object or abstract idea as endowed with personal attributes.*

I concur with Kreuzer's definition because I personally view personification as a comparison of two or more things in a special way which is represented by an inanimate object or abstract idea with personal attributes. It is true that personification is a special type of metaphor. The poet uses different objects as if they were human beings, able to hear and understand what he tells them. The poet in his poem */Sahara*, is talking as if the Sahara will reply in return.

*Deda, deda siminti*

*(Move aside swallower)*

The poet is referring to the Sahara desert as a swallower. To him this Sahara desert is a big animal that can swallow all people around that place. So the poet is fed-up with this Sahara desert. He even wants an answer from the desert hence he (*op cit: 4*) says:

*Sahara ngiphendvule.*

*(Sahara reply me)*

In this poem Shongwe describes the Sahara desert as a place which promotes poverty and socio-economic instability or problems.

*Liphango lakho lingumgodzi wemayini  
Ete leneliswa ngulelivana lolinyonyobelako*

(Shongwe 1985)

*(Your hunger is like a mine's hole  
It will never be satisfied about this little  
continent you are creeping to /towards.)*

The poem *iSahara* has human attributes. It is an anthropomorphic metaphor. This Sahara desert has the animate characteristics that is why the poet says:

*Deda Sahara uyonats'elwandle  
Deda uyodl'elwandle"*

*(Get out to drink at the sea, Sahara,  
Get out to eat at the sea)*

The poet is appealing to the desert to go and drink at the sea. Shongwe uses careful manner to make a meaning of what he wants to convey to people. The poet has been able to use personification in his poem entitled *uMkhuhlu* (mahogany) because he says:

*Ngitjele Mkhuhlu, ugezepi?  
(Tell me Mahogany where have you washed?)*

He is talking to mahogany as if there are two people talking to one another with the other being expected to reply. This shows that the poet's art of conveying message, which make an inanimate object to be animate. The poet has even used a question mark (?), which shows that it is a question. Mahogany is a tree that cannot be washed and cannot talk. But the poet has used his art as though

it can talk and be washed. Only humans are capable of talking and washing, not inhuman things like mahogany.

In his poem entitled, *Umfula Inkhomazi* (Nkomazi River) Shongwe has been able to use personification. He says “nkhosikati” (woman) referring to the river. This woman is able to breastfeed her babies. He even says that she (this river) has big breasts. Human beings and animals are able to breastfeed not inhuman things like a river. In this poem he says: “*Hamba*” (walk) as if the river is a person who can walk. A river cannot walk but it can flow. The poet is giving us a picture of a human being although that’s not so. Shongwe supports his statement by saying:

*Hamba nkhosikati lemabelekati*

*(Go woman with big breasts)*

In the same poem the poet is emphasizing that he has seen the river feeding all people hence he calls these people that they are its children that is why he says in his poem:

*Uhamb’ umunyisa bantfwabakho,*

*(As you flow to feed your children.)*

The poet in the same poem is begging the Nkomazi river to flow very fast in order to feed the people by its endless milk he says:

*Shakutela njalo Nkomazi  
Umunyise ngelubisi lwakho lolungapheli.  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Flow very fast Nkomazi  
Feed them with your endless milk)*

The poet is asking the river to flow and feed all the nations without discriminating hence he says:

*Gijima njalo Nkomazi  
Uphakele ungenalubandlululo:  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Keeps on flowing Nkomazi River  
Feed them without discrimination)*

The poet is impressed by the way in which they perform their traditional dance. The dance reminds the poet about his culture where he comes from. The way in which they perform shows that they are really dancing the traditional way. The poet in his poem entitled *Imbongi Yenkhosi* says:

*Ushaya phansi, ukhahlel' umoya  
(You kick down, kicking the air)*

The poet in the poem entitled *Ensimini E-Avalon* is worried about the cemetery. Since he came to Johannesburg people were crying because they were burying people deep underneath where even no roots can grow. He wants to know from Avalon about the size of the calabash, before the judgment day. He supports his statement by saying:

*Ukhafule bonkhe, labasematfunjini akho?  
(Spilt all people who are in your intestines.)*

The poet is saying that the voice of Avalon is coming closer very slowly. This voice does not have time it comes during the day and even during the night. The voice of Avalon calls everybody even those who are deeply asleep. The voice that the poet is talking about is death. He says the voice comes anyway and anyhow but slowly hence he says:

*Livi lakho Avalon liyanyenya  
(Your voice is crawling slowly Avalon)*

## 4.5 IRONY

Irony is the opposite meaning of the literal meaning of a word. In most cases the meaning may be contrary to the exact meaning of the word. Thwala (2000:163) defines irony as a figure of speech that is based on contrast or difference.

The poet says that he is far away from home where he sees people crying tears of pain because they have lost their loved ones. Ironically he says in his poem entitled *Ensimini E- Avalon*:

*Lapha kunisel'imvula yetinyembeti*

*(Here irrigation is by rain of tears)*

In the cemetery people are ploughing throughout the seasons. When ploughing they use pick and shovel and they plant only during the weekend. Shongwe (*op cit*: 26) in his poem says:

*Kulinywa ngelipiki nelifosholo  
Kuhlanyelwa ngemphelasontfo  
(Shongwe 1996)*

*(They plough by pick and shovel  
They plant on weekends)*

Both young and old people are crying because they have lost their loved ones. Widowers and men are also crying. Shongwe (*op cit*: 27) says:

*Hhayi Mangwane lemvula yetinyembeti.*

*(Alas Mangwane the rain of tears)*

Shongwe (*op cit: 27*) says that he has heard about people who were going very slowly. Mourning the black vehicle that carries the coffin. The bereaved families are crawling hence he (*op cite: 27*) says :

*Sebayobuk'emadvolo, abasakhasi!*

*(They have scars on their knees they no longer crawl.)*

When death comes, only those who have been chosen by you Avalon could hear. Shongwe supports his statement by saying:

*Kumemeta kwakho Avalon  
Kunkeneneta kudvume, kwece  
Imisindvo yemishini ye Jozi  
Eve lowo losuke umkhetsile  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Your calling Avalon  
It is humming and overtakes  
All sounds of machinery in Johannesburg  
Only the chosen one can hear)*

The poet says that when death has come, it goes straight to that particular person and calls him/ her. Shongwe (*op cit: 28*) says:

*Livi lakho Avalon liyanyenya  
Likhas' imini nebusuku litotoba,  
Liyofika kulabasemacansini nasemibhedzeni  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Your voice Avalon is crawling  
Crawling day and night  
Reaching those who are sleeping in the mats and beds.)*

## 4.6 SARCASM

Thwala (2000:157) defines sarcasm as a figure of speech which means precisely what is said in a sharp and bitter manner. At first it sounds as if you are praising whilst you are not.

Shongwe in his poem entitled *ISahara* raises concerns about death. He says death crawls like a wild cat. Even the shade of death is heavy. He is appealing to the Sahara to go away so that he can breathe cool air:

*Unyonyobisa kweligoya  
Nesitfunti sakho siyasindza  
Sisindza indlu lentima yaketfu-  
Hlehla sishaywe ngumoya Sahara!  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(You crawl like a wild cat  
Your shade is heavy  
It over weights our black nation  
Go away so that we can breath cool air)*

The poet is asking the *Sahara* to go back where it originated. He does not want to see it again. He is begging the *Sahara* to remove its jaws and to fold its trunk. He says in his poem (op cit:5);

*Deda, deda siminti,  
Ubuyele kulo lemdzabu wakini  
Susa tidladla takho  
Ugocot'umboko wakho, utfutse  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Move aside, you voracious eater  
Go back where you originated  
Remove your jaws*

*Fold your trunk and go)*

The poet wants to know where does it come from? How long is it going to stay here? He even mentioned that they were happy where it came from because it is no longer there. He (op cit: 5) supports this statement by saying:

*Ufunani kuleli, uyohlala kube nini  
Wavelaphi Sahara? Bayatsaba  
Labashiywa nguwe mcindzeteli  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(What do you want here? for how  
long are you going to stay?  
Where do you come from Sahara?  
They are happy those that you left  
oppressor.)*

#### **4.7 HYPERBOLE**

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that exaggerates extremely or excessively with the aim of emphasizing the point. Hyperbole can exaggerate beyond the natural boundary and it can sometimes misinterpret the truth.

Reaske (1966:34) states:

*A figure of speech which employs exaggeration ...It is extreme or excessive.... Hyperbole can produce a very dramatic effect...*

Myers and Michael (1989:136) concur with Reaske (op cit:34) when they define hyperbole as:

*A rhetorical form of comparison, which uses exaggeration or obvious overstatement for comic or dramatic effect the opposite term is*

*litotes, a form of understatement used ironically.*

Shongwe in his poem entitled *Phumula Langa* is telling people that it is sunset. The sun must rest because it was providing light to people all day long. Now that the sun has set, stars have to take their duty to keep on providing light to people during the night. He says:

*Seliyombats'ingubo lilanga  
Yingako sekudlala tinkanyeti,  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(It is towards sunset  
That is why stars are shining)*

The poet is exaggerating when he says stars are visiting each other in the sky and play with mirrors and light to one another. Moving up and down. In this stanza he has managed to use exaggeration because stars cannot use tails since they do not have such. In the following line Shongwe explicitly emphasizes his statement when he says:

*Uyotibukela setintjikitis' imisidlana.  
(You will see them waving their tails)*

Now that it is dark, gangsters are coming to disrupt the society. Hyperbole is found in the following example, Shongwe (*op cit:30*) says:

*Selembets' ingubo lilanga  
(A blanket covers the sun)*

In the same poem, the poet is telling us that it is dark. Owls are singing badly. The poet supports his statement by saying:

*Nato netahhukulu setibhimba*

*(There are owls singing in discord)*

In the very same stanza, Shongwe is telling us that these owls do not believe that it is already dark and that it is already sunset as he says:

*Atikholwa kahle: lilele lilanga.*

*(They don't believe it is sunset)*

Shongwe is telling people that they must hurry up when it is dark because gangsters are hunting people:

*Hamb' uphangise nkhonyane,  
(Hurry up calf)*

The poet in the poem entitled *Lamuhla Siyandiza* is emphasizing that science and technology are growing very fast. People are now able to visit to the Pluto by aeroplane. People are creative and think above their expectations. We find hyperbole in the following example:

*Ngobe sesindiza ngengcondvo  
(Because we fly by our minds)*

Shongwe in the poem entitled *ISahara* is saluting the Sahara desert that no one is going to fight it. Since it came, it stole people's lives:

*Seloku wavela webe yonkhe imphilo.  
(Since you came you stole the whole life)*

## 4.8 EUPHEMISM

Euphemism is a figure of speech that substitutes a word for a more acceptable one. It can be harsh, blunt, mild or pleasant but it makes the word more acceptable than it was before.

Thwala (2000:147) defines euphemism as decorous speech or a rhetorical figure of speech that substitutes the harsher or more unpleasant word or expression with a favourable and more acceptable one.

Shongwe in the poem entitled *Lembe UnguShaka* is saluting Shaka for the good work he has done when he was King of the Zulus. The poet applauds his courage and leadership. He stood up and fought alongside his soldiers. We find euphemism in the following example,

*Uyoyibamba nemajaha akaMalandzela.*  
(You will fight with Malandzela's warriors.)

People are very proud of the achievements of King Shaka. Hence Shongwe has this to say in this regard:

*Sitsakasel' umsebenti wakho Lembe*  
(We are impressed about your work Shaka)

The poet is happy because today many people, throughout the Southern Hemisphere of Africa speak Zulu as results of the courageous achievements of King Shaka. This can be seen in the following stanza when the poet says:

Ngawe Lembe lamuhla:  
*Siceketsa siNgun' eDalagubha,*  
*Siluvute kush' ematse kaBulawako*  
*Sengce siyolunguta emachibini e-Afrika.*  
*Lembe ngiphelelwa tibongo.*  
(Shongwe 1985)

(Because of you Lembe today:  
*We speak Nguni at Delagoa Bay,  
Speaking till our saliva dries at Bulawako  
Moving further to the wells of Africa.  
Lembe I cannot praise you further.)*

The poem is based on Shaka's victories and the spreading of the Zulu culture to all the tribes that were conquered and absorbed. The poet believes that Shaka would have united both Blacks and Whites and tied them together. The poet has this to say;

*Loyoboph' atfunge labantima nalabalutfuli,  
Abatfunge ngemtiya welikhetselo  
Babelubumba lwekwakha  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(He who will tie and knit both blacks and whites people,  
Sewing them with precious thread  
They will be like building concrete)*

## CHAPTER 5

### 5.0 EXTERNAL STRUCTURE OF J.P SHONGWE'S POETRY

#### 5.1 PARALLELISM , LINKING, REFRAIN AND RHYME.

##### 5.1.1 PARALLELISM

Guma (1986: 159) defines parallelism as:

*...certain similarity between two parts or members of a sentence, whose words correspond to one another.*

Yelland (1980: 137 ) on the other hand defines parallelism as :

*Balancing one statement against another in clauses or phrases of similar length and, grammatical structure so as to make a pattern of sound and sense that has a pleasing, if sometimes artificial, effect The idea expressed in the statements are generally balanced by similarity or contrast.*

Parallelism is employed for aesthetic purposes in modern poetry. It gives recurrence of words that contribute to rhythm. Rhythm is very important to poetry because it is where the reader sees that the poem and the song are closely related. A poet can also understand the song because he is familiar with the arrangement of the words in a sentence. Parallelism is another form of balancing words or phrases. Balancing of words cannot only be similar words or formatives but sometimes it can also be the repetition of words. In

Shongwe's poems, parallelism performs three functions, that is; it emphasizes the meaning, establishes rhythm in the relevant verses in that particular line and it also harmonizes the sounds of a poem.

Ntuli (1984: 90) explains parallelism as follows:

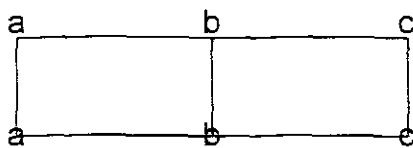
In parallelism we expect each unit the first member of a verse to be balanced by another unit in the second member. If this correspondence is found between all the units, we have perfect parallelism.

This statement is found in Shongwe's poem entitled *Inkondlo ya O.E.H.M Nxumalo* where he says:

*Inkondlo yakho ingemantjoli,  
Inkondlo yakho ingumtfunti*  
(Shongwe 1996)

( *Your poem is full of thoughts  
Your poem is a shadow* )

Although there are many kinds of perfect parallelism, Shongwe manages to use this pattern as follows:

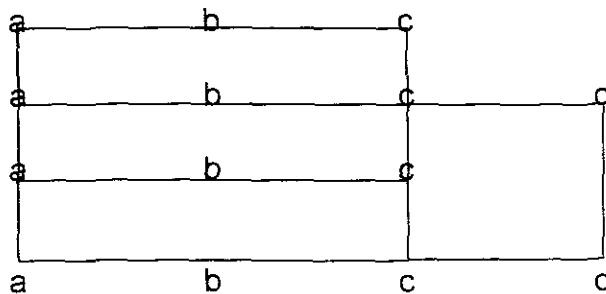


Shongwe sometimes uses one form of verse in a stanza. It is good for a poet to deviate from his pattern as long as it is good to do so. It shows that he does not have a specific form of writing. It just comes as it is. That is why he uses different patterns of writing. Shongwe (1985) in his poem entitled *Asambe Nsiki* writes:

*Asambe Nsiki siphikelele*  
*Siphemb' indlela, sibhul' ematolo .*  
*Sigijimele sivul' ematolo*  
*Siyivulele bantfwana bendlu lentima*  
 (Shongwe 1985)

(Let us keep on going Nsiki  
 Let us pave the way and remove the dew  
 Let us run and open the pathway  
 Let us open it for the children of the black nation)

Shongwe uses the following pattern to support his argument:



As far as cross parallelism is concerned Ntuli (op cit: 9) says:

A rhetorical figure with two  
 syntactically parallel constructions,  
 one of which has the word order  
 reversed.

The word order corresponds in cross wise rather than vertical or horizontal.  
 In the fourth stanza of *Emthonjeni Wemfula* we have cross parallelism in the  
 following verse line:

*Uyimphilo mtfombo!*  
*Mtfombo uyinjabulo!*  
 (Shongwe 1996)

*(You are life fountain  
Fountain you are pleasure)*

The resultant pattern in these lines is as follows:

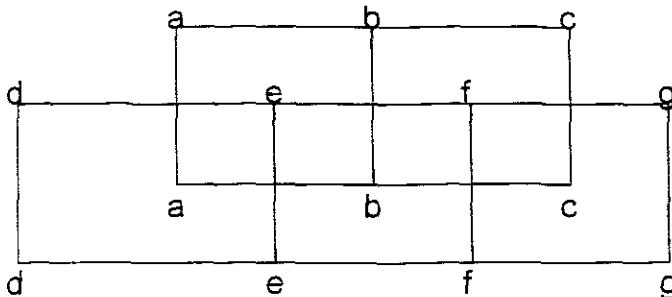


In the poem entitled iSahara, in the third stanza we find the example in which each unit first verse lines is balanced by another third verse line and each in the second verse line balances with the fourth verse line:

*Deda deda siminti  
Ubuyele kulo lemdzabu wakini  
Susa tidladla takho  
Ugocot'umboko wakho, utfutse  
(Shongwe 1985)*

*(Move aside, move aside, you voracious  
Go back to your traditional land  
Remove your jaws  
Remove your elephant trunk)*

The resultant pattern is the following:



The balancing units in the first and third verses are equal, that is a, b, c and the fourth verse are equal, that is d, e, f and g

## 5.1.2 LINKING

Linking is none other than the repetition of items that could be a morpheme or words. This repetition of items can be in adjacent or successive lines. In Shongwe's poems we will deal with vertical linking and horizontal oblique linking. That can be seen in repetition of the whole word, stems or roots of words.

The function of linking in poetry is to emphasize through repetition and to bring harmony between ideas and forms.

### 5.1.2.1 VERTICAL LINKING

Vertical linking according to Ntuli (1984) is the type of linking where a word in the first line corresponds almost vertically with one in the second line. This usually happens when similar words (or stems, or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (Initial linking) or at the end (final linking)

In the poem called *Emagagasi Etikhatsi* Shongwe uses the initial vertical linking which occurs in successive verses:

***Sengiyawuhamba*** *nemajaha e-Afrika*  
***Sengiyawuhamba*** *nebantwana bendzabuko*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(I will go with African men*  
*I will go with traditional children)*

The above pattern can be represented as follows:

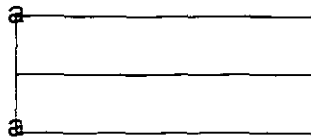


In the above example the emphasis is on *Sengiyawuhamba*. He stresses that he will go with African men. He also stresses that he will go with indigenous children. Initial vertical linking can occur in alternating lines. He says in his poem entitled *Vumani Ngigiye*.

***Ngigiye*** ngelunyawo lolufanele  
***Ngigiyel'*** ingwenyama esigodlweni  
***Ngigiye*** ngifome ngigelet' umjuluko  
 (Shongwe 1985)

*(I perform with the correct foot  
 Performing for his majesty in his kraal  
 I perform until sweat runs down in my cheeks)*

The above example can be illustrated in the following pattern:



In the above example, initial vertical linking applies in alternating lines with the word *Ngigiye*. The poet is very happy that is why he wants to dance for his king. He emphasizes the word *Ngigiye* to alert people about what he wants to do.

Final vertical linking can also occur in successive verse or in alternate lines. The following example is taken from stanza two of *Ngime Elugwini* where he says:

*Ngim'elugwini lwelwandle*  
*Ngiphandlwa tintfuli*

*Letiphakanyisw'umoya **welwandle***

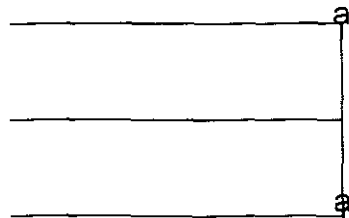
(Shongwe 1985)

*(I am standing at the seashore*

*The dust in my eyes*

*Which are raised up by sea breeze)*

The pattern we encounter here is:



The functions of vertical linking are to emphasize the meaning and to promote harmony between sense and sound.

### 5.1.2.2 OBLIQUE LINKING

Kunene (1971: 71) defines oblique linking as:

Line repetition the line position of a repeated phrase is shifted and this shifting may result in a phrase that was mid-line position or end-line position in a following line, or an end-line position in a preceding line becoming a mid-line position in a following line.

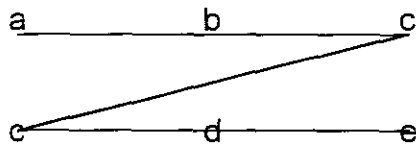
It refers to one of a poetic lines that is repeated in the next line. It is also represented with lines having a slant from one side to the other. The repetition represents a right to left swing pattern. The common type of right-

to -left oblique linking is where the corresponding words occur in a successive line. This can be observed in the following lines:

*Uyofika ekhay' **ulindzelwe***  
***Ulindzelwe** buso ba-Abraham*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(You will arrive home being awaited*  
*Awaited to be seen by Abraham's face)*

This is a repetition of a schematic representation of:



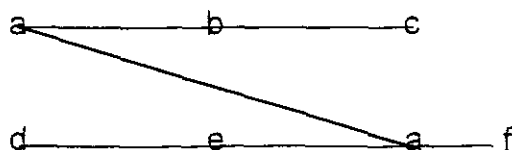
There are variations where the initial linking line position corresponds with word that is in the mid-line position as in the succeeding example.

Shongwe has used this type of linking in many poems as can be best illustrated in a poem called *Imikhemetelo Yemphilo*.

***Imikhemetelo** yemhlaba ingigwanyisile*  
*Sengiyakwati kunetfwa **yimikhemetelo** yetikhatsi*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(The drizzling of the world has immuned me*  
*I am now being showered by drizzles of time)*

The graphic representation is:

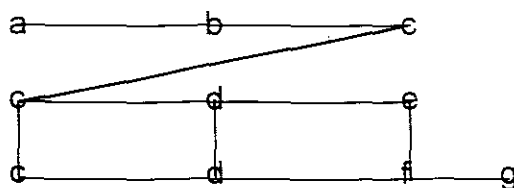


In some other instances units are found in alternate lines but not in successive ones. In a poem entitled *Hamba Kahle*, Shongwe shows us this alternating correspondence:

*Uyofika ekhaya **ulindzelwe***  
***Ulindzelwe** buso ba-Abraham*  
***Ulindzelwe** buso ba Jakobe na Davide*  
 (Shongwe 1996)

*(You will arrive home being expected,*  
*Expected by Abraham's face*  
*Expected by Jacob and David's face)*

This example can be represented as follows:



### 5.1.2.3 HORIZONTAL LINE REPETITION PATTERN

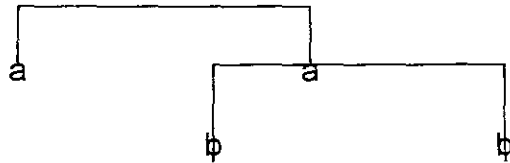
The horizontal line repetition pattern is the repetition that occurs in a single line. The poet manages to write these parallel lines carrying the same image. Shongwe in the poem entitled *Esicongweni se Table Mountain* says:

*Anginako kuphumula ngingakeva*  
*Liphimbo lakho nkuzi yakitsi.*  
***Table Mountain! Table Mountain!***  
 (Shongwe 1985)

*(I cannot rest till I here*  
*Your voice our bull.*  
*Table Mountain! Table Mountain!*

a        b        a        b

This repetition in a line has a schematic representation of:



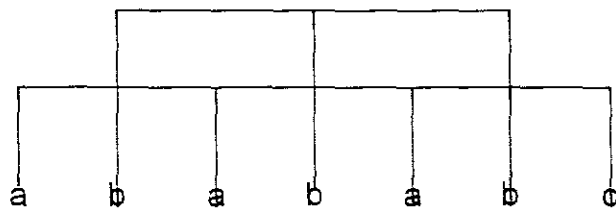
These lines are parallel because they are carrying the same image. The poet has applied each variation to suit a specific purpose. He uses the above repetitions to underline the key word and put together all those parts of the poem whose relationship have to be recognized.

In his poem entitled *Lamuhla Siyandiza* he uses horizontal repetition. These repetitions are accompanied by an ideophone with an exclamation mark which is used to show surprise. These horizontal repetitions are:

Hwa----Fa! Hwa----Fa! Hwa----Fa! Emuva

a    b    a            b    a            b    c

The repetition of a schematic representation of:



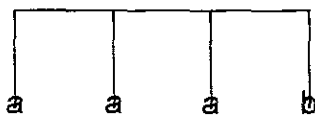
The poet also uses the horizontal linking that is on the same line and have the same meaning except the terminal word. This is taken from a poem

called: *Lwimi Lwami Ungangishiyi*. The poet also uses the horizontal linking which is in the same line and have some meaning except the terminal word. This is illustrated in the following line:

***Catfu! Catfu! Catfu mntfwana***

*(Crawl! Crawl! Crawl child)*

Now we have this pattern:



### 5.1.3 REFRAIN

Refrain in Shongwe's poetry occurs only in certain stanzas. In most of his poems he uses a single form of refrain. The wording of the refrain may either be the same or may have variations. In *Ngime Elugwini* in stanza 7,8,9, refrain is the same as the topic of the poem. It shows that Shongwe is emphasizing that he is at the bank of the sea. He is able to breath the sea breeze air. In the same poem, Shongwe (op cit: 3) uses different kinds of refrain. The following refrain appears as the first line of each stanza:

#### **Stanza 1**

*Ngim' elusebeni lwelwandle*

*(I am standing at the edge of the sea)*

#### **Stanza 2**

*Ngim' elugwini lwelwandle*

*(I am standing at the bank of the sea)*

### Stanza 3

*Ngim elugwini, emehlo ayababa*

*(I am standing at the bank of the sea,  
my eyes are itching)*

### Stanza 4

*Ngiselugwini lwelwandle*

*(I am in the bank of the sea)*

The same pattern occurs throughout the other stanzas. A striking feature here is that it occurs in the first line of each stanza.

In some of the poems, he uses a new variation. He introduces a new word in order to replace the other word. In the poem entitled *Enkhundleni*, we have this refrain in the first and second stanza. This in all instances occur as the first line of the stanza. Look at the following lines for more clarification:

*Ngivumele ngingen' enkhundleni*

*(Allow me to get into the field)*

In the third stanza he substituted *enkhundleni* (in the field) with *nami* (me) and changed *Ngivumele* to a verb *Vuma*. This refrain is:

*Vuma ngingene nami*

*(Allow me to get in)*

In the poem entitled *Emadvwaleni Emnyambaza*, he uses the refrain in the second and fifth stanzas that is the same with the title. The refrain echoes the title. The refrain reinforces the theme that the rocks are slippery to crocodiles or hippopotamus. That is why they want to come and have a nap. In the second and fifth stanzas the refrain is in the first line of each stanza:

*Emadvwaleni emnyambaza*

*(On the rocks of Nyambaza)*

In the poem entitled *Injikalanga* he uses the same refrain in stanza three, line one and five. In stanza four, he uses a refrain in the first line only the refrain reads thus:

*Ifikile injikalanga*

*(Change has come)*

Shongwe uses the word *Injikalanga* literally that means sunset but deeply when, reading his poem, you find that he refers to change. People must learn to respect one another, laugh together and love each other. He emphasizes all these by using the above refrain. In some stanzas, he uses the same refrain but adding some of the words to stress what he says. In stanza five, in the first line, he uses refrain. Look at the following line as an example:

*Ifikile injikalanga nami ngiyayibona*

*(Change has come I can see it)*

In some of his poems, Shongwe uses refrain with constant wording. He is able to choose the position of the refrain in each poem very carefully. If the refrain is in the first line of the stanza, as in *Injikalanga*, it marks the beginning of a new stanza while it is establishing continuity with other stanza. Shongwe uses his refrain with variation according to what he wants to achieve in that particular poem.

To sum up Hees and Lawton (1988:61) state that: the refrain satisfies our natural love of repetition, give continuity and enhances the lyrical quality of any poem , be if joyful or serious. Shongwe also followed on Hees and

Lawton footsteps about refrain by employing refrain the way the other scholars have done.

#### **5.1.4 RHYME**

Ntuli (1978:203) maintains that composers of traditional Zulu poetry never made an attempt to use rhyme in their poetry. This is obvious because their poems were not written and there was therefore no opportunity to work out schemes whereby ending of the verses could be similar. What we find in traditional Zulu poetry is the repetition of whole words or sentence. It is clear that traditional poetry has no rhyme. There is only a repetition of words and sentences as a poetic device in traditional poetry. Swanepoel (1987:88) noted that rhyme is not used in traditional poetry that is why he says:

A verse technically means something new to African poetry. It is also principally limited to the written or the so-called modern poetry.

Vilakazi (1938:129) remarks on rhyme as follows:

Many scholars of African language persisted in the use of rhyme, and were not deterred from applying this device.

Vilakazi (op cit) further adds that:

I believe therefore that it is absolutely necessary that, in composing some poems, we ought to run and decorate our poetic images with definite stanza form.

Shongwe followed Vilakazi's idea because he uses rhyme effectively in his poems although it is limited. He uses similarity in the sounds of words or syllables. In Shongwe's poems, rhyme is achieved by repeating formatives, stems and words.

Lenake (1984:122) took the argument further when he says:

*The term rhyme indicates the correspondence of sounds at the beginning, or in the middle or at the end of verse lines. These rhymes schemes are normally referred to as initial rhyme, middle rhyme. And end-rhyme with various possible subdivisions. The corresponding sounds could be syllables, parts of syllables or morphemes depending on the possibilities provided by the language concerned, and the genius of the poet.*

The different types of rhyme, that is initial rhyme, middle rhyme and terminal rhyme, will be shown below. For this discourse we will concentrate on Shongwe's poetry as determined by position in verses.

Lenake (1984:150) comments on the application of rhyme in African languages as follows:

*In African languages with their different syllabic structure consisting mainly of a consonant - vowel combination, the rhyme possibilities are more restricted than in a language such as English. Another problem fact is that African languages are tonal languages.*

In his poems Shongwe tries to include rhyme that is his art and science in the writing of poetry in African languages. His art includes form that is the beauty of the poem. Shongwe did not force words in to a pattern.

Although Shongwe uses rhyme in his poems but he did not use it through out. In some of his poems he uses it very sparingly.

#### 5.1.4.1 INITIAL RHYME

Riccio (1980:180) defines rhyme as follows:

*Initial or head rhyme sometimes indicates rhyme occurring at the beginning of lines, but at other times, initial means the beginning consonants of words within the line, which brings it into the province of alliteration.*

Many poets employ initial rhyme. By arranging identical syllables in a pattern one can employ this device. Initially, these syllables can be of the first words in successive verses, or consonants in the same position. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Esicongweni se Table Mountain* has employed initial rhyme as follows:

**Ngitawukhuluma ngitsini kuwe**  
**Ngitawubuta muphi umbuzo**  
**Ngiphelelwe ngemagama ntsabakati**  
*Noko ngiyafisa kuceketsa nawe*  
**Ngiyacela ngihlebele ntsabakati.**  
(Shongwe 1985)

*(What am I going to say?  
What am I going to ask?  
I have no words mountain  
I wish to talk to you  
Whisper to me, mountain.)*

The above stanza forms a scheme which can be presented in this way, a,a,a,b,a. In some of his poems, he evokes the feeling of continuity of action. Shongwe in his poem entitled *Mphikeleli*, states that:

*Sengiyawubambelela kulo lijobo lakho*  
*Sengiyawulandzela kuwo umzila lowuvulile*  
*Sengiyawusabela kulo liphimbo lakho*  
*Sengiyawuhogela emakha lavela kuwe*  
(Shongwe 1996)

*(I will stick by your loin*  
*I will follow the trait you opened*  
*I will respond to your voice*  
*I will smell scent that comes from you)*

In the above stanza the poet repeats formative **se** -. This shows that he wanted these formatives to conform to the pattern he has chosen to decorate his stanza.

#### 5.1.4.2 MIDDLE (INTERNAL) RHYME

Reaske (1966:20) has this to say about middle (internal) rhyme:

Sometimes we find internal rhyme where the rhyming words are found within the line, often a word in the middle of a line rhyming with the last word or sound in the line.

Shongwe uses internal rhyme in his poem entitled *Lapha Ngitintile*.

*Ube ngitjani **ngabe** sengavutsa*

*(If I were a log I would have rot*

*If I were grass I would have burnt)*

Shongwe sometimes uses three consecutive rhyming in one sentence, which is rare in most of siSwati poetry, for example in his poem titled *Luhleko*:

***Lugagatseke luhleke luhleko***

*(The laugh giggles and laugh)*

Shongwe uses admirable pattern of rhymes. Rhymes of Shongwe have a wonderful binding effect in all the verses concerned. The repeated use of rhyme in one sentence shows that he wants to emphasize a point.

#### **5.1.4.3 TERMINAL (END) RHYME**

Miller and Greenberg (1981:11) state that when rhyme occurs at the close of lines it is called end rhyme. In some of Shongwe's poems there are poems, which use end rhyme in their stanzas. We will look at the following verses drawn from stanza five of a poem entitled *Inkondlo Yembongi*.

*Luvo lwakho luluvo lwami.*

*Liso lakho liliso lami*

*Nendlebe yakho seyingiyo yami*

*Uyayihlekis' inhlitiyo ngeluhleko lwakho*

*Lapho sengihluti' imilayeto yakho*

*(Shongwe 1996)*

*( your thought is my thought,*

*your eye is my eye,*

*Your ear is also mine,  
You make my heart to laugh with your laughter,  
You make my heart to laugh at you,  
Where I analyse your warnings).*

All rhyming members above are boldly written. We have noticed that in the first syllable and in the last two lines we have rhyme that consists of the vowel of the penultimate plus the final syllable. In the extract below taken from Shongwe (*op cit: 1*) we find rhyme occurring in the two last syllables.

*lyinkondlo yembongi **lengiyivako**  
lyinkondlo yembongi **lengiphambako**.*

*(It's the poet's poem that I understand  
It's the poet's poem that bits me).*

## CHAPTER 6

### 6.0 CONCLUSION.

#### 6.1 FINDINGS.

.We have found that Shongwe is a real metaphysical poet. He is very much philosophical and his language is very simple. His choice and use of words constantly connect the abstract with the concrete, the remote with the real and the sublime with the common place.

More of his giftedness enables him to be seen as a real metaphysical poet. We have also observed that Shongwe concentrates on his work. His poetry is something which one must be proud of. His craftsmanship is evident in his work. The following were the main findings of this study.

In Chapter 1 we declare this study was to study Shongwe's poems and to investigate as to whether or not Shongwe is one of the most prolific poetry writers especially in siSwati over the last few years. This chapter reflected on the aim of this research, method of research, geographic and historical background revealed the actual aim of the study. Shongwe's biography clarified his whole background, social life, factors and circumstances that influenced his writings especially of poems. It was concluded that Shongwe's poems are read by both young and old academics.

Chapter 2 dealt with educational, social, political and cultural situations. It also dealt with religion and beliefs. Protest poetry is a type of poetry that is based on the poet's socio-political, economic and political circumstances. It dealt with the oppression of the Blacks during the past apartheid era. It revealed that people were tired of oppression and that they did everything possible to free themselves. They destroyed the old order for a new one irrespective of the consequences. Shongwe's religious inclination helped him to mix with quite a number of people and observed their behavior. Shongwe highlighted the importance of culture in his poems. He expects people to respect their

cultures. He is concerned about those who do not respect their cultures and who fail to pass it on from one generation to the other.

In Chapter 3 we examined as to whether Shongwe is a metaphysical poet. What makes people love to read Shongwe's work is because his work develops the mind. Another prominent characteristic of Shongwe is concentration of ideas. In this work we find genuine ideas rather than decoration. It is where we get creative power and intelligence. In this chapter Shongwe displayed his genuine skills.

Chapter 4 is concerned with imagery. Imagery clarifies and intensifies what the poet is describing.

Shongwe has used a variety of simile including idiomatic expressions. Some are appropriate and highly effective. Shongwe's use of metaphor is equally impressive. His poetry is based on solid foundation of metaphor. Personification has been used in a simple manner because the poet handles this form of imagery with care. We applaud the poet for his ingenuity with all the figures of speech he has used.

In Chapter 5 we observed the structure of Shongwe's poetry in parallelism, linking, refrain and rhyme. He displays a fair amount of skill and techniques as well. In Shongwe's poetry refrain is used in a single line or in two consecutive lines. In some of his poems refrain has slight variations.

We appreciate the use of such variations because it prevents monotony. Three types of rhyme have been used in Shongwe's poetry. Initial rhyme is the most common one followed by the end rhyme. Middle rhyme is less frequent compared to the other two. We appreciate its use. The perfect parallelism is the most common one when compared to cross parallelism. As regards to linking, vertical and oblique linkings are common whereas horizontal line repetition pattern is uncommon.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Since siSwati is still developing I would recommend that more books be written so that both young and old can read siSwati books to develop their minds and increase their knowledge. Few books are written in siSwati that is not enough because these books are needed for both academic and pleasure purposes. We still need people like Shongwe who commit themselves in upgrading their nation.

My appeal to the authors of siSwati is to write more books since that will uplift our language as we are aware that in South Africa all languages are equal and official. If there are fewer siSwati books our language will remain inferior because people who speak other languages would not be in a position to know siSwati because there are no books available. We also appreciate that Shongwe has translated a book from English to siSwati, namely *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* by Charles Dickens as a contribution to the uplifting of the siSwati language.

## 6.3 CONCLUSION.

Shongwe's poems are based on education, nature, religion, death, politics, social life and culture. The fact that the largest category is that of nature indicates Shongwe's propensity for nature that predominates his poems. Shongwe's poems on nature do not only list the physical attributes of the subject but also strive to establish a balance between sensory perception and intellectual appeal. The fact that he loves nature very much counts to his favour as a poet.

The religious poems are that of love and forgiveness. He is asking God to forgive us. He is also afraid to die through fire. It is evident here that he is a Christian. We applaud the poet for his ingenuity because it shows that he is a matured poet.

Shongwe's sense of humour is always about life. His poems are well structured. His stanzas are not the same and not equal which is good because it shows that he was not in the same mood when writing them. Imagery has been employed to express his thoughts vividly and concisely.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, M.H. (1981) : A Glossary of Literary Terms.  
New York: Holt, Rinehart and  
Winston.
- Adewale, Maja-Pearce (1990) : The Heinemann Book of Africa Poetry  
in English. London: Heinemann  
International.
- Bhiya, O.A. (1990) : Impalampala 3. Pretoria: De Jager-  
Haum Publishers.
- Bible Society of South Africa (1978) : The Holy Bible. Revised Standard  
Version
- Brooke, C. and Warren, R. P.(1960) : Understanding Poetry: New York:  
Holt, Reinhart and Winston.
- Cope, T (1968) : Izibongo: Zulu Praise Poems.  
London: Oxford University Press.
- Cox, C.B. and Dyson, A E (1965) : The Practical Criticism of Poetry.  
London: Edward Arnold, Publishers.
- Cuddon, J.A. (1984) : A Dictionary of Literacy Terms.  
Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Daiches, D. (1982) : Critical Approaches to Literature.  
London: Longman Group Limited.
- Fowler, F. W.and F. G. (1978) : Concise Oxford Dictionary.  
Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Francis, W. and Mamphela, R.(1989) : Uprooting Poverty: The South African  
Challenge. Cape Town: Creda Press.

- Guma, S. M. (1968) : The Form Content and Technique of Traditional literature in Southern Sotho. Pretoria: J L Van Schalk.
- Hees, M. and Lawton, R. (1978) : The Owl Critic. Cape Town: Nasou Ltd.
- Hirson, B. (1979) : Year of Fire, Year of Ash. London: Zed Press.
- Hunter, J. (1965) : The Metaphysical Poets. London: Evans Brothers Limited.
- James, T. (1988) : The Metaphysical Poets. New York:: Longman York Press.
- Kermode, F. and Hollander, J. (1973) : The Oxford Anthology of English Literature. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kreuzer, J.R. (1955) : Element of Poetry. New York: Macmillian.
- Kunene, D. P. (1971) : Heroic Poetry of the Basotho. Oxford: Claredon Press.
- Lenake, J. M. (1984) : The Poetry of K E Ntsane. Pretoria: Unpublished D. Lit et Phil thesis, University of South Africa.
- Miller, R. and Greenberg, R. A. (1981) : Poetry: An Introduction. London: Macmillan Education Limited.
- Murray, P. (1978) : Literal Criticism, a Glossary of Major Terms. London: Longman

- Group Ltd.
- Myres, J. and Simms, M. (1969) : The Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms. New York: South Methodist University.
- Nkosi, L. (1981) : Tasks and Masks. Themes and styles Of African Literature. London: Longman.
- Ntuli, D. B. Z. (1978) : The Poetry of B W Vilakazi. Pretoria: (Unpublished D. Lit et Phil thesis), University of South Africa.
- Ntuli, D.B.Z. (1984) : The Poetry of B.W. Vilakazi. Pretoria: J.L. Van Schalk.
- Peeck, J. and Coyle, M. (1984) : Literacy Terms and Critism. London: Macmillian Education Ltd.
- Pretorius, E.J. (1989) : Aspects of Northern Sotho Poetry. Pretoria: Via Africa Ltd.
- Reaske, C. R. (1966) : How to Analyze Poetry. United States Of America: Simon and Schuter Incorporated.
- Riccio, W. D. (1980) : The Intimate Art of Writing Poetry: Eaglewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Selden, R. (1988) : The Theory of Criticism. London: Longman Publishers.
- Shongwe, J.P. (1985) : Sihlengi Setinkondlo:Pietermaritzburg Shutter and Shooter.

- Shongwe, J.P. (1996) : *Inkondlo Yembongi*. Nelspruit:  
Simsho Publishers
- Swanepoel, C. B. (1987) : *Rhyme is a Distinctive Feature in the  
Northern Sotho Sonnet*. *South African  
Journal of African Languages*  
3: 87 - 93.
- Thwala, J.J. (1986) : *Imagery in the poetry of J.P. Shongwe*.  
KwaDlangezwa: Unpublished B.A.  
Honours Article. University of  
Zululand.
- Thwala, J. J. (2000) : *An Explication of Some Aspects of  
Christian. Themba Msimang's Poetry*.  
Kwa-Dlangewa: Unpublished D. Lit et  
Phil thesis. University of Zululand.
- Van Rooyen, C.S. (1988) : *Time and Scope in three Poems of  
D.B.Z. Ntuli*. *Anthology of Articles on  
African Linguistics and Literature: a  
Festschrift to C.L.S Nyembezi*.  
Isando: Lexicon.
- Von Staden, P. M. (1975) : Taalaspunkte van Prysgeedig in Zulu.  
*Die Kunswerk as Taal*. *Kaapstad:*  
Tafelberg p161 – 186.
- Wainwright, A. T. (1977) : *There is Relationship between Praise  
Poetry in Zulu and Xhosa*: Pretoria:  
University of South Africa.

- Yelland, H. L. et. al. (1980) : A Handbook of Literary Terms.  
Boston: The Writer Incorporated.
- Zulu, E .S. Q. (1994) : Themes. Diction and Form in the  
Poetry of C. S. Z. NTULI, Pretoria:  
University of South Africa.