

Compliments and Caveats:
An ‘implicated’ view of Zulu personal naming
as a retaliatory function
in the *Emaqwabeni* and *KwaLuthuli* areas of KwaZulu-Natal

by

Mzuyabonga Amon Gumede

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts: Orality-Literacy Studies

University of Natal, Durban.

January 2000

DECLARATION

I, Mzuyabonga Amon Gumedede,

declare that,

except for the quotations specially indicated

in the text,

and such help as I have acknowledged,

this study is wholly my own work,

and has not been submitted for a degree

in any other university.

Signature:

Table of Contents

1.	Acknowledgements	4
2.	Introduction	5-6
3.	Theoretical Framework	6
4.	Contextual background and Literature review:	7
1)	Naming as an anthropological phenomenon	7-14
2)	The anthropological significance of the Joussean theory in the recording of oral traditions	14-20
3)	The significance of naming in Africa	20-24
4)	The socio-cultural context of naming in Zulu Tradition	24-28
5.	The collection of data (methodology)	28-29
6.	The recording, translation, mnemonic analysis, interpretation and evaluation of selected names as retaliatory measures in the <i>Emaqwabeni</i> and <i>KwaLuthuli</i> communities of KwaZulu-Natal.	29-49
7.	Concluding Remarks	49-52
8.	References	52-53

Acknowledgements

It is both an honour and pleasure for me to express my endless, sincere gratitude to the following people:

Joan Conolly, my supervisor, who was always available to pave the way forward with regard to the difficulties that were impeding my progress.

Professor Marilet Sienaert of the University of Durban-Westville who encouraged me to pursue an MA degree in Oral Studies and for her immense concern about my progress after I had registered for an MA degree in Oral Studies.

Professor Sienaert, Course Co-ordinator, for his clear introductory lessons pertaining to Oral Studies and for his much-appreciated tendency of inviting guest lecturers to share their knowledge with us.

My colleague, Mr F P Ndlovu (a teacher), for his appreciation of my research area.

My cousin, Sibukiseni (a Secondary School Teacher), who encouraged me and assisted me in the collection of data.

My father for providing me with accommodation in Durban when I was coming for the scheduled supervision meetings.

My mother who encouraged me to endure in the moments of difficulties with regard to my research project.

My respondents, for their willingness to furnish me with the data which contributed to the success of my study.

It is hoped that this study will increase understanding and appreciation of the role of naming in Zulu society and its values to the community at large.

Introduction

This study records and explores twenty-two examples of Zulu naming of people with a retaliatory function. The examples used reflect issues of social friction with the neighbours as well as the friction within the families at large, including that between spouses and in-laws. This study will further concentrate on the impact of this naming process to avoid and to resolve conflicts. The collected names will be individually described, analysed, interpreted and evaluated.

There are a variety of reasons why I have chosen this study. The reasons can be stated as follows:

- 1) There is a considerable body of scholarly attention to, and writing on, the subject of onomastics. (Finnegan 1970, Poland 1995, Turner 1998, *inter alia*). Very little has been written in English from/with an 'insider' view of Zulu onomastics, and it is to this gap that this study endeavours to contribute.
- 2) Secondly, I will investigate onomastics in this way in order to demonstrate the impact naming has on social regulation – in its using names as 'compliments and caveats'. It is hoped that this study will increase understanding and appreciation of the role of naming in Zulu society and its value to the community at large.
- 3) Material presented here reflects the environment which names people (and domestic animals) in such a way that a retaliatory message is entailed in a name. Such naming practices form

part of my personal 'horizon of expectations': as such, I can report upon it as an observer with an informed understanding of the implications of the observations that I make.

- 4) By writing an article on this topic, I am documenting an oral tradition in writing. I hope that new perspectives will emerge, which have not previously been the focus of attention.

Theoretical Framework

The chief theoretical frameworks around which this research rotates are laid down as follows:

- 1) Oral tradition
- 2) *Ubuntu* (Humanism)
- 3) The Anthropology of *Geste* and Rhythm (Jousse 1997)

Since this area of research is about people, anthropological and sociological sources are of profound importance. The sources and references pertaining to this area of research will help most in creating the context of the topic. I will first provide a wide context in connection with onomastics. In other words, I will create a global anthropological context for my study. In the second place I will place the study in the African context and in the third and last place I will shift from the general to specific, that is from naming generally to its application and retaliatory function in a specific Zulu context.

Contextual background and Literature review - Naming as a global anthropological phenomenon

Naming of people constitutes one of the five cultural 'milestones' common to all cultures worldwide, and as such is particularly and peculiarly socially and culturally significant. These cultural 'milestones' can be identified as follows:

- 1) Birth
- 2) Naming
- 3) Coming-of-Age
- 4) Marriage, and
- 5) Death

Naming practice is common to the anthropos in that it takes place regardless of language, colour or creed. Sharifa Zawawi defines a name in this manner:

A name is simply a word, phrase, or sentence by which a human being is known. By it, s/he is identified, called, described and classified (1998:xii).

The above quotation provides a very clear global anthropological use of names. What can be deduced from the above quotation is that a person cannot be called, identified, described, distinguished or classified if he or she has no name. Names perform, *inter alia*, a purpose of expression.

Not only people are given names, but also other entities which exist throughout the world. There exist names for places, plants, animals, soils, streets, *ad infinitum*.

Nothing on this earth - and in much of the heavens - exist without a name. There are names for people, things, buildings and places, and also for storms and hurricanes. Man-made and natural phenomena alike are known through their names (Zawawi 1998:xii).

The naming practice is continuous and creative in that people keep on naming new things which appear in their environment. This leads to accumulation in the onomasticon. By onomasticon is meant the corpus or body of names in a language which includes personal names, place names, ethnic names and the like. Naming as an anthropological practice, globally, is unpacked by Raper when he writes:

With very few exceptions, everyone has the opportunity of naming some entity, be it a new-born child, a pet, a house, a place, an object, other people in the area, or whatever (1982:63).

Personal names and Reputations

Naming is a very splendid phenomenon. Names entail pride, history, popularity and other connotations. The naming of people, animals and other entities is thus not unintentional, but such practice is carried out to restore pride, history and popularity of the context in which they are/were given.

Because people tend generally to be very proud of their names, they try, in most cases, by all means possible, to maintain the good status of their names by protecting their reputation. Names often reveal a great deal about ourselves. Raper clarifies the superiority and the significance of names when he says the following:

In our society, as well as in others, a name enjoys a special status. A name symbolizes a person and may even be equated with that person (1982:63).

This implies that naming has both communal and personal importance. If a person commits wrong deeds in the community in which s/he lives, s/he does not hamper his/her name as an individual, but also the name of his/her parents and the family at large as well as the name of the community at large. The undesirable behaviour of the individual brings the name of his/her family eventually into disrepute.

A person of a good reputation is described as having a good name and when he dies he is said to leave behind a good name (Zawawi 1998:17).

What can be deduced from the above statement is that the community expects the generations following a person with the well-known reputation to proceed in the good steps of their precursor. Zawawi further elucidates the inter-relatedness between reputations and names when she says:

Nevertheless, once given in a name, a reputation develops through one's own initiative. Without the

growth of a good reputation, the meaning of a person's name has no significance. A name speaks or does not speak for itself (1998:17).

This implies that it is a person him or herself who determines the good elements of his or her name in the community in which s/he lives. Once a person behaves in an undesirable and proscribed manner as institutionalized by the community, that act will have a negative impact on the name of the community, therefore a person is imbued with the calibre to control the reputation of his/ her name. To clarify this Zawawi writes:

Nevertheless you do have control over the reputation of your given name, the dignity that goes with it (1998:18).

Naming and Identity

As I have pointed out, identity is a significant anthropological element implied in a person's name. As this study is embedded in the oral nature of the 'anthropos', the significance of names in studies of oral traditions is important. People are known by their names: who they are and where they come from. This view is supported by Molefi Kete Asante when he writes the following:

Naming is significant because it assists us in identifying who we are and where we think we should be going (1991:9).

The following also reinforces the point:

... names are not just words, they are a link to all the ancestors who came before you and all the progeny who will follow (Stewart 1994:vii).

Names/Surnames: Their Origin

Names and surnames are closely related, in that surnames originate from the names of certain significant people in a family and that is why surnames are sometimes referred to as 'family names'.

Peter Verstappen (1980:14-16) mentions the categories which he says have given rise to British names:

- 1) Names derived from first names or patronymics
- 2) Names derived from other relations
- 3) Names derived from physical characteristics
- 4) Names derived from traits
- 5) Names derived from metaphor and ritual
- 6) Names derived from literature, myth and fable
- 7) Names derived from occupations
- 8) Name derived from sayings
- 9) Names derived from actions and events
- 10) Names associated with animals and plants
- 11) Names which indicate nationality
- 12) Names associated with a man-made landmark

- 13) Names associated with natural landmarks
- 14) Names which are status orientated

These fourteen categories of the origin of names cannot only be restricted to the British names, but also to the origin of the names from other countries of the world and are therefore anthropological.

To further elucidate personal naming as one of the five cultural 'milestones' common to all cultures worldwide Kathy Ishizuka (1997:3) says that the name given to the child is also subject to the scrutiny of family, friends and community. This implies that it is not always the only burden of the parents to name a child, but also other people who are close to the parent may play a joint conjugal role in the naming practice.

Ishizuka further writes:

A name can proclaim parents' hopes for their child and how they define themselves as a family. Your personal, religious, and cultural identity can be measured, in part, by the name you give your child (1997:3).

From the above statement, it can be said, arguably, that identity is one of the significant elements which are encapsulated in a person's name.

Ishizuka (1997:5) lists some popular categories of names which appear as follows:

- 1) Ethnic names - these are names which proclaim ethnic and cultural identity of the parents.
- 2) Place names - a parent may name a baby after a certain place, town, etc, which is significant to him or her.
- 3) Names from nature - these names reflect nature
- 4) Customised names - these are names given by the parents to their children just because they want them to be unique with theirs.
- 5) Names from mythology - these are names about supernatural powers
- 6) Classic names - these are old names
- 7) Biblical names - these are names from *The Bible*
- 8) Invented names - these are names formed by combining syllables or names. e.g. June + Rose = Junerose

Modern considerations when choosing a name

Ishizuka (1997) furnishes us with ten considerations when one chooses a name for a baby. These considerations are written as follows:

- 1) The parent must start early. This must be a joint decision between the parents involved.
- 2) Cultural ethnic, or religious considerations are important.
- 3) If you want to honour your family, decisions should be made before the start of naming.
- 4) The name must have a sound and rhythm.
- 5) The baby's last name must also be one of the considerations.
- 6) Meaning of the name should be researched.

- 7) Cute and very stylish names may be considered less appropriate later in a child's life.
- 8) Nicknames should be considered - can a baby and a parent live with the nicknames or not, this needs a prior decision.
- 9) Spelling - the child must be named with the name which he or she will spell or pronounce correctly.
- 10) Don't make a final decision until you actually see your baby.

These considerations are crucial since identity is implied in them and the name's meaning is cultural and therefore are anthropological, given that all people regardless of time or clime celebrate their identity in a cultural framework.

The anthropological significance of the Joussean theory in the recording of oral traditions

I cannot conclude the global anthropological context of my study without briefly unpacking the role played by Marcel Jousse (1886-1961) in unearthing many valuable insights pertaining to human expression in a variety of ways and for a variety of functions. Since Jousse was born into an oral milieu, and observed this milieu and other oral milieus the world over closely throughout his life, his insights pertaining to orality are substantial and significant.

The *oral-gestual* medium (by means of 'audible and visible movement') is the favoured way by which the oral societies record their socio-cultural affairs including laws, genealogies, important events and the like. Oral societies pass information from one generation to the next in the form of Oral Tradition. According to Jousse the use of the *oral-gestual* medium as a mnemonic record-keeper led to the development of what he calls 'Anthropological Global Oral Style', which is sometimes abbreviated

as ‘Oral-style’. Jousse identifies four Mnemonic Laws of The Anthropology of *Geste* and Rhythm, which inform the Oral-style, and the Mnemotechnical Devices as further aids to memory:

The Mnemonic Laws are:

- 1) The Law of Mimism
- 2) The Law of Rhythmism
- 3) The Law of Bilateralism
- 4) The Law of Formulism

The Mnemotechnical Devices include annomination/clamp words (repetition of words), avocalization or clamp rhymes (repetition of vowels), aconsonantization/ clamp sounds (repetition of consonants), and paralinguistic functions, onomatopoeia, countdowns, key words and the like. In this study I have regarded the repetition of articulatory features among the mnemotechnical devices (see *Felindawe, Sandile, Buzani, Swelamandla*).

The Law of Mimism

Jousse describes the anthropos (human being) as a “complexus of gestes” (1997:14, 56, 658), as an indivisible “psycho-physiology of the essentially rhythmic human geste” (1997:659) in a ‘global’ whole. Man, the anthropos, is played or *in-pressed* (im-pressed) by the world around him which s/he registers in the context of previous experience and then re-plays or *ex-presses* what has been played into him or her. Jousse terms this ‘playing’ and ‘re-playing’, ‘Mimism’.

Mimism accounts for the capacity of the anthropos to imitate his or her surroundings; animals and natural events, people - the sum of immediate and mediated activity. Jousse demonstrates that what is 'mimised' is automatically 'memorised' as the "complexus of gestes".

Mimism is applicable in my area of research which is the naming of people, in the following manner:

In the world around us there are people, animals, things, etc. All these phenomena exist and have names. Naming is a continuous process which all people 'play' and 'replay'. A person is named because other people around him or her have names. Naming therefore, is *inter alia*, part of establishing the concept of identity. Identity requires anthropological recognition, therefore definition, hence naming.

The Law of Rhythmism

Man is characterised by Rhythm: his being is characterised by the involuntary rhythms of his natural body functions, and his conscious expression/ activities are characterised by rhythm, which enables their performance. Once there is rhythm, there is order. The individual body of the anthropos is ordered by rhythm (microscopic rhythm): likewise human expression and the body of the family institution are ordered by rhythm (macroscopic rhythm). Names are part of rhythm that emanates from the order of a family. If people had no names, there would be no order because it would be difficult to identify and call people in a given society.

The Law of Bilateralism

For order to last there must be balancing or bilateralism as Oral-style suggests. Man is structurally bilateral, with a left side and a right side, a top and bottom and a back and front. This multiple bilateralism and the characteristic rhythm enable each other to maintain the order of expression and the order of society. Bilateralism, for example, serves the opposition between 'me' and 'you'. In other words one's name differentiates each of us from 'the other'. This opposition marks the balancing that exists in a naming process. There are names for people, there are names for animals, there are names for natural forces, etc. These different naming inform naming as a balanced practice.

The Law of Formulism

The combining of Rhythm and Balancing leads to Formulism, or the emergence of patterns of expression developed in a particular context of expression: Every culture develops, for example, their own way of naming which differs from other cultures. In this way naming is both an anthropological (i.e. species-specific) and an ethnic(i.e. group-specific) geste.

Mnemotechnical Devices

Jousse also identifies the mnemotechnical devices, which further enhance memory. Examples of the mnemotechnical devices include anomination/clamp words (repetition of words), avocalization or clamp rhymes (repetition of vowels), aconsonantization/ clamp sounds (repetition of consonants), paralinguistic functions, onomatopoeia, mnemonics, countdowns and the like.

Mnemonic structure of the Oral-style is significant to human beings anthropologically, for without it, important information could not and would not be and have been recorded in human memory. The traditional identity of peoples is the sum of their socio-cultural archive which needs to be preserved from generation to generation.

Memory and identity

Once memory is lost, the socio-cultural archive is lost. The loss, in part or whole, of an existing cultural archive will result in a partial or complete void which gives rise to deletion, addition, variation which differs from previous expressions. If such loss is radical, the additions and variations could be so removed from the practice and expression of earlier times as to render it unrecognizable. In such instances, groups experience severe and traumatic loss of identity. Names are socio-cultural archives. People operate poorly without the memories of their forefathers, for to bring back their names into their memories is to bring back their own identities. The names of the ancestors are a reflection of people's identities. Once their names are brought back into their memories, their good reputations will be brought back into the people's memories.

'Shelter' as Mnemonic Metaphor

Jousse also couches his thinking in a number of metaphors, one of which is 'housing' or 'shelter' as one of the basic human rights of the anthropos. What can be established from Jousse is that shelter or houses are a universal metaphor. All people need shelter and they spend a lot of time and energy on the process of finding and maintaining a place to shelter. Like a house or shelter, memory accommodates and protects the socio-cultural archive of the human race. To this end I can say,

arguably, that Mnemonic Laws and Mnemotechnical Devices are anthropological, globally. These laws become ethnic only when they are applied in different individual cultures.

Jousse's theory of human expression can thus not only be restricted to the milieu in which he was born, but is also applicable in other oral milieus worldwide. The elements of Jousse's Oral-style, that is Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism characterise all forms of mnemonic oral expression globally.

An Illustration of Mnemonic Balanced Rhythmic Schemas and Mnemotechnical Devices

Chamberlin (1998) identifies the difficulties with “putting performance on the page”. Jousse advocates the placing of orally performed texts in rhythmic schemas on either side of the ‘spine’ of the page to demonstrate the operation of Bilateralism which energise Rhythm and develop Formulas, in binary balancings.

The following Zulu names are recorded in Joussean binary rhythmic schemas. In each example, in addition to the Rhythm and Balance evidenced in the Rhythmic Schema, Mnemotechnical Devices are evident.

Name: *Khalangani?* (What do you want?)

Khala

ngani?

The Mnemotechnical Device of avocalisation is evident in the repetition of [a], and aconsonatisation

in the repetition of the lingua-palatal articulatory feature in [l] and [n].

Name: *Zamaliphi?* (What plan are you trying to make?)

Zama

liphi?

The repeated avocalisation of [a] in the first and [i] in the second rhythmic unit aids memory.

Name: *Sonosakhe* (His sin)

Sono

sakhe

The repetition of [s] operates aconsonantly and [o] operates avocally as Mnemotechnical Devices.

These balancings are thus global and anthropological in that they reflect the bilateralised structure of the anthropos - with a right and left side, and further are energised rhythmic emotions of an anthropos as an ‘indivisible complexus of gestes’. All the names documented in this study can be balanced in rhythmic schemas, and display mnemotechnical features in this way.

The Significance of Naming in Africa

Finnegan (1970) investigates the significance of naming in the African arena, which incorporates many different interpretations. Names are, according to her, functional in minimizing friction. Through naming or onomastic expressions, an indirect social comment is expressed. She puts greater emphasis on the significance of names which she sees as indispensable to Oral Tradition. She stresses

this significance when she writes:

In fact it should be true to say that names often play an indispensable part in oral literature in Africa.

Such names ... can add a depth even to ordinary talk... (1970:470).

Finnegan is also supported by Stewart, commenting that:

Traditional African names have wonderful meanings and unique histories (1994:vii).

What can also be deduced from the above quotations is that the interpretative nature of the name given to a person is situational because the deeper meaning of the given name depends on the situation and context in which it is given. A person, for example, names his/her child with reference to a certain situation, for example, conflict, which can be interpreted in the midst of the name.

The context or situation of the naming contributes pragmatically to the meaning of the name. Leech (1983) defines 'pragmatics' as the study of how utterances have meaning in situation. He further writes that "... pragmatics differs from grammar in that it is essentially goal-directed and evaluative" (1983:xi).

The following uses of names as mentioned by Finnegan (1970:143-173) recapitulate the significance of naming in Africa:

- Names can be used in oblique comment;
- Names are often used to express ideas, aspirations, sorrows or philosophical comments;
- They can express joyful sentiments;
- They can contribute to the literary flavour of formal or informal conversation;
- Names have a close connection with proverbs, many are abbreviations or restatements of recognised proverbs and are characterised by some of their stylistic features.

Another writer who looks at the African concept of naming is Anim (1994). In his writing, Anim explains the significance of oral tradition in unraveling the silent people's history. He says that oral tradition contains people's cultures, aspirations and hopes. Oral tradition makes the world and its surroundings to function in a rhythmic pattern. The essence of names is *inter alia*, a reinforced form of expression that manifests in oral tradition. In his research concerning the tribes in Ghana, Anim (1994) categorises names into two groups, viz.

- Automatic names
- Given names

Automatic names

When a child is born, his/her naming is automatically determined by the day of birth and by the child's sex, for example, a male child born on Sunday may be named *Kwasi* in the Akan tribe. Other automatic names are attached to certain rituals that are performed on the day on which the child is born.

Given names

Anim (1994) says that in the Akan society a child is given a human name after six days have lapsed, that is, on the seventh day after his or her birth. On the seventh day, the visiting spirit - as the newborn is called - must have decided whether to stay with the parents. To have a child in these Akan tribes confers status on a woman's life. A woman without a child is said to be more than a curse: she would prefer to die rather than be insulted as a barren woman. This implies that a woman who has a child has a good name in the tribe.

Categories of 'Given' names include:

God-related names

Having children in traditional societies is regarded as a gift from God. There are therefore names which are God-related which are given to the newborns, for example *Selom* which means 'God loves me'.

Death-related names

These names have emerged as a result of high infant mortality rate. Such names express frustration and hopelessness. It is believed that a name that has a death connotation will make the Angel of Death pass by a child. An infant's name *Yornu* means 'Born for the grave'.

War-related names

The names which are given to the infants may reflect the heroes of the war. The whole tribe revels in its military fame.

Other categories of names mentioned by Anim (1994) are the following:

- Advisory names
- Multiple death names
- Drinking bar names
- Role names

The process of naming situated in the Zulu cultural and situational context contributes to the meaning of the names, and their significance as ‘compliments and caveats’. The names reflect ‘mimismologically’ the social milieu from which they emanate: the meaning of the names is only fully realised within their pragmatic context and situation.

The socio-cultural context of naming in Zulu tradition - ‘compliments and caveats’:

Poland (1997) writes about the cultural significance of cattle in the Zulu tradition. She also provides valuable information on the naming of cattle according to their colour-pattern and the perception of cattle in the Zulu society. Cattle are therefore very important as a tool for social comment. This is evident in the cattle’s names and praises.

The socio-cultural context of naming can also be attached to Turner’s (1991) article on oral poetry, specifically *Zulu Izihasho* (Zulu praises). What can be deduced from the article is that a man is recognised by his praises which make him proud of his status in the society. Praises are performed by an *Imbongi* (a person who praises/compliments). Oral poetry not only functions to praise a person, but also to criticise him or to expose his weaknesses (caveats). This form of oral poetry does not

criticise a person directly, but satirically. Turner (1991) exemplifies this by mentioning, *inter alia*, the *Izibongo* (praises) of Gina in which he is exposed as a kind Christian man – the ‘compliments’, in contrast with the first utterance describing Gina a drunkard the ‘caveat’.

Satirical criticism avoids physical tension that might arise if a person is criticised directly. There is an indispensable link between satirical oral poetry and onomastics. There are names which are given to people with the indirect aim of warning them about their unacceptable deeds – the ‘caveats’. This is exemplified by the onomastics that reflect the conflict within the family, community, or between neighbours or spouses. By naming a child *Mona* (Jealousy), one is indirectly telling a person to abandon his/her envious behaviour or attitude. Satirical oral poetry and onomastics are, in other words, a strategy to minimise psycho-physical tensions so as to keep the society orderly and controlled.

Turner (1998) gives an account of the importance of the Zulu personal and domestic animal's names as a form of descriptive expression of the situation or the contexts in which the names are given. According to her, names convey messages that can be decoded by the one to whom the message is directed. Turner documents and explains names of both people and animals.

Turner (1998:238) describes the Zulu people as people who live an essentially harmony-orientated life. This implies that any conflict that may arise, whether within the family or between neighbours, as Turner points out, is of much concern to the whole community. In rural communities, for example, the chiefs and *Izinduna* (chief's assistants) are concerned with the maintenance of peace in those areas

which are under their control.

In the instances where two or more members of the community are confronting each other, the stakeholders in the community intervene by summoning the conflicting members into an open space. There the community members at large may be invited to attend the *Imbizo* (mass meeting) where the conflicting members may, in collaboration with community members, be warned not to be involved in the conflict again.

From the above description it can be deduced that conflict, specifically to Zulus, is strictly unacceptable. The members of the community try by all means to avoid confrontation among themselves, for the chief has powers to prosecute and punish them. Those members who may happen to be punished, may be punished in the following ways:

- The one who is found guilty may be denied his land;
- The whole herd (that is cattle, goats, etc.) of the guilty person, if any, may be forcibly taken from him. If the same person continues to destabilize or disturb the community's peace, he may eventually be evicted from the community.

Through naming, the indirect message implied in a person's name may voice out the discontent of the community member. In this way it can be said, arguably, that onomastics function as regulators of social norms and values. Conflicts and fights among the community members are thus replaced by onomastic expression.

The names which exemplify the regulation of conflict as indicated above are according to Turner (1998: 241) classified as follows:

1. Friction between spouses or lovers;
2. Friction between in-laws;
3. Friction within the family at large;
4. Friction with neighbours/local community

In this article, as indicated in the earlier part of this writing, I will provide more examples of onomastics which reflect friction between neighbours or the local community, as well as the friction within the family at large, including that between spouses and in-laws. In this case, as I have already mentioned, I will deal only with people's names.

The following are the causes of conflict with neighbours which are identified by Turner (1998:247):

5. Accusations regarding witchcraft;
6. Jealousy between neighbors;
7. Accusations with regard to dishonesty;
8. The spread of rumours/gossiping

The above-mentioned causes of conflicts also apply to the conflicts within the family at large.

In the community in which I am residing, I have heard of and I sometimes experience conflicts which were/are caused by the above-mentioned factors. Such factors are a hindrance to the peaceful *status quo* which manifests in the community-orientated lifestyle. I use all of these categories, and add two other categories in which conflict has been experienced, and then lessened through naming:

9. Accusation with regard to land/boundaries;
10. Minor fights among children which are projected onto their elders.

In the case of each name recorded below, I will identify which of these categories each exemplifies. In some instances, the name exemplifies more than one category.

Collection of data (methodology)

To collect data, I interviewed members of the *Emaqwabeni* and the *KwaLuthuli* communities. These two communities are closely interwoven although they are not under the reign of the same chief. These communities are in the *Maphumulo District* and fall under the *Ilembe Regional Council*. It is important to mention is that these two neighbouring communities have never been involved in any direct confrontation in the form of faction fights. Peace has prevailed for many years and still prevails. The Oral Tradition of according names a retaliatory function plays a distinctive role in these communities to avoid direct physical confrontation.

I have collected the data which pertains to names that reflect conflict within extended families and between/among neighbours. My respondents included both the elderly and teenagers. I did not use

questionnaires because this research was conducted in an 'oral milieu'. Appointments in conjunction with the respondents were crucial as a factor of informed consent. I recorded whatever information which was given to me by the respondents in note form.

I formulated the following questions for the interviews:

- 1) What is your name?/What is the name of this child?
- 2) Who named you?/Who named the child?
- 3) When were you given this name?/When was the young one given a name?
- 4) Why were you/was s/he named in this way?
- 5) What effects did this name have on the neighbours or extended family eventually?

The advantages regarding my data collection

Being a member of the community advantaged my position as researcher. I was able to collect data with relative care, and find that I was well received by the members of both communities because I was known to the residents.

Some of the learners who are at the local school (Njũbanjuba Secondary School) where I am presently teaching, were not uneasy when I was interviewing them about their names. I was also able to collect data by listening to conversations between my mother and aunt who were discussing the names of people which resulted from certain incidents. Sibukeseni, a teacher at Nkosibomvu Secondary School, was also a useful informant and go-between.

The recording, translation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of selected names used as retaliatory measures in the *Emaqwabeni* and *KwaLuthuli* Communities of KwaZulu-Natal

1. **Name:** *Bajabhise* (Disappoint-them)

Category: Minor fights among children which are projected onto their elders.

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Baja</i>	<i>bhise</i>
-------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Aconsonantisation of [b] and avocalisation of [a].

Socio-cultural context: In the *Emaqwabeni* area there was a conflict between two girls who belong to the two geographically separated, but related, families. The two girls continued to insult and fight each other for an extended time until eventually the adults became involved. The adults did not attempt to solve the conflict between the girls, but instead they took sides. Eventually the conflict involved both the children and the elders. The *Induna* (Chief's assistant) intervened and after a lengthy discussions with the *Induna*, the situation simmered down but was not resolved. One of these families felt that their opponents were envious since things were running smoothly in their family. A little while later a baby girl was born in one of these families and the father of the child named her *Bajabhise* (Disappoint-them). The homestead at which this retaliatory name was directed was able to deduce the message entailed in the name and as a result they called for reconciliation between them. The name was therefore functional, for it was able at a later stage to reinstate good relations between the two families thereafter. At this stage the conflict was resolved and today these families are still on good terms.

2. **Name:** *Dinweyini?* (What-angered-you?)

Category: Friction between in-laws

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Dinwe</i>	<i>yini</i>
--------------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [i] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: This name prevails in my family. This name was given by my grandfather, Myekeni, to my uncle's daughter. My uncle, when he was a teenager fell deeply in love with the daughter of the neighbouring family. The young lady's family did not want their daughter to become my uncle's wife and they tried in several ways to stop their daughter marrying into the Gumede family. The girl was assaulted by her parents in a variety of ways. She was physically punished and expelled from her homestead for a number of days. Despite the assault, the girl did not desert my uncle and their attempts to stop the girl from being my uncle's wife totally failed. Later on my uncle and his wife were blessed with the daughter who was named by her grandfather in this way. My grandfather used a name to communicate his puzzlement. My grandfather was asking a question as to why the wife's family had become angry when their daughter fell in love with his son. At a later stage the birth-family of my uncle's wife realized that their attempts to discontinue the good relationship between my uncle and their daughter were in vain and as a result they resorted to reconciliatory measures and they never interfered again.

3. **Name:** *Ngenzeni*? (What-have-I-done)

Category: Accusations regarding witchcraft/ Jealousy between neighbours

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Nge</i>	<i>nzeni</i>
------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [e] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: I interviewed *Ngenzeni*, my previous learner at the school where I am teaching as to why she was named in this way. She said that her mother told her that she was always sick prior to her birth as a healthy baby. The manner of her mother’s illness before *Ngenzeni*’s birth made her to feel uneasy since she thought that she might miscarry. The woman suspected the neighbour of witchcraft which she thought emanated from envy with regard to the better life they were living. The above name is stated in the form of a question. *Ngenzeni*’s mother, through the naming of her daughter, was asking a question as to why the suspect was doing something wrong to her. Questioning through the name enabled the woman to ask a question which she could not do openly to the person questioned for fear of escalating the conflict.

4. **Name:** *Nomona* (The-jealous-one)

Category: Friction with neighbours/local community/ Accusations regarding witchcraft

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>No</i>	<i>mona</i>
-----------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [o] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: This is an example of a name which reflects the friction between

neighbours with regard to witchcraft. The name was given by the mother to a baby girl after she had given birth to a handicapped girl. The Ngema homestead from which the baby was born is well-to-do. The mother named the child in this manner after the other wife who is a neighbour was suspected of having bewitched her while she was pregnant. The suspect had been appointed by the *Isangoma* as a witch. The suspect stayed uneasy with her neighbours (the Ngema family) for a long period. The name that was given to the child made the suspect feel uneasy. After a series of mishaps which took place in the bewitched family, they directly and openly approached the suspect woman and they compelled her to confess why she was bewitching them. At this stage the suspect admitted that she was committing witchcraft. The name *Nomona* (The Envious One) expresses the mother's feelings. The mother of the handicapped baby was indirectly appraising the witch that she was aware of her envy. The name was thus functional because it led to the confession by the witch of her witchcraft.

5. **Name:** *Felindawo* (One-who-dies-for-land)

Category: Accusation with regard to land/boundaries/ Friction within the family at large/
Accusations regarding witchcraft

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Feli</i>	<i>ndawo</i>
-------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical devices: aconsonantisation of the lingua-palatal articulatory feature in [l], [n], and [d].

Socio-cultural context: I asked *Felindawo* to tell me about his name. He was named by his grandfather in this way after conflict which pertained to land within the extended family. The

different families which were involved in conflict were from the same clan. The family into which *Felindawo* was born had a larger piece of land than the other neighbouring homesteads. This resulted in hatred between the families. The neighbouring families wanted a share of the large piece of land but *Felindawo*'s grandfather refused. The grandfather named the grandson in this way after he suspected that the families who were claiming his land were bewitching him for the land. The grandfather wanted to inform his enemies, through naming, that despite their witchcraft, he was not prepared to give up his father's land, but instead thereof he was prepared to die for his land. At a later stage, after many years, these conflicting families started to rectify their mistakes because of pressures by the *amadlozi* (ancestral spirits).

6. **Name:** *Lethuxolo* (One-who-brings-peace)

Category: Fiction between spouses or lovers

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Lethu</i>	<i>xolo</i>
--------------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [o] and aconsonantisation of [l].

Socio-cultural context: The father, Themba, named the child in this way after having a dispute with his wife. He had two wives: *Lethuxolo*'s mother was the older wife. At the time of dispute, the younger wife was not living with Themba's family, but was still living with her family of birth. The dispute emanated from the fact that Themba frequently visited the younger bride while she was still living with her own family. The older wife always discouraged the husband visiting the younger bride. This resulted in a dispute between them.

The rest of the family intervened and tried to calm down the older wife but she fought not only with her husband, but also with the husband's parents. Themba responded by temporarily expelling the older wife from the family. Within a few days the older wife's parents came to hear the causes of dispute that had resulted in their daughter's expulsion. When both the husband's and the wife's families discussed the conflict, the older wife was found guilty of lacking *Ukuhlonipha* (customary respect) because as a wife she was supposed to humble herself in the eyes of her husband. The older wife was warned not to behave like that again. The wife then went back to the husband's family after reconciliatory talks. When the older wife came back she was about to deliver a baby. When a baby boy was born he was named by the father in the afore-mentioned way. After the birth of the child there was no more dispute between the older wife and Themba. In other words they lived in peace afterwards. This is why the father named the child *Lethuxolo* (One-who-brings-peace). In short he was meaning that the child had brought peace between them (him and his wife).

7. **Name:** *Songeleni*? (Why-are-you-intimidating)?

Category: Friction between in-laws

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:



Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [e] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: The name was given by granny MaMzimela to her daughter's child. Her daughter fell in love with the son of the local homestead. When her daughter went to her boyfriend's family to report that she was pregnant, she was rejected by her boyfriend's mother

who questioned the girl’s allowing herself to become pregnant. The boyfriend’s mother kept on threatening and intimidating the girl saying that she wished that she would give birth to a handicapped child or miscarry. The baby was born healthy and was named by granny, MaMzimela, in the questioning manner above. MaMzimela was questioning why the boy’s mother was threatening the girl and wishing her bad luck. As the time went on and when the child was growing healthy, the boyfriend’s mother started to reflect. She realized that the child was her son’s and she wanted the child to visit her. The name played a definite role in changing the boyfriend’s mother’s negative attitude towards the girl.

8. **Name:** *Velosongweni* (He-who-was-born-out-of-intimidation)

Category: Friction within the family

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Velo</i>	<i>songweni</i>
-------------	-----------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [o] and [e] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: This name results from the dispute between the daughter and her mother. When the daughter was about to marry, she first entered into a dispute with her younger brother. When their mother interfered, she was regarded by the daughter as the perpetrator of the dispute and the mother became furious. After her marriage, the daughter did not visit her homestead for years because she hated her mother. Many years passed by and the daughter failed to conceive after marriage. The *Isangoma* told the daughter that the *Amadlozi* (ancestors) were so indignant with her decision to desert her family of birth that they were causing her infertility. Not having babies after being married for years started to

worry the daughter a lot and as a result she went back home to her mother for reconciliation. After reconciliation, she became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy and she named him *Velosongweni* (He-who-was-born-out-of- intimidation). She was referring to the threat from the ancestors which had resulted in the birth of the child.

9) **Name:** *Khulumani* (You-must-talk)

Category: The spread of rumours/gossiping

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Khulu</i>	<i>mani</i>
--------------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [u] and aconsonantisation of nasal continuant feature in [n] and [m].

Socio-cultural context: The name reflects a conflict which arose from the act of gossiping. Grandmother MaNzimande's daughter went to seek work in Durban. While she was seeking employment, she stayed with her older sister's husband, who was staying with his friend whose surname was Xaba. MaNzimande's younger daughter, the one who was seeking work, did not go back home for an extended period. As the time went on, it was discovered that MaNzimande's younger daughter was pregnant. She was sent back home by her older sister's husband. At home they asked her which man was responsible for her pregnancy. The girl said that her older sister's husband's friend (Xaba) was the person who was responsible for her pregnancy. People in the area (*Maqwabeni*) started to gossip about the girl's pregnancy, saying whatever they liked about the girl and her mother. By naming the child *Khulumani* (You-must-talk), Granny MaNzimande was indirectly telling the neighbours who were

involved in the gossip that she did not care about what they were saying because Xaba had agreed that he was responsible for her daughter's pregnancy. The name had an impact on those who were gossiping about the pregnancy of the girl and realized that it is not good to gossip about other people. In other words, they confessed that what had happened to MaNzimande's daughter had also happened to their daughters.

10) **Name:** *Sibangani?* (What-causes-dispute-between-us?)

Category: Fiction between spouses or lovers

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Siba</i>	<i>ngani</i>
-------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [a] and [i] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: The above name exemplifies the response arising from the dispute between the wife and her husband in a family. It is the wife who named the child in this way. The wife, named Phumzile, had five children and she was poverty-stricken. In most cases she had nothing to give to her children to eat and as a result she asked for food from the neighbours. Phumzile's husband was working but he was not a responsible man. Sometimes he did not visit his house for extended periods. Because Phumzile was a woman she was not permitted to argue with her husband directly. The name *Sibangani?* (What-causes-dispute-between-us?) is retaliatory in the sense that the wife was indirectly asking her husband to tell her the cause of the dispute between them. In the course of time, the husband got sick and came back home to stay full time with his wife. The husband realized that his wife loved him deeply and he also realized that to dispute with a wife is a foolish habit, and he needed her

tender care.

11) **Name:** *Sandile* (We-are-increasing)

Category: Jealousy between neighbours

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Sa</i>	<i>ndile</i>
-----------	--------------

Mnemotechnical devices: aconsonantisation of the lingua-palatal articulatory feature [n], [d] and [l].

Socio-cultural context: Siyalo, the father, named his son in this way after having realized that his neighbours were envious about his family’s progress. The neighbours hated his family because it was able to plough large fields and the youngsters of the family were progressing well at school. By naming the child in this way, Siyalo was indirectly informing the envious neighbours that despite their envy, the family was growing and the members thereof were increasing. The name helped the family to ignore the neighbour’s envy and be pleased by their own family matters.

12) **Name:** *Bangindawo* (The-one-who-disputes-over-land)

Category: Accusation with regard to land/boundaries

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Bangi</i>	<i>ndawo</i>
--------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [a] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: This name was given by the father to his son. In the *KwaLuthuli*

community there was a conflict between *Bangindawo*'s father and his neighbour. The main cause of the conflict was that *Bangindawo*'s father had a large piece of land. The neighbour started to be so envious about the land that he tried to make plans to claim this large piece of land from its owner. The neighbour started to tell lies saying that *Bangindawo*'s father had robbed him of a strip of his land. The news reached the man and he said that what was said by the neighbour was null and void. The neighbour did not stop spreading the false information about the other man's land over an extended period. The man whose land was falsely claimed just turned a deaf ear. When this man was blessed with a son, he named him *Bangindawo* (The-one-who-disputes-over-land). Through this name, the father was indirectly conveying a message that he was aware that the neighbour was spreading the false news about the land which did not belong to him. After the man had named his son in the aforementioned way, the neighbour stopped telling other people false news because he realized that what he had said about the man's land was known to the man.

13) **Name:** *Mbewu* (The-seed)

Category: Accusations regarding witchcraft/ Jealousy between neighbours

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Mbe</i>

<i>wu</i>

Mnemotechnical Devices: Aconsonantisation of labial features in [m], [b] and [w].

Socio-cultural context: The name was given by the grandmother to my mother's sister's son. My aunt, by the name of Tholakele, married into the Luthuli family. This family was well-to-do. My aunt's husband was a very responsible man. A few months after my aunt's marriage,

her husband told her that he was getting sick. Her husband's condition worsened and when they took him to the hospital, he died along the way in the vehicle. The family interpreted the death of my aunt's husband as caused by someone who had poisoned him. They suspected a neighbour of this poisoning. My aunt's husband died while she was pregnant. A few months after the death of my aunt's husband, a baby boy was born and was named in this manner. By naming the child in this manner the grandmother was indirectly informing the evildoer that although she had killed her son, the seed was left in her grandson. The name restored hope within the family so that their souls were comforted and looked forward to further progress.

14) **Name:** *Sonosakhe* (His-sin)

Category: Fiction between spouses or lovers

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Sono</i>	<i>sakhe</i>
-------------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [o] and aconsonantisation of [s].

Socio-cultural context: This name results from the dispute between the wife and a husband in the family. The grandmother named her daughter's son with reference to the dispute between her daughter and her daughter's husband. The husband had other girlfriends which were not known to the wife. The husband spent a lot of time with his girlfriends, and as a result he became an irresponsible man who started not to care for his wife and children. After the wife discovered that her husband had other girlfriends which was resulting in his irresponsibility, the wife went back to her parents with her children. The grandmother named one of her daughter's sons in this way in order to indirectly alert her daughter's husband that

what he was doing was a sin. The name had a positive impact on changing the behaviour of the husband, for he started to send food for the children thereafter. In the long run, he asked his wife and children to come back to him and he built a new house for them.

15) **Name:** *Zondani*? (Why-do-you-hate-us?)

Category: Friction with neighbours/local community/ Jealousy between neighbours/
Accusation with regard to land

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Zo</i>	<i>ndani</i>
-----------	--------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: This name exemplifies the response from the conflict which results from the accusations regarding livestock straying on to other people's fields. The name prevails in the neighbouring community and it is the mother who named the child as indicated above. The family from which the name was given had a lot of cattle whereas their neighbors had none. These cattle use to graze across the neighbour's land. Since the neighbour was envious, this resulted in a conflict between them. Even when the cattle had done no damage, the neighbours who had no cattle used to criticize those who kept cattle, and they claimed payment. The mother then named her daughter as indicated above because she felt that the neighbour was hating them for no good reason. The name played a role in avoiding physical confrontation for the hated family used the name to ask a question why the neighbour hated them for no good reason.

16) **Name:** *Buzani*? (What-are-you-questioning?)

Category: The spread of gossiping

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

Buza

ni

Mnemotechnical Device: Onomatopoeia: all the phonetic elements in this name are voiced: i.e. 'the voice of the gossip'.

Socio-cultural context: This name was given by the mother to her child. The name was the response by the mother to the gossip. The woman, Sguda, gave birth to a baby girl while she was not at home. The woman was away from home with the aim of seeking work. She then decided to go back home soon after she had delivered the baby. The child was illegitimate. People in the community had never seen the father of the baby, and because of that they began to gossip about the illegitimacy of the child. Some people asked the mother who the baby's father was. This mother was angered by a series of questions from the residents. As a result she named her child in this way in order to stop people indirectly from asking her questions that angered her. Many people, having heard of this name, stopped asking any questions about the baby. The name therefore relieved Sguda from answering questions which could have resulted in physical confrontation.

17) **Name:** *Sibangaliphi*? (Which-word-is-causing-dispute-between-us?)

Category: Friction between spouses

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

Sibanga

liphi

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [i] and [a].

Socio-cultural context: This name reflects a dispute between the wife and her husband in a family. It is the wife, Ntombi, who named her son as indicated above. From the time when the wife started to live with her husband's family, things ran smoothly as her husband was a responsible man who looked after his family. As years passed, things started to change. The husband began a new habit of not coming home at month-ends and at the same time no-one knew what the cause thereof was. The wife immediately felt worried but she endured. In the course of time, the wife's husband stopped giving his family money for any prerequisites which were required for the survival of the family. At this stage the wife went back to her parents to inform them about what was happening to her and that it was unbearable. Her parents went with her to her husband's family to discuss the matter. The husband did not say any thing with regard to the dispute between him and his wife. At the time of dispute, the wife was pregnant. She took her two daughters with her to her birth-family after she has realized that her husband no longer loved her. In these circumstances, she gave birth to a third child, and by naming it in this way, she was subtly asking her husband what had caused a dispute between them as that was what she wanted to know from her husband. The name of the child was thus functional, because as a woman, Ntombi was not in a position to argue with her husband.

18) **Name:** *Lingukwenzani*? (What-are-you-trying-to-do?)

Category: Fiction between spouses or lovers

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

Ling'

ukwenzani

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [i] and aconsonantisation of [n].

Socio-cultural context: The name reflects a conflict between a wife and a woman whom she suspected was having an affair with her husband. The wife had tried to warn the woman not to disrupt her relationship with her husband, but the woman persisted and the affair continued. The wife delivered her third daughter while the friction was ongoing, and she named her *Lingukwenzani*? (What-are-you-trying-to-do?). The name served as a way in which the wife conveyed a message to her husband's lover, challenging her motive in persisting in her affair with her husband. The name therefore resolved the conflict because as the time went by, the affair between the lady and the husband deteriorated and eventually they were not bound by any relationship.

19) **Name:** *Swelamandla* (He-who-has-no-means-to-do-things)

Category: Friction between in-laws

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

Swel

amandla

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [a] and aconsonantisation of the lingua-palatal articulatory feature in [n], [d] and [l], and the nasal feature in [m] and [n].

Socio-cultural context: The name results from the friction between two families over *lobola* (bride-price). The girl from the Mavimbela family fell in love with the boy of the Luthuli family. The boy promised to marry the girl, but he later changed his mind because he left his job, and then he had no means to pay *lobola*. The Mavimbela family said that the boy's family should pay *lobola* on behalf of their son, but no money was paid. The girl became pregnant,

but still no *lobola* was paid, and nothing was done to acknowledge their love. When a baby boy was born, he was named by his mother's grandmother in this way. Through this name, the grandmother was appraising the child's father that the birth of this child outside of marriage was a sign that he did not have the means to marry. In other words, she was telling him to think wisely and take some steps with regard to the matter.

20) **Name:** *Thandazani* (Do-pray)

Category: Friction with neighbours/local community/ Jealousy between neighbours

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Thanda</i>	<i>zani</i>
---------------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [a] and aconsonantisation of [n] and the lingual feature in [th] and [z]..

Socio-cultural context: The grandmother named the grandson as indicated. The grandmother was responding to the envy of neighbours. The Mbambo family was, and still is today, a devoted family. The family was very fortunate in that it had many cattle and much land compared with the neighbours. All the sons in the family were working and took responsibility for the family. The Mbambo family was fortunate in the area due to their intense devotion to God, and this fact resulted in their neighbours hating them. When the old woman's son was blessed with the third child, she named him *Thandazani* (Do-pray). The grandmother used this name with the intention of informing the envious neighbours that their envy, just because God looks after her family, would not be fruitful. The grandmother was also informing the envious neighbours that if they could abandon their envy and pray strongly

to God, they would be like the Mbambo family. Naming was of great value in this family as a retaliatory function because as devoted people they always avoided physical confrontation with their neighbours. Praying to God is the only means by which they ignored their neighbour's wicked deeds.

21) **Name:** *Xolani* (You-must-forgive-me)

Category: Friction between in-laws

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

Xola

ani

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of voiced articulatory feature: all the phonetic elements in this name are voiced and the aconsonantisation of the lingua-palatal articulatory feature in [l] and [n].

Socio-cultural context: This name exemplifies conflict between two neighbouring homesteads which had its roots in children's faults. The person who named the child as above was the father of the child. The circumstances which led to such naming were very tense. The hatred between the two families arose from the fact that the boy of the Kholose family secretly fell in love with the girl of the neighbouring homestead. The elders were not conscious thereof. One day it was discovered that the girl was pregnant. The girl's parents were very angry with the boy's family. These two families became conscious of the love affair between their children after the girl's pregnancy became apparent. The girl's parents punished her for allowing herself to become pregnant outside of marriage. The girl's family accused the boy's family with regard to their daughter's pregnancy. The boy agreed that he was the

person who was responsible for the girl’s pregnancy. Fortunately, the boy was permanently employed by that time. He then commenced to pay *lobola* for the girl and from then the tense situation seemed to simmer down. The girl gave birth to a baby boy while the father was busy paying the *lobola*. The baby was named *Xolani* (Forgive-me) by the father with the intention of subtly begging for forgiveness from the girl’s parents. The boy wanted the girl’s parents to forgive him for having been responsible for the girl’s pregnancy before marriage. The girl’s and the boy’s families forgave each other after the birth of the child. The boy and girl eventually were married, and from then onwards there was no more hatred between the two families. The name given to the child was of great value, for it brought peace between the two antagonistic families.

22) **Name:** *Chilizile* (The-repelled-one)

Category: Friction between spouses/ Friction between in-laws/ Friction within the family at large

Mnemonic Rhythmic Schema:

<i>Chili</i>	<i>zile</i>
--------------	-------------

Mnemotechnical Devices: Avocalisation of [i] and aconsonantisation of [l].

Socio-cultural context: The mother named the child in this way after a conflict within the family. The family hated Chilizile’s mother. They said that she was gossiping about them, and even her husband supported the family members. From then on, the husband began to disregard his wife and after a lengthy period the wife left the family and went back to her birth-family. By the time she left, she was pregnant. A few months later, when she was living

with her parents she delivered a third child, a girl. The above-mentioned name was used by the wife to retaliate against her husband's family. She was expressing her anger that no one in the family liked her. In other words she was subtly saying that everybody in her husband's family repelled her because no-one had stood by her side when false rumours regarding the gossip-mongering were reported about her. The husband's family deduced the message entailed in the name and they said that they had not repelled the bride from the family, but that the one who was responsible was the husband himself.

Concluding remarks

With reference to the above examples of onomastics which refer to people, the profound importance of naming is made clear. What can be deduced from the above descriptions, analyses, evaluations, and interpretations is that onomastics are like all other forms of expression in oral cultures: names have meanings in the contexts in which they are given and reflect 'mimismologically' the situation which gives rise to their existence.

Zulu names therefore are the carriers of meanings and expressions. Names are not just carried forward for frivolous reasons, but are goal directed. Because of the rhythmic, balanced and mnemotechnic features, they are embedded in memory and contribute to the identity of the relevant individuals and groups. Metaphorically, the significance of naming as a producer of meaning is emphasised in the following Swahili proverb (Zawawi 1998:109) (presented here in a Binary Rhythmic Schema):

A name without meaning

is like a house without a good foundation

After scrutinizing the above Zulu onomastics, their social functions and meanings can be recapitulated as follows:

- Names minimize and deflect physical confrontation, for instance, fighting.
- Names relieve intense emotions. If someone has expressed his/her anger in the form of naming, he can thereafter ignore the confrontation that might arise. A person becomes relieved when any anger that has been 'played' into him/her (*in-pressed*), can be 're-played' (*ex-pressed*) harmlessly and be got off his /her chest.
- Names elicit responses. The one to whom the message entailed by the name is directed, may respond positively by, for example, confessing, or others may also respond negatively by denying the message which is conveyed by the name.

Onomastics have two reflective – 'mimismic' - functions which can be identified as follows:

1. Whenever there are positive things happening in a community, the names which are given to the newborns favour those good conditions – the 'compliments'.
2. When uncertainty, dissatisfaction and conflict exists within the community, the names that the parents give to their infants manifest that situation – the 'caveats'.

These functions in turn reflect the balance – the bilateralised rhythms – of the positive and negative elements in a society. Names are therefore accurate barometers of the equilibrium within a social

group, and provide sensitive access to understanding relationships and status hierarchies operating with the group.

Recommendations

In this study, I have endeavoured to demonstrate the importance of recording names, and their meanings, and functions in context as conflict-reducing agents and as social 'barometers' and regulators. Because of the importance of studies such as this, I recommend that further research on onomastics of this kind should be undertaken. By so doing, the researchers will be contributing in recording oral tradition for current and future use. Research on onomastics is 'do-able' and feasible. I am convinced that if others participate in research of this kind, they will be in a position to unearth much valuable data and issues that will draw attention to many people who would like to be accommodated in a 'Treasure Hunt' of this richly endowed and vast 'Island of Research' of 'compliments and caveats'.

References

- Anim, N O (1994) *What is in a name : Names as a factor in Cultural Identity of the Akan, Ga and Ewe Tribes of Ghana*. Unpublished paper, University of Namibia: Windhoek.
- Asante, M (1991) *The Book of African Names*. Africa World Press, Inc. Trenton, N J /Asmara: Eritrea.
- Chamberlin, T E (1998) Doing things with words: putting performance on the page. *Voices 1*. Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.
- Conolly, J (1995) "*From Mimism to Music in the Child*": an Oral-Style Textual Reading of the Primary Learning Theory of Marcel Jousse with Special Reference to Rudolf Laban. Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Natal, Durban.

- Draye, H (ed) (1982) *Onoma : Bibliographical and Information Bulletin*. International Centre of Onomastics: Belgium.
- Finnegan, R (1970) *Oral literature in Africa*. Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Finnegan, R (1992) *Oral Tradition and the Verbal Arts : A Guide to Research Practices*. Routledge: Chapman and Itall, Inc. New York.
- Groenewald, H C (ed) (1990) *Oral Studies in Southern Africa*. Human Sciences Research Council: Pretoria.
- Ishizuka, K (1997) *10, 000 Names for your Baby*. Dell Publishing: New York.
- Jousse, M (1990) *The Oral Style*. (Translated by E Sienaert and R Whitaker), Garland Publishers: New York and London.
- Jousse, M (1997) *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*. (Edited by E Sienaert and translated in collaboration with J Conolly), Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal: Durban.
- Leech, G (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*. Longman: New York.
- Poland-Oosthuizen, M (1997) *Uchibidolo: the abundant herds : a descriptive study of the Sanga-Nguni cattle of the Zulu people with special reference to colour pattern terminology and naming practice*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Natal, PMB.
- Raper, P E (1982) Sociology and the study of names. *Onoma*, 26. International Centre of Onomastics, Belgium.
- Sienaert, E, N Bell, M Lewis (eds) (1991) *Oral Tradition and Innovation : new wine in old bottles*. University of Natal Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- Sienaert, E, M Cowper-Lewis and N Bell (eds) (1994) *Oral Tradition and Transmission : the many forms of message*. Papers given at the Fourth International Conference on Oral Tradition. The Campbell Collections and Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.
- Sienaert, E (ed) (1998) *Voices 1: A Journal for Oral Studies*. Centre for Oral Studies, UND.
- Stewart, J (1994) *African Names: Names from the African Continent for Children and Adults - as well as information about geography, history, literature and anthropology*. Carol Publishing Group, New York.

- Turner, N S (1991) Contemporary Zulu *Izihasho*: A Satirical Attempt at Social Control. *Oral Tradition and Innovation*. University of Natal Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- Turner, N S (1998) The Composition and Performance of Cryptic Social Messages in Zulu Onomastics. *Voices I*. Centre for Oral Studies, UND.
- Verstappen, P (ed) (1980) *The Book of Surnames: Origins and Oddities of Popular names*. Pelham Books Ltd, London.
- Zawawi, S M (1998) *African Muslim Names: Images and Identities*, World Press, Trenton, NJ/Asmara, Eritrea.