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End rhyme as a device in Southern Sotho
Poetry: a comparative inquiry

by

Ephraim Alfred Shadrack Lesoro

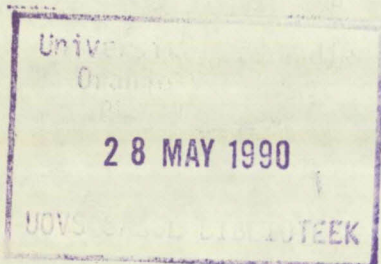
BA (Hons)
(African Languages/English Language Teaching)(Rhodes)

A dissertation submitted to meet the requirements for the
degree of **Magister Artium** in **Southern Sotho**, in the **Faculty**
of Arts, in the **Department of African Languages**, at the
University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein.

Supervisor : Prof Dr JG Gildenhuys

November 1989

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation which I hereby submit for the degree of **Magister Artium** at the **University of the Orange Free State** is my own work; and that it has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university/faculty.

I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out.

-John Milton

DEDICATION

To
my wife
Martha Moretlwana
with
LOVE.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to convey my heartfelt gratitude to:

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of problem

From time immemorial, rhyme as a device in versification practice, has been wrapped in a shroud of controversy. This controversy emanated from prosodists and practitioners of poetry in divers non-African languages. It has since affected African languages. As Lenake (1984:150), succinctly puts it:

The conception of rhyme in African poetry has caused considerable controversy among poets and scholars of literature ever since it was first employed by poets such as Mqhayi (for Xhosa), Vilakazi (for Zulu), Ntsane, Mocoancoeng, Khaketla, Mohapeloa, Lesoro (for S Sotho), Dolamo, Mangokoane (for N Sotho) and Raditladi and Moroke (for Tswana).

An obvious omission in respect of the Southern Sotho practitioners of rhyme is, of course, DCT Bereng, who deserves the appellation of the Father of Southern Sotho Rhyme, and about whom Pretorius (1984:11) writes as follows:

Alhoewel Bereng se poësie hoofsaaklik 'n tematiëse vernuwing in die poësie aankondig, is daar ook spore van 'n vormvernuwing waar te neem waarvan neerslae in die poësie van 'n latere digter soos Lesoro gevind word. In die gedig **Naha ya Moshoeshoe** (Bereng, 1931:33,35) word die volgende gevalle teengekom waar Bereng 'n tradisioneel-poëtiese tegniek soos die herhaling van dieselfde naamwoordstam in dieselde of opeenvolgende reëls sō aanwend dat eindrym verkry word:

La phula tsa didiba,
Tsa dikokwanyana ka bothalabodiba

(Van die vore van fonteine,
Van die kewerinsekte)

en Mantswe a puo ya lona manyenyane,
Jwale ka lona ha le le lenyenyane;
Empa mantswe a lona modumo,
A bitseha, a bueha bodumo,

(Die woorde van sy taal is min,
Soos hy self klein is;
Maar sy woorde het trefkrag,
Hulle is uitspreekbaar, hulle is hoorbaar,)

It is a noticeable fact here that Bereng harnessed his couplets with great success, making him the undisputed precursor of rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry.

To the five African languages mentioned by Lenake (1984:150) above, one could add Tsonga and Venda, in which rhyme is also practised. As practitioners of rhyme here, one could name Ndhambi and Masebenza (for Tsonga), as well as Ngwana and Ratshitanga (for Venda). This brings the total number of African languages that rhyme, to seven. The remaining two African languages which like the previously mentioned seven are spoken within the borders of South Africa, namely Ndebele and Swati, are comparatively young in terms of written literature in general and poetry in particular. They have unfortunately, been precluded from this study because of not having the necessary documented references pertaining to their poetry at my disposal. But one has an intuitive sense that one or even both of these languages practise rhyme after the manner of the other seven African languages with which they are cognate. But, while it is not the intention of this study to incorporate all African languages - which is, of course, an impossible feat - it has been decided to include one African language, spoken outside the boundaries of South Africa, namely Swahili, which has also been discovered to use rhyme in its versification practice. This raises the total number of African languages practising rhyme to a commendable eight, in this study.

The bone of contention in both non-African and African languages is, for the most part, concerned with rhyme in practice, that is, it centres around the point whether rhyme should or shouldn't be used in

poetry. This divisive attitude to rhyme has given rise to two opponent schools of thought, namely the **anti-rhyme school of thought**, adversed to rhyme, and the **pro-rhyme school of thought**, in favour of this device. It is the polemic nature of opinions or views pertaining to rhyme in African languages in particular, which provided a stimulus in response to which this study is being undertaken. It is a fervent personal feeling that a stimulus such as this can be ignored only at a great risk of intellectual sclerocis.

The term 'non-African' languages, which is evidently formulated in exclusive terms, has already been used on two counts. Before getting any further, its utilization needs to be accounted for. As a matter of practice, cognate languages may be divided into **Germanic languages**, which incorporate languages such as Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, German, Frisian, Dutch, Afrikaans, etc. They may also be divided into **Romance languages**, which include languages like Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, etc. They may be divided even further. Hence for the purpose of this study, and with economy in mind, the term 'non-African' languages will be used *faute de mieux* to include all the languages in this study which are not 'African' languages by any means.

The ingenious argument against rhyme in African languages in particular takes root from the fact that it has never been in habitual use in the versification practice of these languages. This argument is substantiated by referring to the indigenous oral poetry of African languages, inaptly called praise poetry, in which rhyme is never used intentionally. The disputants are quick in pointing out that even

where rhyme does occur in this kind of poetry, it does so by accident, and not by design. The implication of such a thesis is that rhyme can only have a place and potential in those languages which used it right from the incunabula of their versification practice, and none in those languages which never employed it **ab initio**. These disputants raise other points against rhyme, such as the morphological system of African languages. But they seem to capitalize mostly on the non-usage of rhyme in indigenous poetry. They are evidently oblivious of the fact that poetry is not a static phenomenon, but a dynamic one which is susceptible of change.

1.2 Definitions of rhyme

The title of this study reveals 'comparison' and 'end rhyme' as key words in its constitution. Hence, for the purpose of defining rhyme, it was considered essential to select definitions propounded by different scholars of poetry, and in different languages. The aim of this exercise is to compare these definitions in terms of their information qualities, that is, the extent to which they can inform us in respect of the concept being defined. The definition that is seen to define 'end rhyme' in particular, most precisely would then be identified and taken as a yardstick for measuring this type of rhyme, which has been intentionally isolated from other types of rhyme for the purpose of this study. Here, then, follow in strict alphabetical order, the selected scholars of poetry together with their definitions of rhyme.

1.2.1 Abrams (1981:163)

Abrams, who confines himself to English, says this about rhyme:

In English versification the standard rhyme consists in the identity, in rhyming words, of the last stressed vowel and of all the speech sounds following that vowel: lâte-fâte; fôllow - hôllow.

1.2.2 De Groot (1946:9)

On the other hand, De Groot leads to his definition of rhyme via this route:

Dit principe van indeling berust daarop, dat opeenvolgende versregels altijd op de een of andere manier met elkaar overeenstemmen: één uiting heirvan is de klankovereenstemming aan het einde van regels, die men (rijm) noemt. (My emphasis.)

1.2.3 Fowler (1973:161)

Fowler sounds somewhat enigmatic in his definition, when he says:

Rhyme is a word in a line and a word in the scheme of things that transcends the line ...

1.2.4 Grové (1977:47)

For his part, Grové speaks in specific terms when he limits his definition of rhyme to poetry, while it can also be employed in other literary genres, such as drama:

Met rym in die poësie word bedoel die herhaling, gereeld of ongereeld, van een of meer klanke.

1.2.5 Lodewick (1977:76)

Lodewick says the following about rhyme:

Rijm is de overeenkom van klank in (niet te ver van elkaar verwijderde) bekleemtoonde syllaben.

1.2.6 Premigner et al (1975:705)

Their definition of the word 'rhyme' goes as follows:

The main meaning of the word is a metrical rhetorical devise based on the sound-identities of words.

1.2.7 Silbajoris (1968:83)

His definition is pithy, and to the point:

Rhyme is properly defined as the like ending of the final syllables of two words.

1.2.8 Vestdijk (1975:68)

Vestdijk seems to take it for granted that rhyme is a commonly known phenomenon, when he nonchalantly declares:

Zoal u weet, berust het rijm op een overeenkomst in klank tussen twee of meer lettergrepen van twee verschillende woorden.

There are still other definitions of rhyme, but for the nonce these should suffice. A comparative study of these definitions reveals that with the exception of Fowler's definition, they all have identity of sound in common. This identity is variably expressed as similarity, likeness or agreement (cf overeenkom, overeenkomst, and overeenstemming), while in Grove's definition it is implicitly expressed as repetition (herhaling). In short, they convey the information that rhyme is a phenomenon of identical sound in words. Shapiro (1976:137), views this sentiment from a historical perspective, when he observes:

The most important, if not invariably explicit methodological principle inherent in the study of rhyme from the earliest beginnings has been the primacy of identity in any standard definition of this poetic convention.

As the principal preoccupation of this study is end rhyme, De Groot's definition that rhyme is the agreement of sounds at the end of verses '...de klankovereenstemming aan het einde van regels', seems to be the most ideal; and so is Silbajoris's definition that rhyme is '...the like ending of final syllables of two words'.

1.3 Salient points on rhyme

Before getting into the swing of things, it has been deemed essential to highlight certain salient points on rhyme because they were considered crucial to this study, or simply because they were found to be harbouring some facts pertaining to this device which are not commonly known.

1.3.1 Derivation of rhyme

The term 'rhyme' derives from etimological association with the ultimate source 'rhythmus', which is, of course, a Latin word. It was originally spelt 'rime', this itself being a graphic variant of 'rhime'. Later on the spelling 'rhyme' was introduced as a variant. For a long time the two spellings 'rime' and 'rhyme' were used side by side, the onus being on the author to use the form he preferred. Saintsbury (1910:539), justifies the use of both spellings as follows:

From the point of view of literature and common sense it is enough to say that 'rime' in English is preoccupied by 'hoar-frost', and that, if there is no clear canon in the obscure business of spelling, it is that **different meanings of the same sound to the ear should, if possible, have different forms to the eye.**

(My emphasis.)

However, Saintsbury's hypothetical statement in defence of the practice of using two different spellings for the same thing has since lost validity, considering the fact that the spelling 'rhyme' gained progressive popularity over that of 'rime' from the seventeenth century to the present century, when the latter has been totally reduced to an exception. Compare Scott (1980:246), in which the spelling 'rime' continues to be used alongside of 'rhyme'.

1.3.2 Origin of rhyme

Wesling (1980:40) says this of rhyme:

There is no time in the history of rhyme when this device was not a matter of contention, whether in practice or in prosodic theory.

It is, indeed, essential to know the origin of such a controversial phenomenon. But this origin seems to be wrapped in a thick veil of uncertainty, making it a subject much given to speculation. The following literary scholars convey this state of affairs in no uncertain terms:

* **Schoonees et al (1942:169):**

Daar is niks met sekerheid te sê oor die oorsprong van rym nie. Dit kom nog nie voor in die ou klassieke kuns nie. Hoogswaarskynlik is dit 'n gestadige groei, wat op die grondslag van ooreenkoms van klank (alliterasie) gegroei het tot assonans, en toe ontwikkel het tot ons moderne rym.

* **Whitehall (1968:21):**

The late George Saintsbury, eminent authority on prosody and wines, once said of rhyme that it appears no one quite knows how, or why, or whence. His remark, pointed specifically at rhyme in English, could well be extended to the literary macrocosm. In sources, diffusions, and comparative details of its history, rhyme is the most mysterious of all literative sound-patterns, certainly not indigenous to any know European, or, for that matter, Indo-European or Indo-Hittite language.

* **Brogan (1981:77):**

The exact details of its genealogy, its points of introduction into Indo-European verse forms, and its ultimate origin in the poetries of ancient world are still unknown.

In view of these revealing utterances, that nobody really knows the origin of rhyme, is beyond controversy. It was ironically this lack of knowledge that inspired some ardent researchers to delve into the annals of history to search for a plausible origin. Only two such researchers will be discussed here, namely Harold Whitehall and Lawrence Elwell-Sutton, in that order.

Whitehall (1968:21), already referred to above, says this of rhyme:

Rhyme is unknown to the great poetic literatures of the Incas, Quetchuans, and Araucanians as also to the less impressive Amerindian verse of North America. In Chibcha, where it does occur, it is borrowed from Spanish. In the Old World, rhyme may conceivably have appeared in the Hattic-Hittite and Egyptian verse of the second millennium BC, but the writing systems of these languages are perversely well adapted to conceal rather than reveal it.

On the same page, he indicates that from the few examples at his disposal, he could judge that rhyme occurred 'only as an accidental by-product of word-formation ... rather than as a device to chisel sound pattern into poetic structure'. Whitehall further reports an early efflorescence of rhyme in China 'as early as the famous anthology *Shi Ching* (ante 500 BC), possibly revised if not collected and edited by Confucius'. He maintains that this collection of 'Classic Songs' 'provided a unique opportunity to study the gradual emergence of structural rhyme-patterns in combination with stringed monodic settings which may have partly prompted their development'. As evidence of rhyme in Chinese poetry, he gives a poem of nine verses written in 130 BC by the young Han Wu Di, the founder of the Han Dynasty. As Whitehall indicates, the poem is in Romanized Mandarin, and he is responsible for what he calls 'English Metaphrase', which one may simply call a 'literal translation into English':

1. Romanized Mandarin

Chyou feng chi syi bai yun fei
tsao mu hwang lwo syi yen nan gwei.
Lan you syou syi jyu you fang
hwai jey ren syi bu neng wang.
Fan louw Chwan syi ji Fen he
heng jung lyou syi yang shu bwo.
Syan gu ming syi fa jau ge
hwan le ji syi ai ching dwo
shau jwang ju shr syi nai lau he,

Han Wu Di

2. English Metaphrase

White clouds scudding, Fall's brusque breeze,
brants home South from fallow leas!
Douce, the fragrant marigold,
douce, the fragrant love I hold.
Speeds my craft down Han and Fen
stemming through the channel surge!
Drum, flute, chant of rowing-men
joyful! Then with wind-leaf dirge
autumn omens Age again.

As it can be noticed, the Chinese version has the rhyme scheme of **aabbcdcdc**. Then Whitehall (1968:22), further makes known the fact that end rhyme became fully formalized in the rich lyrical poetry of the Tang Dynasty (AD 607-918), and that from China it 'penetrated into Sanskrit India, Thai, Tibetan, Okinawan (not into Japanese or Mongol either directly or indirectly) through India'. He goes on to equate the role of Arabic verse in the Middle East to that of Chinese verse in the Far East. Whitehall suggests that the first examples of Arabic verse dating from around 500 AD, 'show ordered sequences of hemistich, line, and couplet organized in what may be loosely regarded as quantitative third paeons and/or amphimacers, built up by monorhyme into the characteristic strophes of the **falīkr** (boasting poem), **ghazal** (short love poems) and **qasida** (monodramatic ode)'. On the same page, he further suggests that the mixed cadenced prose and rhyme of the Koran and the Arabic poetic tradition carried rhyme far outside Arabia, from Persia to Spain, as well as from Syria to India. With special reference to the latter, he observes:

Throughout this vast territory, modified somewhat by the structures and extant esthetic conventions of alien languages, the device of rhyme rapidly made itself at home.

He further suggests (p 22), that by the late twelfth century, the so-called troubadour rhymed poetry 'had developed rhyme intricacy to a point hitherto unknown and perhaps never later approached'.

Whitehall's research into the origin of rhyme has covered many languages, including German and English, in which this device will be discussed in Chapter 2. It is not the intention of the chapter at hand to talk exhaustively on the findings resulting from Whitehall's highly interesting research, which is admittedly informative, but merely to highlight these findings. Despite the fact that he has communicated these findings with the eloquence of a public orator, he has, as it could be expected, not succeeded in saying with the precision of a stop-watch, who were the real originators of rhyme. In other words, he has failed to define the origin of rhyme in indubitable terms. What about Elwell-Sutton?

Unlike Whitehall, whose research was a diversified proposition, Elwell-Sutton concerns himself exclusively with Persian poetry, which is, of course, in keeping with the title of his article 'The foundations of Persian prosody and metrics' (1975). In Elwell-Sutton (1975:89), after describing rhyme as another distinctive feature of Persian poetry, he proceeds in this vein:

As with the metres, it has long been assumed that this too was derived from Arabic. It is certainly the case that rhyme is the exception rather than the rule in Middle Persian verse, though examples of it are by no means infrequent; the Zurvānite hymn from the **Bundahishn** cited by Nyberg is one instance ...

He reports that Christensen suggests that the monorhyme (in Persian poetry) at least must have been copied from Arabic, since only that language has the facility of forming words of similar pattern in sufficient quantity to sustain the rhyme throughout poems of the **qasida** (cf Whitehall above). Although it has been suggested that Persian poetry derived rhyme from Arabic, there are strong indications

that in the course of time the Persians surpassed the Arabs in the rhyming game. Compare Elwell-Sutton (1975:89):

... investigation reveals that the overall ratio in rhyming words is four or five Persian to one Arabic, while even in long *qasidas*, depending on the rhyme chosen, the ratio is rarely lower than two to one.

Here again, the intention is not to be exhaustive. But the following quotation from Elwell-Sutton (1975:89), needs to be weighed and considered:

One Persian rhyme is certainly of native origin, the **radif**. In this technique the rhyming word proper, which is set back in the verse, is followed by an additional word or words repeated without change in each rhyming line. ... Here is a 7th/13 century example:

'ai dūst ki dil zi banda bar dāshta-ī
nīkū-st ki dil zi banda bar dāshta-ī

O beloved, you who have stolen my heart from me,
It is good that you have stolen my heart from me!

For interpretative purposes, one would regard the word /'ai/, in verse 1, as the so-called rhyming word proper. By the same token, one would regard /ki dil zi banda bar dāshta-ī/, in both verses 1 and 2, as additional words following this 'rhyming word proper', and which are repeated without change. This is by all standards, a unique and interesting rhyming system. But what should be of great interest in terms of the origin of rhyme, is Elwell-Sutton's statement that the **radif** is 'one Persian rhyme (which) is certainly of native origin'. This statement is quite ambiguous, lending itself to two interpretations. The first interpretation is that Persian poetry originally employed rhyme, and never copied it elsewhere, and this includes Arabic. The second interpretation is that, although Persian poetry derived rhyme from Arabic (cf Elwell-Sutton, 1975:89), it

modified this rhyme, and produced a rhyme system which is peculiar to Persian poetry. If the first interpretation is the one that Elwell-Sutton had in mind, then, in the light of his previous pronouncement, this makes him inadvertently guilty of a terminological inexactitude.

Whatever the case, like Whitehall, Elwell-Sutton has not succeeded in informing us precisely where rhyme originated, thus proving the fact that the *fons et origo* of rhyme are virtually unknown.

1.3.3 Characteristics of rhyme

It is useful to distinguish rhymes by means of the following characteristic features:

- * Degree of syllabic correspondence,
- * Region of occurrence, and
- * Acoustic congruence.

These features will be exemplified from Southern Sotho poetry. Where a relevant example is not available in this language, such an example will be derived elsewhere, preferably from one of the African languages.

(a) Degree of syllabic correspondence

The technique here is the use of a specific number of corresponding syllables in the words that are made to rhyme. There are four possibilities in this regard. The corresponding syllables are duly marked. For obvious reasons, translation is not necessary.:

- * **One-syllable rhyme**, known as masculine rhyme:

'Lehopo'

Bakeng sa ho ntlosa bodutu ke ditsietsi, a
 Bakeng sa thabo ya ka mehla ke kotsi. a
 (RJR Masiea: **Dithothokiso tsa bohahlaula**)

- * **Two-syllable rhyme**, known as feminine rhyme:

'Phodiso ya Naamane'

Sa sema ho lemoha sena sefopha a
 Hore se manaka kgopo, sa fopha a
 Bohale bo neng bo ka ya mollo kgabo, b
 Ba fetoha ka ho panya, ya eba thabo. b
 (EAS Lesoro: **Maleatlala le dithothokiso tse ding**)

- * **Three-syllable rhyme**, known as triple rhyme:

'Motse wa Mangaung'

Hlwayang tsebe, ke le qoqele, a
 Ka ke qetile, le nkopele... a
 (EAS Lesoro: **Mmitsa**)

- * **Four-syllable rhyme**, known as quadruple rhyme:

'Nnete e bonwa ho ofe?'

Lefatshe, lebedi, le a phethohaka a
 Le sona sekgotso se a fetohaka. a
 (BM Khaketla: **Dipjhamathe**)

(b) **Region of occurrence**

Here rhyme is distinguished in relation to the region or place in which it occurs. This yields the following forms of rhyme:

- * **End or terminal rhyme**, which occurs at the end of verses:

'Lemo sa 1939'

Ya ithiba ditsebe, ya hana ho utlwa, a
 Ya re yona e se nna e tutlwa; a
 Morao tjena ho jewa ka dikgoka, b
 A fetile matsatsi a diboka, b
 Geneva kajeno ke dithakong, c
 Ho so kgajwa ka dithunya maphakong. c
 (KE Ntsane: **Mmusapelo**)

- * **Medial or internal rhyme**, which occurs in the middle as well as at the end of the same verse, differentiated from end rhyme as a x a in verses 1 and 3 of the example below:

'Noka'

Ke tswa Bophirimela, ke lebile Botjhabela, a x a
 Ke ya moo tsatsi le tjhabang teng; b
 Ke latela ditsela, ke tsamaya ke tshela a x a
 Moo koti di tebileng teng. b

(SD Ngcongwane: Halleluya le dithothokiso tse ding)

(c) Acoustic congruence

Finally, rhyme may be distinguished with reference to the sound(s) registered by the words intended to be rhymed. Here too, two forms emerge:

- * **True or full rhyme**, if the last syllables of the words intended for rhyme have the same pronunciation or tone:

'Dinaledi tsa maobane'

Dinaledi tsa maobane, masupatselà, a
 Mehlaleng ya tsona re fumane kgothatsó: b
 Re mamella malwetse re bina difelà, a
 Re ithutile botho, re busa ditakatsó. b

(KDP Maphalla: Fuba sa ka)

- * **False or eye rhyme**, if the last syllables of the words which are supposed to rhyme have the same spelling, but different pronunciation or tone:

'Ntwa ya Abisinia'

Re ne be re dutse ka nyene, kantlé, a
 Ra utlwa modumo mose ho mawatlé, a
 Ha ba ha tetema ra re ho a helehà b
 Ra kena matlung ra ba ra balehà! b

(BM Khaketla: Dipjhamathe)

It is important to take cognizance of the fact that end rhyme, which is central to this study, may also be arranged systematically into what is universally known as rhyme schemes.

Scott (1980:247), aptly defines a rhyme scheme as '... the pattern of rhymes in a stanza'. There are several such patterns in existence. In African languages in particular, the most common rhyme schemes are

in the form of:

- * **Consecutive rhymes**, with the rhyme scheme of **aabbcc**, etc:

'Modumong, 1925'

Ba reng, 'Hlaahlaafethe,	a
Phetho, e seng makgethe	a
Tshebetsong ya matsoho ke sa rona sepheo.	b
Masimong ha re jala re hashatsa peo,	b
Ha re nna re e kolokisa,	c
Re hana ho e lokisa.	c

(JM Mohapeloa: **Mosikong wa thabana ya Borata**)

- * **Alternate rhymes**, with the rhyme scheme of **abab**:

'Se mpholelle tsa masisapelo'

Mpolelle tsa dishweshwe palesa tsa naha,	a
Mpolelle tsa tswere le leebanakgorwana;	b
Mpolella tsa tjobolo e phuthile dithaha,	a
O mpolella tsa dithope di tlotse letshwana.	b

(KDP Maphalla: **Fuba sa ka**)

One could rightly regard these two rhyme schemes as the basic schemes in African languages, with the whole gamut of rhyme schemes being a combination or modification of these two. It was interesting to note Mahlasela (1982:31) quoting the enclosed rhyme of **abba**, as one of the common rhyme patterns used in Southern Sotho. Unfortunately, he does not supply an example to substantiate his claim. A personal search for this rhyme scheme in Sesotho was without avail, proving it to be something of a rarity. The following example was found in a different African language, namely Xhosa:

'USimnikiwe'

Wayeyinkwenkwe endwebe kunene.	a
Wayengumenzi wezinto eziphuthileyo,	b
Engazihoyanga izenzo eziphuhlileyo.	b
Wayengabunanzanga ngant'ubunene	a

(LS Ngcangata: **Ukuphuma kwelanga**)

1.3.4 Functions of rhyme: a preamble

What are the functions of rhyme? The answer for this question is to be derived from the arguments erected by the advocates of rhyme in its

defence, in Chapter 3. These arguments repeat themselves with such remarkable precision in both non-African and African languages, that one cannot resist regarding them as the authentic functions of rhyme. In other words, the defensive arguments are synonymous with the functions of rhyme. But for the nonce, just a few preliminary statements.

Hollingworth (1924:17), comes up with a useful, but less-known function of false rhyme in particular:

Rime may seem too simple a matter for comment: you may think that a rime is either good or bad, and there is an end of it. It is not even the beginning, for a skilful poet may sometimes deliberately use a false rime as a sort of discord by suspension to be resolved into the harmony of the following perfect rimes. (My emphasis.)

This is indeed an eye-opener, especially so to the adversaries of rhyme, who are obsessed with the wrong idea that rhyme, let alone false rhyme, has no function in poetry. But for the functions of rhyme on a broader spectrum, one may revert to Smith (1964:45-46) who observes:

Rhyme is obviously associated with the form of a poem, as many forms are distinguishable by their rhyme-schemes. So rhyme must be associated with the structure of a poem. Rhyme is one of the architectural devices that makes a poem hold together. As we read the poem we look (subconsciously) both backwards and forwards to the rhymes, and when they come they give us a satisfying feeling of completeness. That is why a rhyme is a satisfying way of finishing something off, such as the couplet at the end of a scene, or at the end of a sonnet. That is, too, why it is always the last word of a quatrain which rhymes:

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer.
On Monday they began to hunt,
Ere daylight did appear:
And long before high noon they had
A hundred fat buck slain:
Then, having dined, the drovers went
To rouse the deer again.

(Chevy Chase: an anonymous ballad.)

Smith's pronouncements may rightly be regarded as an unpretentious summary of the principal functions of rhyme - a fact that will be validated by the arguments in defence of rhyme and, as already intimated, erected by the advocates of rhyme in Chapter 3.

Last, but by no means least, just another aspect of the functions of rhyme from Lanz (1968:265), focusing on the rhythm of the poem which contributes significantly to its quality:

With regard to rhythm, rime has two different functions to perform: (1) As the key in the melody of verse, it attracts our attention to rhythmically important places, the most important place being the end of each line. **Stressing the end-rimes rectifies the rhythm distorted by 'interruptions'.** Such is the melodic function of rime with regard to rhythm. (2) **As the chief principle of poetic harmony rime helps to arrange the verse lines into the larger, also rhythmically repeated, units called stanzas or strophes.** (My emphasis.)

1.4 Aim of study

The aim of this study is to establish by means of comparison, the fact that although rhyme has never been in habitual use in the indigenous or traditional poetry of African languages, as its adversaries are always quick to mention, and notwithstanding the morphology of these languages, **rhyme has as much potential in African languages, as it has in non-African languages.** In pursuance of this objective, the position of rhyme in these two language families will be investigated, and the outcome of the investigation compared. The role played by comparison in this study, as well as in other related studies, cannot be over-emphasised. Compare Baumbach (1987:167), who observes:

Opland has used the oral tradition of the South African imbongi, particularly of the Xhosas, to throw light on Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition. He points to a similarity between conditions in Anglo-Saxon England and the Transkei in the last 19th and early 20th centuries where a similar set-up existed ... (My emphasis.)

Adopting Opland's comparative approach to the Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition, Baumbach declares on the same page that the aim of her paper 'is to try to see whether the oral tradition of the Xhosa imbongi can be used in a similar way in comparison with a much older tradition of poetry, that of the ancient Greek'. On page 169, Baumbach restates her objective with a sense of immediacy, in this vein:

I want now to call in the help of another tradition, that of the African in South Africa, to see what light it can throw on the methods of oral composition, to see, too, what differences and what similarities there are in the two traditions, the Greek and the African.

While Opland and Baumbach both use an African poetic tradition to cast light on the Anglo-Saxon and Greek poetic traditions, respectively, the aim of this study is to work in reverse, and use these two poetic traditions, including those of the related non-African languages, for casting light on the poetic tradition of African languages with special reference to (end) rhyme, with a view to proving my point in a way which will, hopefully, be convincing.

1.5 Method of approach

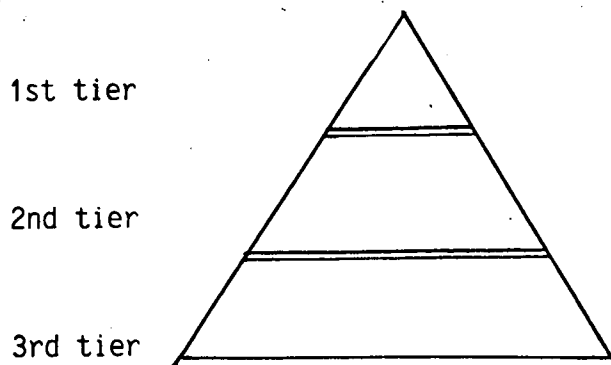
This study seeks to make a comparison of two levels of poetic practice in respect of non-African and African languages. The first level is the historical development of poetic devices, (cf alliteration, and rhyme), with a special partiality for rhyme. In the course of this study, these devices will often be referred to in terms of metre (cf dactylic hexameter, alliterative metre/verse, and rhyming metre). The second level is the arguments relating to rhyme. As hinted above, the two levels will be investigated in non-African languages, as well as in African languages. In both cases, the findings in respect of the former will be compared with those of the latter.

To the two levels above, a third level will also be added. This is a structural analysis of selected rhyming poems in Southern Sotho. Three rhyming Southern Sotho poems, picked out at random, will be structurally analysed. The primary aim of this exercise is to let the rhyme in these poems speak for itself, that is, it is expected to parade its alleged potentialities, failing which Southern Sotho, and by implication the rest of African languages with which it is cognate, would not be worth their salts as instruments of poetic expression.

One would like to conceptualize the three levels involved here as a pyramid with three tiers, these tiers being:

- 1 comparison of the historical development of poetic devices in non-African and African languages, with special reference to end rhyme
- 2 comparison of the arguments relating to rhyme in non-African and African languages, and
- 3 structural analysis of a selection of three rhyming poems from Southern Sotho poetry.

This pyramid and its three tiers may be diagrammatically represented as follows:



With reference to the historical development of poetic devices and

arguments relating to rhyme, the focus will be on the concept of analogy. One is inclined to raticionate that analogous events have the intrinsic value for producing analogous results. This being the case then, should the historical development of poetic devices and the arguments relating to rhyme in African languages be seen to tally with those in non-African languages, there could be absolutely no scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should not have as much potential in African languages as it has in their non-African counterparts. Regarding the structural analysis of selected rhyming poems in Southern Sotho, if the rhyme in these poems is seen to perform some of the functions of rhyme reflected in the arguments of the advocates of rhyme in Chapter 3, the contention is again that there could be no scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should not have as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages. By comparing these two language families in this manner does not by any means imply that they are cognate with each other. The crux of the matter is, what is good for the goose, is good for the gander. In other words, if non-African languages can rhyme, African languages should also be able to do so on their own right, for as Preminger *et al* (1986:235), aptly say:

Languages differ widely in their rhymability, and different conventions have been established as to the acceptable and the unacceptable. Languages which rhyme easily may right the balance by restrictive rules; and those which rhyme less easily may tolerate near-rhymes, though retaining perfect rhyme as the ideal. (My emphasis.)

1.6 Critical theories

There are in the main, four types of theories or arguments that may be applied in a critical analysis of a literary work of art. These are:

- 1.6.1 The **mimetic theory**, which uses the text in establishing how realistic art reflects the universe or reality.
- 1.6.2 The **expressive theory**, which regards the text as an expression of the poet's feelings or emotions.
- 1.6.3 The **pragmatic theory**, which looks at the text in relation to the reader, and how it affects him.
- 1.6.4 The **objective theory**, which examines the text by means of structuralism, which concerns itself with determining the **how** of the text, as opposed to the **what** of it. In other words, the objective theory uses structural analysis as its analytic vehicle.

1.7 Structural analysis

In 1.5, the question of comparison and structural analysis was raised, and their areas of application defined. It must now be restated that the selected rhyming Southern Sotho poems in Chapter 4, will be analysed through structural analysis. This analysis is a relatively new phenomenon in the prosody of African languages. Fortunately, one can derive valuable guidance from Leon Strydom's structural analysis of a sonnet by a certain Kloos, in Strydom (1975:317-328). His analysis, which is an in-depth study, demonstrates in a point-device manner and intrinsic freshness of this analytical approach to poetry, the harmonious interaction between certain key words and/or phrases, which is so crucial to the constitution of a poetic work of art. M Scott's diligent analysis of James Kirkup's poem, 'Thunder and lightning', which appears in Scott

(1985:v-ix), also affords a structural analysis technical expertise.

Smith (1968:6), distinguishes two kinds of elements in a poem, namely formal elements and thematic elements:

Formal elements are defined as those which arise from the physical nature of words, and would include such features as rhyme, alliteration, and syllabic meter. The **thematic elements** of a poem are those which arise from symbolic or conventional nature of words, and to which only someone familiar with the languages could respond; they would include everything from reference to syntax tone.

Nevertheless, it is not within the range of possibility for any given poem to have all these poetic elements - a fact that Cloete et al (1985:177), so aptly convey:

Dit is immers so dat alle moontlike elemente wat literêre werke konstitueer, nie in elke literêre werk aangewesig is of kommunikatief ewe aktief is nie.

Structuralists believe that every poetic element in a literary work of art must have a function. The vital role played by these elements together or collectively cannot be over-emphasised. Compare Scott (1985:x):

... what we expect to find as we study the content of a poem is a range of poetic devices which concentrate the meaning of the poem and represent, in many cases, different levels of interpretation. These devices include imagery and metaphor, and it is these techniques which give a piece of writing its poetic quality. **The purpose of poetic techniques is to increase the reader's awareness and understanding of the poet's ideas.** (My emphasis.)

The selection of structural analysis was influenced by the fact that I also believe as structuralists do. Hence, first and foremost, the rhyme in the poems to be structurally analysed would be expected to perform some of the functions of rhyme specified in Chapter 3. The operative word here is 'some' because no poem can have capacity for

performing all those functions by itself. So, the poems would be analysed with the functions of rhyme in mind. Secondly, due consideration would also be given to other poetic elements in the poems for the simple reason that all the elements in a given poem have an important role to play, and rhyme is only one of them. True as it is that rhyme is central to this study, attention cannot be focused on it exclusively as it cannot constitute a poem by itself, but can only do so in collaboration with other poetic elements. Indeed, concentrating exclusively on rhyme implies a deficiency of some kind. To demonstrate this point, excerpts from the poetical works of KDP Maphalla and EAS Lesoro, respectively will be structurally analysed exclusively in terms of rhyme.

1.7.1 KDP Maphalla: 'Le re hapile'

Fatshe lena nnete le re hapile,	a
Ke mona re lelera sa nku di lahlehile;	a
Re bafo ba meleko le ditakatso,	b
Re a qhwebeshana, ha ho kgotso -	b
Hobane ruri, le re hapile.	a

(Fuba sa ka)

('It has enchanted us'
This world has really enchanted us,
Here we are, roaming about like lost sheep,
We are addicted to temptations and desires,
We quarrel among ourselves, there's no peace -
Because it has indeed enchanted us.)

1.7.1.1 Structural analysis

This stanza comprises five verses with the rhyme scheme of **aabba**. The rhyme element **/-ile/** performs three functions. In the first place, it lends a magnetic power of some kind to the action word **/lahlehile/** (lost), in verse 2, to instil extra attention into its rhyme partner **/hapile/** (enchanted), in verse 1. This extra attention gives the

enchantment of the personas in this poem more dimension, when studied against the background of the simile /sa nku di lahlehile/ (like lost sheep), of which /lahlehile/ is a constituent. Secondly, this rhyme element links /hapile/ in verse 5 to /lahlehile/. It finally links /hapile/ in verse 5 with the other /hapile/ in verse 1, with which it now stands in what may be called an epiphoric relation, which intensifies the enchantment of the personas further still. This process whereby one rhyme word is linked to some rhyme partner(s) implies the linking of those verses in which the relevant rhyme words occur. As those verses convey certain ideas, the linking of such ideas as are conveyed is also implied. Besides the linking force of end rhyme in this stanza, it is also worth mentioning that the rhyme element /-tso/ does not only make it possible for /ditakatso/ (desires), in verse 3, to rhyme with /kgotso/ (peace), in verse 4, but that the high tone (HT) in /ditakatso/ serves to create an intuitive sense that the desires having reference here are not ordinary, but intense - they are the so-called burning desires. The low tone (LT) of /-tso/ in /kgotso/ on the other hand, conveys the idea that peace is something humble and gentle - something quite pleasurable. Last, but not least, by juxtaposing /ditakatso/ and /kgotso/, the poet seems to imply that everybody yearns for peace.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the organization of the verses bearing the rhyme element /-ile/ is such that a conscientious reader is tempted to re-organise these verses to read as follows:

Statement: Fatshe lena le re hapile, a
 Re a lelera, re lahlehile, a
 Hobane le re hapile. a

(This world has enchanted us,
 We roam about, we are lost,
 Because it has enchanted us.)

Result: Re bafo ba meleko le ditakatso, **b**
 Re a qhwebeshana, ha ho kgotso. **b**

(We are addicted to temptations and desires,
 We quarrel among ourselves, there's no peace.)

1.7.2 EAS Lesoro: 'Tshokoloho ya moetsadibe'

Matswalo a bona a tota, a eketseha, **a**
 Ha jwale ke bua, ebile ke tsheha, **a**
 Ka bona ka dirope ho otlana, ho phakgasela. **b**
 Ba tiya ba re ha ke motho, ke sethotsela, **b**
 Yare ho kgolwa ba tloseletsa seka mahlanya, **c**
 Thota ya tlala maphanyaphanya a mathang sehlanya. **c**

(Maleatlala le dithothokiso tse ding)

('Repentence of the sinner'
 Their fright was aggravated and intensified;
 When I started talking and laughing,
 I noticed their thighs shaking and trembling;
 They averred that I was a ghost,
 Being convinced, they made off like those possessed,
 And the veld was covered with fugitives running
 helter -skelter.)

1.7.2.1 Structural analysis

This stanza is composed of three couplets rhyming **aabbcc**. Because of the consecutive nature of the rhymes, the sounds to which the ear has been attuned, and it consequently expects, are yielded with such immediacy that the ear cannot fail to be enthralled. In the first couplet, the rhyme element, **/-eha/** besides making **/eketseha/** (intensified), in verse 1, to rhyme with **/tsheha/** (laughing), in verse 2, it also relates to the two rhyme partners in an antithetic sort of way. The antithesis it constitutes is well-pronounced when the whole couplet is taken into consideration, that is, **/Matswalo a bona a tota, a eketseha/** (Their fright was aggravated and intensified), in verse 1, and **/Ha jwale ke bua, ebile ke tsheha/** (When I started talking and laughing), in verse 2. Normally, fright is never associated with laughing, hence the **ne plus ultra** of juxtaposing **/matswalo a eketsehang/** (intensifying fright) with **/tsheha/**, is

antithesis. The persona in this stanza could also be interpreted to be amused by the people in his company, who were possessed with imaginary fears, and he could not contain his laughter.

The rhyme element /-ela/ in the second couplet rhymes /phakgasela/ (tremble), in verse 3, with /sethotsela/ (ghost), in verse 4. The two words belong to disparate word categories, with the former being a verb, and the latter a noun. But rhyme is seen to be linking the two words into a semantic whole. Both words also evoke a sense of vision. One can formulate a mental picture of a horrific ghost and frightened, trembling people. As trembling implies an agitated motion, /phakgasela/ in addition evokes a sense of kinetics. The two words /sethotsela/ and /phakgasela/ may also be viewed in terms of subject and causation, respectively, as the idea of a ghost was the cause of trembling. The third couplet has /-hlanya/ for its rhyme element. This is responsible for the rhyme between /mahlanya/ (maniacs, those possessed), in verse 5, and /sehlanya/ (helter-skelter), in verse 6. The use of /seka mahlanya/ (like maniacs, like those possessed) and /sehlanya/ (like a maniac, helter-skelter) consecutively, results in an effective comparison as the phrase and the word are indistinguishable similes.

Like the stanza excerpted from the poetical work of Maphalla, this stanza also suggests a reorganization of verses and a division into statement and result:

Statement:	Ha ke bua, ke tsheha,	a
	Matswalo a bona a eketseha,	a
	Ba phakgasela,	b
	Ba re ke sethotsela.	b

(When I started talking and laughing,
 Their fright was intensified,
 And they trembled,
 They averred that I was a ghost.)

Result: Ba tloseletsa seka mahlanya, c
 Thota ya tlala maphanyaphanya a mathang sehlanya. c

(They made off like those possessed,
 And the veld was covered with fugitives running
 helter-skelter.)

That is how far the structural analysis of the two stanzas could go, when the focus is exclusively on the element of rhyme. Both analyses suffer from a deficiency of poetic elements which together or collectively constitute a poem, and this condition was to a great extent exacerbated by the fact that in each case only a small section of the relevant poem was analysed, and not the poem as a whole. To prevent this problem from recurring, the poems selected for structural analysis will be treated in their entirety, focusing on all poetic elements which constitute them. On this score of entirety, I contribute categorically to the opinions expressed by Lenake (1984:9), as quoted at length:

In order to be able to explain how a poem functions ('hoe 'n gedig werk'), the poem - and the poem in its entirety - should be considered. Rightly so, because the poem is a generic entity of its own. This implies that it purports to communicate as a whole. Its form, its internal structure, its imagery, its communicative strategies and devices, operate in the totality of the poem. Wherever analysis is being made - thematic or structural - wherever evaluation is the issue under consideration, these activities will be based on complete poems. Descriptions, analyses and evaluations based on isolated samples of selected verse lines, will only lead to incomplete and unreliable conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF POETIC DEVICES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO END RHYME

The primary objective of this chapter is to examine the historical development of poetic devices in the versification practice of both non-African and African languages. In the pursuance of this objective, special attention will be paid to end rhyme. Such preferential or emphatic approach is quite essential, in view of the fact that end rhyme in particular is precisely what this study is all about.

2.1 Versification practice in non-African languages

As non-African languages preceded African languages in the literary scenario of versification, by virtue of which they boast the oldest tradition, it has been considered wise and logical to start by examining them in terms of the history of poetic devices, with a special partiality for end rhyme. The principal aim, as already expressed in Chapter 1, is to find out if they started using this device from the incunabula of their poetic practice, or whether the opposite is in fact true. Just a modicum of non-African languages has been selected for this purpose. The selection was to a greater extent influenced by the documented evidence at my disposal.

2.1.1 Greek

According to Preminger et al (1975:326):

Poetry was uniquely important in ancient Greece, as a means not only of expression, but also of communication, commemoration, and instruction.

The epics composed by the blind poet, Homer, are estimated to be the earliest Greek poems. They undoubtedly served the purpose expressed above very well as Preminger et al (1975:326) further says:

Homeric poems were considered throughout the history of ancient Greece as the richest source of moral and religious instruction. (My emphasis.)

The 9th and 8th centuries are regarded as the **age of epic poetry** in Greek versification. With reference to poetic device, the ancient epic employed the so-called **verse**. The term 'verse' is, unfortunately, used in such a diversity of senses that it runs the risk of leading to misinformation, especially when it is used out of context. Compare this manifold definition of 'verse' by Scott (1980:304):

Latin **versus**, a furrow, a row, line, a metric line, literally turning (to the next line), from **vertère**, to turn. Metrical composition or structure. A stanza consisting of several lines. One of the short sections into which a chapter of the Bible is divided.

Abrams (1981:102), on the credit side, presents a precise meaning of 'verse', as per context, when he circuitously defines it in the following words:

If ... rhyme of stresses is structured into a recurrence of regular - that is, approximately equal - units, we call it **meter**. Compositions written in meter are known as **verse**.

This verse is, as a rule, written in dactylic hexameter. For centuries on end, the Greek poets wrote their epics in these hexameters. But as Symonds (1893:15, Vol 1), says:

The national ear demanded other and more varied forms of verse than the hexameter. ... **Solon consigned his wisdom to couplets**, and used it as a trumpet for awakening the zeal of Athens against her tyrants. (My emphasis.)

What one can deduce from this quotation is that, in response to the national demand for formal variety, one of the Greek poets called

Solon started using rhyme in the form of couplets in his versification practice. This being the case, one could assume that couplets were the first form of rhyme to be used in Greek poetry as a departure from the dactylic hexameter. This assumption derives a degree of validity from Preminger et al (1975:327), who say the following about this form of end rhyme:

Elegiac poetry originated as a song accompanied by the flute. Its meter, **the elegiac couplet**, is a **modification of the dactylic hexameter**, and felt to be lighter than the epic verse form. (My emphasis).

Further reference to the elegiac couplet in Greek versification practice is found in Preminger et al (1975:329), where they observe:

Callimachus ... is at best (at least to modern taste) in **the epigram**. This traditional form, which is **based on the elegiac couplet**, and traces its origins to functional dedicatory and sepulchral inscriptions of the 7th century, received a rare polish from the terseness and wit of the Callimachean technique. (My emphasis.)

This is, indeed, further proof that the couplet was the first form of end rhyme to be used in Greek poetry. Another evidence of rhyme in Greek versification is found in the following pronouncement by Preminger et al (1975:330):

The masterpiece of Cretan literature is the **Erotokritos**, an **epico-lyric poem of 10,052 rhyming 15-syllable political verses**, composed by Vitzentzos Kornaros. (My emphasis.)

This 15-syllable verse form was also not for all times for in the words of Preminger et al (1975:331):

(Solomos) introduced a number of Western forms (the sestina, the Ottava, the terza rima) into Greek, which freed Greek poetry from the monotony of 15-syllable verse which had formerly characterised it. (My emphasis.)

Rhyme here, is implied by the bracketed 'Western metrical forms',

which rhyme. While the sestina may be both rhymed and unrhymed, it may be well-assumed that Preminger *et al* were in fact referring to the rhyming version of this poetic form. The foregoing literary evidence yields the following observation:

- * In Greek versification practice, the poets started by using the dactylic hexameter.
- * They then modified the dactylic hexameter into elegiac couplet, which spelt the emergence of end rhyme in Greek poetry.

2.1.2 Latin

According to Raven (1965:17):

To a very large extent, the structure of classical Latin verse is derived from that of Greek verse, whose influence is already apparent in Latin literature of the late 3rd century BC.

The derivative nature of Latin poetry is echoed by Preminger *et al* (1975:437), in the quotation below:

Classical Latin poetry is commonly censured as derivative. The Latin poets wrote in meters originated by Greeks, (and) employed a more or less assimilated Greek mythology as a poetic vehicle.

This being the case, it would not amount to a strained interpretation to say that the poetic practice of Latin followed that of Greek very closely. But differences could not be precluded because in the process of exploiting the Greek poetic techniques, the Latin poets were bound to effect certain modifications for, to borrow words from Preminger *et al* (1975:438), 'the exploitation is an exercise in humility and craft, a constant refinement of a more or less dominant mode'. A close study of Latin versification reveals that in its initial stages, only one solitary indigenous poem was composed in the

so-called **Saturnian stress-meter**, as opposed to the **dactylic hexameter** initially used in Greek poetry. This, of course, happened many years before Latin was subjected to Greek culture. But it is by no means satisfactory to regard the Saturnian stress-meter as the first metre to be used in Latin poetry because the non-availability of even some fragments of a poem written in this mysterious metre deprives it of authenticity, reducing it to a subject that is much given to speculation. As far as I am concerned, the Saturnian stress-meter is nonexistent in the sense that there is virtually no poem that can be used to demonstrate its structural organization. As a matter of fact, no prosodist is known to cast explicit light on this metre. Even a dictionary is of very little help, as it will not go beyond defining it as a metre used in early Latin poetry.

But Latin was later influenced by Greek. In the realm of poetry, it immediately adopted the dactylic hexameter utilized in Greek versification of the day. In Latin, the precursor of this metre was Quintus Ennius (239-169 BC), who used it in his epic poem called the 'Annals'. The Medieval period dawned to see two Saints, namely St Hilary and St Ambrose, composing Latin hymns. Commenting on the hymnic compositions of the latter, Preminger et al (1975:442) enthuse:

The future lay with the hymns of Ambrose, whose **iambic dimeters and 4-line strophes easily developed into rhythmic verses of 8 syllables**, adorned, as time went on, with regular rhymes. (My emphasis.)

After a thorough investigation of the poetic activities of the fourth to the sixth centuries, Preminger et al (1975:442), remark with an air of incredulity:

In a manner that is still somewhat obscure, **rhythm and rhyme were beginning a long and wonderful career**; for they were destined to guide and transform the vernacular literatures of Western Europe. (My emphasis.)

This is not only a literary evidence of end rhyme in Latin versification, but also a fair estimation of its future influence. The presence of rhyme in Latin poetry was, indeed, validated by Wilkinson (1970:32), when he knowingly remarked that '... a tendency to actual rhyme could hardly fail to occur in an inflected language, and it was promoted by the taste of parallelism'. This quotation spells the end of this section on Latin versification. It can be observed that:

- * The first metre to be used in Latin versification was the disputable Saturnian stress-meter, associated with an anonymous, nonexisting indigenous poem.
- * Latin then adopted the Crecan dactylic hexameter.
- * It finally adopted rhyme from Greek, using it initially on its hymnic compositions, then in its poems.

2.1.3 Scandinavian

Like Greek and Latin, Scandinavian did not employ rhyme during the earliest stages of its versification practice. It used the alliterative verse. And like these two languages, it adopted rhyme in due course. This in fact emerges when in his discussion of the Scandinavian literature (1870-1980), Rossel (1982:83) writes in this vein about Gustaf Fröding (1860-1911), who was one of the great romantic poets in the history of Scandinavian literature:

Fröding's feelings of ineffectuality and failure pervade all his poetry. His artistic treatment of ... peasant motifs was novel: the language was terse and clear, with no extraneous words, **no uncertainty of structure, indeed there is musical virtuosity in the rhyme and rhythm.** (My emphasis.)

According to Rossel (1982:110), by 1897 the Hannes Hafstein had become a strong nationalist, and 'the national assertiveness brought a renewed interest in the old artistic traditions; the languishing

medieval *rímur* poetry ...'. The implication here seems to be that the Medieval Age experienced a vigorous use of rhyme in Scandinavian poetry, and this had started dying out, and was now being revived. This leads one to form an opinion that as it is the case with other languages, rhyme in Scandinavian poetry was a phenomenon that occurred in an alternating sort of way. In other words, it would be used in a given era, fall out of use in the next era, only to be used again in the era that follows.

That the Scandinavian poets still practised rhyme in their versification up to the twentieth century, can be judged from what Rossel (1982:239) says about *Silmästä silmään* (1926), this being an anthology of poetry by another Scandinavian poet, Uuno Kailas (1901-33):

Silmästä silmään (Eye to Eye, 1926) brought Kailas before a large audience. It marks a transition in his art from free verse to more traditional forms, characterized by regular rhythm and rhyme, and shows his progressive introversion. (My emphasis.)

Rhyme in this Scandinavian poetry of the twentieth century gained further ground and popularity when Magnús Stefánsson (1884-1942), writing under the *nom de plume* of Arnarson, added more dimension to it with his satiric collection, *Rímur af Oddi sterka* (Rhymes by Oddr the Strong), in 1938. But the customary periodic alternation between the rhymed and unrhymed poetic practices soon set in when in his poetical work, *Mannen utan väg* (The Man Without a Way, 1942), Erik Lindegren (1910-68) came up with unrhymed poems as opposed to the rhymes of Kaila (1926) and Stefánsson (Arnarson) (1938). Says Rossel (1982:258) about Lindegren's *Mannen utan väg*:

It consists of forty unrhymed symmetrical poems, almost every line of which is saturated with dissonant imagery. (My emphasis.)

But another twenty nine years later, in 1971 to be, more precise, Hannes Pétursson reversed the poetic practice with his volume, *Rimblöð* (Pages of Rhyme, 1971) in which he reverted to rhyme. This repetitive return to rhyme clearly under scores the importance of this poetic device in Scandinavian poetry which initially used the alliterative metre.

2.1.4 German

With reference to German, vide Robertson (1902:17) the 'Hildebranslied' ('Lay of Hildebrand and Hadubrand') written in ca 800 was also composed in alliterative verse, which he describes as the oldest metrical system of Germanic poetry. In other words, German poetry used alliterative metre as its poetic device during its early formative stages, and not rhyme. The 'Muspilli' ('Destruction of the World') is another German poem which was written during the early Middle Ages. Robertson (1902:22) does not say precisely when it was written. He vaguely relegates it to the reign of Ludwig of German (ca 843-876), which constitutes a parachronism in view of the fact that I have learned from a reliable source that it was in reality written in ca. 829. On the page indicated above, Robertson writes the following about 'Muspilli':

... the so call **Muspilli** (comprises) one hundred and six lines of alliterative verse in the Bavarian dialect ...

His statement mentions only the use of alliterative verse in the 'Muspilli', and inadvertendly omits to mention that this poem also contains some rhyming verses, making it the first German poem with

rhyme. The following extract quoted by Robertson himself (p 23), bears testimony to the fact that the 'Muspilli' does indeed contain some rhyming verses. The quotation as Robertson hinted, is in the Bavarian dialect:

Sô daz Eliases pluot in erda kitriufit,	a
sô inprinnant die pergâ, poum ni kistentit,	a
ênîc in erdu, ahâ artruknênt,	b
muor varswilhit sih, suilizôt lougiu der himil,	c
mano vallit, prinnit mittilagart	b
dar ni mac mâk andremo helfan vora demo muspille.	c

Assuming that /artruknênt/ in verse 3 and /mittilagart/ in verse 5 constitute a half rhyme, and that the terminal /-e/ in /muspille/ in verse 6 is devoiced, hence making it possible for /muspille/ to rhyme with /himil/ in verse 4, then the rhyme scheme of this extract is aabcbc. Probably, one cannot strongly claim that the 'Muspilli' was the first rhyming poem in German from this evidence alone, without having studied the full text in terms of the frequency of rhyme in it, including its schematic organisation, as this rhyme could have occurred by accident, and not by design (cf rhyme in indigenous poetry of African languages).

One of the monuments of German poetry of the early Middle Ages is the 'Heliand' ('Saviour'), written in ca 830. As Robertson (1911:8) says, it was also composed in alliterative verse:

The **Heliand** is a genuine epic of the life of Christ based on the Gospels, or rather on a Harmony of the four Gospels; its language is simple and noble, ornamented only by the direct and forcible phrases of the old alliterative speech.

It is interesting to take cognizance of the fact that the end of this alliterative verse was engineered by the soundshifting phenomenon which occurred in the German language later on. Vide Robertson

(1902:24), with Otfrid, the abandonment of alliterative verse when he wrote his 'Evangelieharmonie' ('Gospel harmony') in ca 870, was a must - he had no choice:

Otfrid had no choice; he was compelled to abandon alliteration, and adopt in its place rhyme, with which the Church hymns had already made him familiar. He virtually retained, however, the alliterative form, namely, the long line broken in the middle, but instead of using alliterative syllables, he made the half verses rhyme with each other.

The 'Evangelieharmonie' is generally regarded as the first rhyming poem in German, and this may be because of the high frequency of rhyme in it, which probably preponderates over that of the 'Muspilli', as well as an organisation that culminates in a well-defined rhyme scheme, which may be lacking in the 'Muspilli'. It is indeed worth mentioning that since the advent of the rhyming 'Evangelieharmonie', rhyme has never ceased to be used in German versification. It has also never fallen out of favour, except with certain poets at certain times, in certain epochs - a fact that will be briefly discussed in a subsequent chapter of this study.

As an example of a rhyming poem in German, I have elected choosing 'Abend' composed by Gryph (Gryphius) during the Baroque era, and which JH Tisch-Wackernagel describes in Ritchie (1977:33) as one of Gryph's most perfect sonnets, with a lucid architectural concentration.

Here follows the text of this sonnet:

Der schnelle Tag ist hin/die Nacht schwingt jhre fahn/	a
Vnd führt die Sternen auff. Der Menschen müde scharen	b
Verlassen feld vnd werck/Wo Thier vnd Vögel waren	b
Trawrt jtz die Einsamkeit. Wie ist die zeit verthan!	a
Der port naht mehr vnd mehr sich/zu der glieder Kahn.	a
Gleich wie di licht verfiel/so wird in wenig Jahren	b
Ich/du/vnd was man hat/vnd was man siht/hinfahren.	b

Diß Leben kömmt mir vor	aß eine renne bahn.	a
Laß höchster Gott mich doch nicht auff dem Laufplatz gleinten		b
Laß mich nicht ach/nicht pracht/nicht lust/nicht angst verleiten.		b
Dein ewig heller glantz sey vor vnd neben mir/		c
Laß /wenn der müde Leib entschläfft/die Seele wachen		b
Vnd wenn der letzte Tag wird mit mir abend machen/		b
So reiß mich auß dem thal der Finsternuß zu Dir.		c

Then Tisch-Wachernagel, among other things, says the following about this sonnet, in Ritchie (1977:34):

With its abstract, un-subjective metaphors of earthly transitoriness, **Abend** epitomizes the inherently religious imagery that constitutes another integral part of the era which Herder already was inclined to style 'emblematic'. Gryph's whole work draws upon a body of images (whose ancestry is traceable back to Renaissance and Middle Ages at least), subservient to the poetic expounding of a Christian world picture, a system of universal references, deitic, exemplary, and ultimately metaphysical in character.

With Tisch-Wackernagel having showered 'Abend' with such unrestrained accolades, one can only examine the rhyme scheme of this sonnet to establish how it compares with that/those of the model, namely the Italian sonnet, also named the Petrarchan sonnet after the man who first invented it. Before the envisaged comparison can be made, it is quite imperative that the rhyme schemes of both sonnets should be closely examined. In the case of Gryph's 'Abend', the rhyme scheme as reflected above is **abba, abba, bbc, bbc**. This can be broken down into the following categories:

1. **OCTAVE:** 1st quatrain rhyming **abba** and
2nd quatrain rhyming **abba**
2. **SESTET:** 1st tercet rhyming **bbc**, and
2nd tercet rhyming **bbc**.

Below is the text of a Petrarchan sonnet, composed in Italian by Petrarcha (Petrarca) himself:

S' una fede amorosa, un cor non finto,	a
Un languir dolce, un desiar cortese,	b
S' oneste voglie in gentil foco accese,	b
S' un lungo error' in cieco laberinto,	a
Se nella fronte ogni pensier dipinto,	a
Od in voci interrotte appena intese,	b
Or da paura, or da vergogna offese,	b
S' un pallor di viola, e d' amor tinto,	a
S' aver altrui più caro che sè stesso,	c
Se lagrimar, e sospirar mai sempre	d
Pascendosi di duol, d' ira, e d' affanno;	e
S' areder da lunge, ed agghiacciar da presso	c
Son le cagion ch' amando i' mi distempre,	d
Vostro, Donna, 'l peccato, e mio fia 'l danno.	e

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A critical gaze at this sonnet reveals the fact that an Italian or Petrarchan sonnet boasts the rhyme scheme of **abba, abba, cde, cde**, which can be broken down into the following categories:

- 1 **OCTAVE:** 1st quatrain rhyming **abba**, and
2nd quatrain rhyming **abba**.
- 2 **SESTET:** 1st tercet rhyming **cde**, and
2nd tercet rhyming **cde**.

But this rhyme scheme is only one version of the Petrarchan sonnet's rhyme schemes. It has three versions, the remaining two versions being as follows:

- (a) 1 **OCTAVE:** 1st quatrain rhyming **abba**, and
2nd quatrain rhyming **abba**.
- 2 **SESTET:** 1st tercet rhyming **dcd**, and
2nd tercet rhyming **dcd**.
- (b) 1 **OCTAVE:** 1st quatrain rhyming **abba**, and
2nd quatrain rhyming **abba**.

- 2 **SESTET:** 1st pair of verses rhyming **cd**,
 2nd pair of verses rhyming **cd**, and
 3rd pair of verses rhyming **cd**.

Coming now to the comparison of 'Abend' and the Petrarchan sonnet, one observes that the former does not strictly conform to the latter because although it conforms to it in terms of the octave, this is not the case with respect to the sestet. According to Berthón (1899:1vi), any sonnet that does not conform to the structural organisation of the Petrarchan sonnet is irregular, and this includes popular sonnets such as the Shakespearean and Spenserian sonnets which have a structural setup that deviates from the Petrarchan convention. Hence 'Abend' is, by definition, also irregular, and may only be regarded as a variant of its Italian/Petrarchan counterpart.

2.1.5 Anglo-Saxon

In the **Anglo-Saxon** poetic history, the epic 'Beowulf' is regarded as one of the oldest poems. The exact date of its composition is, unfortunately, not known. But its importance cannot be ignored, as judged from the utterances by Strong (1927:3):

Beowulf is an important historical document, recreating for us a whole society, telling us, in most authentic fashion, of life as it was lived in far-off ... days.

From a literary point of view, however, it is more important and equally interesting to learn from Robertson (1902:17) that like the German lay, the 'Hildebrandslied', and other related poems, this epic was also composed in alliterative verse. This leads one to the impression that at that point in time rhyme was virtually unknown in Anglo-Saxon, the only poetic device of note being alliteration. But sooner or later, things were destined to change, as poetry is not a

static phenomenon, but a dynamic one which readily responds to change. As a matter of fact, the Scandinavian prosody, which had earlier proved susceptible to the attractions of rhyme, exerted some influence on the later Anglo-Saxon versification which resulted in the so-called homiletic piece of work called 'The Rhyming Poem' found in the Exeter Book, and whose rhyming metre was quite unique to the genius of the Anglo-Saxon mode of poetic expression. No wonder Wrenn (1967:120-121) could not resist saying:

Beowulf has a magnitude, the completeness, and depth of an epic, and is a whole consciously expressing the fulfilled artistic conception of its maker. (My emphasis.)

Writing about this unique Anglo-Saxon epic in subsequent pages of his work, Wrenn (1967:148) further observes:

Its editorial title arises from the fact that it is the one complete poem in Anglo-Saxon which was evidently intended to be entirely in rhyme in lines which, while alliterating in the usual way, at the same time link their two halves by means of internal rhyme. Such Leonine lines had been used occasionally singly as in **Beowulf** 1014 and **Maldon** 282 for stylistic effect, and by Cynewulf in the famous continuous passage opening the Epilogue of the **Elene**.

From this quotation it is quite evident that before the advent of 'The Rhyming Poem' rhyme had already been used in certain Anglo-Saxon literary works. But its use was sporadic and of a limited extent. It is, so to say, the superfluity of rhyme in 'The Rhyming Poem' that made it a unique poetic composition. For its technique of blending alliterating and internally rhyming metres, compare verses 27-29 of this epic:

*Scealcas wæron **scearpe**, scyl wæs **hearpe**,
hlude **hlynede**, hleoþor **dynede**,
sweglrad **swinsade**, swiþe ne **minsade**.*

(Keen were the retainers as the harp sonorously shrilled; it sounded loudly as the voice (of the reciter) rang out: melodious was the music, nor did its power diminish.) (Paraphrase by Wrenn, 1967:149).

The words which rhyme internally have been clearly marked. The similarity of initial consonants in each verse is quite obvious, and reveals the three verses to be intensively alliterative. Besides internal rhyme, one can also discern some evidence of **epiphora** in this poem. Compare verses 67-69 in this regard:

Sumur-hat colað,
fold-wela fealleð, feondscipe wealleð,
eorð-mægen ealdap, ellen colað.

(Cold grows summer's heat: the riches of the earth begin to fall away, and the enemy rages. The might of the earth grows aged, and valour grows cold.)

(Paraphrase by Wrenn, 1967:150)

In this quotation, while verse 68 rhymes internally, the word **colað** (cold) in verses 67 and 69 contrives an end rhyme known as **epiphora**. Like its opposite, **anaphora**, which appears at the beginning of verses instead of at the end, as it is the case with it, epiphora has the poetic effect of emphasis, whereby the word for cold appearing terminally in verse 69 emphasises its counterpart appearing at the end of verse 67 by attracting an extra attention to it. This objective having been achieved, this word ceases to be a mere natural phenomenon. It is transformed into an element of experience, which can only be realised through the sense, the so-called sense-datum.

Commenting on the unique continuity and superfluity of rhyme in 'The Rhyming Poem', Wrenn (1967:149) observes:

As the only Old English poem in rhyme throughout, the work might be thought of as a first anticipation of passing over to rhymed metre which characterized the Middle English period. But ... **The Rhyming Poem** is more likely to have been just a piece of bold experimenting.

2.1.6 English

From Anglo-Saxon, whose poets Wrenn (1967:14) implicitly says did not

look for the virtues of construction, the architectonics of poetry, our attention will now be diverted to **English**. But this term, English, is for the present rather problematic, as it erroneously implies that Anglo-Saxon as such is a completely different language from English. The truth of the matter is that basically, Anglo-Saxon is also English. It only happened to be old English, with a capital 'o'. Its 'age', however, contributed tremendously to its dissimilitude to English in terms of terminology and phraseology, as reflected in the two fragments from 'The Rhyming Poem' quoted above. The type of English whose poetic history is on the verge of discussion has been differentiated elsewhere as 'British English'. But it has been deemed fit and expedient to merely refer to it as 'English' throughout because, differentiation apart, it is the name by which it is universally and popularly known. Nevertheless, it is quite incumbent to differentiate 'South African English' in due course.

Working on the premiss that the Anglo-Saxon poetic history was pursued from the beginning of the English literature to the Norman Conquest, the poetic history of English as an extension of that of Anglo-Saxon, will be resumed from the Old Middle English Period (450-1100) and briefly traced to the present twentieth century. For this purpose, the emphasis will be on metre, with a bias to the rhyming metre.

As English is cognate with Anglo-Saxon, it is not a cause for surprise that it inherited the alliterative metre from the latter and applied it in its versification during the Old Middle English Period. There was, of course, an occasional use of rhyme here and there, which was probably not intentional, but accidental for, as Kaluza (1911:126),

translated by AC Dunstan, indicates; the transformation of the Old English into rhymed verse, which was due to the influence of the rhymed French and Latin verse, did not take place before the Middle English Period. The early Middle English Period can, therefore, be regarded as one of the most important epochs in the history of English prosody, because it was during its advent that a gradual change from alliteration to rhyme was brought to bear.

It would appear that during this period of transition both poetic devices were applied. One of the earliest productions exhibiting the combined application of these devices is 'The Proverbs of Alfred' (1180), about which under his sub-heading, **THE GRADUAL EMERGENCE OF A NATIVE COUPLET**, Oakden (1968:141) says:

There are:

1. 129 alliterative long lines without rhyme.
2. 11 alliterative long lines with rhyme or assonance.
3. 100 lines in couplets without alliteration.
4. 46 lines in couplets with alliteration. ...

In Layamon's famous **Brut** (1189-1207), is found a poem which is reputed to have two versions exceeding each other by a period of half a century, in which rhyme frequently intrudes upon the basic alliterative verse, the frequency of this intrusion being higher in the second version than in the first one. But in comparative terms, the early Middle English Period seems to have been characterized by

rhyme. One of the rhyming poems of this period is 'Morte Arthure', of which Strong (1927:22) writes as follows:

There is no lack of love ... in the earlier **Morte Arthure**, a rhyming poem in eight lined stanzas. ... The description of Arthur's last fight and passing is at once fuller and finer than that given in the alliterative romance ...

What can be deduced from Strong's pronouncement is that this poem has different versions - one in alliterative metre, and another one in rhyming metre. The comparison of the two versions seems to tip the scales in favour of the version written in rhyming metre. This speaks volumes about rhyme, which continued being used up to the Middle Ages. Minot, one of the English poets of this period reportedly wrote in many metres, employing both rhyme and alliteration. But as Strong (1927:34) indicates, rhyme had now become essential, and alliteration had ceased to be so. He maintains that it was still used for ornament, but insists that it was not fully revived. Rhyme, on the contrary, forged its way right into the Elizabethan era, which was characterised by a prolificity of sonnets by such great names as Spenser and Shakespeare, the fathers of the Spenserian sonnet and the Shakespearean sonnet, respectively.

With rhyme on the crest of the wave, Thomas Campion (1567-1620), about whom more will be heard in a subsequent chapter, wrote a treatise in which he essayed to demonstrate the superiority of rhymeless over rhymed lyrical poems. But as Strong (1927:168) points out:

Campion's own practice disproved the contention, for his best lyrics are rhymed - for instance, the beautiful 'Follow your saint', 'There is a garden in her face', and 'Now winter nights enlarged'. (My emphasis.)

But Strong immediately concedes that '... a handful of his rhymeless lyrics - as 'Rose-cheeked Laura, come', and 'Hark all you ladies' -

are so exquisite as to more than justify his use of this form'.

One may rightly conclude that Campion's attempt to discredit rhyme was of no avail, considering the fact that it continued being used during the century that followed, namely the eighteenth century. One of its practitioners during this century was the lyricist Robert Burns (1759-1796), on whose lyrics Strong (1927:274) comments:

Constantly in these lyrics his utterance has the supreme qualities of simplicity, intensity, and sweetness. This supremacy cannot be analysed; it can only be felt and demonstrated in such lines as:

My love is like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June,
My love is like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune. ...

One cannot fail to sense the 'melodious tune' that is enhanced by rhyme in this stanza. Even the nineteenth century has some evidence of rhyme, and Francis Thompson (1859-1907) was one of its practitioners. Strong (1927:345) says he 'had probably more inspiration than any poet of his generation, and many would class him among the greatest English lyric poets.' Compare the following extract from one of his compositions in which the rhyme scheme of **abcbcad** is employed:

In all I work, my hand includeth thine;
Thou rushest down in every stream
Whose passion frets my spirit's deepening gorge,
Unhoodst mine eyes-heart, and fliest my dream;
Thou swing'st the hammers of my forge;
As the innocent moon, that nothing does but shine,
Moves all the labouring surges of the world.

Then finally comes the twentieth century, and there are still some evidence of rhyme in the English poetry. Compare the following fragments from Julian Grenfell (1888-1915), a soldier who turned poet

during this century:

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

.
The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

Judging Grenfell's attitude to death from these fragments, Ward (1964:170) remarks:

Death to him did not seem a pit into which he would be plunged headlong and despairing; it was a rest to which he would go as confidently as men go each night to bed.

With regards to alliterative metre, there seems to be no such during these centuries, if this metre as previously defined is taken into consideration. There are, however, some instances of what, for the lack of an appropriate term, could be called 'ordinary or common alliteration'.

2.1.7 South African English

As previously hinted, it is quite essential when talking about English in the South African context to give it a differentia by referring to it as 'South African English'. This is the language whose poetic history, with emphasis on the poetic metre(s), will be investigated - the South African English. Unfortunately, very little has been written on the history of South African English in general, and its poetry in particular. Compare Slater (1946:vii-ix):

In the meritorious **History of English Literature** published by the Cambridge University Press, the chapter by Sir Herbert

Warren on 'South African Poetry' is perhaps the most inadequate of the whole series. The learned article on 'South African Culture' contributed by Dr CL Leipoldt to *The Cambridge History of the Dominions* though 'good in parts', is even worse - in that portion dealing with South African poetry - than Sir Herbert Warren's effort. ... He dismisses South African poetry in three-fourths of a page containing some amazingly fantastic criticism ...

It is now approximately forty three years after Slater made these disconcerting remarks, but the situation is ironically still the same. The few publications which are purported to deal with South African literature have so little information to offer, particularly with regard to poetry, much to the hindrance and disappointment of anyone attempting to make a close study of this poetry.

To resolve this problematic situation, the one and only practical way out was to examine a selection of three anthologies of South African English poetry, with special reference to the metre of their content matter. Kolbe et al (nd), gives the impression of being one of the oldest anthologies by dint of its format, which is reminiscent of that of a book of nursery rhymes, plus its colourful, pictorial illustrations of South African sceneries. The entire book has no pagination of some kind, which further contributes to the allegation of it being one of the oldest anthologies. But what is of paramount importance to this study is the fact that the six poems comprising it all rhyme. Here is a sample of what this anthology contains - a poem called 'The Rhyme of the Bather', whose title leaves one in no doubt as to the nature of its metre:

ON MANY a shining summer morn,
Ere day's freshness is outworn
I seek the riverside;
And where its course runs clear and deep,
Disrobing swift, I headlong leap
Into its cooling tide.

And when again to air I rise
 And brush the water from my eyes,
 All things seem born anew.
 More glorious glows the climbing sun:
 The trees a richer green have won:
 The sky a deeper blue.

Awhile with steady stroke and strong
 Breasting the stream I swim along;
 Then, turning to the sky,
 Down the serene and sluggish tide
 With idle arms extended wide
 I float luxuriously.

This is a fascinating poem with glimpses of imagery and metaphor. The rhyme is simply enchanting. As the format of the anthology suggests an antiquity of some kind, one would certainly not be wrong to claim that South African English poets started using rhyme from the earliest stages of their poetic activities. This could be attributed to the fact that they started versifying during an era when rhyme was a *la mode* in the versification of English overseas, and they could not resist the influence of following suit.

The second anthology which was examined to establish the poetic situation in South African English is Butler (1959). The findings are that, from the life-spans of the poets whose poems have been selected for this anthology, these poems were written in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that a great majority of them is written in rhyme. Compare Bosman's 'Recovery from Mental Illness' (p 85), which is quite unique in the sense that it is the only one in the whole collection written in couplets:

I had been ill; and when I saw
 The world again without a flaw -

A pigeon tumbling in blue air,
 A yellow leaf in the winter bare,

A gemmed ring on a maiden's finger-
 I was glad my thought did not linger

Too long within the laid-out pleasaunce
Of my body's convalescence,

But that they came in-doors quite soon
And opened a curtain to the moon.

I lay with the full moon on my bed,
But a crescent moon shone in my head.

The straighter that the pavements tend
The crookeder the people bend.

The straight sidewalks of Eloff Street
Were never made for human feet

For we are born to greener chains
Than we well know; our grassy brains
Closer to bees and suns and rains.

As calm as the outward lunar ray,
So wild is the inward moon alway.

Just a word or two about this Bosman's poem: Stanza 9 is something of a **non sequitur**, as it is structurally different from the other nine stanzas constituting this poem. This anomaly may perhaps be attributable to the fact that composing in couplets was still in its experimental stages in the poetry of South African English. The functional use of anaphora constituted by /A/ in verses 3, 4 and 5, is worth mentioning. It really calls attention to the words that follow it. The use of the unconventional form, /**alway**/, in the place of the conventional form, /**always**/, in the last verse of the terminal stanza, also merits one's attention. It is a proposed opinion that the unconventional form is emphatic. But Adams (1955:63), says, '... sometimes the emphatic form occurs where there is no occasion for the emphatic'. The use of the unconventional form, /**alway**/, in this case, seems to be an example of the non-emphatic, which was only used to rhyme with /**ray**/ in the preceding verse.

The way South African English poets practised rhyme during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as reflected in Butler (1959),

gives one the impression that they were composing under the influence of their English counterparts overseas who, as it has been noticed, were also practising rhyme during those two centuries. Of course, some of the poems did not rhyme. One would have expected such poems to use the alliterative metre after the practice of Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, German and English, with which South African English is cognate. But this appears not to have been the case. The traditional alliterative verse as practised by the four cognate languages above, seems not to have gained popularity in the versification of South African English. Instead of this metre, one finds some instances of common alliteration. Compare the following stanza from Currey's 'Marshal Lyautey' in Butler (1959:81):

I tried to make a marriage of convenience
Between the Cross and the Crescent;
But the voice of Marx, professional seducer,
Corrupts the veiled, platonic bride.

The repetitive occurrence of /m's/ and /c's/ in this quatrain constitutes alliteration of high order.

On the surface, **alliteration** and **alliterative metre** look synonymous enough. But strictly speaking they are different phenomena in terms of their structural organization. Abrams (1981:7), aptly draws a line of demarcation between the two:

Alliteration is the repetition of speech sounds in a sequence of nearby words; the term is usually applied only to consonants, and especially when the recurrent sound occurs in a conspicuous position at the beginning of a word or of a stressed syllable within a word. In Old English **alliterative meter**, alliteration is the principal organizing device of the verse line; each line is divided into two half-lines of two strong stresses by a decisive pause, or **caesura**, and at least one, and usually both, of the two stressed syllables in the first half-line alliterate with the first syllable of the second half-line.

2.1.8 Afrikaans

From South African English, the focus of attention is now shifted to Afrikaans. The primary issue would still be the metre that poets use in their versification, with a special partiality for end rhyme which is central to this study.

A perusal of the poetic history of Afrikaans reveals the fact that its poets started using rhyme from the very incunabula of their versification. This phenomenon is attributable first and foremost to the kind of 'indoctrination' that the budding poets received at the hands of imminent literary figures of the day, such as JD Celliers, ds SJ du Toit, and CP Hoogenhout. For instance, consider the following hints which according to Nienaber et al (1941:330), JD Celliers offered the would-be poets, and which he incidentally conveyed in the form of rhyme:

Verdeel dan jou versies, soos jy begeer;
 In reëls van vier, of van ses, of meer,
 Mar laat ook soos d'eerste, di tweede vers wees,
 En tot op di end in di selfde maat lees.
 Want is daar een woord in te veel of min,
 Dan klink dit net vals, want dit hoort dar ni in.
 Ge verder ook as op di woorde wat rym,
 Want daar leg ver digters di grootse geheim;
 Di woorde wat sluit, di moet net op 'n haar
 In uitgang en klanke, mooi vloe inmaak.
 Want let jy ni suiwer op uitgang en klank,
 Dan gaat jou gedig heel waarskynlik ook mank.

(My emphasis.)

Hoogenhout advised the readers and aspiring poets alike in **Die Patriot** (July 1881), in this vein:

Ons seg dit nogeens: dig maar op, **rym so veel as jul kan**. Is dit die eerste maal sleg, die tweede maal gaat nog beter en so voort; en eindelijk kom dit reg - dan is dit tyd van stuur om gedruk te worde. (My emphasis.)

Although, unlike Celliers, Hoogenhout conveyed his advice in a purely

factors. So far, only one factor has been identified. The second factor is similar to the one suggested for South African English, namely that Afrikaans poets commenced versifying during an era when rhyme was a fashionable device in English versification overseas, and like their South African English counterparts, they could not resist the urge to adopt rhyme. In other words, rhymes as a poetic device was an import for South African English poets and Afrikaans poets alike. To show that Afrikaans poets also derive influence or inspiration from the English poets overseas, compare what Nathan (1925:184) says about Celliers, with particular reference to the form of his poem, 'Die Vlakte':

Mr Celliers himself acknowledges that the form of **Die Vlakte** was inspired by that of Shelley's **The Cloud**.

As a matter of fact, Celliers makes a personal acknowledgement in Pienaar (1926:230-1):

Toen ik nou, in Pallens (sur Montreux), Shelley weer vir die soveelste maal lees, tref dit mij ineens soos 'n aangename verrassing dat die vorm van die onvergelykelyk skone gedig 'The Cloud' net die vorm was wat ik kon gebruik om uitdrukking te gee, bevrediging te gee, aan die drang wat mij alsware vervolg het, geen rus gelaat het nie, die stem van die vlakte van 10 jaar van tevore. Ik **kon** toen nie anders nie, ik **moes** skrywe, ik was vol daarvan.

But Nathan (1925:184) maintains that despite this acknowledged inspiration, the subject matter and ideas of 'Die Vlakte' are original, and could only have been written by one who was impregnated with the spirit of the African veld. Pienaar (1926:246) expresses a similar sentiment, when he says:

Ongetwyfeld het Celliers meermale uit buitlandse, veral Engelse en Duitse, skrywers geput, **maar dit het sy oorspronklikheid op die duur ewe min skade gedoen.** (My emphasis.)

Incidentally, 'Die Vlakte' is also written in rhyme. Compare the

following excerpt, which rhymes **aabb**, if only the end of the long verse in each case is taken into consideration, the correct way being to read each verse in its entity:

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 1 | Ek slaap in die rus van die eeue gesus, | |
| | ongesien, ongehoord , | a |
| 2 | en dof en loom in my sonnedroom, | |
| | ongewek, ongestoord , | a |
| 3 | Tot die yl-bloue bande van die ver-verre rande | |
| | skuif my breedte uit | b |
| 4 | wyd-kringend aan die puur al-omwelwend asuur, | |
| | wat my swyend omsluit | b |

There is yet another aspect of this excerpt which warrants special attention, and that is the longer portion of each verse which starts on the extreme left, as opposed to the shorter one that is indented, reveals the so-called **medial** or **internal rhyme** which could be symbolically represented as (x).

This generates the following rhymes:

rus	(x) gesus	(verse 1)
loom	(x) sonnedroom	(verse 2)
bande	(x) rande	(verse 3)
puur	(x) asuur	(verse 4)

These rhymes, in combination with the couplets indicated above, undoubtedly result in a poetic technicality of the highest order. Little wonder that Grové et al (1973:38) identify this prominent Afrikaans poet as follows:

Jan FE Celliers (1865-1940), wat met **Die Vlakte en ander gedigte** (1908) dadelik 'n hoogtepunt in sy oeuvre bereik. Enersyds is hy die uitgesproke volksdigter, andersyds **die digter wat bewus met uiterlike vorme eksperimenteer**. (My emphasis.)

To fully appreciate the preoccupation of the Afrikaans poets with rhyme, one needs only page through the **Eerste sterre** (1973), compiled

by PJ Pienaar, and published by Perskor in honour of personalities who made valuable contribution to the Afrikaans language and poetry. It would seem that the poems that are included in this anthology, derive from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, showing that this preoccupation continued to the present century. But, lest a false impression is created that Afrikaans poetry is all rhymed, it would be necessary to point out that some of the best poetic composition in Afrikaans are unrhymed. Here one could mention 'Oom Gert vertel' (C Louis Leipoldt), 'Die dans van die reën' (Eugène N Marais), and 'O wye en droewe land' (N P van Wyk Louw). These are only three examples of several unrhymed poems in Afrikaans.

Shifting attention from the rhyming metre, it has been observed that, like in South African English, there is no evidence of the old alliterative verse in Afrikaans poetry. After the manner of South African English, only alliteration is to be found. Grové (1977:70), quotes an extract from 'Aan Madonna', by Toon van den Heever to show how this poetic element can manifest itself in a multiplicity of repetition. This extract will be re-quoted here as an illustration of alliteration in Afrikaans versification:

Maar in die woud waar orgideë straal
Soos sterre, in die by-gesuste dal,
Ruis lispelend 'n lome waterval
Tot slaap vir ewig op die bosse daal.

Grové (1977:70), makes the following analytical comment on this extract:

Hier het die veelvoudige herhaling van die l- en s-klanke 'n duidelik atmosferiese effek tot gevolg.

2.2 Versification practice in African languages

In 2.1, the development of poetic devices with special reference to

rhyme, was traced from non-African languages which are less familiar in the South African context (cf Greek, Latin, Scandinavian, etc), to those which are most familiar (cf Afrikaans and English). By the same token, a similar study in respect of African languages will be pursued starting with a language of less familiarity in the said context namely Swahili, and then proceeding to the most familiar African languages of South African (cf Southern Sotho, Zulu, Xhosa, etc).

2.2.1 Swahili

Knappert (1971:13), says 'there are two types of Swahili poetry, that which is written in one of the four metrical schemes, and the free verse'. He proceeds to say that the free verse type is almost exclusively oral poetry. He does not say in specific terms which type of metre or verse was practised first. But it may be well-assumed that it was free verse, which is less restrictive in respect of form, as can be ascertained from the definition of 'free verse' set forth by Scott (1980:112). He defines it as 'a kind of verse with no regular scansion, not observing the strict laws of form', and goes on to elaborate in this vein:

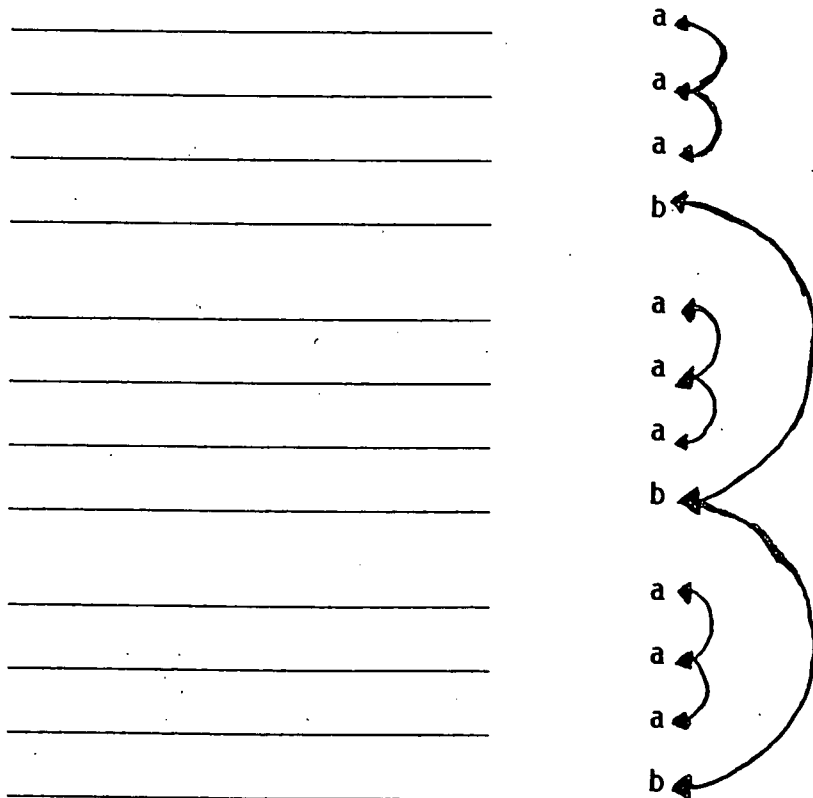
The irregularity may give some force to the thought and expression. In an address on 17th May 1935, Robert Frost said, 'Writing free verse is like playing tennis with the net down'.

If the assumption is right, then Swahili, started its versification practice using rhymeless verse which, as it will soon be noticed, is in keeping with the versification practice of the other African languages. Needless to say, rhyme was later adopted - also after the manner of these languages. The adoption of this device in Swahili poetry may be attributed to the Swahili's attitude to poetry, as

expressed by Knappert (1979:xxi):

It should never be forgotten that poetry serves one purpose in the first place: that of the embellishment of what the author has to say. **For the Swahili, the content of the poem is as essential as its form; both have to be perfect.** (My emphasis.)

It is by no means a strained interpretation to say that rhyme figured at the top of the list of formal elements in the Swahili's versification practice. According to Vilakazi (1937:52), the Swahili modelled their poetry to the standards of Arabic poetry as early as 1783. The stanza of Swahili poetry, he says, 'is a quatrain; the three first lines rhyming while the last rhymes with all the other ending lines of each stanza in the whole poem'. This intricate rhyme scheme could be schematized as follows:



Knappert (1979:35), on the other hand, points out that the oldest Arabic poetry known dates from the sixteenth century AD, and that it

rhymed. He proceeds to say that it had only one type of rhyme, in which only the last syllables of the rhyming words were identical. In other words, this poetry was characterized by monorhyme. In illustration of this type of rhyme in Swahili poetry, three stanzas from the 'Epic of Heraklios' will be extracted, in the process making use of the professional translation made by Knappert himself:

Amiri kajilabisi
kapanda wakwe farasi
mukundufu si mweusi
na zita kuvumilia.

Muvumilizi wa vita
na ndaa ikamupata
alina kiu kuteta
kwa shida kumukolea.

Farasi wakwe usoni
ali kiwaa yakini
kiasikye fahamuni
dirihamu kufania.

(The emir dressed himself
and mounted his horse;
it was brown but not dark,
and used to enduring battles.

War-resistant,
war-hunger seized him;
he had thirst for fighting,
which gripped him violently.

On the forehead of his horse
there was a clear blaze,
in size, you understand,
it resembled a silver coin, a drachme.)

As it can be noticed, each quatrain has a rhyme scheme of **aaab**, which means that only the first three verses rhyme, while the fourth verse does not rhyme, hence constituting a dissonance. The rhyme scheme of this epic is evidently the same as the one represented on the previous page. However, unlike Vilakazi whose definition of the stanza in Swahili poetry is suggestive of a rhyme scheme, Knappert concerns himself with rhyme *per se*, with particular emphasis on the number of

syllables in the given words that correspond, only one syllable in this case.

The given examples may inadvertently create the impression that the quatrain is the only stanzaic type in Swahili poetry. The fact is, there are other forms of stanzas, as found in the poetry of other languages. Compare the following stanzas extracted from a poem by a leading Swahili poet called Sikujua, with a translation by Knappert:

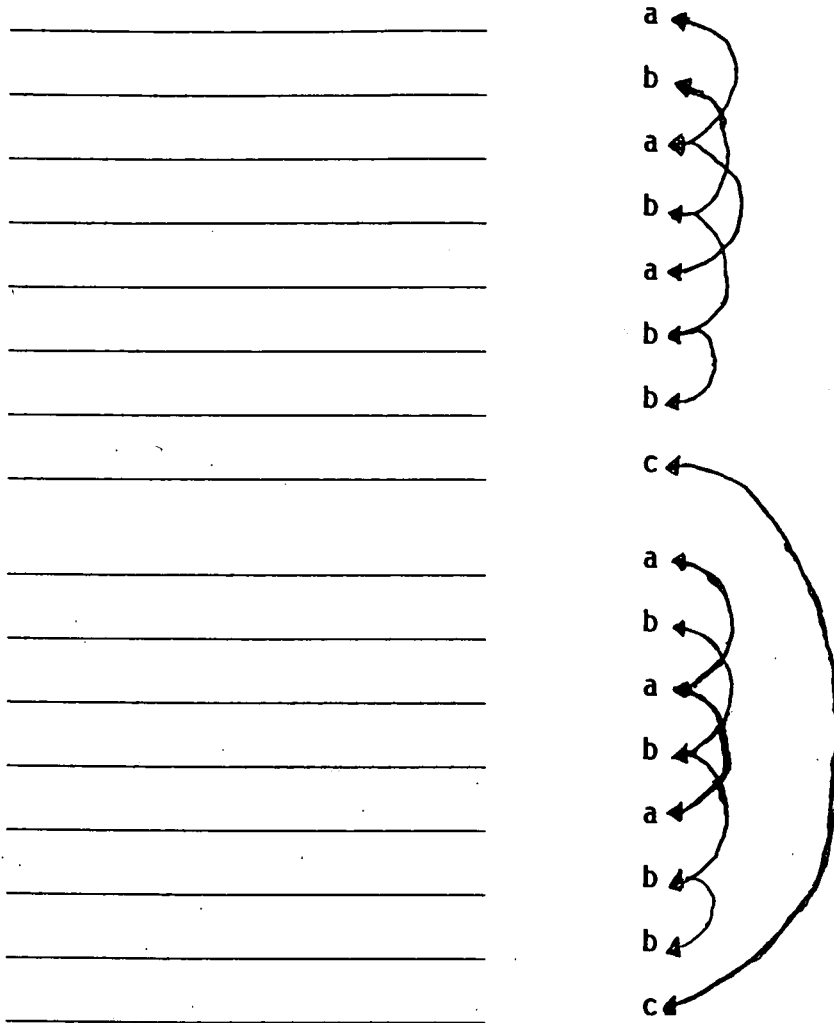
1	Nali nikele kitako	a
	nikamuona mpenzi	b
	akija kwa matamko	a
	ya kuruma na mbawazi	b
	kataka kwangu matako	a
	ya maneno ya kingozi	b
	nisiyaone makozi	b
	'kamwambia utapata'.	c

2	Nisiyaone makozi	a
	ya neno lililo ngumu	b
	kijana cha kingerezi	a
	mutu akutabasamu	b
	kwa nyimbo na tumbuizi	a
	zilizo tungwa kadimu	b
	tukampa yaliyomu	b
	jamii akazipata	c

(1 I was sitting quietly
when I saw my friend
coming with important words
of respect and compassion;
he had many things to ask me
about words in the ancient poetic Swahili;
I did not see any snags
and I said: 'You will get them'.

2 I did not see any snags
in a matter that was difficult for ,
an adept of the church [or a child] of England,
a person [who] smiles at you;
songs and serenades
which have been composed in ancient times;
we gave him what there was,
he got the lot!)

This may be schematized as follows:



Regarding classification of rhymes in Swahili Knappert (1979:38), says:

Mere repetition itself produces rhyme; and these natural rhyme-types must have served as patterns for intentional rhymes. These early rhymes may thus be classed in two groups: **rhymes natural to speech; rhymes of repetition.** (My emphasis.)

* **Rhymes natural to speech**

Below is a typical example of rhymes that are natural to the Swahili speech:

Lifaalo kueleza lieleze
lisilofaa limeze.

(What is beneficial to explain, explain it;
What is not beneficial, swallow it.)

Note the spreading of the rhyme over two syllables, starting from the penultimate syllable, and proceeding to the last syllable, showing how the Swahili rhyme developed from one-syllable rhyme to two-syllabled rhyme.

* Rhymes of repetition

In this connection, Knappert (1979:39) makes the following remarks:

Rhyme in Swahili is often repeated throughout the poem, and this is highly admired. Lullabies are, even more than dance songs, the type of popular song in which the most is left to the creative artistic imagination of the singer:

Mwana huyu ana **nini**.
Anidhiki roho **yangu**
Analia kulla **hini**
Anakata ini **langu**.

(What is the matter with this child?
It pains my soul to hear him cry,
he is crying all the time,
the pain cuts into my liver the pit of my
stomach.)

Note again here, the use of the disyllabic rhyme.

Knappert further remarks that either of these two types of rhyme, the **rhymes natural to speech** and the **rhymes of repetition**, can be extended **ad lib**, showing the infinite richness of the Swahili rhymes.

* Rhyming Swahili proverbs

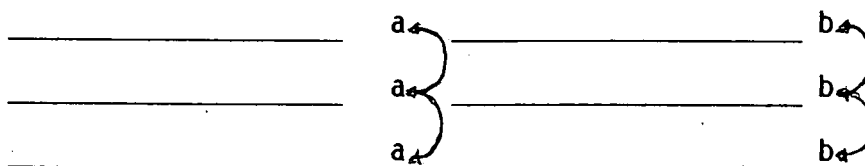
In Swahili one finds the so-called rhyming proverbs, which Knappert (1979:46) aptly refers to as poetic proverbs. And because they can also be sung, they can also be called proverb songs. Below is an

example of such a proverb:

Swahibu muovu * heri emwepuke
 kuchelea kovu * isipapurike
 ni heri uovu * kama wema wake.

(A bad friend, the best thing is to avoid him,
 for fear that an old scar might break open,
 his evil is better than his goodness.)

Note the fascinating rhyme scheme with **aaa** running down the **caesura**, indicated by the asterisk; and the **bbb** running down terminally, resulting in a schematic representation of this kind:



At the risk of being repetitious, Clark (1946:175), is being quoted once more:

rhyme in verse is the deliberate use of this latest characteristic and the regularising of this innate tendency.

* Rules of rhyme in Swahili

For these rules, I am deeply indebted to Knappert, that distinguished scholar of Swahili poetry, whose name I have mentioned so many times that I have indeed lost count, (cf Knappert, 1979:36):

In the oldest Swahili poetry we find the following rules of rhyme being applied. Rhyme is the identity of the last syllable. Syllables are (firstly) simple vowels, so that in the Herekali (1728), **ia** rhymes with **aa**, the final **a** being the rhyme. Secondly a syllable can be a vowel preceded by a consonant. So, in the later poetry, when the rules are becoming stricter, **ia** which is phonetically **iya**, with **y** clearly sounded and also written in both Arabic and in Roman (except in the 'Standard' spelling), may no longer rhyme with **aa** or **ua**, but only with **aya**, **eya**, **iya**, **oya** and **uya**. Under the influence probably of English poetry, modern poets increasingly rhyme with the last two syllables, and so in this case would use only **iya**. Thirdly, a syllable may be a vowel preceded by consonants, that is, by voiced consonant, **b**, **d**, **g**, **j** or **d** preceded by its homorganic nasal. Rhyming

ba with mba is considered imperfect. For instance:

Kiwata situndi
sizungui shingo,
kiiza sitendi
kweli, si urongo,
kyembeu hakyendi
illa kwa kimango.

(When I leave I don't care any longer,
I don't turn back.
When I refuse I will not do it,
truly, without lying.
The chisel does not go forward
except when pushed on by the mallet.)

The development of rhyme in Swahili is clearly portrayed in these rules. Now, judging from the different ways in which rhyme manifests itself in Swahili, one cannot help regarding this device as an integral part of Swahili's speech and vehicle for poetic expression. With this proven predilection for rhyme, the Swahili poets would presumably not be ashamed of eulogising rhyme in a state of euphoria, using words borrowed from Oscar Wilde, as cited by Clark (1946:142), saying:

Rhyme, that exquisite echo which in the Muses' hollow hill
creates and answers its own voice; ... rhyme, which can turn
man's utterance to the speech of gods; rhyme, the one chord
we have added to the Greek lyre.

2.2.2 African languages of South Africa

It is of vital importance to take cognizance of the fact that unlike in the case of Swahili, in the African languages of South Africa there is a sad lack of documented material from which one can retrieve the relevant information for the purpose at hand. To make up for this deficiency, there was no other recourse but to scrutinize and 'discuss' some of the written poems of these languages, not excluding their hymns. This is more or less similar to what was done when researching the situation of South African English which was also

found to have very little documented information. It is hoped that this method of research did well for the South African English, and will hopefully also do well or at least sufficiently for African languages.

Mahlasela (1982:8), says the following about the existence of rhyme in Southern Sotho, in particular:

It is interesting to note that rhyme in Southern Sotho literature is not a novelty. It can be traced and ascertained to have existed in the earliest forms of Southern Sotho literature i.e. praise poems, initiation praises ... (My emphasis.)

While it is true that rhyme existed in the earliest forms of Sesotho literature indicated by Mahlasela, unlike him, one is inclined to regard rhyme in Southern Sotho, and by implication in all African languages, as something not lacking in novelty. The reason of adopting this line of thought is that despite the fact that rhyme occurred in these indigenous poems, its occurrence had for the most part been too sporadic and accidental in the extreme to imply any antiquity of existence. Moreover, it has been axiomatically stated that one swallow does not make a summer. The norm for this kind of indigenous poems is as already indicated, free verse, or 'declamatory verse', if one were to coin a more appropriate and self-explanatory term, and it will always be that.

2.2.3 Universal nature of the role of hymns in versification practice

The role of hymns in versification practice appears to be quite universal when viewed in the light of the following information concerning the poetic device of rhyme:

- * German poetry, for example, first shows it in the Biblical translations of Notker and his pupils (c 1000); and English, in the **Exeter Book** and later in the fragmentary hymns of St Godric (d 1170). In fact, it seems always to derive from Mediaeval Latin hymnology; and here it first appears in the Roman Province of Africa about 200 AD, in the **De Iudicio Domini**, attributed to the great Tertullian, the father of Latin Christian literature. (Draper, 1957:74).

- * Another source of rhyme deserves investigation. In the Afro-Christian hymns attributed to successors of Tertullian (AD 160?-230?) a species of rhyme occurs as end-marker in final inflectional syllables only (suscipe/tempore). Fully developed stanzaic rhyme first shows itself in hymns associated with St Hilary of Poitiers (d 397?), probably to be correlated with the **Lorica** of the Welsh missionary bishop to Ireland, St Patrick - dated 433 and written, if indeed he is the author, after his indoctrination into Near-Eastern monastic practices transplanted to the Riviera island of Lerins (St Honore). (Whitehall, 1968:23).

- * The real beginnings of rhyme as we understand it, 'harmonizing with stress-accent and supporting the rhythm of the verse, are to be found in the tenth century' - in Latin hymns and leonine hexameters. So the deep harmony of rhyme enters Europe at the same time as organized Christianity. (Wesling, 1980:42-3).

Here rhyme is universally pronounced to owe its origion and diffusion

to hymns. It was for its mnemonic function, especially for the illiterate populace who depended primarily on their memory, that hymnologists resorted to rhyme. The association between hymns and rhyme has since become so deeply ingrained that when thinking of the one, the other is involuntarily called to mind. Gaum (1969:98), strongly advocating the use of rhyme in hymns, not so much from the mnemonic point of view, as from a poetic one, emphasises that rhyme cannot be divorced from hymns:

Alhoewel Pienaar tereg beweer dat die rymlose vers goedskijs ook in the gesangeboek 'n plek kan kry, is dit duidelik dat die opvallendste kenmerke van alle volkspoësie - die ritme en die rym - **in hoofsaak** ten opsigte van die gesange gehandhaaf moet word. Vir die leek is hierdie twee die belangrikste eienskappe van die digkuns: dit gee aan die gedig sy 'vorm' wat ook die nie-letterkundige kan verstaan en waardeer. As die gesange gewyde volkspoësie wil bly - soos Pienaar toegee die geval moet wees - kan hierdie wesenskenmerk nie weggeneem word nie.

He (p 101), presciently regards the use of rhyme in hymns as a tradition, finding this fact to be beyond all question:

Terwyl ons die goeie reg van die gesangedigter aanvaar om in uitsonderlike gevalle 'n vrye vers te skryf, bly dit duidelik dat die tradisie van rymende gesangeverse origins gehandhaaf moet word.

Having noticed the important role played by rhyme in non-African languages, it was only natural to investigate the possibility of a similar role in the hymns of African languages, that is, finding out if they can also be seen as originators of, and diffusion media for rhyme. For Southern Sotho in particular, Ngcongwane (1974:70), has already observed that '... al die sendelinge het byna sonder uitsondering rym gebruik in hulle liedere'. In substantiation of his statement, he indicated that John Bennie, for instance, generally employed the **abab** rhyme pattern in his hymnal compositions, and Robert

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Moffat the **aabb** pattern, while Thomas Arbousset had originally translated the hymn 'Hark the herald angels sing' into a fixed **abab cdcd** rhyme scheme. Mahlasela (1982:8), confirms the question of rhyme in Southern Sotho hymns:

Lifela tsa Sione, which we regard as one of the oldest hymn books in Southern Sotho, contains a large number of rhyming hymns. This collection (of hymns) represents too, the earliest forms of literary work by the French Missionaries in Lesotho. They were S Rolland, E Casalis and T Arbousset. These three are the most important pioneers of religious work in Lesotho and they eventually wrote hymns in 'Sesotho' for the Basotho to sing in their different churches.

He gives and analyses a few examples of these rhyming hymns. Compare the following stanza from a composition by R Rolland (p 12):

E, joale ke tla oroha	a
Ka la Simeone;	b
Ke tšepile ho pholoha	a
Motseng oa Sione.	b

More examples of these rhyming Southern Sotho hymns will be catalogued in Appendix A of this study. Fully satisfied that there were rhyming hymns in Sesotho, the quest was to find out if the same was true of the other six African languages of South Africa. To this end, the hymn books of these languages were examined. It was a fascinating experience to note that their hymns also contained rhyme (cf the following examples from the languages concerned):

1 Northern Sotho

Hymnal: **Difela tsa Kereke**

Ka tlhatso ye ba newa	a
Borêna, ka go bewa	a
Barui ba bophelo	b
Bjo bo se nang bofelo.	b

(Hymn 147, Stanza 6)

2 Tswana

Hymnal: Kopelo ya Kereke ya Luthere

Mme fa basenyi gongwe dinokwane	a
di sa itseela ditsarona tsotlhe,	b
ke pabalelo ya Mothatayotlhe.	b
Bakang Morena!	c

(Hymn 56, Stanza 5)

3 Xhosa

Hymnal: Amaculo eBandla laMamethodi

NguYehova onokwazi,	a
Iinto zonke uya zazi;	a
NguYehova obonayo	b
Iinto zonke ezenzwayo;	b
Nezenziwa ekuhlени,	c
Nezifihlwa entliz'weni.	c

(Hymn 23, Stanza 1)

4. Zulu

Hymnal: Icilongo Levangeli

Ilowo ufanele	a
'Kuvuka alalele	a
Ubaba lwengelosi;	b
Ibika inkululo,	c
Iletha injabulo,	c
Nang' uMsindis' iNkosi.	b

(Hymn 33, Stanza 1)

5. Venda

Hymnal: Nyimbo dza Vhatendi

Hosiana! A daho,	a
Iwe Murwa wa Davida,	b
Khosi yo tshiwaho,	a
U takadzaho U tshi da!	b
Yesu, ri dalele-vho	c
Na riqe ri tshidze-vho!	c

(Hymn 3, Stanza 1)

6. Tshonga

Hymnal: Mhalamhala ya Evangeli

Vona a va ri le munyameni,	a
Endleleni ya ku lahleka;	b
Kambe va twile rito ra Hosi,	c
Va kholwa va ko va kateka.	b

(Hymn 121, Stanza 2)

These examples show a wealth of rhyme schemes that hymns in these languages have to offer. As it was indicated for Southern Sotho, more examples will be catalogued in Appendix A of this study. But what should be of great interest here is that from the foregoing examples, in African languages too, hymns can be regarded as originators of, and diffusion media for rhyme, as it was found to be the case in non-African languages. The diffusion in particular, may be interpreted in terms of the number of African languages in which rhyme has found home through the influence of the rhyming hymns. The inference here is that in African languages too, rhyme had hymns as its starting point, and from there it spread (cf rhyming poems in African languages). Examples of such poems will be catalogued in Appendix B of this study in respect of the seven main African languages of South Africa.

What emerges from the whole exercise is the fact that the development of poetic devices in African languages, and that includes Swahili, has the tendency of progressing from free verse (cf indigenous poetry) to rhyming metre or verse (cf some of the compositions in the modern poetry of African languages). It is of vital importance to take cognizance of the fact that some of the African languages will be found to rhyme better than the others. But seeing that these languages belong to the same language family, that is, they are cognate with one another, the thesis erected by Preminger et al

(1986:235), that '...languages differ widely in their rhymability ...', can only hold good to a point, as these languages boast a similar morphological system. The difference in the quality of rhyme here may be attributed to the degree of 'enthusiasm', with some languages being more 'enthusiastic' to rhyme, while others are less 'enthusiastic' to do so.

2.3 Comparison of the historical development of poetic devices in non-African and African languages

A study of this phenomenon in both non-African and African languages reveals the not so widely-spread knowledge of the fact that, with the exception of Afrikaans and South African English, the other six languages investigated here, (cf Greek, Latin, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, (British) English and German), did not use rhyme in the embryonic stages of their versification practice. They, however, used it in due course. The development of their poetic devices could be said to have progressed from rhymeless metre to rhyme. In the case of Afrikaans and South African English, the development was in a diametrically opposite direction, as it progressed from rhyme to rhymeless metre. The reason for this, as already intimated, is that when their respective poets started versifying, rhyme was the in thing overseas, and they could not resist emulating their overseas' counterparts. It would indeed be quite correct to regard the development of poetic devices in these two non-African languages as an exception, rather than the rule as admittedly set by the six non-African languages mentioned above.

Like the latter, virtually all African languages investigated here,

(cf Swahili, Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Xhosa, Tsonga and Venda), did not use rhyme in the initial stages of their versification practice. They likewise used it later on. This constitutes an analogy of the highest order which stands to prove the fact that, contrary to popular belief, **rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages**, and what its adversaries say against it is a sheer **suggetio falsi**, under the guise of prosodic exercise.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 ARGUMENTS RELATING TO RHYME IN NON-AFRICAN AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES

Of the two levels of comparison envisaged for this study, and which were duly defined in 1.3, only one has been put through the proposed process so far, namely that of the historical development of poetic devices with special reference to rhyme. This chapter will now concern itself with the second level of comparison, which centres around arguments pertaining to rhyme in non-African and African languages alike. These arguments are proffered by disputants belonging to the two opponent schools of thought identified in 1.1, that is, the **anti-rhyme school of thought**, and the **pro-rhyme school of thought**. The views expressed by the representatives of each school of thought in non-African languages will be weighed and considered. A similar approach will be brought to bear upon the views voiced by the representatives of each school of thought in African languages. The arguments found in non-African languages will be compared with those discovered in African languages, the primary objective still being to prove the veracity of the fact that rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in their non-African counterparts.

It stands to reason that only those languages boasting a reasonable documentation of the information pertaining to the purpose at hand will enjoy consideration. The procedural principle put in short is, no relevant information on a given language, no enjoyment of consideration on its part. Depending on the availability of the relevant information, not excluding its non-availability, some languages will be discussed under the two schools of thought, some

under only one school of thought, while some will not be discussed under any.

3.1 Anti-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages

As it is about to be noticed, English provides more information in this respect than the other non-African languages. Its disputants are also more argumentative than those of the other non-African languages, with their arguments more often than not being of caustic stuff.

3.1.1. English

The following literary personalities figure amongst the most prominent representatives of the anti-rhyme school of thought in this language:

3.1.1.1 Roger Ascham (1515-1668)

Smith (1904:29), reports Roger Ascham to have levelled criticism against rhyme, calling it '... rude beggarly ryming, brought to Italie by Gothes...'.
 .

This criticism convincingly identifies him with the anti-rhyme school of thought. He alludes to the fact that the English rhymers were emulating the Goths in rhyming, because they did not know the difference between the best and the worst in versification practice. Basking in the complacent hope that these rhymers now know the difference between the two, he avails himself of the first opportunity to urge them not to imitate the Goths when they versify, adding that they should rather emulate the Greeks (cf Smith, 1904:29):

But now, when men know the difference, and haue the examples, both of the best and the worst, surelie to follow rather the Gothes in Ryming than the Greekes in trew versifiying (sic) were euen to eate ackornes with swyne, when we may freely east wheate bread emonges men.

To show what a bad device rhyme is, Ascham tells us the story of a certain Simmias Rhodius, who wrote a book containing the fable of Jupiter in rhyming Greek verse, at the time Greek poetry was at its highest pitch of perfection. He alleges that the book was condemned, and both the author and the book were soon relegated to the limbo of forgotten things. He adds that the 'folly' of rhyming verse was never followed by any for many hundred years thereafter, until it was revived again by the Huns, the Goths and '... other barbarous nations of ignorance...'. Compare Smith (1904:32). He proceeds in a similar vein to allege that, those who defend rhyme do so because of their ignorance of what is best.

In short, Ascham may be said to oppose the use of rhyme in English since:

- * it was introduced to Italy by the Goths, hence it is primitive (rude), and poor for intellectual purposes (beggarly)
- * the English rhymers imitated the Goths in rhyming because of ignorance, not knowing the difference between the best and the worst in versification practice, and
- * the first attempt to use rhyme in Greek was a failure.

The Goths are generally associated with ignorance and primitivism. If they introduced rhyme to Italy, as Ascham purports they did, that speaks volumes about their state of development at that point in time. They seem to have been ahead of their English counterparts, at least in respect of this poetic device. So, Ascham does not have a tangible reason for opposing rhyme as the Goths proved themselves to have cast away their despicable cloak of ignorance, as proved by their

employment of a sophisticated poetic device such as rhyme. Moreover, it is an open secret that rhyme taxes the mind of the poet a great deal. Hence, to define it as being beggarly constitutes a complete fabrication of the truth. Prior to their employment of rhyme, the English used alliterative verse in their versification. The very fact that they later adopted rhyme surely proves that contrary to Ascham's opinion, they knew the difference between the best and the worst in versification practice for, if the opposite was true, as Ascham purports it was, they could have refrained from using rhyme, and remained faithful to their alliterative verse. As it has been noticed, Ascham's professed 'advice' to the English poets is following the Greeks '... in trew versifyng ...'. This is, of course, highly misleading as it leads one to believe that the Greeks never used rhyme in their versification practice. The truth of the matter is that they did employ this device. Compare 2.1.1 in this respect. Indeed, Ascham himself said the Greek poet, Rhodius, wrote the fable of Jupiter in rhyming Greek verse. This being the case, the English and Greek poets may justly be said to have been sailing in the same boat in terms of technique. Finally, the allegation that the initial attempt to use rhyme in Greek was a failure, does not mean that rhyme should not be used in the poetry of other languages. In fact, what Ascham regards to be a failure was a success, as Rhodius, the precursor of Greek rhyme, had succeeded in writing a whole fable in rhyme. The fact that his book written in rhyme was slated and then forgotten about, could at best be ascribed to the literary aesthetics of the day, and not to the failure of rhyme, as Ascham would like people to believe.

3.1.1.2 Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

What Stapleton (1983:132), says about Campion, identifies him with the anti-rhyme school of thought in no uncertain terms. He observes:

In 1602 Campion wrote his **Observations in the Art of English Poesie**, and arbitrary statement in favour of classical forms in opposition to the use of rhyme.

Campion (1602:6), calls rhyme and the English metre a vulgar and easy kind of poesy, and scornfully adds that the facility and popularity of rhyme created as many poets as a hot summer flies. As if it were indeed a shameful act, he alleges that should any rhymer be called upon to read his 'halting rimes', he would never do so without blushing with shame. He crowns the whole scorn with rhetorical questions designed to discredit rhyme further still (where necessary, the archaic orthography will be modernised accordingly):

It is not a curse of Nature laid upon rude Poesie, when the writer is ashamed of it, and the hearers call it Riming and Ballating? What Devine in his Sermon, or grave Counsellor in his Oration will allege the testimony of rime?

He really goes all out to paint rhyme black, giving a false impression that using it was an exercise in futility, seeing that no clergy nor barrister would be found using it in the course of his duties. This is indeed as it should be as sermons and speeches cannot be expected to be delivered in rhyme. But it is quite interesting to take cognizance of the fact that although Campion advocated the use of classical forms like John Milton (qv), and opposed the use of rhyme, he in effect employed the very rhyme he professed to be opposing in his treatise (cf Stapleton, 1983:132):

Campion, having delivered his **Observations**, seems to have forgotten them in his work; he used rhyme in his songs continually.

Here we have a classical case of a man who was not practising what he was preaching.

In conclusion one could say that Campion opposed the use of rhyme in English poetry because:

- * it is an easy kind of poesy, and
- * its falicity and popularity created a host of poets.

According to Clark (1946:118):

... one of the regular topics of the Elizabethan critics was classical versifying which several misguided devotees hoped to see supplanting

shifting rime, that easie flatterer,
Whose witchcraft can the ruder eares beguile.
(My emphasis.)

It comes as no surprise to learn that the emphasised verses were quoted from Thomas Campion's **Observations in the Art of English Poesy** (p 335), as he regarded rhyme as an easy kind of poesy. But Campion's contention on that score missed the mark, there being nothing easy about rhyme. In fact, by regarding rhyme as an easy way out in versifying, Campion stood in sharp contrast with most adversaries of this poetic device who consider it to be a great impediment, forever hampering the creative process. That being the case, one fails to see how the so-called 'facility' of rhyme could manage to create 'as many poets, as a hot summer flies'. Simpson (1970:23), convincingly refutes this facility of rhyme in English poetry in particular:

... in comparison with other languages English does not have a variety of rhyming words. This is evident if we read the poems of an English rhymers such as Pope, who is frequently compelled to use the same terminal words,

Therefore, contrary to Campion's allegation, such a paucity of rhyming words could not possibly make rhyming an easy feat. It was, in fact

this paucity that led to the evolution of the English sonnet form during Elizabethan era. It is consequently difficult to imagine how on earth its facility could have been instrumental in increasing these practitioners of poetic discourse to the extent of Campion's simile. One is really left with the impression that Campion was desperately looking for tangible reasons why he thought rhyme should not be used in English poetry. Unfortunately, he came out with the flimsiest reason that cannot be taken *au sérieux*.

3.1.1.3 John Milton (1608-1674)

The adversative attitude of Milton towards rhyme may rightly be referred to as his revolt against this device, as he was originally a rhymers. He used rhyme to great advantage, for according to Callan (1938:79), in one of 'his sonnets, 'On his Blindness', the rhyme holds together what might otherwise sound like a piece of iambic prose. Daniel (1965:130), on the other hand, pronounces Milton's rhymes commendable (cf his 'Lycidas', published in 1638 in an anthology of poetry, *Justa Eduardo King*):

I came to pluck your berries harsh and crude,	a
And with forced fingers rude,	a
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.	b
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,	b
Compels me to disturb your reason due:	c
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,	d
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:	b
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew	c
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.	d

(3-11)

The terminating verse, forces one's mind to linger on it for a while, refusing to associate it with the man who revolted against rhyme. For his relentless efforts in quest of rhyme during incipient stages of his poetic career, one could refer to Potter (1986:74), who observes:

It was in the Italian poets that Milton found the most interesting examples of experiment within the conventions of rhyme.

It would, indeed, not be wrong to suggest that Milton eventually revolted against rhyme because he was possessed with a burning desire to write *Paradise Lost*, his *magnum opus*, which by virtue of its length defied rhyme on the score of monotony, not excluding the paucity of rhyming words in English. According to Stapleton (1983:598), Milton was an exceptional scholar who got into trouble soon after his arrival at Christ's College, Cambridge '... because he demanded a broader curriculum than was available; but he settled down and developed further the Greek and Latin at which he was already adept.' (My emphasis.)

It was presumably his knowledge of the Greek and Latin metres which prompted Milton not only to advocate, but also to adopt a similar poetic system in his *Paradise Lost* (cf Clark, 1946:105):

The Measure is English Heroic Verse without Rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and Virgil in Latin; Rime being no necessary Adjunct or true Ornament of Poem or good Verse, in longer Works especially, but the Invention of a barbarous Age, to set off wretched matter and lame Meeter; grac't indeed since by the use of some famous modern Poets, carried away by Custom, much to their vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them.

Proud of his 'achievement', Milton congratulated himself on having in *Paradise Lost* set the first example in English epic of avoiding 'the jingling sound of like endings', and restoring 'to Heroic Poem ancient liberty from the troublesome and modern bondage of rimeing', (cf Marsh, 1888:366). In short, Milton may be said to have revolted against rhyme because:

- * it is no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially
- * it is the invention of a barbarous age
- * it sets off wretched matter and lame metre
- * it is a hindrance to the poets, and
- * it constrains the poets to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than they would have expressed them.

That rhyme 'is no necessary adjunct ... of poem or good verse' is a sweeping generalization which borders on exaggeration. While it is to be admitted that rhyme is not necessary for some poems, it is beyond dispute that it is on the contrary categorically imperative for certain poems. For example, in order to be called a **sonnet**, a given poem must not only have fourteen verses. Over and above this, it must also have a specific rhyme scheme. In the absence of such rhyme scheme, it would be a misnomer to call that poem a sonnet. Viewed in this context, rhyme cannot be seen as an unnecessary adjunct, and as Pendlebury (1971:19), more elaborately says:

An accomplished writer does not use it perfunctorily but as an artistic resource capable of increasing the emotional impact of his verse. He may use it at times to point the significance of particular words, and he will use it constantly to bind lines together in a firm and recognizable pattern.

One cannot resist the pronouncement of Schoonees **et al** (1942:165) on this issue. They observe:

In die voorwoord van sy **Paradise Lost** skrywe Milton die volgende: 'Rime is no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre', ens.

Having set the stage in this way, they immediately comment:

... as ons die onsterflike epos van die groot digter van Engeland lees, voel ons dat hy in hierdie geval gelyk het, wat die eerste gedeelte van sy bewering betref. Tog is rym nie so 'n onding as wat Milton ons wil laat glo nie, en sy eie sorvuldig versorgde sonnette allen loënstraf die algemene bewering.

One inclines to contribute to their sentiments partially, as it will soon be evident.

Although embellishment of a poem does not figure as one of the most important functions of rhyme, it is, however, a true ornament, which evokes both the visual and auditory senses of the reader. In longer poems, however, it may be found to strike a monotonous note. Like Campion, Milton opposes rhyme because it was introduced to English poetry by the Goths. Hence, it is 'the invention of a barbarous Age'. But that is not a very good reason for being adverse to rhyme. Many artefacts which were invented by primitive man are known to have been modified and/or modernised. For example, the gourd of old has given birth to a water bottle, and the flint and steel to matches and match-boxes. Nobody worried about the fact that the gourd as well as the flint and steel originated with primitive man for the purpose of carrying water and making fire respectively. Why should rhyme be treated differently?

By 'wretched matter and lame Meeter' Milton seems to mean an ill-contrived method of expression and halting rhythm. He blames all this on rhyme. But as Pendlebury (1971:71) further observes, 'In the illustrating words of Lascelles Abercrombie, the poet will make of rhyme 'the vehicle of major rhythm''. One may borrow further words

from Lowes (1938:163), to refute Milton's 'wretched matter', purported to be set off by rhyme, which read as follows:

... some of the most felicitous turns of thought and phrase in poetry are the result of a flash of inspiration under the happy guidance of rhyme.

It is, however, true that rhyme tends to hinder the poets in the course of creative process. But then, true art cannot be expected to be an easy bed of roses, and poetry is not an exception. It is interesting to note how Milton's revolutionary ideas are constantly refuted. His idea that rhyme constrains the poets '... to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them', finds refutation in Dryden's statement as cited by Lanz (1968:312), which reads:

A good poet never establishes the first line till he has sought out such a rhyme as may fit the sense, already prepared to heighten the second. (Therefore), **the necessity of a rhyme never forces any but bad or lazy writers to say what they would not otherwise.** (My emphasis.)

Dryden indeed knew what he was talking about, as he was not only a practising poet, but also a practitioner of rhyme who went to the extent of pleading for the use of rhyme even in dramatic works of art.

3.1.2 German

Not much has been written about the literary scholars who are associated with the anti-rhyme school of thought in German. It is hence considered sufficient to settle for a **compte rendu** of only a few of them. They are admittedly, not very much articulate on the reason why they were adverse to the employment of rhyme in German versification practice. They, however, bear caricatures of anti-rhymers.

3.1.2.1 Georg Wilhelm Sacer (1635-1699)

According to Garland et al (1976:739), Sacer wrote religious poetry, publishing his *Der bluttriefende, siegende und triumphierende Jesus* in 1661. However, his most remarkable work was a satire bearing the title of *Reime dich oder ich fesse dich*, which he published under a *nom de plume* in 1673. This satire, which Garland et al (1976:739), describe as '... a vigorous and combative treatise on poetry', was written with the primary objective of attacking enforced rhyme in the versification practice of German.

3.1.2.2 Johann Jakob Bodmer (1698-1783)

As stated by Garland et al (1976:93), Bodmer's interest in the English moralists drew his attention to Milton, who quickly aroused his enthusiasm. His translation of *Paradise Lost* (*Der Verlust des Paradieses*) into German, was published in prose in 1732, in verse in 1742, and further revised in 1754. It was indeed most unlikely that one with such a great interest in a revolutionist of Milton's calibre could escape his influence in matters of technique. It came as no surprise when in 1740 Bodmer published *Critische Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie*, which according to Garland et al (1976:93), provoked a quarrel with JG Gottsched (qv), who was incidentally pro-rhyme. This quarrel was fanned further still by Bodmer's *Critische Betrachtungen über die Poetischen Gemahlde der Dichter*, published in 1741.

3.1.2.3 Johann Jakob Breitinger (1701-1776)

According to Garland et al (1976:106), Breitinger's *Critische Dichtkunst*, which like his namesake's first *Critische* was also

published in 1740, contained his rejection of rhyme and his insistence on the importance of the miraculous in poetry, and Gottsched the advocate of rhyme felt these to be a provocation.

3.1.3 Recapitulation

A close examination of the anti-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages reveals the fact that, because it is very scanty, the information relating to German does not really offer much food for thought, while that pertaining to English does. But in the final analysis it shows very little to warrant the abandonment of rhyme as a poetic device.

Ascham gives an intuitive sense that he dislikes rhymes because it was brought to Italy by the Goths, foreigners who spoke a language that was alien to the English language. Hence rhyme was a foreign element in English poetry which should be abandoned, a sentiment which is not different from the one expressed by the adversaries of rhyme in African languages. But there is nothing wrong with imitating foreigners, as long as that imitation has merit. Eliot (nd:252), has proved this beyond any reasonable doubt:

A very young, who is himself stirred to write, is not primarily critical or even widely appreciative. He is looking for masters who will elicit his consciousness of what he wants to say himself, of the kind of poetry that is in him to write. The taste of an adolescent writer is intense, but narrow: it is determined by personal needs. **The kind of poetry that I needed, to teach me the use of my own voice, did not exist in English at all; it was only to be found in French.** (My emphasis.)

This is indeed an eye-opener, taking into consideration the fact that Eliot was an English poet.

Campion's reasons for advocating the abandonment of rhyme are flimsy, and without a grain of truth. Nobody who is well conversant with rhyme would agree with Campion that rhyme is an easy kind of poesy whose facility and popularity created a host of poets. Even if this was true, it could not have been good enough a reason for abandoning rhyme. On the contrary, it could have been a good reason for advocating it. Milton came closer to the truth when he abandoned rhyme on the score of hindrance or difficulty, as rhyme is not an easy device to handle. But he made a gross mistake when he suggested that rhyme constrained the poets 'to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they could have expressed them', for as Clark (1946:177), puts it:

When rhyme is handled as it ought to be, as it can be, and as it generally is by the poets who have any right to the name, the reader has no feeling whatever that the poets have been forced by a pre-existing and therefore rigid language, made still more rigid by the necessity of rhyming, 'to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have exprest them.'

Clark himself does not deny the fact that it is difficult composing in rhyme, but as he says further on the same page, he is only asserting the triumph when the difficulty is surmounted, the real beauty of the accomplishment, and its seeming inevitability. While, like Clark, the difficulty of rhyme is not denied, it should be stressed that this difficulty is only up to a point, and not as grievous as Milton would like people to believe. This can be proved convincingly by conducting an appropriate experiment with rhyme, which would hopefully be regarded as scientific, and consequently acceptable.

3.1.4 Experiment with rhyme

Let it be indicated from the outset that the envisaged experiment is

intended to focus on rhyme and the creative process. The primary objective is to establish the extent to which rhyme could be seen to be a hindrance to the poets when composing their poems. This is expected to emerge from a close study of transcripts of preliminary drafts of poems composed by three poets from the English literature, namely, Robert Frost, Elizabeth Barret Browning, and Edmund Blunden, in that order. The three transcripts are all from Croft (1973), Volume 2. For the sake of interest and comparison, it could have been a brilliant idea to carry a similar experiment with selections of preliminary drafts of poems from Afrikaans, as well as from one or two African languages. Unfortunately, a search for such drafts was not crowned with success. But it is hoped that the three preliminary drafts at hand will suffice.

To elaborate on the main objective of this experiment, it should be stated that as it is the habitual practice of every poet who is worth his salts to change certain words or even phrases and sentences when composing a poem, the emphasis of this experiment will be on such changes. It would be noted as to how many words in a given draft or transcript were changed for the sake of rhyme, and how many of them were changed for the sake of effect with no rhyme in mind. A comparison of the two types of changes will definitely establish the extent to which rhyme was a hindrance to the creative process. There are, however, some hidden problems in this kind of experiment because as Arnheim *et al* (1948:94), say:

In as many cases the most difficult preliminary stages of composition seem to have been accomplished mentally, that is, without the poet's knowledge of how many trials and errors he has overcome before his pen has touched paper. The habitual poet perhaps has learned a technique of discard of which he

is no longer aware. Therefore much valuable material will be missing from the record.

From what one can learn from Baumbach (1987:167), a slightly similar chain of events takes place perceptibly when a traditional bard gives vent to his creative mind. She states explicitly:

I would agree with Lord ... that improvisation is an important feature of an oral tradition, namely that the poet creates a new poem in performance every time he performs; in fact, that each performance is a new creation. (My emphasis.)

This foreknowledge, especially as far as it affects the creative process in modern poetry, will by no means dampen my spirits in quest for the truth.

3.1.4.1 Robert Frost (Croft, 1973:60)

[Fey cancelled by]Once by the Pacific
 The shattered water made a misty din.
 Great waves looked over others coming in,
 And thought of doing something to the shore
 That [ocean waves had never done] before.
 The clouds were low and hairy in the skies
 Like locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes.
 You could not tell, and yet it looked as if
 The sand was lucky in being backed by cliff,
 The cliff in being backed by continent.
 It looked as if a night of dark intent
 Was coming, and not only ^anight, [but] ^{an} age.
 Someone had better be prepared for rage.
 There would be more than ocean water broken
 Before God's last "Put out the light" was spoken.

The first change in Robert Frost's poem above occurs in its title, where /Fey/ was replaced with, or to use Frost's own words, 'cancelled by' /Once by the Pacific/, which became the new title of the poem for, as Croft (1973:16) convincingly speculates, the cancelled /Fey/ was

the original title. The next change in this poem appears in verse 4, where the words /water never did to land/ were substituted for the original words, /ocean waves had never done/. The final changes are subject of verse 11. The first in the series is the insertion of the indefinite article /a/ between the words /only/ and /night/. This is followed by the changing of /but/ to /an/.

It is of paramount importance to note that, of all the changes made in this poem, none seems to have been made with rhyme as the object in mind. Instead, the changes were made in the name of emotion and reminiscence, (cf the two titles of the poem) and, above all, they were made for the purpose of refining poetic expression. Needless to say, all these changes form part and parcel of the creative process. (Cf Croft in this regard):

The revisions here made in two lines of the poem itself reveal Frost's subtle instinct for the tones of speech (which he sometimes called 'the sound of sense'): a touch, for example, enlivens line 11 with a slight but expressive irregularity.

3.1.4.2 Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Croft, 1973:113)

Sonnet XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
 Except for love's sake only. Do not say
 "I love her for her smile . . her look . . her way
 Of speaking gently . . ; for a trick of thought
 That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a day—"
 For these things in themselves, beloved, may
 Be changed, or change for thee, . . and love so wrought
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
 Thine own dear pity' [in] wiping my cheeks dry!
 For one might well forget to weep, who bore
 [I might forget to weep, if, so, I bore]
 Thy comfort long, & lose thy love thereby.
 But love me for love's sake, that evermore
 Thou may'st love on through love's eternity.

Croft (1973:113), seems to suggest that this sonnet went through several revisions, in the same way as the 'Anthem for Doomed Youth', by Wilfred Owens, which according to Phythian (1973:99-100), underwent no less than four drafts before reaching the final version. But for the purpose at hand the focus will only be on the present version of the sonnet.

The first change is found in verse 10, in which the deletion of **in** is suggested, and after which the verse in question would read as follows: **/Thine own dear pity' wiping my cheeks dry!/** The change, as it could be seen, has nothing to do with rhyme. The only other change here is in verse 11, where Browning engaged in a threefold business of eliminating certain words, as well as inserting others, including rearranging the verse as a whole. Thus, the verse reading **/I might forget to weep, if, so, I bore/,** was changed to read **/For one might well forget to weep, who bore/**. It should be stressed that the whole change here was for the sake of poetic effect, and not for rhyme's sake, as **/bore/**, initially intended to rhyme with **/evermore/** in verse 13, was still retained. So, none of the changes in this sonnet was due to rhyme.

3.1.4.3 Edmund Blunden (Croft, 1973:184)

RURAL ECONOMY

1914-1918

There was winter in those woods
And still it was July:
There were Thule solitudes
With thousands wandering nigh;
There the fox had left his den,
The scraped holes hid not stoats but men.

To these woods the rumours ^{teemed} [came]
Of peace five miles away,
And green hills hovered, houses gleamed
Where last perhaps we lay
Till the cockerels bawled bright morning and
The hours of life slipped the slack hand.

The rakes and ploughs where now we ^{rose} [were]
Lay idle, but the ground
Was harrowed, raked and ploughed, God knows,
And curious clods crushed round;
The sower was the ploughman too
And iron seeds broadcast he threw.

What husbandry could outdo his?
With flesh and blood he fed ^[the plain],
The planted iron, which not amiss
Grew thick and swift and red,
And in a night [as many] though ne'er so cold
Those acres bristled a hundredfold.

Nay, even the wood as well as field
^{The ingenious} [This fiendish] farmer knew
Could be reduced to plough and tilled,
And if he planned, he'd do;
The field and wood, all bone-fed loam,
Shot up a roaring harvest home.

Each stanza in this poem comprises six verses, consisting of a quatrain with alternate rhyme **abab**, and a couplet rhyming **cc**. The basic rhyme scheme can therefore be defined as **ababcc**. This pattern of rhyme scheme is set by the opening stanza:

There was a winter in those woods	a
And still it was July:	b
There were Thule solitudes	a
With thousands wandering nigh;	b
There the fox had left his den,	c
The scraped holes hid not stoats by men.	c

Having said this, it is necessary to point out that it is universally acknowledged that in all the stanzas of a given poem, the rhymes must occur in the same corresponding positions. In other words, the rhyme scheme must be identical in all stanzas. For instance, if the rhyme scheme of the first stanza which sets the trend is **abbacddc**, then the subsequent stanzas must all assume a similar rhyme scheme.

Now, in their original form, stanzas 2 and 3 in Blunden's poem did not conform to the principle in the sense that they both rhymed **abcbaa**. To maintain the rhyme scheme he set in stanza 1, Blunden decided to change **/came/** in stanza 2 to **/teemed/**, which rhymes perfectly with **/gleamed/**. In a similar poetic vein, he changed **/were/** in stanza 3 to **/rose/**, which forms a perfect rhyming fellow with **/knows/**.

But these were by no means the only changes that Blunden effected on his poem in response to the creative process. He made yet another change in stanza 4, where he deleted the two words **/the plain/** after the action word **/fed/**. This deletion was instrumental in clearing the way for **/fed/** to rhyme with the colour adjective **/red/**. The deletion of **/as many/** (3 syllables) in the last but one verse of the said stanza, left the verse with 9 syllables, thus equating it with the verse below it in terms of syllable count, resulting in an impeccable rhythmic balance.

It should be mentioned that Blunden acquitted himself creditably in changing **/fiendish/** (very cruel) to **/ingenious/** (very clever) in stanza 5, when taking into account the background of the farmer being described, whose activities in stanza 3 are heightened by the rhetorical question, **/What husbandry could outdo his?/** in stanza 4. On the

average, forty percent of the changes which Blunden made in his draft were influenced by the dictates of rhyme, while the remaining sixty percent of these changes were influenced by some other factors. In other words changes which were made thanks to other factors preponderate over those that were effected in the interest of rhyme.

In the striking words borrowed from Arnheim *et al* (1948:161-2), these drafts '... show obstinate, incorruptible laboring for an aim, which is neither the selfishly desirable nor diplomatically obtainable, but absolute good. They are a demonstration of what man does when he is free and capable of using freedom for his own fulfillment.'

3.1.5 Recapitulation

One could, indeed say without the slightest fear of self-contradiction that in the light of this experiment with rhyme, suggesting that rhyme in particular is a hindrance to the poets or the creative process constitutes something of a *suggestio falsi* of the whole issue. It is quite evident that the creation of a poetic work of art is beset with a multiplicity of hindrances or difficulties for which rhyme should be held partly, and not wholly responsible. It could be said that the whole business of choosing the precise word either for rhyme or poetic effect desired by the poet, is quite a big struggle. But as Clark (1946:172), so judiciously observes:

... artistic incarnation of any kind is always the result of a struggle against obstruction offered by the medium on the one hand and against the formal limitations on the other. An artist's creativeness thus functions only within constraint and through opposition; and a work of art is the drawn battle between the energy of the artist and the stubbornness of his form.

3.2 Anti-rhyme school of thought in African languages

As it was the case with non-African languages, only those languages for which the relevant information is available will be taken into consideration. The focus is still on the anti-rhyme school of thought.

The arguments advanced by the representatives of this school of thought will be weighed and considered after the manner contrived for non-African languages on a similar aspect of this study. The languages involved will likewise be examined one after another.

3.2.1 Southern Sotho

Below are some of the most prominent representatives of the anti-rhyme school of thought in this language:

3.2.1.1. Guma

Guma figures among the most prominent scholars of Southern Sotho literature, falling under the anti-rhyme school of thought. Compare Guma (1967:182):

The introduction, for instance, of foreign techniques like **rhyme** and metre, is contrary to the basic structure of traditional poetry. They are jarring and artificial, as well as unbecoming to the genius of this language.These mechanisms serve no useful purpose in Southern Sotho poetry. (My emphasis.)

Judging from the foregoing pronouncements, and with particular emphasis on rhyme, one draws the conclusion that Guma's aversion to rhyme stems from the allegations that:

- * it is a foreign technique, which is contrary to the basic structure of traditional poetry
- * it is jarring and artificial

- * it is unbecfitting to the genius of the Southern Sotho language, and
- * it serves no useful purpose in Southern Sotho poetry.

Being a foreign element is, indeed, not a good reason for denouncing rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry. In the plastic world of art the artists who are worth their salts will never be found sticking to the same old thing just because it happened to be familiar. They constantly strive to break the monotony by introducing something new into their art, something unfamiliar. As Hollingworth (1924:10), expresses it:

The charm of writing is a nice mingling of the familiar and the unfamiliar. Like the Athenians, we seek always some new thing Good style is in the main a matter of the perfect use of contrast and similarity, the new and the old.

Because rhyme is foreign to Southern Sotho poetry, it is something new, something unfamiliar. As such, it should be mingled with the familiar if Hollingworth's 'charm of writing' is to be attained. On the other hand, it is an indisputable fact that rhyme is contrary to the basic structure of traditional poetry, as Guma purports. But that is besides the point because those who employ rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry, as well as in the poetry of other African languages, employ it in modern poetry, and not in its traditional or indigenous counterpart.

One of the characteristics of rhyme is an identity of sound which culminates in a harmony that enthrals the ear. Hence, 'jarring', which means 'to sound discordant', is not compatible with rhyme in any language, including Sesotho. So, rhyme in Southern Sotho cannot be refrained from because of this deliberate misrepresentation. It is again beyond controversy that rhyme is artificial. But then, by dint

of its nature, all art is artificial. Therefore, rhyme cannot be abandoned purely on the score of artificiality.

The genius of this language to which Guma purports rhyme is unbecoming may be interpreted to be its morphology, on which the subsequent representatives of the anti-rhyme school of thought seem to dwell tediously. That being the case, my reaction to the question of morphology will follow in the subsequent pages of this study to avoid being unduly repetitious. To be more precise, this reaction will be found under Khaketla below. Finally, in saying the rhyme serves no useful purpose in Southern Sotho poetry, Guma is expressing the same sentiment as Moloi in 3.2.1.3, who contents that rhyme is not an essential feature of Southern Sotho poetry. My reaction to Moloi's pronouncement in this respect will also hold good for this one of Guma's.

3.2.1.2 Khaketla

Khaketla, one of the major poets in Southern Sotho literature, has much in common with the English poet, Milton, than meets the eye. Like the latter during the formative stages of his poetic career, he also rhymed. This is adducible from Khaketla (1970:23), where he imparts the following information.

... thothokiso ya pele, eo ke itsibotseng ka yona, ke **Ntwa ya Abisinia**, ke e ngola ka selemo sa 1937.

(... the first poem, with which I made my debut, is **Ntwa ya Abisinia** (The Battle of Abyssinia), which I wrote in 1937.)

Needless to say, this poem rhymes. It consists of twenty eight quatrains made of couplets, the basic rhyme scheme being that of **aabb**. He then goes on to confide that:

... mehleng eo ke ne ke sa ntsane ke ena le tumelo e kgolo ya hore reneketso ya Sesotho le yona e lokelwa ke raeme, jwale ka reneketso ya dipuo tsa Sekgowa, mme ka baka leo ka leka ho ngola thothokiso eo, le tse ding tse e hlahlamang ka ho sebedisa raeme.

(... at that point in time, I still strongly believed that the Southern Sotho poetry could also be rhymed, like the poetries of European languages, and I therefore endeavoured to employ rhyme in writing that poem and subsequent ones.)

Then, like Milton, Khaketla later revolted against rhyme, (cf Khaketla, 1970:23):

Empa- eitse ha nako e ntse e tsamaya, ka fumana hobane raeme ha e hlile ha e lokele reneketso ya Sesotho; **ka baka leo ke ile ka fetola maikutlo a ka**, hobane ba sa fetoleng maikutlo a bona ke ba shweleng feela. (My emphasis.)

(But as time went on, I realised that rhyme was not really suitable for Southern Sotho poetry; **hence I changed my mind**, because it is only the dead who never change their minds.)

He ascribes this change of mind to the morphology of the Sesotho language, which he asserts is not conducive to rhyme. He further claims that, even if rhyme is used, it turns out to be mainly eye rhyme because of tonal disparities. Moloi (1968:33-34) makes great capital of this ostensible change of mind on the part of Khaketla:

It is interesting to note that Khaketla realized that rhyming could not suit Southern Sotho poetry because of the morphology of the language.

But this is not surprising, as Moloi is an antagonist of rhyme in Sesotho with a capital A, and as Boas (1937:57) has so aptly philosophized:

There is a tendency on the part of all men to approve of what they like and to like what they have reason to approve. (My emphasis.)

But what is even more interesting to us about Khaketla and his professed change of mind is the fact that he still deemed it fit to include not less than six rhyming poems in his anthology, *Dipjhamathe*,

namely: 'Ntwa ya Abisinia', 'Dinako tsa ngwaha', 'Nahathothe', 'Morena o le hloka ka mehla', 'Nnete e bonwa ho ofe?', and 'Mariha a kene'. To be more convincing about his change of mind, he should have simply omitted these rhyming poems. Instead, Khaketla (1970:26) tries to justify their inclusion:

Le ha ke fetotse maikutlo a ka malebana le raeme puong ya Sesotho, ha ke a ka ka rata hore ke e tlose dithothokisong tseo ke seng ke di ngotse ka yona, ke boele ke di ngole botjha, hobane e tla bontsha mokgwa oo maikutlo a ka a nnileng a fetoha ka wona mengwaha ha e ntse e feta.

(Although I have changed my mind with regard to rhyme in Southern Sotho language, I did not want to remove it from the poems I had already written in it, and embark on the task of recasting them, because the rhyme would show how my mind had been changing throughout the years.)

Considered against the background of a master rhymers of his calibre who decided to break with rhyme, such a reason cannot really convince anybody. In Khaketla (1970:25), appears one of his main reasons for finding rhyme unsuitable for Southern Sotho poetry, which is not without a dash of Milton's revolutionary ideas:

... ho phehella ho raeme ho etsa hore sethothokisi se itlame matsoho, mme se sitwe ho sebedisa mantswe a matle, hobane a hana ho dumellana le a ka moleng o ka hodimo ka modumo, se be se lokele hore se sebedise a se nang kelello, a sitwang ho bea taba ka makgethe, hore a tle a dumellane ka medumo.

(... a firmness of purpose to write in rhyme causes the poet to restrict himself, and fail to use some telling words, because they are incapable of striking an acoustic similarity with those in the preceding verse, and he ends up using unintelligible ones, which cannot express his point with meticulous precision, in order that they may be similar in sound.)

He makes an earnest appeal to prospective poets to abandon rhyme, and to write poetry after the fashion originally practised by those whose responsibility it was, to sing praises to their chiefs, because there is no semblance of rhyme in their praise-poems. Even where rhyme does occur in these praise-poems, he says, it does so by accident, with no preconceived intention to employ it.

Despite these well-meaning utterances, the final analysis of the matter is that he is somewhat sceptical about the wisdom of abandoning rhyme. Hence his dubitative apologia for the inclusion of rhyming poems in his anthology, (cf Khaketla, 1970:26):

... le ha nna ke bua ka mokgwa ona kajeno, ke re raeme ha e a lokela reneketso ya Sesotho, ho ka nna ha etsahala hore ebe ke fositse, mme ka mengwaha e tlang bahlalefi ba fumane hore e ntse e nepahetse; ka baka leo ke fumana hore ho molemo ho tlohela dithothokiso tseo ka moo esaleng di ngolwa ka teng, mme ke bahlalefi ba tla bolela hore na ke nepile kapa ke fositse.

(... although I am presently speaking in this vein, saying that rhyme does not suit the Southern Sotho poetry, I may happen to be wrong, with the intelligentsia in the foreseeable future finding that it is after all quite in order; I therefore find it expedient to leave those poems in their original form, and it will be the **onus probandi** of the intelligentsia to decide whether I was right or wrong.)

What indeed could have been more expressive of his state of scepticism than this? In conclusion it may be stated that Khaketla opposes the use of rhyme in Southern Sotho for the following reasons:

- * the morphology of this language
- * restriction on the poet
- * acoustic dissimilitude of words; and
- * constraint to use eye rhyme for the most part.

The question is, are these reasons of such a serious nature that rhyme should be avoided like a plague in Southern Sotho poetry? The answer is in the negative, as the arguments that follow will reveal. To start with, the morphological reason advanced by Khaketla is nothing else but flimsy. Does it mean that in order to use rhyme in its poetry Southern Sotho must have had a morphology similar to that of English and Afrikaans, for example? Not for a moment. Each and every language boasts a morphology which is peculiar to it, and it must

understandably adapt this device to suit that morphology. It is as simple as all that. Rhyme does restrict a poet to some certain extent. But some poets in Southern Sotho in particular, and other African languages in general have written poems which rhyme very well. Hence, the question of restriction cannot be presented as a serious problem confronting the poet in the course of his versification practice. Acoustic dissimilitude of words, and constraint to use eye rhyme for the most part, in its final analysis reverts to morphology, to which reference has already been made.

3.2.1.3 Moloi

It is common knowledge that the earliest form of poetry in any given African language is praise-poetry. With development in mind, one may justly ask: **What would be the right thing to do?** One of the bitter critics of rhyme in the person of Moloi has this suggestion to make, (cf Moloi, 1968:109):

An experiment will have to be attempted to compose poems on a variety of subjects but using the techniques of traditional poetry. At first the features of praise poems may have to be applied consciously to our modern attempts, but this will not be a retrograde step. **It will be a worthy attempt to go back to the Sesotho language itself to find the 'laws' of our poetry.** (My emphasis.)

Part of these 'laws' of our poetry that Moloi had in mind were later encapsulated by Kunene in his jewel of Southern Sotho poetry entitled **Heroic poetry of the Basotho**, which saw the light of publication in 1971, and to which Lenake (1984:13) refers in encomiastic terms:

This is a valuable piece of research in which he made a scholarly study of the heroic poems. His approach is an analytical-descriptive one. **He discusses various aspects contributing to the making of a heroic poem** such as the naming of the hero (pp. 13-20), **inter alia** by means of deverbative eulogues (pp. 21-34). (My emphasis.)

The emphasis here, as it can be observed, is on Moloi's 'techniques of traditional poetry'. But what we should ask ourselves in earnest with special reference to the development of our African poetries, is whether the focus is on traditional poetry, or on modern poetry. If the focus is on the modern poetry, as we think it is, then Moloi's implication to ape traditional poetry is out of tune with the necessary trend for development.

Modern poetry differs thematically with traditional poetry, and this presupposes a measure of structural and stylistic difference between the two. If there is no marked difference between these poetic forms, then it would not be appropriate to talk in differential terms of 'modern' and 'traditional'.

Incidentally, A Sandilands, as cited by Moloto (1970:20), seems to have just the right recipe for enhancing the development of Tswana poetry in particular. In fact it holds good for African languages in general. Says Sandilands:

It does seem to the writer that, if Tswana poetry, is to master new ground of thought and life, it must develop new forms. The traditional 'leboko' is an extremely limited medium, and cannot be impressed very far in such new service. Its course is already run. (Lekgetho, Kitchen & Kitchen, Introduction.) (My emphasis.)

Among the new forms that Sandilands had in mind, we cannot help thinking of a host of poems which depend on rhyme for their identity.

But quoting Sandilands and commenting favourably on his utterance, does not necessarily mean that the modern African poets are expected to be slavish extremists in the process of developing their art, and completely refrain from applying the traditional techniques. In fact,

it is an open secret that our Southern Sotho poets in particular, never fail to avail themselves of the benefits of these techniques, as Kunene (1971:165-166) was quick to observe in the course of his discussion of the poetess Mokhomo:

Mokhomo, needless to say, is not the only poet who has drawn from the Sotho poetic tradition, nor is it she alone who has attained a measure of success in so doing. One could illustrate from the Khaketlas (BM and his wife NM), for instance. One could refer to Tsosane, to EAS Lesoro, and many more, and show how, even among those of them who are striving hard to be 'Western' in structure of their poetry, the tradition keeps intruding itself into their creations and doing nothing but good - mostly at any rate.

Kunene's follow-up (p 166) clearly indicates that, contrary to Moloi's views, one can still write good poetry without those trappings which have become part and parcel of traditional lore:

But Mokhomo is outstanding in this respect, and it is easy and pleasing to illustrate from her work. She happens, of course, to be one of the best Sotho poets, as already stated, and nothing said above is intended to suggest that the quality of her poetry is thanks only to her use of traditional poetic features. On the contrary, in some of her poems that are completely devoid of eulogues, repetition patterns, and the like, she has reached a respectable height in sheer lyricism. (My emphasis.)

Coming from a scholar, theoretician and critic of international repute like Kunene, this cannot simply be ignored.

Of course, Mokhomo does not use rhyme in her metrical discourse. It is therefore natural to wonder what effect this modern poetic technique could have created in her lyrical compositions if she had used it. It is indeed a foregone conclusion that the antagonists of rhyme can predict nothing else, but adverse results in such an exercise on the part of this rightly lauded representative of the female pen. For example, Moloi (1969:46) expresses a low opinion of Lesoro's anthology, *Mmitsa*, simply because it contains poems that are

written in rhyme:

In **Mmitisa** Lesoro is singing praises to rhyming by telling stories in rhyme. He has not written poetry. His respect for rhyming and other outward features of poetry led Lesoro to produce shallow, uninspiring and less intellectual compositions, eg:

Basadi ba baholo ba Senzangakhona,
Qetellong ba ba le bana le bona;
Ba tsekella hore jwale ho kgethwe
Bona majalefa, Chaka a lelekwe!
(Bayede Zulu)

(The senior wives of Senzangakhona,
Eventually bore children of their own;
They insisted that they should be chosen
As heirs to the throne, and Chaka be chased away!
(Hail Zulu)

(Own translation)

One gets the impression that Moloi equates the traditional form with Southern Sotho poetry in the same manner that the English used to equate rhyme with the poetry of their language. One would suspect that, because of his high respect for the traditional form and his aversion to modern techniques in general and rhyme in particular, he was oblivious to the alliterative /b/ in the first two verses of the stanza above, and the enjambement that effectively links the third verse to the fourth verse, preventing an interruption of the message being conveyed. These features, reinforced by the use of rhyme, should give this stanza some attributes of modern poetry, as opposed to the indigenous poetry, and there is no doubt that Lesoro's preoccupation was the former, and not in the least the latter.

It is quite interesting to note how Moloi's opinion of **Mmitisa** differs from that of Mokgokong (1963:128), who observes:

I must make mention here of a young Southern Sotho poet, Ephraim AS Lesoro, who in his anthology **Mmitisa**, which was

awarded the Mqhayi prize last year, shows the spirit and content of modern Bantu poetry. He is the first Bantu poet to apply rhyme successfully in his poems, thus breaking away completely from the form and structure of Bantu poetry.

Mahlasela (1982:20) also referring to this anthology, remarks:

Of Lesoro's poetry books, there is no one surpassing **Mnitsa**. He has reached his climax here. Twenty eight rhyming poems are found in this collection! Despite their rhyme, they are rich in meaning. One can realise that **he has not forced the rhyme but used it to drive the matter home. He maintains his thought or theme throughout the poem without any sign of being impeded by the type of rhyme he is using.** (My emphasis.)

After a perusal of the utterances of these two scholars of Sesotho poetry, one feels inclined to ask if they were really engaged in the same evaluative exercise with Moloi. It would seem that the latter was more concerned with Lesoro's rhyme than anything else, for as Pretorius (1984:1) aptly says about the evaluation of his poetry:

Rym as poëtiese boumiddel was dikwels die enigste maatstaf waarvolgens sy poësie geoordeel, of selfs waardeur dit as modern gekenskets is. Een van sy gedigte, Ngwetsi ya Mnasebele, word deur Moleleki (1975:29) hoofsaaklik op grond van rym as ultra modern (modern poetry proper) geklassifiseer. (My emphasis.)

Mahlasela (1982:21) explicitly reflects the flaws in one of the poems in the anthology under discussion, pertaining to the poet's use of rhyme. We expect Moloi to have followed suit, instead of talking in implicit terms. As Lenake (1984:11) says:

He often refers to features such as rhyme and rhythm, but fails to indicate how these function or influence the poetry he is studying. ... **He appears to be so opposed to structural devices such as rhyme and foreign metrical schemes that he does not even take the trouble to assess the success or failure accompanying their use.** (My emphasis.)

It is a real cause for surprise reading what Moloi (1968:71-2) has to say, when analysing 'Maswabi', a rhyming poem from the pen of his favourite poet, KE Ntsane:

Doubt and the poet's pessimism are clearly indicated in the following lines:

Ka beha matsoho phatleng, ka lla,
Ka tshwara pitsi ya ditsietsi, ka kalla.
(Maswabi)

(I raise my hands to the forehead and cried,
I caught a horse of sorrows and rode.)

The metaphor in the last line is effective. Immediately the reader realizes the bitterness of the poet because he holds that he is specially selected to suffer; he is wholly surrounded by misfortunes. His sorrow is intensified by the rhyme in **lla** and **kalla**. (Note this final comment referring to rhyme.)

Coming from a critic of his calibre, with a pet aversion for rhyme, this final comment sounds completely discordant, as opponents of rhyme are not expected to say such things about it. Poetic functions are certainly not uncommon to rhyme. For example, and with due apology to Moloi, one could also add that the two rhyming words /lla/ (cry) and /kalla/ (ride or rode as it is used in context), compel the reader's or listener's mind to linger on them for a while, and in the process regarding them as being complementary to each other. Looked against the background of the horse of sorrow /pitsi ya ditsietsi/, the crying /lla/ ceases to be a mere act of crying. It is intensified by this horse of sorrows into a prolonged and painful crying. Although Moloi has said such an incredibly good thing about rhyme, it does not necessarily mean that he has developed a soft spot for rhyme. His attitude as reflected in Moloi (1968:28), remains stern and irrevocable:

But no matter how accurate rhyme can be, it is not an essential feature of Southern Sotho. The meaning and depth of the poem will be adversely affected if words are rearranged arbitrarily to suit like endings. (My emphasis.)

It would, indeed, not amount to a strained interpretation to say that

Moloi looks at rhyme as an acoustic or at least a decorative device, and fails to see its function as a bearer of meaning. It may in conclusion be mentioned that Moloi is adverse to rhyme in Southern Sotho on the following grounds:

- * concurrence with Khaketla on the issue of morphology
- * implication that rhyme is not one of the 'laws' of Southern Sotho poetry
- * contention that rhyme is not an essential feature of Southern Sotho (poetry), and
- * contention that the meaning and depth of the poem will be adversely affected if words are rearranged arbitrarily to suit like endings.

What has been said in respect of Khaketla with special reference to the morphology of Southern Sotho, holds good for Moloi, who concurs with him on this issue. The solution for Southern Sotho, or for that matter, for any language, lies in cutting its coat according to its cloth, when it comes to rhyming. For example, Greek has a morphology of its own, which admittedly differs from that of English. Despite this morphological disparity, they both use rhyme in their versification practice, each language in accordance with its own morphology. There is, indeed, no scientifically defensible reason why Southern Sotho, or any other African language should not follow suit. The letters of the Greek alphabet begin with **alpha**, and end with **omega**. It is by convention that these letters were arranged in this way. If convention willed it, they could have been arranged the other way round, and still be acceptable to the Greeks. Like these letters of the Greek alphabet, the 'laws' of Southern Sotho poetry also depend on convention, as they are conventional and not natural phenomena.

This being the case, it is safe to say that if rhyme is not one of the 'laws' of Southern Sotho poetry, by conventional means it can easily become one of them, and the sooner that happens, the better for the development of modern poetry in Southern Sotho, and by implication in African languages in general. The inessentiality of rhyme as a poetic feature is only fully true in respect of indigenous or traditional poetry. But in modern poetry, saying or even suggesting that it is completely not essential would be blowing the issue out of proportion because here rhyme performs some of its important poetic functions which range from signalling the end of the verses, to identifying verses, stanzas, not excluding poems in general. It is thanks to rhyme that in the terminology of a well-developed poetry there exist terms such as **couplet** and **distich** (verse forms), **quatrain**, **quintet**, **ottava rima** and **terza rima** (stanzaic forms), as well as **sonnet** and **triolet** (poetic forms), which together or collectively contribute to the concept of variety in metrical discourse.

Phythian (1973:70), observes:

Any mention of rhyme brings us to the consideration of the part it plays in giving poetry a shape that emphasises its unity. Poetry is a controlled way of using language, and one way of showing control is to use a pattern of sound as well as the basic patterns of thought.

Viewed in this context, rhyme cannot be regarded as an inessential feature of the poetry of any given language, and that includes Southern Sotho. Finally, only a bad poet will arrange his words arbitrarily to achieve rhyme. As Phythian above has indicated, '... poetry is a controlled way of using language ...'. Hence the so-called arbitrary use of words to form rhyme is an exception, rather than the rule.

3.2.1.4 Moleleki

In Moleleki we find another scholar of Southern Sotho poetry who is not in favour of rhyme (cf Moleleki, 1975:28-29):

Rhyme, as found in European texts, is even difficult to find in Sesotho. The fact that Sesotho is a tone language makes it difficult to find words with similar or like endings. The free emotional outflow of the poet is inhibited where the choice of words is governed by rhyme. (My emphasis.)

This differs not very much with that utterance made by Milton in 3.1.1.3, namely '... hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise ...'. He exemplifies the difficulty of finding words with similar or like endings by pointing out that in 'Ngwetsi ya Mmasebele', by EAS Lesoro, the words /lelwala/ (grinding stone) and /lebala/ (courtyard), occurring terminally in stanza 1, do not rhyme, adding that 'what they have is poor eye-rhyme'. What Moleleki means by 'poor eye rhyme' is beyond comprehension. By qualifying eye rhyme in the manner he has implies the existence of a 'good eye rhyme' as well, of which there is none. Of course, there is also nothing like 'poor eye rhyme'. 'Eye rhyme' will always be 'eye rhyme' with no qualifications attached. But Moleleki needs to be reminded that eye rhyme is not a peculiar feature of Southern Sotho poetry, or for that matter, that of African languages in general. It also features in some of those 'European texts' to which he refers. For instance, in English, 'The Valley of Unrest', by Edgar Allan Poe, contains the following verses:

Trusting to the mild-eyed stars
They had gone unto the wars.

Here, the words /stars/ and /wars/ constitute eye rhyme, as they do not boast a similarity of sound. Ngcongwane (1974:71-72) pursues this feature more elaborately with special reference to the English hymns

found in A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodist:

'n Paar voorbeelde uit dieselfde boek sal toon hoe Wesley se rym op plekke eintlik gelyk het:

Hymn 138

O that thou wouldst the heavens rent,
In majesty come down;
Stretch out thine arm omnipotent,
And seize me for thine own!

Dit is moeilik om te se of dit **own** is wat soos **down** uitgespreek moet word, of anders om. So 'n geval kom ook in vers 3 van lied 661 voor:

Thine we are, a heaven-born race,
Only to thy glory move,
Thee with all out powers we praise,
Thee will all our being love.

Vir die oog rym **move** en **love** wel. ... Ander reëls wat in die boek veronderstel is om te rym is:

We live, and move, and are,
Through his preserving care; [Hymn 662, v. 2]

For Christ our Lord
Hath spoke the word
Which seals thee ours for ever. [Hymn 1026, v. 1]

These are some of the examples of eye rhyme that one contacts, not in Southern Sotho, but in English. The difficulty to find words with similar or like endings is also not peculiar to Southern Sotho. As we observed in the foregoing pages of this study, positional languages such as English for example, possess very few words that rhyme. So, Southern Sotho is apparently in good company in this respect.

Concerning the development of Southern Sotho poetry Moleleki (1975:29), seems to contribute to the views of Khaketla and Moloi in this respect:

If one were to point the direction of our modern poetry, one would not hesitate to encourage Basotho poets to keep as many of the stylistic features, characteristic of traditional

poetry, as possible, for in them lies the future as well as the potential for the development of our modern poetry.

But one strongly feels that sticking religiously to traditional poetry as suggested by Moleleki, hardly augurs well for the development of our modern poetry, for as Lowes (1938:93), so judiciously puts it:

... we obviously cannot for ever merely transform and retransform the old. If poetry is not to become a stagnant pool, there must also be fresh influx of the new. But in our preoccupation with the trodden paths, most of us remain oblivious to the vast tracts of the unexplored, which lie waiting to be drawn within the plastic stuff of art. Now poetry, which attains its highest triumphs in the transmutation of the familiar, is also everlastingly reaching out, for new substance of its alchemy, into the region of the strange. (My emphasis.)

By way of conclusion, it should be noted that Moleleki is opposed to the use of rhyme in Southern Sotho for the following reasons in particular:

- * difficulty of finding specimens of rhyme in Southern Sotho which are similar to those found in European texts
- * the tonal nature of Southern Sotho, which makes it difficult to find words with similar or like endings (cf *lelwalá* x *lebalà*), and
- * inhibition of the poet's free emotional outflow, caused by the choice of words governed by rhyme.

It would seem that what Moleleki would really want to see in the Southern Sotho texts is a replica of what is found in the European (non-African) texts. Little wonder it was difficult for him to find this. Every language employs rhyme in a way that is peculiar to it, and to expect Southern Sotho or any African language to rhyme like a European (non-African) language is an incarnation of ambition. The question of tone boils down to the morphological problem which has already been threshed out under Khaketla (3.2.1.2), and Moloi

(3.2.1.3), respectively. But it should be pointed out that rhyming /lā x lā/, ie HIGH TONE (HT) x LOW TONE (LT), or alternatively /lā x lā/, ie LOW TONE (LT) x HIGH TONE (HT), may sometimes perform a useful poetic function by inducing the reader or listener to pay extra attention to the first word by returning to it unconsciously, as it were, to check its tone as a result of the second word which deviates from it in terms of the tone to which the ear was first introduced, and whose repetition or echo it consequently expected. But, if eye rhyme is a predominant feature of Southern Sotho poetry, which one would like to believe it is not, it would be wise to accept this situation, and regard it merely as one of the peculiarities of rhyme in this poetry. There is no running away from it: rhyme in African languages is a **fait accompli**, and to borrow words from Lowes (1938:166):

... criticism has no cause to scoff, even though it may not feel called upon to pray. To understand, so far as possible, and to appraise are more to the point.

Choosing words which transform the poet's emotion into poetic language is a Herculean task, irrespective of whether the words are chosen to rhyme or not to rhyme. If the words chosen to rhyme inhibit the free emotional outflow of the poet, so should the words chosen not to rhyme. Coles Editorial Board (1985:111), defines a lyric as follows:

A type of poetry marked by emotion, melody, imagination and unified effect. ... the term encompasses poetry in which the poet expresses personal thoughts or feeling as opposed to epic or dramatic poetry, which describe external circumstances and events.

One excellent example of a true lyric is Samuel Daniel's 'Love is a Sickness':

Love is a sickness full of woes,
 all remedies refusing;
 A plant that with most cutting grows,
 Most barren with best using.
 Why so?
 More we enjoy it, more it dies,
 If not enjoyed, it sighing cries,
 Heigh-ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,
 A tempest everlasting;
 And Jove hath made it of a kind
 Not well, nor full nor fasting.
 Why so?
 More we enjoy it, more it dies,
 If not enjoyed, it sighing cries,
 Heigh-ho!

But what is of paramount importance in respect of the argument at hand is that this lyric rhymes. It comprises two stanzas of eight verses each with the rhyme scheme of **ababcddc**. True to its type, 'Love is a Sickness' is indubitably impregnated with emotion, which Daniel expressed freely without any inhibition, and that, in despite of his use of rhyme. The question that Moleleki and anyone contributing to his trend of thought should answer convincingly on scientific grounds is, why should rhyme impede the free emotional outflow in Southern Sotho poetry, but not do the same in English poetry? The whole business sounds like relegating Southern Sotho to an inferior position in the sphere of poetry, which is unacceptable to a genuine Southern Sotho, who is equitably imbued with language pride.

By way of conclusion, it seems imperative to state that virtually all of these literary scholars of Southern Sotho poetry concentrate only on the dissimilitude of rhyming sounds as such, and completely ignore the effect of rhyme in those cases where no acoustic problems are in existence, and one gets the impression that they are blissfully

ignorant of the functions of rhyme in any given language. They also propagate a return to the traditional modes of artistic execution in poetry, ignoring the fact that literature in general and poetry in particular, is not a static phenomenon, but a dynamic one which is susceptible to change. In poetry, such a change can only materialise through experimentation by poets who are innovative, and not merely stereotyped versifiers who work obsequiously according to the 'law' of the Medes and Persians, contrived by some conservative *literati*. In advocating a turnback in versification practice, they are sailing in the same boat with Plato, and ironically, this is the twentieth century.

3.2.2 Venda

Besides Southern Sotho, another African language showing evidence of the anti-rhyme school of thought is Venda.

3.2.2.1 Makuya

In words that are highly reminiscent of Coombes (1970:36), Makuya (1971:38), reveals inklings of his oppugnant attitude to rhyme in Venda. He observes succinctly:

To say that rhyme is not an essential element in Venda poetry is not to belittle its importance. Nearly all the Venda poets who have written memorable rhymeless poems have produced good poetry. For rhyme had better be absent from a poem if it is not doing something effectively; if it is not fulfilling any worthwhile function it is only an empty convention or affectation.

Like his co-antagonists of rhyme in African languages, he hastens to point out that, in Venda where rhyming is found, it is merely accidental. He adds that, what is commonly found in some traditional poems is repetition. To illustrate what he as a matter of fact means

by this 'repetition' in traditional poems, he quotes from two Venda poems. We shall only show the repeated words in both quotations:

_____	mulomo,	↖
_____	mulomo,	↖
_____	rothe,	↖
_____	rothe,	↖
_____	pi?	↖
_____	pi	↖
_____	khombe,	↖
_____	khombe,	↖
and		
_____	mambo	↖
_____	mambo	↖
_____	mambo	↖
_____	mambo	↖

It is evident that the repeated words in the first poem are /mulomo/, /rothe/, /pi/ and /khombe/. Their positioning and occurrence result in couplets rhyming aabbccdd, and no amount of persuasion can make anyone believe that this is not rhyme. Of course, in comparison with the other types of rhyme, it will be found lacking in that kind of artistry which can only be effected by variation. But it is still rhyme, and not merely repetition, as Makuya likes it to be believed. The same argument holds good for the epiphora in the second poem, in which the word /mambo/ appears four times in a row, yielding the rhyme schemes of aaaa. It is the same rhyme scheme that Schoonees et al (1942:169) identify and exemplify as follows:

slagrym, waarin dieselfde rymklanke meer as tweemaal mekaar opvolg, a a a a — b b b b ens; bv

'Bleek blink die seile ver teen die hang,	a
swart kom die kaffers met driftige drang,	a
bewend omhoog rys gebed en gesang —	a
o so bang!	a

(Totius - Vegkop.)

The only difference between Makuya's example and that of Schoonees **et al**, is the inventory of words made to rhyme, namely that the same word is used four times in the case of the former, while four different words, with each word used only once in respect of the latter. But rhyming the same word is nothing unique. It has been practised in other languages besides Venda. For example, the English poet, Edgar Allan Poe, has used a similar technique in his poem 'Ululame'. The following verses will illustrate this point:

It was noon in the fair field of Enna,
 Where Proserpine gathering **flowers** —
 Herself the most fragrant of **flowers**,
 Was gathered away to Gehenna.

Thanks to repetition of the word /**flowers**/ in verses 2 and 3, the stanza ends up rhyming **abba**, with the **aa** pair outflanking the **bb** couplet constituted by this repetition. One may perhaps refer to Whitman (1982:52-53), for an elaboration of this argument:

This ancient device of recurrence — rhythm and rhyme — has never been lost. Poets have always used it, in all kinds of variations, as in this wonderful poem by Rukeyser:

Rune

The word in the bread feeds me,
 The word in the moon leads me,
 The word in the seed breeds me,
 The word in the child needs me.

The word in the sand builds me,
 The word in the fruit fills me,
 The word in the body mills me,
 The word in the war kills me.

The word in the man takes me,
 The word in the storm shakes me,
 The word in the work makes me,
 The word in the woman rakes me,
 The word in the word wakes me.

It is a noticeable fact that the rhyming word through the entire poem is /me/. Whitman, on the same page, draws attention to the rhymes and stresses in each stanza:

Notice the **brilliant rhymes**, four in each stanza, and the three stresses in each line, giving an effect of incantation. (My emphasis.)

'Brilliant rhymes' says Whitman. But, unfortunately, she has made a technical fault by saying these rhymes are four in each stanza, seeing that only the first two stanzas comprise four verses each, while the third stanza comprises five. Nevertheless, she has proved the case most convincingly, showing that what Makuya regards as mere repetition in the two examples of traditional Venda poems, is in reality rhyme. The arrangement of the rhyming words reveals that they do not appear thus by accident, but by design. Because traditional or indigenous poems are normally dissiminated by word of mouth, the two Venda poems must have been handed down in that manner from one posterity to another, with the rhyme in them being used as a mnemonic device, designed to aid the memory of those who learn them by heart. That being the case, contrary to the opinion expressed by Makuya, rhyme seems to be an essential element in Venda poetry. But there is a growing unjustifiable tendency in certain African languages to regard rhyme as an inessential, foreign element. Some people working unconsciously under the influence of their educators and literary scholars, whom they hold in high esteem, simply accept this trend of thought without questioning.

In conclusion, one could say that Makuya is adverse to the use of rhyme in Venda poetry because:

- * it is not an essential element in Venda poetry

- * most Venda poets writing rhymeless poems have produced good poetry
- * rhyme should be functional, otherwise it is only an empty convention or affectation.

Rhyme cannot just blatantly be dismissed as an inessential element in any given poetry, as it has capacity of performing a diversity of poetic functions. It should, however, be admitted that in those poems in which it is not seen to perform any function at all, it may be rightly regarded as an inessential element. One has to agree with Makuya on the functional aspect of rhyme. It should, indeed, have a function in a poem. Silbajoris (1968:121), seems to be contributing to the sentiment expressed by Makuya:

In general one should always subordinate the use of rhyme to meaning, that is, in composing verse one should care more for clarity of thought than for rich rhyme; and if it is impossible to have both at the same time, the solid meaning must never, under any circumstances, be neglected for the sake of rich rhyme.

Although Makuya suggests that rhyme should fulfil a worthwhile function, he inadvertently omits to stipulate even a few functions which he expects it to perform, hence leaving his reader(s) probing in the dark for a solution. The fact that the majority of Venda poets using rhymeless verse have produced good poetry doesn't necessarily mean that they could not achieve similar results using rhyme. As a matter of fact, some languages such as Afrikaans and English are reputed to do equally well in both rhymeless and rhyming poems. The equality between the two forms in English versification is indubitably demonstrated by Westland (1966:124), after comparing a rhyming poem by Carew with a rhymeless one by Turner:

It is difficult not to believe that rhyme adds as much to perfect expression of the first as its absence allows to the other example,

he enthused. As it can be judged, to Westland the two forms merit equal importance. One would like to believe that the Venda poets, and by implication those of the other languages with which Venda is cognate, are also capable of achieving good results in both rhyming and rhymeless poetry. This achievement may come sooner or later, depending on individual talent, not excluding the language being employed as a means of poetic expression, for as Lanz (1968:131-2), judiciously observes:

No matter through what influence and what time rime appears in poetic literature of a given language, it always proceeds from more or less imperfect forms of terminal assonance to a more accurate repetition of sound. The period of adaptation may be very brief, as it was in English poetry, or it may take centuries of development, as it did in Old French ...

3.2.3 Zulu

Zulu is the third and the last African language, according to documented information, which reveals evidence of the anti-rhyme school of thought, whose representatives appear below.

3.2.3.1 Dhlomo

In Visser (1977:13), Dhlomo makes the following statements which reflect his aversion to rhyme:

The question of rhyme is exercising the minds of those interested in the development of Bantu poetry. Rhyme can be an exacting taskmaster and a cold tyrant. Preoccupation with technique and rhyme make for art that is too self-conscious. This is true especially of rhyme in African languages where words end almost invariably with a vowel, and where stress and accent play an important part in meaning. Here, rhyme may obscure meaning, stem the even flow of thought, and lead even to artificiality and superficiality.

It is significant that despite his opposition to rhyme in African languages, he can still afford commenting favourably on the rhyme system designed by Vilakazi for Zulu poetry, and which will be

discussed under its designer in subsequent pages of this chapter, when the pro-rhyme school of thought will be the point at issue. He remarks as follows:

In his 'The Conception and Development of Poetry in Zulu', Vilakazi has worked out an interesting rhyme scheme (cf Visser, 1977:13).

But he immediately changes his stance, saying in a quizical sort of way:

Actually, it is not new. Vilakazi has been forstalled by the European poets who attempted to develop double even triple rhyme.

Owning her **weakness**,
Her evil **behaviour**,
And leaving with **meekness**,
Her sins to her **Saviour**.

One more **unfortunate**,
Weary of **Breath**,
Rashly **importunate**,
Gone to her **death**!

Then he goes on the same page to say that Vilakazi is pleading for a similar development in Zulu poetry, but he regards his system as being too rigid - a sentiment to which I fully contribute, and which will be clear when Vilakazi is discussed in due course. Dhlomo maintains that, the larger and the sublimer the subject is, the more impertinent rhyme becomes to it, and that this impertinence increases in a sort of geometrical progression as one advances from monosyllabic to disyllabic, on to trisyllabic rhyme. But Dhlomo seems to be of whimsical disposition, running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. Having said that rhyme can be an exacting taskmaster and a cold tyrant, I classified him under the anti-rhyme school of thought without hesitation. But in Visser (1977:14), he changes his tune, finding rhyme in African languages being even better than in English. He declares in a state of euphoria:

But when we pass from singly rhyme to double ... we find the English poet a pauper; so nearly a pauper that he has to achieve each new rhyme by a trick - which tricking is fatal to rapture, alike in the poet and the hearer... No one can be clever and ecstatic at the same moment ...

Of course, nothing could be farther from the truth. He continues talking favourably about rhyme in African languages, saying that it is freely, if not always scientifically and artistically used (p 49). What a self-contradiction!

In his introductory remarks, Dhlomo gives one the impression of opposing rhyme in African languages because:

- * it can be an exacting taskmaster and a cold tyrant
- * preoccupation with technique and rhyme make for art that is too self-conscious
- * rhyme may obscure meaning, stem the even flow of thought, and lead to artificiality and superficiality.

While it is true to say rhyme is a demanding task, applying the descriptive phrase of 'cold tyrant' to it, is not an appropriate thing to do, for the obvious reason that being a self-imposed task on the part of the poet, the *onus probandi* is on him to rhyme or not to rhyme. No poet has ever been coaxed to use it, let alone being forcibly made to use it. It has never been obligatory to any poet, and it will never be. As an inference from this, there is nothing tyrannical about rhyme, as Dhlomo would like people to believe. It is also true that preoccupation with technique and rhyme make for art that is self-conscious. But this in itself is a differentia between indigenous poetry in which the bard recites his composition extempore,

and modern poetry in which the poet approaches his task with studied precision, playing the game of chop and change until he is fully satisfied with the product of his creative mind. Without relevant examples to substantiate his claim, it is not clear how on earth rhyme may obscure meaning. Instead of obscuring the meaning, rhyme clarifies it, as a rhyming word will often intensify its rhyming partner by echoing it, and in the process making the reader's/listener's mind to pay extra attention to it, hence drawing more information from it than it could have otherwise been the case. One of the functions of rhyme being the linking of verses in a poem, one cannot agree with Dhlomo that it may stem the even flow of thought, as the linking is designed to enhance the flow of thought. One inclines to regard as somewhat quotidian, the argument that rhyme leads to artificiality in the sense that all poetry being an artistic representation of reality, and not reality *per se*, is artificial by its very nature. Finally, as rhyme is capable of emphasising certain ideas, how it can lead to superficiality is indeed incomprehensible.

3.3 Comparison of the anti-rhyme school of thought in non-African and African languages

Looking again at the arguments raised against rhyme by those representing the anti-rhyme school of thought in non-African as well as African languages, it emerges that they repeat themselves on both sides with remarkable precision, showing that there is more analogy between these two language families than meets the eye. Compare the following arguments:

Non-African languages

African languages

1) Rhyme is no necessary adjunct on ornament of a poem or good verse (Milton, for English).

1) (a) Rhyme serves no useful purpose in Southern Sotho (poetry) (Guma).

(b) It is not an essential element in Venda poetry (Makuya).

(c) It is not an essential feature of Southern Sotho (poetry) (Moloi).

2) Rhyme was introduced to Italy by the Goths (implying it was a foreign element in English poetry) (Aschem).

2) (a) Rhyme is a foreign technique which is contrary to the basic structure of traditional poetry (Guma, for Southern Sotho).

(b) It is unbecoming to the genius of the Southern Sotho language (being foreign) (Guma).

(c) It is not one of the 'laws' of our poetry (as implied) (Moloi).

3) Rhyme is a hindrance to the poets (Milton).

3) (a) Rhyme restricts the poet (Khaketla).

(b) It may obscure meaning and stem the even flow of thought (Dhlomo, for Zulu).

(c) The meaning and depth of the poem are adversely affected by arbitrary arrangements of words to suit rhyme (Moloi).

(d) It inhibits the poet's free emotional outflow (Moleleki, for Southern Sotho).

- (e) It is difficult finding specimens of rhyme in Southern Sotho which are similar to those found in European languages (Moleleki).

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- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>4) The first attempt to use rhyme in Greek was a failure (Aschem).</p> <p>5) It constrains the poet to express many things otherwise and for the most part worse than they would have expressed them otherwise (Milton).</p> | <p>4) The poet is constrained to use eye rhyme for the most part (a sign of failure) (Khaketla).</p> <p>5) (a) Compare Dhlomo in 3(b)
(b) Compare Moleleki in 3(d)</p> |
|---|--|
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The comparison above shows in no uncertain terms, the analogy pervading the oppugnant views entertained by those representing the anti-rhyme school of thought in non-African and African languages. This analogy puts African languages fairly and squarely in the same boat with their non-African counterparts which, ironically, the opponents of rhyme in African languages admit implicitly and otherwise to be having capacity or potential for rhyme. This they do despite the fact that even in non-African languages one still gets adversaries of rhyme, who express great disapprobation at its use.

On the basis of this analogy, these opponents of rhyme in our languages should, in the name of fairness and logic, admit that **rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages.** There is indeed no scientifically defensible reason to prove that the opposite is true. Such a reason does not exist in non-African languages. That is why rhyme has never ceased being used in those languages. Nor does it exist in our African languages. That is again why rhyme is still enjoying continual use in these languages. This being the case, it should be emphatically restated that **rhyme has**

as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages, and what its adversaries say against it is but a *suggestio falsi*, in the guise of prosodic exercitation.

3.4 Pro-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages

Depending on the documented information at my disposal, I shall now discuss the pro-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages, with English as a point for departure.

3.4.1 English

It is within the region of possibility that English has more representatives of this particular school of thought than those on the verge of being discussed. But they should be sufficient for the purpose of this study which is not to exhaust, but to exemplify.

3.4.1.1 Samuel Daniel

In 3.1.1.2 Stapleton (1983:132) was quoted saying that Campion wrote his **Observations** in 1602, which was 'an arbitrary' statement in favour of classical forms in opposition to the use of rhyme. On the same page, Stapleton says this about Daniel's refutation of Campion's **Observations**:

Despite his (Campion's) eloquence he was refuted by Samuel Daniel, who — without intensive historical knowledge — argued from a background of sense and sensibility.

This Daniel did in 1603 in his **A Defence of Rhyme**, which Stapleton (1983:217), describes as:

... an affirmation in verse of his belief in literature as a civilizing and refining element ... which replies to Thomas Campion's **Observations in the Art of English Poesie** and the tendency to fit English poetry into classical models.

By writing in defence of rhyme, Daniel shows himself to be a true representative of the pro-rhyme school of thought, having in the further words of Stapleton (1983:217), '**... proved an accomplished advocate for English rhymed verse ...**'. (My emphasis). It is not the intention of this study to include every good thing said by Daniel on rhyme. But one cannot resist the urge of quoting him as per Smith (1904:365), where he observes:

... for sure in an eminent spirit whome Nature hath fitted for that mysterie, Ryme is no impediment to his conceit, but rather gives him wings to mount, and carries him, not out of course, but as it were beyond his power to a farre happier flight.

In other words, Daniel does not regard rhyme as a hindrance to a talented poet, but rather as his passport to greater success. Compare his opinion with that of John Livingstone Lowes in 3.4.1.2. Despite his predilection for rhyme he, like the unbiased judge he is, can still manage to tell the other side of the story. Compare Smith (1904:382):

... I must confesse, that to mine own eare, those continuall cadences of couplets vsed in long and continued Poemes, are very tyresome, and vnpleasing, by reason that still, me thinks, they run on with a sound of one nature, and a kinde of certaintie which stuffs the delight rather then intertaines it. (My emphasis.)

How is that one for the perfectionist of rhyme? But, going back to the pronouncements of Daniel, the advocate for rhyme, one may say that his reasons for being a proponent of this device are as follows:

- * rhyme is not an impediment to a talented poet, and
- * it kind of elevates the quality of his poem.

It is quite true that despite the scarcity of rhyming words, rhyme is not an impediment to a talented poet, and what is more, it will never

make him say what he did not intend saying. It can also elevate the quality of his poem in various ways such as, for example, by enhancing its linking, and also by giving more impact to its emphatic intent. To these two, one may also add the enhancement of the musicality of the poet's composition, rhyme being intended to please the ear more than the eye.

3.4.1.2 John Livingstone Lowes

Lowes has niched himself a place in the pro-rhyme school of thought by dint of his views in Lowes (1938:163), as quoted below:

... some of the most felicitous turns of thought and phrase in poetry are the result of a flash of inspiration under the happy guidance of rhyme.

For illustrating his point, he quotes a quatrain from Keat's sonnet, 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer', pointing out that its original version read as follows:

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet could I never judge what men could mean;
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
(My emphasis.)

He maintains that the third verse, '**Yet could never judge what men could mean**', which he considers to be rather dull, was changed in a subsequent version, '**under the compulsion of rhyme, to the splendid phrase which now completes the figure**', namely '**Yet did never breathe its pure serene**'. Compare the subsequent version containing this verse below;

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer rules as his demesne;
Yet did never breathe its pure serene;
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
(My emphasis.)

In case one could be misled into believing that this is an isolated case in which rhyme makes its mark effectively, Lowes (p 164) hastens to say:

That is one instance out of hundreds, of the happiness in words which rhyming often hits on. (My emphasis.)

To Lowes, rhyme forms an integral part of the binding elements in the production and perception of structural unity. He hates to imagine what the superb cogency of the *Divine Comedy* would be like without the binding force of the *terza rima*. Although he is not in disagreement with the fact that a poem may still have artistic unity of high degree without the binding force of rhyme, he strongly believes that in English poetry rhyme has become a constructive element of such great value that it could not be discarded without loss.

In short, one could say that Lowes is in favour of the use of rhyme in English poetry because:

- * rhyme guides the inspiration of a poet in creating the kind of poetry that is pleasant to the ear, as well as ingenious to the mind
- * it is one of the binding elements of a poem, and
- * it also enhances the unity of a poem.

It is quite true that rhyme, because of a regular repetition of sounds, creates poetry that is pleasant to hear, and the musicality resulting from the arrangement of rhyming words is nothing short of ingenuity. On the other hand, the function of rhyme as a binding element in a poem is common knowledge to all, except the uninitiated, at any rate. So, Lowes may be seen as merely reiterating this knowledge. It is also true that rhyme enhances the unity of a poem. In this respect, compare Ntuli (qv), in 3.5.3.2.

3.4.1.3 Arthur Melville Clark

Clark (1946:185), speaks about rhyme in favourable terms:

In English rhyme is comparatively rare; and therefore it is a **valuable property of our language, not a bad habit or nuisance. It is a pleasant thing, to be sought and treasured as a stylistic charm or poetic grace.** (My emphasis.)

With such pronouncements, it is quite safe to refer to him as another representative of the pro-rhyme school of thought in English. In fact, these pronouncements are an extension of the good things he says about rhyme in Clark (1946:183), where he alleges that 'there had been a time of prosodic welter when the verse makers were mumbling something between decayed Middle English and immature Modern English', but rhyme saved the situation by keeping the tradition of poetry from utter extinction. He further maintains that rhyme also gave stability to the new poetry after that period of transition.

Unlike Milton (qv), and to some certain extent Daniel (qv), Clark is in favour of the use of rhyme in long poems. Compare Clark (1946:205), in this regard:

If rhyme is allowed to give any pleasure at all, it is a **recurring pleasure which is just the kind fillip one would expect a long poem to require.** (My emphasis.)

He, however, informs that he does not suggest that all English poetry should be rhymed for, as he states in Clark (1946:201):

... in some kinds of metaphysical poetry ... the manner is less important than the matter, and **rhyme may sometimes detract from, or compete with, the interest of the thing said.** (My emphasis.)

In the quotation above, one can see Clark endeavouring in real earnest to reflect some of the weak points associated with rhyme. But the irony of the whole exercise is that he is inadvertently demonstrating

the impact that rhyme can have, or actually has in poetry.

It is indeed to the point mentioning that Clark advocates the use of rhyme in English poetry for the following reasons:

- * rhyme is a valuable property of the English language
- * it is imbued with stylistic charm or poetic grace
- * during a period of transition in the English poetry when the versifiers seemed to have lost their sense of direction, rhyme saved the English poetic tradition from extinction
- * after the period of transition, rhyme stabilized the new poetry, and finally
- * rhyme is a kind of fillip, or alternatively a stimulus, in a long poem.

It is admittedly true that rhyme is a valuable property of the English language or any other language, for that matter. This is mainly due to its function in poetry, as expressed by various advocates of rhyme in this study. The repetitive rhythmical effect of rhyme together with its varying echo, are nothing short of stylistic charm or poetic grace. The role played by rhyme in English poetry during the period of transition and thereafter is quite significant. It demonstrates in no uncertain terms, the power of rhyme as a poetic device, and serves to verify Lowes' conviction that in English poetry rhyme has become a constructive element of such great value that it could not be discarded without loss. Its role of being a 'fillip' in a long poem is, however, given to controversy.

3.4.2 Afrikaans

According to documented information available for my use in this language, there seems to be only one solitary representative of the pro-rhyme school of thought worthy of note.

3.4.2.1 AP Grové

There is no doubt that Grové is a great proponent of rhyme in this language. Compare Grové (1977:52), in which he makes the following remarks in favour of rhyme:

... rym is in die eerste plek 'n baie belangrike vormelement. Dit baken die vers af teenoor die sin. Veral in 'n lang gedig verskaf die rym vaste punte, as 't ware rotsblokke in 'n snelvlietende stroom. As dit nie die geval was nie, kon 'n lang gedig, soos **Raka** byvoorbeeld, maklik in vormloosheid verval.

It is quite interesting to observe that he is at variance with John Milton on the score of rhyme in longer poems. To some extent, he seems to be in agreement with Clark (qv), on the same score. That Grové does not by any means limit rhyme to long poems, is crystal clear in the following pronouncements also excerpted from Grové (1977:52):

... maar ook in kortere, strofiese gedigte het rym 'n besliste funksie: dit sluit die versreël op 'n bevredigende wyse af en bind ook die strofe tot 'n tegniese en psigologiese eenheid. Dit is veral duidelik in die geval van die kwatryn met die rymskema **aaba**. (My emphasis.)

Over and above these functions, he maintains that rhyme has also an acoustic function. He elaborates this point by indicating that, because the rhyming word usually occurs at the end of the line, it is in a privileged position to accentuate a predominant sound and exert a strong influence on the tone of a poem. And because the rhyming word occurs at the end of the verse line, and as a result often receives a

particular emphasis, it can also play a decisive role with relation to the rhythm of the poem. He illustrates his point by means of an excerpt from 'Die Smid', by Marais:

Blaas hoog die vlam,
geen floue trek of tam!
want alles moet verteer, -
in gloed verander, eer,
met skitter, skoon en rein,
die wit lig suiwer skyn,
Blaas hoog die vlam!

Grové draws one's attention to the fact that the rhyming words in this poem sustain the accent and bring the powerful, masculine tonality of the poem into special prominence. He further maintains that due to the fact that the echoing of sound is anticipated, rhyme can also serve to arouse a suspense of some kind in a stanza, an anticipation whose **ne plus ultra** is satisfaction.

It could now be said that Grové is well-disposed to rhyme in Afrikaans for the following reasons:

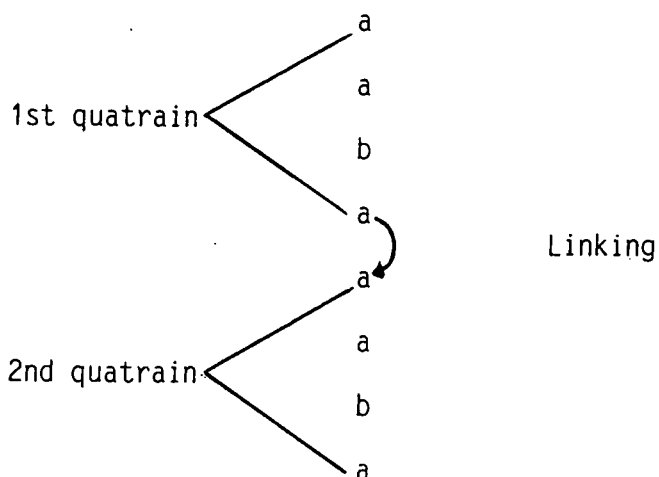
- * rhyme is a formal element of great importance
- * in longer poems rhyme affords a demarcation of units (of thought)
- * in shorter poems it winds off each verse in a satisfactory way
- * it also binds or links the stanzas into a technical and psychological whole
- * it accentuates a predominant sound, hence influencing the tone of the poem, and finally
- * it determines the rhythm of the poem.

The importance of rhyme as a formal element is indisputable. Without rhyme there could have been, for example, no such poetic forms as the

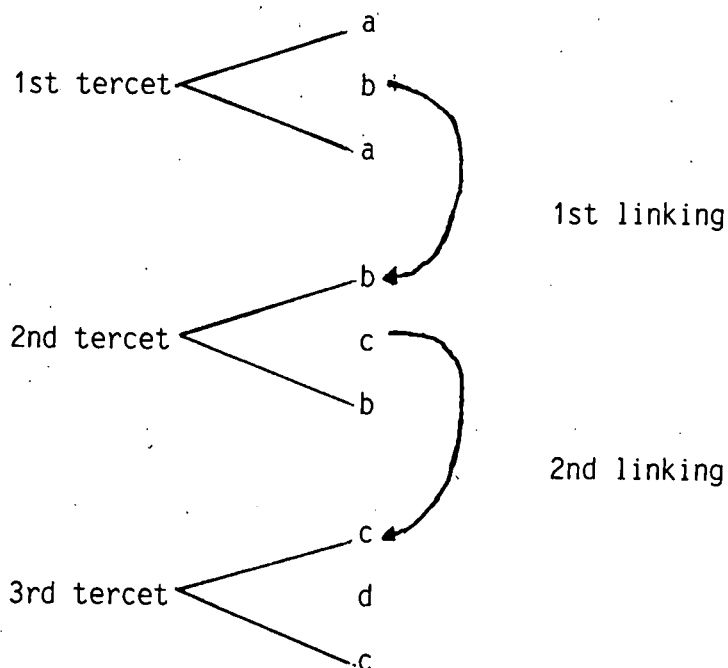
sonnet and the **canzone**, a two-parts poem consisting of the opening part called the **fronte**, and the closing part called the **sirna**, these two parts being linked by rhyme, the last of the **fronte** being for the most part identical to the first rhyme of the **sirna**. Indeed, as Fowler (1982:161-2), most elaborately puts it:

It is rhyme that has allowed, encouraged and diversification of strophic forms, the rhythmic organization of lines. Rhyme-schemes, even in the abstract, execute meaningful gestures. **Abab** describes the thrust and parry, give-and-take leisurely discursive development; **abba** describes, apart from its self-stabilizing chiasmic structure, an aggressive movement in which the **aa** pair outflanks and envelops the **bb** couplet, so that the **bb** couplet is ever in danger of becoming a mere parenthetical insertion. (My emphasis.)

While it is in accordance with fact that rhyme marks the units of thought in a poem (cf Ntuli (**qv**), in this respect), as it has already been pointed out, the use of rhyme in longer poems is open to controversy. On the credit side, rhyme does wind off each verse in a satisfactory manner. This is thanks to the fact that rhyme accentuates the end pauses, as well as strengthens the repetitive rhythmical effect. One has also to agree with Grové that rhyme binds or links the strophes (*strofe*) or stanzas, in the context of modern poetry, into a technical and psychological whole. According to him, this is especially evident in the case of a quatrain with the rhyme scheme of **aaba**. In this particular case the binding or linking of two consecutive strophes would be as represented below:



Another interesting strophic/stanzaic linking can be found in a **terza rima** comprising three **tercets**, rhyming **aba bcb cdc**, respectively. Here the linking would assume the following representation:



That rhyme accentuates the predominant sound and determines the rhythm of the poem has already been alluded to above.

3.4.3 German

In this third and last non-African language to be discussed under the pro-rhyme school of thought, there are only two representatives about whom I have information, - a very scanty one indeed, which does not quite reflect their basis of argument.

3.4.3.1 Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-66)

Born and bred in the eighteenth century, Gottsched upheld the German tradition of the seventeenth century when the importance of rhyme was stressed. In his satire, *Der Dichterkrieg* (1741), he attacked opponents of rhyme such as Bodmer (qv). He expressed a feeling that the onus to rhyme or not to rhyme rested on the poet. In other words, it was up to the poet, and nobody else, to use rhyme in his versification, or not to use it.

One may say with justice that Gottsched favoured rhyme in German poetry because:

* he encouraged the German poets to use it *ad lib*.

Gottsched was right in this respect. Poets, like creative artists they are, need a degree of freedom. That is why they boast poetic licence. They should be accorded the liberty of versifying as they please. Versifying is their self-imposed duty. The duty of the readers or critics is to appreciate and evaluate, and not to dictate.

3.4.3.2 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81)

In the words of Lanz (1968:315), Lessing very convincingly, and with a charming simplicity of argument, 'assumed the defense of rime' (My

emphasis). He is of opinion that Lessing's apology for this device is worthy of being quoted in full. True to his word, he proceeds to quote it in precisely that way - in full:

It seems to me that those who are mercilessly antagonistic to rime are, perhaps, only wishing to avenge themselves for their own failure to master it. With a haughty mien they call rime a jingling sound. As though the sensually pleasing repetition of sound were the only reason why one should wish to retain it. Don't you consider at all the pleasure that arises from overcoming a difficulty? Is there no achievement in not letting one be carried away by rime but through skilful arrangement of words to produce the impression that no other word can possibly stand in its place? Those who doubt the possibility of such arrangements reveal thereby their own weakness in the command of language and a lack of adequate (grammatical) transformation in their mind. Haller, Hagedorn, Gellert, Utz, have sufficiently demonstrated that a poet can have a complete control over his rimes and that it is in his power to give them a perfectly natural appearance. The difficulty is rather a commendation for it than a reason for discarding it. And yet, dear sir, do not conclude from this that I am entirely against those who advocate blank verse.

On the same page, Lanz cites Lessing suggesting that if the poet's enthusiasm is sufficiently persistent to survive the difficulties of rhyming, he should by all means be allowed to rhyme. But, not being unduly obsessed with rhyme, Lessing did not hesitate to propose the idea that if on the contrary the poet's inspiration subsides in the process of developing his theme, it would be better for him to discard rhyme. He found it difficult to say which method between blank verse and rhyme was of greater merit, and suggested that the choice between the two methods of versification should be left to the poet, which is indeed as it should be.

One may justly say that Lessing was in favour of rhyme because:

- * overcoming a difficulty is a source of pleasure

- * it is an achievement to arrange words skilfully to produce the impression that no other word can possibly stand in the place of a given one
- * Haller, Hagedorn, Gellert, Utz, have sufficiently demonstrated that a poet can have a complete control over his rimes and that it is in his power to give them a perfectly natural appearance, and finally
- * the difficulty is rather a commendation for it than a reason for discarding it.

It is an indisputable fact that overcoming any kind of difficulty gives one untold pleasure, and triumphing over the difficulties of rhyme is no exception. And it is indeed an achievement to arrange words skilfully in rhyme - skilful in the sense that it reflects the best choice of words which enhances the development of the theme, not only semantically, but also by exploiting the audio-visual senses. If Haller etc have proved that a poet can have a complete control over his rhymes, there seems to be no scientifically defensible reason why other poets should not be capable of the same feat. It can also not be denied that the power of successful rhyming is vested in the poet himself. If he is a judicious, painstaking rhymers, there is absolutely no reason why he should not achieve success. In conclusion one believes as Lessing does that the difficulty of rhyme seals its use rather than emphasise its abandonment. This takes the matter back to the pleasure arising from overcoming a difficulty.

3.5 Pro-rhyme school of thought in African languages

This school of thought will now be discussed within the premises of African languages, and as ever, subject to the availability of the

relevant information in any given African language.

3.5.1. Southern Sotho

The literary scholars of this language seem to be deeply involved in the highly controversial issue on rhyme, with some informing against this device (cf 3.2.1), and others speaking in its favour, as it will presently emerge from the pronouncements of the pro-rhymers.

3.5.1.1. Mohapeloa

Mohapeloa will serve as a starting point for those representing the pro-rhyme school of thought in Southern Sotho. After posing a rhetorical question '... na thothokiso ya kajeno e sa tla tshwana hantle le ya mehleng?' (... will the poetry of today ever be a replica of that of yesteryear?), in Mohapeloa (1961:5), he retorts:

BoBereng ba se ba arabile. Mokgwa oo ba ngolang ka oona o sekametse hanyenyane tseleng tseo thothokiso tsa puo tse ding (haholo tsa Senyesmane) di ngolwang ka tsona.

(Bereng and others have already furnished an answer. Their style of writing is slightly inclined to that of the poetries of other languages (especially that of English).

He maintains that poets no longer go for poetic eloquence alone. Instead, they also pay attention to the formal structure of their compositions or poems. They ask themselves if their verses should be arranged in such a way that they create end rhyme. Mohapeloa contents that poetic devices such as rhyme embellish the poetries of other languages, and should be able to do the same to the poetry of this language. He, however, does not hesitate pointing out that by so saying, he does not suggest that the Southern Sotho poets should become hyperemulative artists. Mohapeloa (1961:6), without attempting to be prescriptive, judiciously asserts that if the poetic

embellishments of other languages are seen to suit Southern Sotho, the Southern Sotho poets should apply them with a clear conscience. With special reference to rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry, he goes a step further, in Mohapeloa (1961:8), to erect the following thesis:

Ha e le tumellano ya medumo (**rhyme**) ke batla ke kgolwa hore Sesothong e utlwahala hantle ha mantswe a dumellana ka medumo ya di-**consonant** le di-**vowel** -**sekgothe** : **kgokgothe**- le hoja dithothokisong tsa bukana ena ho tla fumanwa tumellano tse kang ena: **hlabello** : **pheello**.

(Concerning rhyme in Southern Sotho, I seem to believe that it is more successful when the words boast similar consonantal and vowel sounds, for example, **sekgothe** : **kgokgothe**; although in some of the poems contained in this book rhyming such as **hlabello** : **pheello** will be found.)

Here, Mohapeloa has in an unpretentious way formulated the first principles of Southern Sotho poetry with special reference to rhyme. It is a good system as far as the theory goes. But for practical purposes, it is not without problems. For example, while the vowel sounds of the rhyming words should be identical, should the consonantal sounds of such words also be identical? One feels that this is stretching the identity of sounds to a snapping point. Identity of vowels is sufficient, while identity of consonants is quite superfluous. That is my contention. By advocating this identity of consonants, Mohapeloa is seen to be in the same predicament with Vilakazi, (**qv**), according to whose system such words as /zulu/ and /mulu/ cannot rhyme together as fricative alveolars have no ear relation nor even phonetic relation with nasal bilabials. The irony of the matter is, a close study of his rhyming poems reveals that Mohapeloa himself fails to effect the consonantal identity he is suggesting, the examples he has given in his plea being more of an exception than the rule. This inadvertently puts him in an awkward position of not practising what he preaches.

Mohapeloa's reasons for advocating the use of rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry, may be summarized as follows:

- * rhyme has a decorative effect on poems, and
- * it gives a definite formal structure to them.

While the decorative function of rhyme in poetry is a genuine one, which has often been raised by some of the scholars of non-African literature, there is more to rhyme than sheer embellishment. But Mohapeloa should be pardoned for focusing mainly on this minor function of rhyme, because rhyme is comparatively new in Southern Sotho, not excluding the other African languages, and its primary functions are not yet fully appreciated. However, nothing could be truer than Mohapeloa's suggestion that rhyme gives form to poems. This form in turn gives a distinctive name to each poem bearing it, resulting in such names as **sonnet** and **triolet**, to mention only two. In conclusion, it should be mentioned that Mohapeloa is in favour of rhyme only where it suits the Southern Sotho language. In other words, he does not advocate the use of rhyme at all costs, that it, going to the extent of enforcing it just for the sake of rhyming, and rightly so, for as Silbajoris (1968:121), has already sounded a warning in 3.2.2.1, '... solid meaning must never, under any circumstances, be neglected for the sake of rich rhyme'.

3.5.1.2 Mahlasela

This literary scholar also identifies with the pro-rhyme school of thought. His research project, **A study of some aspects of the development of rhyme in the written poetry of Southern Sotho** (1982) which he submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree for Hons BA in the Department of African Languages of the University of Zululand, is

the most extensive study of rhyme to date, not only in Southern Sotho alone, but in African languages in general. His pronouncements are vast and varied. But for the present, the following utterances expressed in Mahlasela (1982:33), will suffice:

One point to make is that rhyme is not for everybody! It is a very taxing enterprise, it needs somebody who has a thorough command of his language and a good vocabulary. Rhyme must always be used to emphasise certain ideas in a poem by employing the words with similar sounds. In this way our poetry will be of high quality, memorable and easy to quote. As long as rhyme does not impede the flow of the message of the poem but tends to emphasise certain ideas and concepts, then it is successful. (My emphasis.)

He goes on to give a *catalogue raisonné* of rhyme schemes in existence, and admonishes the adversaries of rhyme to find out for certain that none of these rhyme schemes is suitable, before they 'can have audacious temerity of stating the unsuitability of rhyme in the poetry of African languages, especially Southern Sotho'. Although Mahlasela means well to rhyme, propagating its use by focusing the attention of its adversaries to the whole gamut of rhyme schemes is simply not the best way for convincing them that rhyme is worth practising. They are not interested in the rhyme schemes as such, but in the acoustic similitude, not excluding dissimilitude, of the words intended to rhyme together. Speaking in metaphorical terms one would say that these adversaries of rhyme would rather search for dissimilitude in a muddy pool, than for similitude in a clear one.

They are resolute beyond the strict terms, and Mahlasela's rhyme schemes, if devoid of acoustic similarities, would not influence them to any depth. Moreover, they never omit indicating that rhyme was never in habitual use in their indigenous poetry.

Stated in synoptical terms, Mahlasela maintains that rhyme may be used in Southern Sotho poetry to:

- * emphasise certain ideas
- * enhance the quality of a poem, and
- * to render a poem memorable and easy to quote.

In other words, rhyme has a functional role to play in poetry. One has to agree with Mahlasela on the emphasising role of rhyme on certain ideas. When two words rhyme, the second word echoes the sound of the first, causing the mind of the reader or listener to tarry for a while, not only on this word alone, but also on the immediate environment in which it occurs, hence emphasising the ideas which are embodied and intended for conveyance. The enhancement of the quality of a poem by means of rhyme is obviously a conditional phenomenon, depending to a high degree on the quality of the rhyme itself. It would be quite irrational to expect rhyme of poor quality to always enhance the quality of a poem. Fortunately, Mahlasela is fully aware of this, and consequently underscores the need for employing words with similar sounds. Finally, because of its mnemonic properties deriving from repetition of similar sounds, rhyme surely makes any given poem easy to remember, and equally easy to quote. This is an indisputable fact that can only be bandied about and refuted by adversaries of rhyme of Moloi's calibre (cf Moloi, 1969:46):

Memorable passages depend more on the heights of contents reached, the depth and intensity of the experience and the insight of the poet presenting his inward feelings, and less on rhyme.

This is, indeed, nothing else but a display of sheer semantic acrobatics.

3.5.1.3 Lenake

This distinguished scholar and critic of Southern Sotho poetry has earned himself a place in the pro-rhyme school of thought by dint of his compliant pronouncements (cf Lenake, 1984:11-12):

A closer look at Lesoro's poetry indicates that he employs rhyme with a reasonable amount of success in some poems.

A careful and wise assertion is made by Mohapeloa (1954:5-6) on this thorny issue. He says:

When the decorative devices of the other languages agree with the Sesotho language, we should not hesitate to use them.

It is undoubtedly Lenake's attitude to rhyme that makes it possible for him to observe whatever amount of success in rhyming poems, a thing that will always remain imperceptible to the adversaries of rhyme. Considering Mohapeloa's assertion on the thorny issue of rhyme as being careful and wise, gives dimension to Lenake's attitude to this device. After analysing 'Lemo sa 1939' by KE Ntsane, Lenake (1984:160), comments as follows on the effect of rhyme in this poem:

Overviewing the function of rhyme in the poem in general, it could be stated that it does contribute to its aesthetic unity and adds to its expressiveness. On the other hand, the instances of weak rhyme to which we have referred, do make it less successful. However, if the level is not as high as it could have been, it was not caused by the use of rhyme as such. It was rather caused by those instances of weak rhyme that we have indicated.

In the light of the foregoing pronouncements, it would be safe to assume that Lenake is not adverse to rhyme in Southern Sotho poetry because:

- * it may be used with reasonable amount of success
- * it may be used as a decorative device
- * it contributes to the aesthetic unity of the poem, and
- * it also adds to the expressiveness of the poem.

One's contention is that if Lesoro is seen to be employing rhyme 'with a reasonable amount of success', there is no reason why other Southern Sotho poets cannot do the same, or even surpass him for that matter. The decorative role played by rhyme in poetry cannot be ignored. But it is only one of the poetic functions of rhyme, a minor one at that (cf Mohapeloa in 3.5.1.1), in this respect. Shaw (1972:389), defines the concept of literary unit as follows:

In literature, unity involves the concept that a work should exhibit some principle of organization in which all the parts are related in such a way that an organic whole is formed.

Because of the linking properties of rhyme, rhyming words are more 'qualified' than any other words to contribute to the formation of this 'organic whole', alternatively called aesthetic unity. On the other hand, the repetitious nature of rhyme constantly draws the attention of the reader or listener to what the poet wants to convey, and emphasise the meanings, and by so doing adding to the poem, the expressiveness to which Lenake is referring. With Lenake having thus established the fact that rhyme does contribute to the aesthetic unity of Ntsane's poem, 'Lemo sa 1939', as well as add to its expressiveness, then one would expect rhyme to have a similar effect on the other rhyming poems in Sesotho, and by implication, in African languages in general.

3.5.2 Tswana

As it has already been noticed, Tswana was not represented in the anti-rhyme school of thought. For a change, however, it is being represented in the pro-rhyme school of thought, albeit only by the one scholar indicated below.

3.5.2.1 Moloto

Moloto is in favour of the use of rhyme in his native Tswana. He is, so to say, one of those scholars who stand aloof from the trivialities of current aesthetic indoctrination, and puerile academic appeasement in the order of the day. In Moloto (1970:140) he analyses PP Leseiyane's didactic poem, 'Boammaruri' (Truth), in this rhyme-flattering vein:

In the first stanza the first four lines are successfully end-rhymed **aabb**. The fifth line is odd, perhaps having lost its partner in printing. The last two lines are pararhymed. The second stanza is successfully end-rhymed in the first six lines, viz. **aabbcc**. The last two lines are not rhymed. The third stanza succeeds in the first four lines, and pararhymes the other four **cdcd**, making therefore **aabbcdcd**. The last stanza end-rhymes the first five lines **aabcb** and leaves the last three lines unrhymed.

Moloto's use of such words as **/successfully/** and **/succeeds/** with relation to the use of rhyme in 'Boammarruri', clearly indicates his attitude to rhyme. His concluding remarks made with further reference to this poem identify him with the pro-rhyme school of thought beyond doubt (cf Moloto, 1970:140):

There is no doubt in our minds that the lines rhymed are successfully rhymed and that Tswana has the capacity for and a tendency towards morpheme-rhyme. (My emphasis.)

But NH Kitchin seems to have taken the cake in the rhyming scenario of Tswana poetry with a poem that appeared in the now-defunct children's magazine, **Wamba**. His comments on this poem really puts Kitchin at the top of the tree (cf Moloto, 1970:177):

There is a matured **abab** rhyme scheme, **refuting current belief that Tswana cannot be rhymed**. Whereas we noted the failure to rhyme successfully in the works of some authors of the preceding stage, we now enter an era when the bard apparently

knows the theory of rhyme and with his first attempt at junior poetry, succeeds with fully-fledged feminine rhyme. (My emphasis.)

He cherishes a strong feeling that Kitchin must have given a great deal of thought to the selection of his rhyme-words, before or after finalising them, because the rhyme is successful in form, intonation and duratics.

In short, one could state that Moloto is in favour of the use of rhyme in Tswana poetry because he has discovered from some of the written Tswana poems that:

- * they are rhymed successfully, refuting the current belief that Tswana cannot be rhymed, and
- * Tswana has capacity for and a tendency towards morpheme-rhyme.

As Moloto reached all these by manner of scientific study of rhyme in Tswana, one could in conclusion expressly mention that he has successfully demonstrated that Tswana has capacity for rhyme.

3.5.3 Zulu

The pro-rhyme school of thought will now be discussed in Zulu, which is incidentally the third and the last but one African language on which the necessary information for the purpose at hand was procured. This school of thought is represented here by two scholars of literature indicated below.

3.5.3.1 Vilakazi

Vilakazi (1937:55) definitely has a mental pabulum for those prophets of doom who can only predict adverse results when Western forms such

as rhyme and stanzaic division are applied to African poetry:

I believe ... it is absolutely necessary that in composing some poems we ought to rhyme, and decorate our poetic images with definite stanza forms. (My emphasis.)

But as if to condition them for this kind of comment Vilakazi (1937:51-52) declares:

There is no doubt the poetry of the West will influence all Bantu poetry because all the new ideas of our age have reached us through the European standards. But there is something we must not lose sight of. If we imitate the form, the outward decoration which decks the charming poetry of our Western masters that does not mean to say we have incorporated into our poetry even their spirit. If we use Western stanza-forms and metrical system we employ them only as vehicles or receptacles for our poetic images depicted as we see and conceive. Criticism on Bantu poetry today confuses 'form' and 'spirit'. The latter is important. (My emphasis.)

Not oblivious of the fact that the African rhymes cannot, and should not be expected to be glorified replicas of their Western counterparts, Vilakazi (1937:53) advises that, in rhyming the Bantu or African syllables one has to take into account the penultimate syllable which not only has prominence to the ear because the succeeding final syllable is generally (in Zulu) devocalised, but also attracts the eye in that the poet will run his rhyming through two syllables: the penultimate and the final. He goes on to explain his rhyme system for Zulu poetry, based on this principle of the penultimate and the final syllables. According to this system the following consonants may rhyme together as exemplified (cf Vilakazi, 1937:55-59):

(a) Bilabial consonants:

iphaba	:	ubaba	:	ukubaba
imbobo		upopo		
impuphu		imbubu		

(b) Dentilabial consonants:

vela	:	fela
fula	:	vula

(c) Alveolar consonants:

(i)	amatata	:	amathatha
	itwetwe	:	isidwedwe
(ii)	umsizi	:	umzisi
	ukususa	:	ukuzuza
(iii)	ukwelula	:	ukurula
	ukulola	:	ukurola

The nasal alveolar 'n' is, however, not rhymed with the other alveolar members, and stands on its own.

(d) Prepalatal consonants:

ikatshana	:	isikhashana
ikatshana	:	ukukwenetane
isikhashana	:	ubisana

Because of its voiced quality, the prepalatal 'j' does not agree with its unvoiced prepalatal members in terms of sound. Hence Vilakazi accommodates it by allowing it to rhyme with the voiced alveolar 'd' and the voiced velar 'g'.

(i) 'j' versus 'd':

amaJuda	:	ukududa
ukubeja	:	ukubeda

(ii) 'j' versus 'g':

amaJuda	:	akuguda
ukugeza	:	ukujeda

(e) Velar consonants:

amagagazi	:	amakhosikazi	:	amakhasi
ukuguguza	:	ukukhukhusa	:	ukusukusa

(f) Glottal consonants:

The fricative unvoiced 'h' rhymes with the voiced 'h'.

(g) Clicks:

- (i) The radical and aspirated dental clicks, the palatoalveolar and the lateral clicks may rhyme indiscriminately.

Radical

icala : ukuqala : ukuxhala

Aspirated

ukuchuma : ukuqhuma : ukuxhuma

- (ii) The voiced clicks will rhyme in any combination:

ukugxuma : ukugquma

Vilakazi (1937:54), further states that words such as 'zulu' and 'mulu' could not rhyme together, because fricative alveolars have no ear relation or even phonetic relation with nasal bilabials. As Dhlomo in Visser (1977:13), rightly expounds the implication of this last aspect of Vilakazi's rhyme system or rhyme scheme as he prefers to call it:

In this rhyme scheme, therefore, bilabial consonants can only rhyme with bilabials, alveolars and alveolars, etc.

The rhyme system as a whole, is quite interesting, and it is, indeed, a study in minutia for details. It is also in parts, highly reminiscent of Silbajoris's conception of end rhyme (cf Silbajoris, 1968:50):

There should be no need to refer to the agreement of the final syllables, for all our poets know that it is better if it (rhyme) starts with the penultimate syllable, that is, with the syllable which immediately precedes the last ... (My emphasis.)

Here, Silbajoris was referring to end rhyme in Russian poetry in particular. Nevertheless, his conception of rhyme or rhyming, to be more precise, is similar to that of Vilakazi for Zulu poetry. But one

can mention with the warrant of a good conscience that by advocating that in rhyming one has to take account of the penultimate syllable, which not only has prominence to the ear, because in Zulu the succeeding final syllable is generally devocalised, but also attracts the eye, Vilakazi falters on at least two counts:

- * he overlooks the function that half rhyme when pitted against full rhyme can perform in a poem
- * he concentrates on the aspect of length on the penultimate syllable, thanks to which he regards the final syllable as being of little consequence, since it is in any case devocalised in Zulu - a fact that does not hold good for non-Nguni languages.

This sets one wondering if a devocalised syllable in Zulu is devoid of meaning or implication. In any case, the final syllable may be devocalised in spoken Zulu, but not necessarily in written Zulu poetry. The fact that the poetry appears in a written form, is enough to entice the reader to vocalise this final syllable. By advocating that rhyme should start at the penultimate syllable because the final syllable in Zulu is devocalised, Vilakazi misses the main reason for what he advocates, namely impact on the ear, to which Silbajoris (1968:50), comes so close to in his suggestion that rhyme is better if it starts with the penultimate syllable, the operative word here being 'better'. It is an indisputable fact that /la x la/ (one syllable), has more impact than /ka x la/ (half a syllable). By the same token, Vilakazi's penultimate starting of rhyme, yielding /lala x lala/ (two syllables), would have more impact than /la x la/ (one syllable). In other words, the greater the number of full syllables that rhyme, the greater the impact of rhyme on the ear. But this does not necessarily

mean that rhyme should be restricted to the penultimate syllable, as such a restriction has the adverse results of accepting only those rhymes that start penultimately, and rejecting all the other rhymes that do not conform to this requirement.

One ardently feels that end rhyme as proposed by Vilakazi, and inadvertently corroborated by Mohapeloa (3.5.1.1) and Silbajoris (3.5.3.1), respectively, would be difficult to achieve, much to the jubilation of those adversaries of rhyme, who want to deprive the poets of their freedom of creativity with a bulldog's tenacity. This deprivation of the freedom of creativity, with special emphasis on innovation, does not only hamper the development of poetry, but it also affects the reader adversely by denying him his full rights in terms of critical analysis, by affording him less food for thought. Last, but certainly not least, one would need an optical as well as an auditory illusion before one could resign oneself to the most incredible fact that, by a strange twist of events, 'zulu' and 'mulu', including related minimal pairs, do not really rhyme. In conclusion, one could say that Vilakazi is in favour of rhyme because:

- * it is a decorative device.

The decorative properties of rhyme seems to occupy the minds of almost all of its proponents. It should be restated that the embellishment of poems is but a minor function performed by this device. It has more important functions to perform (cf Chapter 3). It is, however, quite true that rhyme gives definite stanzaic forms to poems, not only bringing in some kind of structural organisation, but also giving a distinctive name to a stanza, which effectively distinguishes it

from a concomitance of stanzas (cf quatrain, terza rima; etc).

3.5.3.2 Ntuli

Here is another scholar of Zulu literature representing the pro-rhyme school of thought. Feeling that a poet is at liberty to use any poetic device of his own choice, including rhyme, Ntuli (1984:204), wisely remarks:

We subscribe to the view that an artist cannot be limited in the devices he wants to employ. A poet is free to borrow or emulate patterns which are used by other artists in other cultures. Why should there be an objection when a poet wants to decorate his piece with similar endings?

Like most proponents of rhyme, Ntuli also thinks of rhyme in decorative terms. But he is not oblivious to the other important functions of rhyme, as it is clearly reflected in his pronouncements on the same page:

When properly used, rhyme has a regulating effect and indicates audibly that we have come to the end of a verse. We cannot ignore the aesthetic echo effect produced by such repetitions. After coming to the end of the line, we anticipate hearing the similar sound later on. When we get to that sound, it echoes the sound we have already heard. If a poem has a similar rhyming scheme for each stanza, this scheme serves as a device for indicating the units of thought which are found in each stanza. In a description of something formal or harmonious or orderly, a poet can enhance that idea of orderliness by using a rhyme scheme.

On reflection, one is inclined to think that Ntuli hinted on the decorative function of rhyme purely from a structural point of view, while fully aware that in terms of content and meaning, rhyme has a more important function. Compare Ntuli (1984:205):

Rhyme is more effective when it is not merely a decorative device but is used in close association with the ideas contained in that particular portion of the poem. (My emphasis.)

In conclusion, Ntuli may be said to advocate the use of rhyme in Zulu because, among other things:

- * a poet is free to borrow or emulate patterns which are used by other artists in other cultures
- * there is no reason why a poet should not decorate his piece with similar endings
- * rhyme marks the end of a verse audibly, and
- * a similar rhyme scheme for each stanza indicates the units of thought in each stanza.

Ntuli is dead right in his contention that a poet is free to borrow or emulate patterns used by other artists. Emulation in particular, is a common phenomenon in the plastic world of art. Compare Race (1988:xvii-xviii), with reference to conscious imitation in literature:

In many cases, conscious *imitatio* is obvious. Catullus wrote a mock elegy on his mistress' sparrow and Ovid did him one better with one on Corinna's parrot, both of whom were followed by Statius. Milton had command of the entire tradition of pastoral lament when he composed his 'Lycidas', and Auden consciously drew on that same tradition in his 'In Memory of WB Yeats'. ... As TS Eliot points out in 'The music of poetry', 'Every revolution in poetry is apt to be, and sometimes announces itself as, a return to common speech. That is the revolution which Wordsworth announced in his prefaces'.

There is, indeed, no reason why a poet should not decorate his piece with similar endings. But, as Ntuli has judiciously pointed out, such similar endings (rhyme) can only be effective if used in close association with the ideas contained in a particular portion of the poem. In other words, rhyme should not be employed only for the purpose of embellishment, but it should in the main be used in

pursuance of a poetic function, such as emphasising the ideas involved in elucidatory terms. In a rhyming poem, the similar endings effectively heralds the end of each verse. Shipley (1972:395), defines a stanza as:

A group of lines of verse (any number; most frequently 4) with a definite metrical and rhyming pattern, which becomes the unit of structure for repetition throughout the poem.

Ntuli (1984:232), elaborates on the concept 'stanza' in this vein:

We expect each stanza ... to imply some **unit of thought** which is separated from that contained in the other portions of the poem. This is not an independent thought though, but is a step in the arrangement of a series of ideas which are contained in the poem. (My emphasis.)

Hence, a similar rhyme scheme for each stanza serves to concretise the ideas contained in each stanza into a solid unit of thought, which nevertheless has loopholes, making it possible for it to freely interact with the other units of thought contained in the other stanzas. It is this interaction pervading the units of thought that result in a unified artistic whole.

3.5.3.3 Masuku

Masuku gives expression to his views on rhyme in a smooth and concise manner which leaves no one in doubt with respect to the school of thought to which he belongs. Compare Masuku (1988:4-5), in which he observes:

In English poetry, we have a definite rhyme scheme. This is necessary to distinguish poetry from prose. We cannot pretend to be writing poetry when we, in fact, are writing prose. The writing of poetry is both an art and a science. **It is necessary, therefore, even in the writing of poetry in African languages** (My emphasis.)

Subsequently, Masuku suggests that one of the principles of writing poetry in African languages is to 'observe a definite rhyme scheme'.

From his utterances, one can deduce the fact that Masuku advocates the employment of rhyme, not only in the poetry of his own language (Zulu), but also in the poetry of all the African languages with which it is cognate. The reasons for his advocacy may be stated as follows:

- * rhyme distinguishes poetry from prose, and
- * the writing of poetry is both an art and a science.

It is quite true that rhyme distinguishes poetry from prose. It is capable of effecting this distinction because it is a poetic element which is found exclusively in poetry and/or verse, and not at all in prose. So, immediately one sees rhyme in a piece of writing, one knows for certain that it is poetry or verse, and not prose which never has any rhyme. It is worth noting that rhyme is not the only poetic technique which distinguishes poetry from prose. Rhythm also distinguishes the two literary genres. But the distinction which it makes is not as well defined as that made by rhyme. The reason for this is that while prose does not have any rhyme, as indicated, it does have rhythm like poetry. Fortunately, the rhythm of poetry occurs at regular intervals, and the *ne plus ultra* of such occurrence is a recognizable metre. Prose rhythm on the other hand is not quite regular. Hence it does not result in a recognizable metre like poetry.

3.5.4 Venda

According to documented evidence at my disposal, there is seemingly only one representative of the pro-rhyme school of thought in Venda literature, whose views on the poetic technique of rhyme are on the verge of discussion.

3.5.4.1 Milubi

If Makuya was an opponent of rhyme in the literary scenario of Venda, the indications are that Milubi is its proponent. Compare Milubi (1988:48), in the course of discussing a rhyming children's song with the title of 'Rathavha', whose theme of reference is reportedly a baboon:

The poem, 'Rathavha' shows a good rhyme and a rhyming scheme that comes on its own without any enforcement. The rhyming scheme is that of:

a)

a)

a)

a)

The combination of this rhyming scheme with rhythm gives the poem a musical touch which allures children more and more.

Unfortunately, prior to this, (on page 41), Milubi observed:

One is bound to believe that the children's rhyming schemes may not be taken in a serious light as one would do with that of Western poets. The reason being that **children's rhyming schemes come spontaneously without any enforcement.** (My emphasis.)

Milubi's comparison is quite misleading as it inadvertently gives one an impression that the enforcement of rhyme is what the doctor prescribed for Western poetry. He ends up regarding the rhyme scheme of any given children's rhyme or song as a 'playful eye rhyming scheme'. Compare Milubi (1988:42-44):

The following is another nursery rhyme with a playful eye rhyming scheme.

FUNGUVHU

Funguvhu tanzwa mulomo	a
Tanzwa mulomo	a
Ri kone ri tshi la rothe	b
Ri tshi la rothe	b
Vhomme vha ka enda pi?	c
Vha ka enda pi?	c
Vho lima davha la khombe	d
Davha la khombe	d
Vho lima ndima ngana?	e
Ndima ngana?	e
Vho lima ndima nthâru	f
Ndima ntharu	f
Ya vhuṇa ndi ya u fhedza	g
Ndi ya u fhedza	g

'Crow, wash your mouth
That we may eat with you
Where are the mothers?
Where have they gone to?
They have gone to plough.
How many acres have they tilled?
They have tilled three acres
The fourth is the last'

He then comments on this rhyme scheme comprised of couplets in this vein:

The eye rhyme scheme goes as follows:
(My emphasis.)

a
a
b
b
c
c
d
d
e
e
f
f
g
g

The implication here is that the rhyme in children's rhymes and songs is nothing else but eye rhyme. The term 'eye rhyme' applies only to those words which appear to the eye as rhymes, but not to the ear. On

account of the fact that the rhyme in these children's rhymes and songs is a product of epiphora, whereby the self-same words with an identical sound are repeated and made to rhyme at the end of verses (cf the repetition in the nursery rhyme above), such rhyme cannot, by any stretch of the mind, be regarded as 'eye rhyme'. Milubi was undoubtedly influenced by Vilakazi whom he quotes in Milubi (1988:41), as saying:

Although the rhyme schemes of children's rhymes and songs do not presuppose a concerted intention of creation yet they bring forth an alluring melody. **The rhyming scheme should be regarded as eye rhyme** and not in terms of Western thinking. (My emphasis.)

It is to be regretted that Milubi acquiesced in Vilakazi's trend of thought, when he had a good reason for refuting it. He comments further on the so-called eye rhyme of the nursery rhyme 'Funguvhu', reproduced above:

It is interesting to realize that **the rhyme scheme comes into being because of linking**. Had it not been for the linking and repetition the rhyme scheme could hardly have come to fruition. (My emphasis.)

One of the functions of rhyme is that of linking. But according to Milubi it would appear that it is linking that gives rise to rhyme, and not the other way round. But all this does not by any means tarnish the place he has niched for himself in the pro-rhyme school of thought. He advocates rhyme, especially for children's rhymes and songs because:

* it gives the poem or song a musical touch.

In other words, the echoing of the identical sound culminates in a harmony which is reminiscent of music.

3.6 Comparison of the pro-rhyme school of thought in non-African and African languages

A close examination of the arguments advanced by those identifying with the pro-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages on the one hand, and African languages on the other, will reveal the fact that these arguments are also analogous to each other. Weigh the merits of the arguments from both sides below:

Non-African languages

African languages

1) (a) Rhyme elevates the work of a talented poet (Daniel, for English).

1) (a) Rhyme enhances the quality of a poem (Mahlasela, for Southern Sotho).

(b) It is imbued with stylistic charm and poetic grace (Clark, for English).

(b) It also adds to the expressiveness of the poem (Lenake, for Southern Sotho).

2) (a) Rhyme guides the inspiration of a poet in creating the kind of poetry that is pleasant to the ear, as well as ingenious to the mind (Lowes, for English).

2) Rhyme gives the poem or song a musical touch (Malubi, for Venda).

(b) It determines the rhythm of the poem (Grové, for Afrikaans).

3) Rhyme accentuates a predominant sound, hence influencing the tone of the poem (Grové).

3) (a) Rhyme marks the end of a verse audibly (Ntuli, for Zulu).

(b) It emphasises certain ideas (Mahlasela).

4) (a) Rhyme links the stanzas into a technical and psychological whole (Grové).

(b) It is a binding element of a poem (Lowes, for English).

(c) It enhances the unity of the poem (Lowes).

4) Rhyme contributes to the aesthetic unity of the poem (Lenake, for Southern Sotho).

5) In longer poems rhyme affords a demarcation of units (of thought) (Grové).

5) (a) A similar rhyme scheme for each stanza indicates the units of thought (Ntuli).

(b) Rhyme gives a definite formal structure to poems (Mohapeloa, for Southern Sotho).

On the basis of the comparison above, it is crystal clear that the arguments put forward by the representatives of the pro-rhyme school of thought in non-African languages on the one hand, and of those in African languages on the other, are analogous to the same extent that **performing one's ablution** is no different from **washing oneself**. This goes to prove that the proponents of rhyme in African languages have very good reasons for advocating its use, and that these reasons are just as good as those advanced by their counterparts in non-African languages. Because of this analogy between non-African and African languages, it constitutes a double standard for anyone to say that non-African languages have capacity or potential for rhyme, and in the same breathe say the diametrical opposite about African languages. The problem with some of the adversaries of rhyme in African languages is that they would like to see it looking like a carbon-copy, a photocopy or a replica of the non-African languages' model. This is an unrealistic conception of the highest order, which does not seem to consider the dissimilarity aspect of the two families of language. As

the reasons given by the advocates of rhyme in both non-African and African languages in support of their arguments are in fact the primary functions of rhyme in poetry, it should be restated once again that rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages, and what its opponents say against it is sheer *suggestio falsi*, under the cloak of prosodic exercise.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED RHYMING SOUTHERN SOTHO POEMS

The task I proposed to myself in Chapter 1 was to structurally analyse selected rhyming Southern Sotho poems in the present chapter. The primary aim of this exercise, is to establish if the rhyme in these poems is seen to perform some of the poetic functions indicated in Chapter 3, consequently proving in an even more apodictic manner that rhyme has as much potential in Southern Sotho poetry and, by implication, in the poetry of the other African languages with which it is cognate, as it has in non-African languages, or on the contrary, if perhaps the opposite is true. The rhyming poems involved were chosen at random from the poetical works of the three leading poets in Southern Sotho literature, namely KDP Maphalla, KE Ntsane and BM Khaketla, respectively. In each case the title of the poem will be followed by the relevant extract, which will in turn be followed by the author's/poet's name and the title of his anthology from which the extract was derived. The verses will be numbered to facilitate reference. The extract will then be translated into English, despite the inadequacy surrounding the translation of poetry reflected by John Denham, as cited by Van der Merwe (1958:44):

... poesie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit is not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but **caput mortuum**.

But the compromise by Lalo (1949:278), encourages one to ignore Denham, and translate the poems to be analysed into English 'for the sake of wide teaching consumption', as Moletsane (1982:57), puts it. Lalo says:

... if this translation is difficult and only approximate, it

is never entirely impossible since it is a fact that one recognizes the same idea in its two different forms. What differs profoundly in the two forms is the extent and mode of polyphonic structuralization.

Finally, the poem in question will be submitted to structural analysis, highlighting such poetic devices as may be discerned, with a special partiality for rhyme.

4.1 Poem: 'Leleme'

1	Hara ditho tsa mmele tse bopilweng ke Mmopi,	a
2	Ruri ha ho se matjato ho feta leleme;	b
3	Leleme le aba mahlale le hara mekgopi;	a
4	Le nena ho pharama sa kgoho e alame;	b
5	Leleme le tsanyaola difela ho roka Modimo,	c
6	Le tshedisa metswalle, le kgothatsa baena;	d
7	Leleme le qapetswe ho pheta tsa lehodimo,	c
8	Ho tlotlisa Ramehau ka thoko le ka pina.	d
9	Jo! Lelema ha le kgopame ke seba bole,	e
10	Le qapa diqabang, le qabanya metswalle,	e
11	Le thulanya banna le basadi ka diphatla,	f
12	Le busa masea, le hapile le boralefatla;	f
13	Le ka o retla o phela, wa ba wa makala;	g
14	Ruri tjhefu ya leleme ha e na ditlakala.	g

(KDP Maphalla: Fuba sa ka)

* Translation: (The tongue)

1	Among the organs of the body created by the Creator,
2	There is indeed none more active than the tongue;
3	The tongue disseminates knowledge even during gatherings;
4	It loathes lying idly like a brooding hen;
5	The tongue sings hymns blithely in praise of God,
6	It comforts friends, and exhorts brothers in Christ;
7	The tongue was created to impart information about heaven,
8	To extol the merciful Father through praise and song.
9	Alas! When the tongue is wicked, it is sulphur,
10	It creates quarrels and ruptures friendly relations,
11	It causes head-on collisions between men and women,
12	It manipulates infants, and has even vanquished baldpates;
13	It can dissect you alive to your surprise;
14	Truly speaking, the tongue-poison has no antidote.

4.1.1 Structural analysis

In this sonnet the poet mirrors the moral excellence of the tongue, not excluding its gross immorality.

Verses 1 and 2 work together harmoniously to create a state of hyperbolism designed to demonstrate in no uncertain terms how active the tongue is. The hyperbole begins in verse 1 with the phrase */Hara ditho tsa mmele tse bopilweng ke Mmopi/* (Among the organs of the body created by the Creator), and ends up in verse 2 with the sentence */Ruri ha ho se matjato ho feta leleme/* (There is indeed none that is as active as the tongue). Saying there is no organ of the body that is more active than the tongue, is quite hyperbolic. But the poet deliberately uses this hyperbole in order to drive the message home that the tongue is a very active organ. He could have simply said */Leleme ke setho se sebetsang haholo/* (The tongue is an organ which works very much), but this commonplace statement could not have been as effective and evocative as its hyperbolic counterpart.

The word */matjato/* (active) merits attention. It is not used in its normal syntactic environment in the sense that one does not expect it to be used with relation to an organ of the body, that is the tongue. It is more associated with the mobility of people. But the poet used it with a specific purpose in mind, namely to make his reader pay more than just a fleeting attention to verse 2. He seems to have succeeded in this respect because, being taken aback by the strange syntactic environment in which */leleme/* (the tongue) is used, one's attention is deeply drawn to that verse for a magnetic moment during which he is able to grasp the full implication of the hyperbole. In verse 3, the tongue is said to disseminate knowledge. Dissemination of knowledge is as a matter of practice performed by a person, using his/her tongue as a vehicle of communication. But the poet deliberately superimposes the tongue over its owner by assigning the task of disseminating

knowledge to the former, instead of to the latter. This results in a figure of speech known as synecdoche, in which a part is used to represent the whole (cf the tongue vs the person). As a result, the poet succeeds in attracting his reader's attention to the tongue as a vehicle of communication, and above all, as the most active organ of the body.

In verse 4, the poet raises the tongue from the level of a minus human, to that of a plus human, by endowing it with human attributes in the first half of the verse, namely /Le nena ho pharama/ (It loathes lying idly), which implies that the tongue is indeed very active. The portion which has just been quoted is an example of personification. The poet follows it up with a simile /sa kgoho e alame/ (like a brooding hen). But the impact of this simile becomes greater when the verse is quoted in its entirety - /Le nena ho pharama sa kgoho e alame/ (It loathes lying idly like a brooding hen). The combination of the two figures of speech of personification and simile, really gives an extra dimension to the sonnet.

Verses 5 to 8 are an extension of the moral excellence of the tongue which is incidentally portrayed in the four verses preceding them. These first eight verses stand in sharp contrast with the subsequent six which give a catalogue of the immoral things which the tongue is capable of doing. As if to call attention to new information relating to the tongue, the poet sets off verse 9 with the /Jo!/ (Alas!), which is an interjection of sorrow. With one's attention duly attracted, one ardently desires to know the cause of the sorrow being implied, and the poet satisfied this burning desire as follows: /Leleme ha le

kgopame ke sebabole/ (When the tongue is wicked, it is sulphur). This statement serves as the embodiment of an effective metaphor in which the tongue is equated to sulphur, a highly flammable element with suffocating smell, in comparative terms. This metaphor effectively emphasises the dangerous nature of a wicked tongue.

Verse 10 is interesting in more than one way. It contains the poetic device of alliteration which is constituted by the repetition of the /q/ click. Compare /**Le qapa diqabang, le qabanya metswalle/** (It creates quarrels and ruptures friendly relations). It also contains the poetic device of assonance in a highly concentrated form. Compare the use and frequency of a consonant /a/ as indicated by the bold type: /**Le qapa diqabang, le qabanya metswalle/**. The concurrent use of the two poetic devices injects verse 10 with a higher dose of effectiveness.

Verse 11, /**Le thulanya banna le basadi ka diphatla/** (It causes head-on collisions between men and women), is not without merit. The causative /**thulanya/** (cause to collide), creates a kinaesthetic image in one's mind. One can visualize men and women engaged in a physical conflict like two warring rams. But this by no means precludes emotional conflict, the chances being that the poet is talking in symbolic terms, using the physical to suggest the emotional conflict. In verse 13 the immoral deeds of the tongue are brought to a climax with the effective and evocative use of personification, constituted by the following words: /**Le ka o retla o phela/** (It can dissect you alive), with the action word /**retla/** (dissect) giving a human attribute to the tongue. Here the poet has deliberately made an

overstatement for the sake of effect. What he actually has in mind is slander and not dissection as such, the tongue being capable of perpetrating the former, and not the latter. But the poet opted for the more sensational work */retla/*, which has become associated with ritual murder. It stands for a cruel, horrific act, and the poet uses it deliberately in order to portray the horrible things which a wicked tongue is capable of doing. Verse 14 is couched in metaphorical terms: */Ruri tjhefu ya leleme ha e na ditlakala/* (Truly speaking, the tongue-poison has no antidote), thus concluding this sonnet on a high note. In this metaphor, the poet equates the wickedness of the tongue to poison, and to show the efficacy of this 'poison', he states that it has no antidote. What he actually means is that a wicked tongue is incorrigible.

Having demonstrated how some of the poetic elements in this sonnet interacted, the next step is to examine rhyme with special reference to its function in the sonnet. As it was noticed in 4.1, the rhyme scheme of 'Leleme' is **abab cdcd ee ff gg**. This may be broken down into the following categories:

- 1 **OCTAVE:** 1st **quatrain** rhyming **abab**, and
2nd **quatrain** rhyming **cdcd**.
- 2 **SESTET:** 1st **couplet** rhyming **ee**,
2nd **couplet** rhyming **ff**, and
3rd **couplet** rhyming **gg**.

The breakdown above shows that this sonnet has an octave comprising two quatrains of alternate rhyme, and a sestet consisting of three couplets. Understandably, this rhyme scheme deviates from the Italian/Petrarchan model, making Maphalla's sonnet irregular.

But as Berthon (1899:1vi) further observes, irregular sonnets are common, and some very beautiful, as it is indeed the case with 'Leleme'. It should be stressed that fourteen verses do not necessarily constitute a sonnet. Only fourteen verses which rhyme go by that name. In other words, 'Leleme' is called a sonnet because the fourteen verses comprising it, rhyme. One may, therefore, safely say that the main function of rhyme in this poem is that of giving the name 'sonnet' to it, which distinguishes it from other forms. Because the type of rhyme used here is end rhyme, it occurs at the end of the verses, consequently marking the end of each verse in a recognizable way.

The two quatrains of the octave both have alternating rhyme, resulting in an atmosphere of suspense. This has the effect of slowing down the tempo of the sonnet, and rightly so, because these quatrains are the embodiment of the moral excellence of the tongue of which the sonneteer would like his reader(s) to take a special note. The three couplets comprising the sestet, on the other hand, have consecutive rhyme which has an accelerating effect on the pace of the sonnet. It comes as no surprise when, in sharp contrast with the octave, the sestet reflects the immorality of the tongue, which the sonneteer would not like his reader(s) to dwell upon, hence the acceleration in the pace of the sonnet at this point. 'Leleme' may thus be viewed as a study in contrast, a kind of **deux principes** in which good and evil are juxtaposed.

Maphalla is a rhymers par excellence. All his fourteen verses rhyme perfectly well, which is a rare achievement. The rhyme in these verses differs in terms of impact to the ear. For example, /Mmopi/

(Creator) in verse 1 rhymes with /mekgopi/ (gatherings) in verse 3, resulting in a great impact to the ear. This is because the rhyme is spread over two syllables. The rhyme between /Modimo/ (God) in verse 5, and /lehodimo/ (heaven) in verse 7, result in an even greater impact to the ear because it is spread over three syllables. Where rhyme occurs on only one syllable, as in the case of /leleme/ (tongue) in verse 2, and /alame/ (brooding) in verse 4, as well as /baena/ (brothers in Christ) in verse 6, and /pina/ (song) in verse 8, the result is that of less impact to the ear. The rhyme in general accentuates the end pauses and strengthens the repetitive rhythmical effect. Because of its varying echo, the rhyme also emphasises and enriches the complex pattern of the whole.

Looking at rhyme in 'Leleme' from another perspective, namely the associative perspective, one observes that /Modimo/ is linked with /lehodimo/ by means of rhyme, and rightly so as one rarely thinks of the one (God) without thinking of the other (heaven). Linking /diphatla/ (foreheads) in verse 11 with /boralefatla/ (baldpates) in verse 12, makes a lot of sense for the simple reason that as the hair recedes from the edge of the forehead to form a bald, the forehead seems as if it is extending. One could also rightly say that because of its lack of hair, the bald is highly reminiscent of the forehead. Hence rhyming /diphatla/ and /boralefatla/ evokes a striking visual impression of the baldpates.

4.1.2 Conclusion

In 'Leleme', Maphalla has succeeded in using a diversity of poetic devices to make his sonnet what it is - a real work of art.

With particular reference to the function of the device of rhyme in this poem, one may say that:

- * it is thanks to rhyme that this poet is called a sonnet
- * rhyme accentuates the end pauses and strengthens the repetitive rhythmical effect
- * it affects the pace of the poem accordingly
- * it has a linking force - it links certain words and ideas which are associated in one way or another
- * it emphasises and enriches the complex pattern of the whole work, and above all
- * it interacts harmoniously with the other poetic devices which together with it or collectively constitute this poem.

4.2 Poem: 'Hwetla'

- 1 Isang mahlo naheng le bone
- 2 Ha naha e ikgabetsa ka botala;
- 3 Jwang le dimela di ntle, di nonne,
- 4 Di kgahla mahlo, a sitwa ho kgathala.
- 5 Pula ho na ya dikgomo le batho,
- 6 Ka hohle ho hwasana dinoka le dinokana;
- 7 Phoofole di a nwa, di tletse matjato,
- 8 Tswetse di tlatse dihlofa le dihlofana.
- 9 Tjobolo e nka dithaha sehlopha,
- 10 E yo di lahla mabeleng matsekela;
- 11 Motshosi a qhale sa pele sehlopha,
- 12 Sa bobedi sa mo tsietsa, a tsekela.
- 13 Botala ba naha bo thabisa pelo;
- 14 Dipalesa di nka ha monate;
- 15 Tsohle di tletse bophelo;
- 16 Ha se perekisi hodima sefate!
- 17 Hwetla le rona mafutsana re a nona,
- 18 Ha se kgora, ke ntho esele;
- 19 Hwetla ha le feta, tsohle di a pona,
- 20 Di lahle mmala wa tsona wa pele.
- 21 Nako ena ya hwetla ha se ho rateha,
- 22 Lona le ratang bomariha le selemo,
- 23 Le hlolang le tsota, le re di a boheha,
- 24 Nna ha ke o bone wa tsona molemo.

(KE Ntsane: Mmusapelo)

* Translation: (Autumn)

- 1 Cast your eyes on the veld and see
- 2 How the veld is draped in green;
- 3 The grass and plants are beautiful and lush,
- 4 They attract the eyes, and these can't get bored.

- 5 The rain falls in great abundance,
- 6 Rivers and streams rustle everywhere;
- 7 Animals drink (water), and they are given to action,
- 8 And cows fill up lots of leathern milk containers.

- 9 The male widow bird leads away a covey of finches,
- 10 And later abandons them in the sorghum (field) in batches;
- 11 The (bird)-frightener dispersed the first batch;
- 12 The second one bewildered him, and he was dazzled!

- 13 The greenness of the veld pleases the heart,
- 14 The flowers give off a sweet smell;
- 15 Everything is full of life;
- 16 And what a super abundance of peaches in the tree!

- 17 In autumn even we paupers get fat,
- 18 Food is incredibly plenty;
- 19 When autumn comes to an end, all things wilt,
- 20 They lose their original colour.

- 21 The autumn season is lovely in the extreme,
- 22 To you who prefer winter and spring,
- 23 And always enthuse, saying they are fantastic,
- 24 I for one, do not see their avail.

4.2.1 Structural analysis

Ntsane opens his nature poem with an invitation to this audience in verse 1 with the imperative /Isang mahlo naheng, le bone/ (Cast your eyes on the veld and see), whose main objective is to attract the attention of his audience. Having achieved this, he explains in verse 2 what is there to be seen, namely /... naha e ikgabetse ka botala/ (... the veld is draped in green). These two verses affect one in different ways. Verse 1 evokes a sense of kinaesthetics because complying with the poet's invitation implies a movement of some kind. It also evokes a sense of vision, as the act of seeing is involved. Verse 2, on the other hand, narrows the act of seeing in verse 1, which is on a broad spectrum, to focus only on the greenness of the veld. This arouses one's visual sense with emphasis on colour. The

use of the poetic device of enjambment between these two verses deserves mentioning, as it results in a continuous and uninterrupted thought, which flows freely from the act of seeing in verse 1, directly to the object sight in verse 2. /Jwang le **dimela di ntle, di nonne**/ (The grass and the plants are beautiful and lush), in verse 3, besides affecting one's sense of vision once more, has an alliteration, constituted by the recurrence of the consonant /d/ (cf the bold type above). This poetic technique has the effect of accelerating the tempo of this verse, which is in keeping with the transitory nature of the beauty and luxuriance of vegetation such as grass and plants. It also contributes significantly to the rhythm of this verse. In demonstration of the extent to which the grass and plants are beautiful and lush, the poet enthuses in verse 4: /**Di kgahla mahlo a sitwa ho kgathala**/ (They attract the eyes, and these can't get bored). This verse also is not lacking in merit. The alliteration formed by the repetition of the phoneme /kg/ in the action words /kgahla/ and /kgathala/, respectively, has the effect of emphasising the Shakespearean aphorism that a thing of beauty is a joy forever.

In stanza 2 the poet explains why the veld is so beautiful, which is the abundance of rain: /**Pula ho na ya dikgomo le batho**/, as he says in verse 5. In the next verse he only makes an allusion to the fact that because of much rain the rivers and streams overflow their banks, when he says: /**Ka hohle ho hwaso dinoka le dinokana**/, which shows that the poet does not write down upon his audience or readers, but expects them to find out certain things on their own. The action word /hwaso/ (rustle) which is a verbalised form of the onomatopoeic ideophone

/hwa!/? evokes our sense of hearing, and we intuitively experience the sound of these rustling rivers and streams. The beneficial effects of abundant rainfall are reflected in the fact that there is enough water for the animals to drink, which makes them active: **/Phoofolo di a nwa, di tletse matjato/**, (Animals drink (water), and they are active). By implication, frolicking is also involved here, because animals normally frolic when they have enough to eat and drink. This arouses our sense of sight with emphasis on the kinaesthetic. But of more importance is the way milk cows yield abundant milk as a result of plenty: **/Tswetse di tlatse dihlofa le dihlofana/**, (Milk cows fill up lots of leathern milk containers), in verse 8, which means people will have enough milk for various purposes. **/Hlofa/** is a leathern milk container which the Southern Sotho use for keeping milk, especially sour milk, for future use. Reference to its plural **/dihlofa/** and the diminutive of this plural **/dihlofana/**, therefore has a cultural connotation.

Stanza 3 mirrors the poet's ornithological experience and his thorough acquaintance with the Southern Sotho way of looking after their crops. A covey of finches, normally led by a male widow bird, usually invade the sorghum fields to rob them, and it is normal practice to frighten them away. This is exactly what happens in this stanza: **/Motshosi a qhale sa pele sehlopha/**, (The (bird)-frightener disperses the first batch), in verse 11. But his luck soon runs out because the second batch of birds simply bewilders him, leaving him dazzled. All this evokes our sense of sight with the emphasis still on the kinaesthetic.

Stanza 4 goes back to the greenness of the veld, once more arousing our sense of sight in respect of colour, this being the subject of

verse 13. The next verse, */Dipalesa di nkgá ha monate/*, (The flowers give off a sweet smell), on the other hand, evokes both our sense of sight and of smell, resulting in a double-edged sensory effect. */Tsohle di tletse bophelo/*, (Everything is full of life), in verse 15, is an example of hyperbole used for emphatic purposes. Verse 16, */Ha se perekisi hodima sefate!/* (And what a super abundance of peaches in the tree!), is of particular interest. It is in the negative construction, and seems to contradict its English equivalent. But this construction is used to convey a sense of super abundance on the part of the peaches in the tree, it being normal practice in Southern Sotho to use the negative to imply the intensive. In stanza 5 we find antithesis when the good and the bad things associated with autumn are mentioned. A sense of sight, with special reference to colour, is aroused in verse 20: */Di lahla mmala wa tsona wa pele/*, (They lose their original colour). In the final stanza, the poet expresses his preference for autumn, finding the other seasons to be of no avail.

On the question of rhyme, it could be said that 'Hwetla' comprises six quatrains rhyming *abab*. It should be borne in mind that the poetic term quatrain refers to a stanza consisting of four verses which rhyme, the rhyme being alternate, as in this poem. However, it could also be consecutive (cf *aabb*), or cross-armed (cf *abba*). The upshot of the matter is that the four-verse stanzas of 'Hwetla' owe the name 'quatrain' to rhyme. It soon becomes evident that Ntsane is not as good in using rhyme as Maphalla (qv). His rhymes are mixedbag of eye rhyme (cf *dinokanà* x *dihlofaná*), in verses 6 and 8, where the former terminates with a LOW TONE (LT), and the latter with HIGH TONE (HT), including full rhyme (cf *nonà* x *ponà*), in verses 17 and 19, where both

words end with a LOW TONE (LT). Eye rhyme is not always as bad as it is painted. It often has some hidden merits. For example, /dinokana/ (streams) and /dihlofana/ (leathern milk containers) are admittedly eye rhyme, but this rhyme serves the good function of linking these two words. The linking is quite appropriate in the sense that they are both containers of liquids. The former contains water, while the latter contains milk, especially sour milk. In the case of the eye rhyme /pelo (HT) x bophelo (LT)/, in verses 13 and 15, the two rhyme words are also appropriately linked because /bophelo/ (life) emphasises /pelo/ (heart) as the most important organ of the body for the sustainment of human life. As it may be expected, some full rhymes are also used functionally in this poem. For example, the full rhyme /nona (LT) x pona (LT)/, in verses 17 and 19, reveals an antithetical relationship between the two words /nona/ (become fat) and /pona/ (wilt), as the former connotes an increase in size, while the latter signifies the direct opposite. The full rhyme /rateha (HT) x boheha (HT)/, in verses 21 and 23, on the other hand, is used with emphatic purpose in mind, as /rateha/ (lovely) and /boheha/ (admirable) both focus on one and the same quality, which is beauty, with the latter emphasising the former to convey an even clearer perception of this quality.

4.2.2 Conclusion

In 'Hwetla', Ntsane has also achieved success in using a variety of poetic devices. His use of rhyme in particular reflects the fact that:

- * it is because of rhyme that the four-verse stanzas of this poem are known as **quatrains**, without rhyme they could not have been known as such

- * rhyme marks the end of each verse in a distinctive manner
- * rhyme links certain words for the sake of effect
- * it emphasises certain ideas, and once again
- * it interacts effectively with the other poetic devices which together with it or collectively constitute a poetic work of art.

4.3 Poem: 'Morena o le hloka ka mehla'

- 1 A! mosebetsi ke o mokaakang!
- 2 Ke ba le bakae ba o sebetsang?
- 3 Bongata ba lona bo ntse bo kgoba,
- 4 Anthe le tseba hantle hoba,
- 5 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 6 Bohle emang ka mafolofolo,
- 7 Ruri moputso o tla ba moholo,
- 8 Hobane basebetsi ba nyenyefetse,
- 9 Le hoja le hana, le thotse, le dutse;
- 10 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 11 Ho kena ha teng ha se ho bonolo,
- 12 Notlolo sa teng se seng - Tumelo.
- 13 Re ka se fumana ho yena le mong;
- 14 Ba eso ho tsebe le mo mameleng.
- 15 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 16 Tsohang molota ke hona,
- 17 Tsebang metlepu e ke ke ya kena,
- 18 Borasekgothadi ho batleha bona;
- 19 Dikgoba le sa le ho tsona:
- 20 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 21 Ba mo kgokgothetse ka baka la lona,
- 22 A hlajwa ho hlatswa dikodi tsa lona;
- 23 Mekgelo ya ruta - a se sebeletswe;
- 24 Le ka ya le yona - ho se ho boletswe;
- 25 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 26 Bofelo o ke ke wa ba bo qatsoha,
- 27 Akofa ke hona se ka ririhleha,
- 28 Kgahlola letheke, o lahle bonapa,
- 29 Meketso e etswa ho se mahahapa:
- 30 Morena o le hloka ka mehla.
- 31 Tsohle dikgoba di tla lelekiswa,
- 32 Yohle metlepu e sa tla swabiswa,
- 33 Ho thwe: "Tlohang mahlokatshebetso!
- 34 Ha le a e mamela ya kgosi meketso:
- 35 Morena o le hloka ka mehla."

(BM Khaketla: Dipjhamathe)

* Translation: (The Lord always needs you)

- 1 Oh! what a stupendous work.
- 2 How many people are doing it?
- 3 Most of you are still idlying,
- 4 Whereas you know very well that
- 5 The Lord always needs you.

- 6 Rise up you all in ardent spirits,
- 7 Surely the reward will be great.
- 8 Because the work-force has decreased,
- 9 Though you are resistant, mute, and inert;
- 10 The Lord always needs you.

- 11 Entering there is not an easy feat,
- 12 There is only one key to it - Faith,
- 13 We can get this only through Him;
- 14 You who don't know yet, do obey Him!
- 15 The Lord always needs you.

- 16 Hence, bestir yourselves, my fellow-men,
- 17 Know that the indolent can never gain entrance,
- 18 Only the workaholics are in demand;
- 19 The word is still addressed to the sluggards:
- 20 The Lord always needs you.

- 21 They crucified Him for your sake,
- 22 He was wounded to cleanse your sins;
- 23 The heretics urged - He must not be worshipped!
- 24 You may follow suit - but it has been stated:
- 25 The Lord always needs you.

- 26 You can never evade the day of reckoning,
- 27 Hasten, therefore, do not dawdle,
- 28 Pull up your socks, and stop idlying.
- 29 The call is made with no strings attached:
- 30 The Lord always needs you.

- 31 All the sluggards will be chased away,
- 32 All the indolent will be greatly disappointed,
- 33 They'll be told: "Get away, you idlers!"
- 34 You didn't pay heed to the call of the Lord:
- 35 The Lord always needs you."

4.3.1 Structural analysis

Khaketla starts his poem in a deliberately vociferous tone, as indicated by the use of two exclamation marks in the opening verse: /A! mosebetsi ke o mokaakang!/ (Oh! what a stupendous work!), which immediately arrests our attention. In normal construction, this exclamatory expression reads: /A! ke mosebetsi o mokaakang!/ Now,

the transposition of the copulative /ke/ and the nominal /mosebetsi/ (cf **A! mosebetsi ke o mokaakang!**) has the effect of emphasising the stupendous nature of the work. The second verse is framed in the form of a rhetorical question which demands to know how many people are engaged in this work. But in a true rhetorical fashion, the poet does not wait for an answer to his question, as he in effect expects none. He proceeds to the third verse as if nothing had happened, and here accuses the greater part of his audience of contemptible idleness. The fourth and fifth verses seem to be interdependent as the poet uses them to convey the idea that, despite their idling habits, the accused know very well that the Lord always needs them, which makes them guilty of indifference.

In the second stanza, the audience is urged to act, and enticed with promises of a great reward. The confidence of the poet in what he says is emphasised by the adverb of manner, /ruri/ (surely) at the beginning of the relevant sentence (cf **Ruri moputso o tla ba moholo**), in verse 7. Sensing that the audience may seek to know what makes him so sure, he immediately explains in the next verse line: **/Hobane basebetsi ba nyenyefetse/** (Because the work-force has decreased). This makes a lot of sense because it is possible to pay higher wages and/or salaries when there are few employees, than when there are many of them. The alleged diminution of the work-force seems to allude to the Biblical text that many will be called, but few will be chosen. The implication is that the work-force was initially large, but has now decreased, perhaps as a result of the picking and choosing process. In fact, the whole poem seems to derive from this Biblical text.

In stanza 3, the poet patently tells his audience that entering heaven is not an easy task. This definitely lowers their morale, but he quickly boosts this by telling them about that metaphorical /senotlolo/ (key) to heaven, which is /Tumelo/ (Faith), and how it can be obtained. This metaphor is very apt indeed as it emphasises the difficulty of gaining entrance to heaven most effectively. The analogy between a key that unlocks the door of a house, and faith that unlocks the gates of heaven, is simply too great to escape our imagination. Those who are still ignorant of matters relating to heaven are advised to obey the Lord, that is, His call.

With the audience well indoctrinated, the poet complacently calls for action on their part, emphasising that the indolent can never enter the kingdom of heaven (cf Tsebang metlepu e ke ke ya kena) 'Know that the indolent can never gain entrance,' in verse 17 of stanza 4. There is a sense of antithesis when in verse 18 the poet refers to /Borasekgothadi/ (Workaholics), which is diametrically opposed to /metlepu/ (the indolent). The sluggards are once more reminded that the Lord always needs them.

Stanza 5 alludes to the story of crucifixion and atonement of sins. In stanza 6, the work-force seems to have dwindled far beyond our expectation as the poet is now addressing one solitary individual, and not a group of people as he has been doing throughout his poem. Compare verse 26: /Bofelo o ke ke wa bo qatsoha/ (You, singular, can never escape the day of reckoning). The advice to this solitary individual is to do something before it is too late, most important of which is to pay heed to the call of the Lord. Antithesis is again

brought to bear when /akofa/ (hasten) in verse 27 is juxtaposed to /ririhleha/ (dwa-dle) in the same line.

In the last stanza, the poet puts his audience in a psychological quandary in a desperate bid to win their response. He patently tells them that the sluggards will be chased away from heaven because of their idleness. This bald statement of facts seems to plunge the poem into a state of gloom and pathos. But the whole atmosphere is brightened up by his concluding and reassuring refrain, /Morena o le hloka ka mehla/ (The Lord always needs you).

Having examined how Khaketla employs certain poetic devices in this poem, the next point is to look at the poem with special reference to rhyme. This religious poem comprises seven stanzas of five verses each. The first four verses are couplets, rhyming aabb. The fifth verse does not rhyme with any of these couplets, and consequently assumes the symbol /c/, for identification purposes. This reduces the rhyme scheme of each stanza to aabbc. Because of its deviation from the rest of the verses with respect to rhyme, the fifth verse has the effect of dissonance, as the ear is abruptly confronted with what it did not expect acoustically. For example, in the first stanza, having been brought into the musical accord of the first and second couplets constituted by the /-ng/ and /-ba/ sounds, respectively, the ear experiences a /-hla/ sound out of the blue. This comes as a surprise, as the ear did not expect such a sound. But this different sound seems to relieve the ear from the established sounds for a moment for, as Callan (1938:81), puts it:

Nothing cloys quicker than the rhyme that falls pat line after line, but if the ear has been taught to expect this

monotonous perfection a sudden variation gets a double effect, by breaking the flow of the verse and by introducing surprise, which helps to taunt the poem. (My emphasis.)

Khaketla displays a masterly use of rhyme, with eye rhyme found only in exceptional cases, such as /qatsoha (evade) x ririhleha (dwadle)/, in verses 26 and 27, respectively, where terminal tones are (HT) and (LT), in the order mentioned. The consecutive nature of the couplets ensures an immediate realisation of the expected echo, resulting in a sustained enthrallment of the ear. The linking of /moholo/ (great), in verse 7 with /mafolofolo/ (ardent spirits), in verse 6, emphasises the idea that all who work diligently for the kingdom of heaven will be greatly rewarded. The linking of /ririhleha/ with /qatsoha/, on the other hand, emphasises the fact that delay spells disaster. Finally, the two passive forms, /lelekiswa/ (chased away), in verse 31, and /swabiswa/ (disappointed), in verse 32, suggest a situation of cause and effect, as those chased away would subsequently be disappointed for having missed to gain entry to heaven.

4.3.2 Conclusion

Khaketla has also used a diversity of poetic devices in the poem 'Morena o le hloka ka mehla'. With special emphasis on the functional use of rhyme in this poem, one may say that it is used:

- * to mark the end of each verse in a recognizable way
- * to influence the tempo of the poem
- * to link certain words for the sake of effect
- * to emphasise certain ideas, and finally
- * to interact harmoniously with the other poetic devices which together with it or collectively constitute an artistic poetic discourse.

4.4 Recapitulation

Hoping, with due apology to Arnheim et al (1948:47), that in the structural analysis of each of these three rhyming Southern Sotho poems one managed to escape the inherent risk of outdoing Archne, spinning cobwebs out of oneself, which the poem itself could not possibly support, one would venture to say that what emerges from these analyses is the fact that these poems comprise a diversity of poetic devices serving a variety of poetic functions. These are, as a matter of fact, functions to be expected of any poem that is worth its salts, irrespective of whether such a poem is written in a non-African language on the one hand, or an African language on the other hand. Among these poetic devices, one could mention imagery and figurative use of language as in the case of personification and metaphor, in which words are used in their non-literal sense - devices which undoubtedly give that extra dimension to the quality of a poem.

Rhyme in these poems seems to be used with a facility which comes second to none in non-African languages. This rhyme is seen to perform some of the functions indicated by the advocates of rhyme in Chapter 3, in supporting their arguments in favour of this device. As previously stated, the operative word here is 'some', for reasons already spelt out. It is quite clear that rhyme in these poems is not in conflict with the other poetic devices. On the contrary, it interacts harmoniously with these devices, playing a significant role in the enhancement of the quality of each poem. That being the case, one could state at the risk of being repetitious *ad nauseam*, that rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages, and that what its adversaries say against it is but a *suggetio falsi* in the guise of prosodic exercise.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 MISCELLANY

5.1 GENERAL CONCLUSION

As it has been pointed out, one of the primary reasons advanced by most adversaries of rhyme in African languages in particular is that it is not in habitual use in the indigenous poetry of these languages. Where it does appear in this poetry, the argument goes, it does so by accident, and not by design. The implication of such an argument is that if a given language did not use rhyme at the earliest stages of its versification practice, it should never have the impudence to use it at any later stage, as it would be a foreign device to it.

These adversaries of rhyme seem to have *prima facie* a good case. But their case simply fizzles out when they are seen to hold the opinion that non-African languages, especially English, have the right to use rhyme, hence giving the false impression that, in sharp contrast with African languages, these languages all started using rhyme from the beginning of their versification practice. But, on the basis of the pronouncements by Schoonees *et al* (1942:169), Whitehall (1968:21), and Brogan (1981:77), respectively, as recorded in 1.2.5, none of these non-African languages can truly claim to be the first practitioners of rhyme, its origin being virtually unknown. Out of the eight non-African languages selected for this study, only two were found to use rhyme from the earliest stages of their versification practice, namely Afrikaans and South African English. The reason in respect of these two languages is to be found in the fact that when their poets started versifying, rhyme was in vogue overseas, and they were consequently whirled off by this modal whirlwind of the day. Understandably, this did not make them the first practitioners of this device. None of the

remaining six non-African languages, namely Greek, Latin, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, (British) English and German, used rhyme at the earliest development of their poetic discourse. Like African languages in general, they only started rhyming at a later stage. This presupposes a striking analogy between non-African languages on the one hand, and African languages on the other hand. Despite this analogous situation, the opponents of rhyme in African languages are in favour of the use of rhyme in non-African languages, while on the contrary they have a strong prejudice against its use in African languages. On the basis of analogy, there is no scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should not be used in African languages as well, seeing that it has as much potential in these languages as it has in their counterparts.

Another argument against rhyme, in both non-African and African languages this time, is that it is a hindrance to the creative process. This argument was discovered to be true only up to a point. As proved by the experiment with preliminary drafts of three English poems, the creative poet struggles, not with rhyme in particular, but with words in general. Moreover, as Clark (1946:173), puts it, 'though poets often complain of the obstinacy of words in particular, their complaints are like the murmuring of fascinated lovers (as) language may indeed be a difficult mistress'. The poet, as a matter of professional practice, struggles with his words in a bold endeavour to draw the very best out of them for the enhancement of the quality and artistry of his work. Compare Clark (1946:174), to fully appreciate the beneficial effects of such a struggle:

... the poet, wrestling with his words like Jacob with the angel, often wins a blessing beyond his expectation. For by some mere arrangements of sound he will secure an effect

which neither he nor any one else could have predicted. Like a magician accidentally stumbling on a magic formula, he sometimes releases some mysterious power in his medium which no known laws can explain but which conduces miraculously to his intention.

Hence, this wrestling with words is just not in vain. With special reference to rhyme, one could venture to say that its success depends on the way the poet handles it. Arnheim et al (1948:172) sound a light-hearted admonition in this regard:

Rhymes ... are like servants. If the master is just enough to win their affection and firm enough to command their respect, the result is an orderly happy household. If he is too tyrannical, they give notice; if he lacks authority, they become slovenly, impertinent, drunken and dishonest.

So, being of such sensitive a nature, rhyme should always be used with good judgement and sensibility. As the so-called hindrance of rhyme is a problem which is common to both non-African and African languages, there is again no scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should be used in non-African languages, and not be used in African languages. This unwarranted prejudice against African languages presumably emanates from a misapprehension regarding the analogy between non-African and African languages in this particular respect.

In a somewhat sweeping generalization, one could state that the arguments raised in the anti-rhyme school of thought and the pro-rhyme school of thought in both non-African and African languages, were also a study in analogy, unwittingly putting these two language families aboard the same boat. This being the case, there could not possibly be any scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should be used in non-African languages, but not in African languages, not losing sight of the fact that every language will use this device in a way which is

mutually tolerant with its own genius. If the adversaries of rhyme in African languages had seasonably reconciled themselves to this sentiment, the futile coil over the use of rhyme in these languages could have been nonexistent.

Finally, the structural analysis of the three rhyming Southern Sotho poems proved that rhyme does play a functional role in Southern Sotho poetry in particular and, by implication, also in the poetry of the other African languages with which it is cognate. As a bonus, it was found to interact harmoniously with the other poetic elements or devices in each poem, resulting in the enrichment of the complex artistic whole. All this was achieved in the same way it could be achieved in any given non-African language, hence conveying the message loud and clear that there is no scientifically defensible reason why rhyme should be used in non-African languages only, and not be used in African languages as well.

After examining all the relevant facts relating to rhyme in the minutest detail, it is of material importance to restate emphatically with all sense of finality that **rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages**, and that what its adversaries say against it is but a **suggestio falsi** in the guise of prosodic exercise. In conclusion, one would like to say, whatever may be said on both sides of the controversy, rhyme in African languages is a **fait accompli**, and to borrow words from Lowes (1938:93):

The inevitable extremes are merely insurgency's alms for oblivion. The essential point is that a residuum persists; a new inch of the strange has been made familiar! and the frontiers of art have been so far advanced.

5.2 APPEDICES

5.2.1 APPENDIX A: SELECTION OF RHYME SCHEMES FROM HYMNS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

5.2.1.1 SELECTIONS FROM SOUTHERN SOTHO HYMNS

* Source: Lifela tsa Sione

* Rhyme schemes

Examples

1 ababcdcd : Monghali, letsoho la hao
 A le tšoare letsoho la ka;
 U ntike pele le morao,
 Ntate, se phetse ho nqamaka!
 Ke lemalle tsela e lokileng,
 Ke khomarele 'nete.
 U nthute melao e hloekileng,
 U ntise hamonate!

(Hymn 8, Stanza 3)

2 abab : Le Moshoele a tumisoa
 Liphuthehong tsohle;
 Rato la hae le holisoa
 Mona le kahohle.

(Hymn 18, Stanza 5)

3 ababccdd : Hosanna! thabelang
 Monghali oa bophelo;
 Tsohang, ananelang,
 Le tle ka linyehelo,
 Bohle re khumame,
 Pina li phahame,
 Bongata bo phalle,
 Pelo li nyakalle! (bis)

(Hymn 24, Stanza 2)

4 abbacc : Bakhethoa, tsohelang
 Tsatsi la Morena;
 Hlahisang ho eena
 Pelo tse chesehang.
 Tlong, re kopaneng kaofela
 Ho mo roka ka lifela.

(Hymn 37, Stanza 1)

5 abababab : Jesu, bocheng ba ka u nkamohela,
 Mohla ke shoang ke tle ke ee khanyeng;
 Ha ke ntse ke hola, ke u phelele,
 Ke ntan'o finyella monateng.
 Jesu, bocheng ba ka u nkamohela,
 Mohla ke shoang ke tle ke ee khanyeng;
 Ha ke ntse ke hola ke u phelele,
 Ke ntan'o finyella monateng.

(Hymn 149, Stanza 4)

- 6 **ababbcbc** : Ke leboha Ntat'a molemo
 Ea mpolokileng boseeng;
 O mpabaletse ka lilemo,
 O mpepile bonyenyaneng.
 E bile seli la ka bocheng,
 Molebeli le Molisa,
 Ea ntseng a nkholisa bohlaeng,
 Pallo tsa hae a li tiisa.

(Hymn 198, Stanza 2)

- 7 **ababced** : Lumelang, banyali
 Ba tlang ka tumelo
 Ho kopanngoa ke Monghali
 Ngalong ea thapelo!
 Bobeli bo be bong,
 Pelo li kenane;
 Nyalo le theoe ka melao,
 Tlamanang, le ane.

(Hymn 212, First tune, Stanza 1)

- 8 **aabbccdd** : Na ke sa tla kopana
 Le uena, Morena,
 Ke u bohe sefahleho,
 Le 'na ke khore thabo?
 Ha u ntahla, ke khutsana,
 Kea hlora, kea ilibana;
 U ntšibolle, ke shoele,
 Jesu, ke u tsepile.

(Hymn 304, Stanza 4)

5.2.1.2 SELECTIONS FROM NORTHERN SOTHO HYMNS

* Source: Difela tsa Kereke

* Rhyme schemes Examples

- 1 **abaab** : Sehlare sê se thabisang
 Se phala hlare tsohle!
 Ke gona re se tukisang;
 Tlang fano bohle phuthegang!
 Re se thabele bohle, e, bohle.

(Hymn 30, Stanza 1)

- 2 **aabccb** : Ba gaka ke ba gago;
 Morena, ba be nago
 Ge ba le mo nywakong.
 Homotsa ka lesoko
 Ba ba hloka boroko,
 Ba ba lelang ditshwenyegong.

(Hymn 321, Stanza 4)

- 3 **ababcc** : Jesu ke e a itseng:
 Ke nna tsogo le bophelo.
 O tlo ntsosa lebitleng
 Ka letsatsi la bofelo.
 Yena ke yo a tla mphang
 Mmele'mofsa o kganyang.
 (Hymn 354, Stanza 4)
- 4 **ababccd** : Morena ke modiratsohle.
 Naa a ka sitwa ke selo?
 O gaugela batho bohle.
 A ko mmotse tsa dilelo!
 Megokgo o tla e phumola
 Le ge tlalelo e rumola;
 O homotsege!
 (Hymn 278, Stanza 2)
- 5 **ababacc** : Gotsa mollo meoyeng,
 Re go fisegele.
 Leratong, go kgethegeng
 Re go botegele.
 Go pheleng le go hweng
 Re go sale nthago,
 Kgosi ya letago.
 (Hymn 297, Stanza 2)
- 6 **ababccdd** : Ka lerato la Morena
 Ke tla dula selallong,
 Mo ke abelwang ke yena
 Dijo tsa legodimong:
 Mmele wo o ntlhabetsweng,
 Madi a ntshologetseng.
 Dijo tse di tla mphedisa;
 Mo pelong di tla nthabisa.
 (Hymn 153, Stanza 1)
- 7 **aabbccdd** : O ithakge, pelo ya ka,
 Lahla dibe le maaka.
 Nyaka edi sa bophelo,
 Itokise ka tumelo,
 Bona, Jesu Mopholosi,
 Yena kgosi ya magosi
 So! O rato go etela;
 O ye go mo amogela.
 (Hymn 154, Stanza 1)

- 6 ababcccd : Ke go tumisa bathong,
ke go leboga thata,
Mothusi wa me bophelong,
ka o ntse o re rata.
Ke lebogela 'rato loo
le boikanyo jotlhe joo.
Ka nnete o nthusitse.

(Hymn 4, Stanza 2)

- 7 ababcdcd : Morena, o mofenyi,
 o thata tlhabanong,
 mme Satan ke mosenyi,
 o isa tshenyegong.
 Morena, mo kganele
 motlhang o re tlaa swang!
 Mothusi, o re lwele,
 o tau e kgolo jang!

(Hymn 121, Stanza 3)

- 8 ababccddc : Mme fa re latlhegelwa
ke dilo lefatsheng,
ka ene re tlaa newa
tse di sa senyegeng:
Mong yo o phedisang
ka dijo batho botlhe
le tse di phelang tsotlhe,
ga se yo lebalang.

(Hymn 43, Stanza 5)

5.2.1.4 SELECTIONS FROM XHOSA HYMNS

- * Source: Amaculo eBandla laMamethodi

- | * Rhyme schemes | Examples |
|-----------------|----------|
|-----------------|----------|

- 1 **abab** : Wena unguThixo,
 Unamandla onke;
 Hlamba intliziyo yami,
 Ibe ngcwele yonke.

(Hymn 159, Stanza 6)

- 2 **aabba** : Lila, mPhefumlo wam,
 Ngazo zonk'izono zam;
 Zonk' izono zilihlazo,
 Mina noko ndisenazo:
 Lila, mPhefumlo wam.

(Hymn 189, Stanza 2)

4 **ababccdc** : Yerusalema, wo fhatiwaho
 Tshedzani tshavhudi!
 Hayani hanga hu tuvhiwaho,
 Mbilu a i vudi
 I di ri ndi a tuwa,
 Hee mpheni mafhafha,
 Ndi kone u takuwa
 Namusi henefha.
 (Hymn 225, Stanza 1)

5 **ababccdc** : I a da yone Khosi;
 Nga i tangedzwé.
 Ndi mune wa vuhosi,
 Nga a fhumledzwé.
 Ndi Yesu a daho.
 Hosiana nga i pfale;
 Dakalo nga li dale:
 Hu rendwe a daho.
 (Hymn 1, Stanza 1)

6 **ababaacc** : Ndi Yesu a li disaho
 Duvha lihulu ilo.
 Mutshidzi, vha mu divhaho
 Vha ri: U fha vutshilo.
 O felaho
 Vho xelaho
 Vhothe vhe a phulusa
 U do da a vha vusa.
 (Hymn 232, Stanza 2)

7 **aabbccdde** : Yesu, ri do U lindela.
 Ri do di U fulufhela.
 U Mutshidzi, U mulalo,
 Bako le ra khuda ngalo.
 Shango la dina,
 Li na vhuswina
 Yesu washu, U do vhuya
 U Muhali, U Muvhuya
 A ri divhaho.
 (Hymn 227, Stanza 2)

8 **ababccdede** : Li do vha duvha la dakalo
 Mathubwa ashu o da-vho.
 Li do vha duvha la mudalo
 Vha kule vho swikiswa-vho.
 Mudi wa Tsioni wo dala
 Ndi hone ri tshi do takala,
 Ra fana na vha loraho.
 Nga duvha ilo mifhululu
 Maseo na dakalo fulu
 Ndi zwone zwi do pfalaho.
 (Hymn 228, Stanza 1)

5.2.1.7 SELECTIONS FROM TSONGA HYMNS

* Source: Mhahamhala ya Evangeli

* Rhyme schemes Examples

1 aaab : Tatana a ndzi hambuka,
 Ni le kaya a ndzi suka,
 Ndzi dyondzise ku hundzuka;
 Ndzi fume Hosi.

(Hymn 92, Stanza 1)

2 abab : Mi tirhe ku aka yona;
 Xikwembu xi pfunile,
 Nhlengeletano ya xona,
 Na hina hi nkhehensile.

(Hymn 126, Stanza 2)

3 ababcbcd : A ndzi byi naveri byona
 Vukulu bya misava,
 Laha Yesu a nga kona
 Mahlomulo ku hava.
 'Ncini loko va ndzi vengha,
 Va n'wi vengha na Yesu
 L'a nga fela nandzu wa nga,
 Muferi wa rirandzu.

(Hymn 91, Stanza 2)

4 ababbbab : Hi mi muyenji la misaveni,
 Nji jula tilu akaya ja nga,
 Nambi minjinga mi le ndleleni,
 N'ta va nji wisa ku Yesu wa nga,
 Nji tshinjekela ku Hosi ya nga,
 Yi langusela ku famba kwa nga,
 Yi ta nji pfuna ni le ku feni,
 Yi ta nji yisa akaya ja nga.

(Hymn 82, Stanza 1)

5.2.2 APPENDIX B: SELECTION OF RHYMING POEMS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

5.2.2.1 SELECTIONS FROM SOUTHERN SOTHO POETRY

* Source: **Mmusapelo**, by KE Ntsane

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

Ya ithiba ditsebe, ya hana ho utlwa,	a
Ya re yona e se nna e tutlwa;	a
Morao tjena ho jewa ka dikgoka,	b
A fetile matsatsi a diboka,	b
Geneva kajeno ke dithakong,	c
Ho so kgajwa ka dithunya maphakong.	c

('Lemo sa 1939', Stanza 3)

* Source: **Fuba sa ka**, KDP Maphalla

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

Noka e teng mose ho lebitla,	a
Noka e maqhubu, noka e lelemelang;	b
Noka e tetemisang le yona mekutla,	a
Batho ba ho kgarametsa Ya halalelang.	b

('Noka ya Jorotane', Stanza 10)

* Source: **Dithothokiso tsa bohahlaula**, by RJR Masiea

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

Ha pharela banneng e se e sitile,	a
Maqheka le mahlale ohle a se a hlolehile,	a
Mosamong ha hlooho ya monna e iketlile,	a
O mo sebela leano, a tsohe a le lorile.	a
Ke yena mme, mofumahadi.	b

('Mofumahadi', Stanza 15)

* Source: **Maleatlala le dithothokiso tse ding**, by EAS Lesoro

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

Oho, sethoto, eya ho bahlalefi,	a
O tsamaye le bona o tsebe ho hlalefa!	b
Ha ho thuse letho le ha o halefa;	b
O apere kobo e ntsho, lefifi:	a
Lesela buka, o ithute motho,	c
Bahlalefi le bona ba hlola ba paka,	d
Etswe motho ke yena ya ngolang buka:	d
Buka e mohlapanana; ho tebile motho!	c
Ba bang ba tsheha tsheho la sebele,	e
La ba bang letsheho ke menomasweu;	f
Dipelo tse kgopo di apeswa bosweu	f
Ka meno, anthe thena di kwetile	e
Lerumo ka dikobong, la ho o bolaya —	g
Ke rialo ke o eletsa, ke o laya!	g

('Lesela buka, o ithute motho': Sonnet)

5.2.2.2 SELECTIONS FROM NORTHERN SOTHO POETRY

* Source: **Masumathane**, by SM Mphahlele

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

Ge lehu a ka hwa re tla fola matswalo,	a
Gobane mmele o ka nona gwa se re selo;	a
O re hloba boroko esita le ka la Matswalo a Morena,	b
Ga a lewe ke dihlong o tsena gare ga rena.	b

('Ge lehu a ka hwa', Stanza 1)

* Source: **Manose**, by EKK Matlala

* Excerpt Rhyme scheme

O, Bopedi bja ga Makgoba a Sefara!	a
Na naga towe o nee lekhura bjang?	b
Mejo yotlhe e hwetswa go wena: merara,	a
Dikwababa, dinamune, —marang	b
A letsatsi a tshela lesako o bona	c
Kgodi le phoka di phatsima godimo	d
A kala di kolotlang maungo le maungwana	c
Diapolakoso, matshidi, marotse, ke sedimo	d
Se madimo a tlhaga le a gae go fela,	e
'Me di enywa nkang e se more wa go lewa.	f
Mekgoo; dimenko, ditlodi, diapola,	e
Dipanana, diperekisi, merogo, — di tsewa	f
Mafelong di sa nyakwe le go nyakwa.	g
O makhura Bopedi, go babale go bakwa!	g

('Bopedi' : Sonnet)

* Source: Kgotla o mone, by OK Matsepe

* Excerpt 1

Rhyme scheme

Lefeela tena ba rego o pudi,
 Ke eng o le o o lekgwathakgwatho?
 Noka go go gaka ga e seso ngwanabatho,
 Moo ba a beago meetse go tseba wena setudi.
 Ka malapeng go tsena o go tshephile,
 Nku go go ila ke seo e se dirago;
 Ka ngwakong go tsena o yo o tsenago,
 Gona fao ruriruri nku e go phadile.
 A yona le ge go jewa a sa jewe,
 Ya yona nama ka mohlodi e a go phala;
 O ngwana wa bokome le phuti le phala,
 A tsona ga re tsebe gore a tle a jewe.
 Ka wena badimo ba robatswa ka phoso,
 Ka yona e sa tshwenyego go robatswa nkabe;
 O sesenyi, o roba le wona makabe,
 A e se be wa gago eupsa wa nku mmuso.
 Le ge ka thari re ba pepula ka wena.
 Le ge ka menyanya re go hlabela lesoko -
 Se re re go kganyogela go ba phooko,
 Go go fedisa re rata go go dira rena.

a
b
b
a
c
d
d
c
e
f
f
e
g
h
h
g
i
j
j
i

('Lefeela tena' : Complete poem)

* Excerpt 2

Rhyme scheme

Go ntshwara o be o ntshwaretse eng
 Ge ruri maatla o be o le yo o a tiisitseng?
 Go ntira o be o gopotse go ntira eng
 Ge ruri go nkholofela e le se o se dirileng?
 Dikgomo ke yo ke bego ke ile go inyakela,
 Go nthakelela ke seo o ilego wa ntirela;
 Go go kgopela e le se ke sego ka go direla.
 Mphago wa ka lehono letswa o a go beela,
 Tlala e tla swara wena, mosaa tlala!
 Mpa ke ya ka e tlogo go tlala,
 Ya gago ke yona e ka sego ya tlala,
 Le ge o robetse go tla duma a gago mala.
 Gageno a e se ne, o ntsherekile,
 Gagesu a e ne, e be gore e go rakile.

a
a
a
a
b
b
b
b
b
b
b
b
e
e

('Wena tlala' : Sonnet)

5.2.2.3 SELECTIONS FROM TSWANA POETRY

* Source: Boka, ke boke, by BD Magoleng

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Morena, kgopha metse matlakala,
Mesima o e katele makala;
O thube matlapa ka a re kgopa
Fa kwa moseja re tswa go bo kopa!

a
a
b
b

('Kgosi', Stanza 2)

* Source: A me a kalo, by SJ Shole

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Metlha e ka tswa e le ya magala
Ya felela e le ya metlakase —
Bophelo ba lena lefatshe
Bone ga se ba mahala.
Tshela o tlatse o be o tlhatse;
O phele mpa o swe pelo;
O swe boko o gatsele mowa;
Ga se ga lefelafela;
Kwa pele o tla patela.

a
b
b
a
b
c
d
a
a

('Kgora e a fora' : Complete poem)

* Source: Sefalana sa menate, by LD Raditladi

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Dikatikanyi tsa koko la bannana,
Thaka tsa ga morwakgosikgolo re ile,
Re editse maseleng fela re tshiphile,
Re le bontshe nkoo re le batubanyana.
Nkile ra nna bakgaodisi ba mekgosana,
Bakgaodi ba mekgosi ba re tsholele,
Re tsholelwa fa motho re mo tlhabile,
Ntwa e utlwalelwa ka matshwelelenyana
Re bannana bagolo, re ole sebarong,
Fa re tsoga jaanong re kuakua mekgosi,
Thobane kima re di lese mabogong,
Mangole a rona a setse a ipaa bosisi
Meriri ya rona mesweu mo ditlhogong,
E mesweunyana jaaka bosweu jwa maswi.

a
b
b
a
a
b
b
a
c
d
c
d
c
d

('Botsofe' : Sonnet)

* Source: Dikgang tse pedi, by GC Motlhasedi

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Kgosi le fa ke dumela, mme fa gongwe go lolame,	a
Gore nkotla-ke-tsamaye, a itse gore o kotane,	a
A se ka a ja a namile, o ka tloha a senyega;	b
Ya re a boela ko Bopedi ra sala re sa ikatega.	b
Fa o bona re le fano, batho re lebala bobé;	c
Ke a bua mong wa me, ke papametse ga ke lobe.	c
Fa o raya motho o re dumela Kwená, o lebala segagabo,	d
Ga o re 'Ise Thobela!' o itebatsa puo ya gagabo.	d

('Kgang ke eo, Bakwena' : Extract)

5.2.2.4 SELECTIONS FROM ZULU POETRY

* Source: Izikhali zembongi, by TM Masuku

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Ngingamane ngife kunokuba ngidaze inkani	a
Nawobhuyengana, nawoSocevuza benkani.	a
Ngingamane ngife kunokuba ngibe yisidwedwe	b
Esimqondo uguqulwa ngezinye izidwedwe.	b
Ngiyenqaba ukuchitha isikhathi ngezilima!	c
Nginenqaba ukuphikisana nezilima!	c
Ngingamane ngife kunokuba ngibengumzenzisi!	d
Ubunja wubunja: bungefane nobuzenzisi.	d
Ngingamane ngife: ngingencenge bungani bazilima;	c
Ngingamane ngife: ngingelandele micabango yazilima.	c

('Ngingamane ngife', last stanza)

* Source: Inkondlo kaZulu, by BW Vilakazi

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Sengiyokholwa ukuthi sewafa	a
Um' ukukhala kwezinyoni zaphezulu	b
Nobusuku obuqhakaz' izinkanyezi zezulu;	b
Um' inkwezane yokusa nezinkanyezi	c
Ezikhanyis' umnyama njengonyezi —	c
Sezanyamalal' ungunaphakade.	d

('Sengiyokholwa-ke', Stanza 1)

* Source: Hayani Mazulu, by P Myeni

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Lapho uqhamuka izinyoni zikuzwa ngephunga;
Eke yazibambelela ngameva woyithunga;
Awunandaba ibatshazwa ukulunga,
Wennz' ungathethelel' okwephoyisa elafunga.
Muhl' umbala kodwa unhliziyo mnyama;
Yeka ikloza elithanda enukay' inyama!

a
a
a
a
b
b

('Iqola', Stanza 2)

* Source: Imisinga yosinga, by NP Mbhele & ESQ Zulu

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Ngokushesha ngenyus' imihosha,
Ngiphuthum' ukuxhawul' elakho ithambo.
Njengamaza ahlelemba ngeqholo nokuqhosha,
Ephokophel' impikanelanga yezawo izinkambo,
Nangesizotha semimoya yobusika elilayo,
Olwakh' unyawo ulubeka laph' ulubeke khona.
Ngikubon' usencwaba njengomnyezane omilayo
Nakuba ikhanda elinsasa lithi kade wawubona;
Ngezinyawo zakh' ulobe imilando nezigemegeme,
Washiya amashashalazi ebika imishudulo,
Laph' imisheshelengwan' ibisinela amagemfe;
Nangomuso uzob' ugiya ngobushinga bamandulo.
Sengoze ngendele egodini elingilinde nkathi,
Ngingazange ngixhawule kuwe Sikhathi.

a
b
a
b
c
d
c
d
e
f
e
f
g
g

('Ngokushesha ngenyus' imihosha' : Sonnet)

5.2.2.5 SELECTIONS FROM XHOSA POETRY

* Source: Intshuntshe, by ZS Qangule

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Yakhula inkwenkwe yabheka esikolweni,
Izithanda iincwadi ingenzi nomolweni.
Yayisingcutha isilungu ingaqhelisi,
Iwadlakaza amanani nje ngesingesi.

a
a
b
b

('Okuhle', Stanza 1)

* Source: Ugadla, by PT Mtuze

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Bhilikidi zabhidana,
Ntlilikithi angqubana,
Malakatha abambana
Amadoda exabana.

a
a
a
a

('Kuyahlekwa kulogwala', Stanza 1)

* Source: Ukuphuma kwelanga, by LS Ngcangata

* Excerpt 1

Rhyme scheme

Imini yehlobo yayishushu, imitha ithengezela,
Wazigweja iinyosi zindanda eliweni.
Zaziphuma zingena apho engxingweni.
Wancuma unkabi akuzibona ziphithizela.

a
b
b
a

('Ichebesha', Stanza 3)

* Excerpt 2

Rhyme scheme

Yincindi yobusi engqondweni.
Yincamisa-mxhelo emphefumleni,
Ukuze ingqondo ityebe okomhlelo.
Ukuza entloko amagam'afunxwa ngamehlo.
Ubuchopho buyadimala umntu akungalali,
Zide izifundo zibhoke zingavakali.
Buyaxola xa umntu ebusuku eyeka.
Esakulala ingqondo yon'iyahlaziyeka.
Nokuba ndiphi ndolala ndifunda.
Xa nditshijila ingqondo iyafunda,
Bonden'ubuchopho, kube nzim'ukucinga.
Ndozimisel'ukufunda ndibhitye okomcinga.
Ndisakungakhathali izifundo ziyaminxa.
Ndisakuzimisela ziyayeka entloko ukukhinkxa.

a
a
b
b
c
c
d
d
e
e
f
f
g
g

('Ukufunda' : Sonnet)

5.2.2.6 SELECTIONS FROM VENDA POETRY

* Source: Vhungoho na Vivho, by TR Ratshitanga

* Excerpt 1

Rhyme scheme

Ndi iwe movhei wa mikano
A dovhaho a mphura nga miano,
Nda vho diita a na ndivho,
Nda hangwa uri ndivho a i na vivho.

a
a
b
b

('Muhumbulo', Stanza 4)

* Excerpt 2

Rhyme scheme

Thina vhuyo kha thungo dzothe.
Wanga mufarisi khana yanga u ita ngoma,
Zwine zwi sa dihwe kha vha milenzhe mina vhothe.
Fhedzi tshanga tshanda ndi mufari wa ndoma.

a
b
a
b

('Mbongola', Stanza 3)

* Source: Vhakale vha hone, by DM Ngwana

* Excerpt 1

Rhyme scheme

Funguvhu tanzwa mulomo,
Tanzwa mulomo,
Ri kone ri tshi la rothe;
Ri tshi la rothe.
Vho mme vha ka enda pi?
Vha ka enda pi?
Vho lima davha la khombe;
Davha la khombe.
Vho lima ndima ngana?
Ndimanga?
Vho lima ndima ntharu;
Ndimanga ntharu.
Ya vhuna ndi ya u fhedza;
Ndi ya u fhedza.

a
a
b
b
c
c
d
d
e
e
f
f
g
g

('Funguvhu' : Complete work)

* Excerpt 2

Rhyme scheme

Mme'anga vho fela fuyu;
Dzadza phinimini dzadza;
Mukomana wanga o fela fuyu,
Dzadza phinimini dzadza;
Mukomana o fela fuyu,
Dzadza phinimini dzadza
Mufaro wo fela fuyu,
Dzadza phinimini dzadza;
Tshanda tsho fela fuyu
Dzadza phinimini dzadza;
Mulenzhe wo fela fuyu,
Dzadza phinimini dzadza.

a
b
a
b
a
b
a
b
a
b
a
b

('Fuyu' : Complete work)

5.2.2.7 SELECTIONS FROM TSONGA POETRY

* Source: Swiphato swa Xitsonga, by EP Ndhambi

* Excerpt 1

Rhyme scheme

Swihari ni swikhova pfukani,
Mpimavayeni u pfule ndlela.
Vamatirhavirusiku humani.
We matirhanhlekanhi etlela.

a
b
a
b

('Mpimavayeni', Stanza 5)

* Excerpt 2

Rhyme scheme

Yingisan', yingisan', vama'werhu!
Me ndzi rhwele ngula ya maxangu,
Misava yi ndzi komba tinxangu,
Nhlomulo wa nga a wu na mpiwu,
Miri wa nga wu fehla vuxungu.

a
b
b
c
b

('Donki', Stanza 1)

* Source: Chochela-mandleni, by BJ Masebenza

* Excerpt

Rhyme scheme

Mumu wu hisaku ...
Saka ri kenyaku ...
Mbuya i ku jiyela,
Mbuya i ku gon'wela.

a
a
b
b

('Namauntlha na Tolo', Stanza 4)

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5.4 SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1 identifies the poetic device of (end) rhyme as the subject which provokes violent discussions in both African and non-African languages, as reflected by the two opponent schools of thought, that is to say the **anti-rhyme school of thought** on the one hand, and the **pro-rhyme school of thought** on the other hand.

- * The aim of this study is spelt out, namely to place beyond dispute the fact that notwithstanding the morphological system of African languages, and the fact that rhyme has never been in habitual use in the indigenous or traditional poetry of African languages, rhyme has as much potential in these languages as it has in non-African languages.
- * Definitions of the concept rhyme framed by ten scholars of poetry are excerpted, and two of these are judged to be the best for the purpose of this study in the sense that they rightfully associate rhyme with the end of verses, end rhyme being an agreement of sounds at the end of verses. The two definitions are those by De Groot (1946:9), and Silbajoris (1968:83), respectively.
- * Derivation of the term **rhyme** is traced, while characteristic features of rhyme are also put forward, and for the most part exemplified from Southern Sotho poetry.
- * Finally, on investigating the origin of rhyme, there emerges a considerable divergence of opinion, leading to the assumption that the origin of rhyme is a matter for speculation. This being the case, it stands to reason that none of the eight non-African languages selected for this study, namely **Greek, Latin, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, (British) English, South African English, German and Afrikaans**, not to mention **African languages**,

can with all sincerity claim to be the first practitioners of rhyme.

- * The method of research to be pursued in this study is explained. This explanation is followed by an explanatory discussion of four critical theories or arguments which may be applied in analysing a literary work of art, namely the **mimetic**, **expressive**, **pragmatic** and **objective** (structural) theories. The objective theory is seen to identify best with the envisaged structural analysis of three rhyming Southern Sotho poems in Chapter 4. The inherent weakness of analysing only one stanza from a given poem, and worse still, focusing exclusively on rhyme, is demonstrated. It is then decided to analyse a given poem in its entirety, paying attention to all poetic elements in it, without denying rhyme its rightful place as the focus of interest in this study.
- * Finally, in order to prove in even a more practical way that rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages, in the rhyming Southern Sotho poems rhyme is expected to perform some of the functions associated with it. Such functions are given in a scholarly way by the advocates of rhyme in Chapter 3, in their defence of this device.

CHAPTER 2 deals with the historical development of poetic devices with special reference to end rhyme. This development is traced in respect of both non-African and African languages. Out of the eight non-African languages indicated in the summary of Chapter 1 above, six were found to have used unrhymed metre in the preliminary stages of their versification practice. They, of course, practised rhyme in due course. On the ground of these findings, the argument that African languages should not use rhyme in their poetry because it has never

been in habitual use in their indigenous poetry, does not stand up on examination. The only two non-African languages found to have started using rhyme from the earliest beginnings of their versification practice are South African English and Afrikaans, the reason for this, as already intimated, being that their poets started versifying at a time when rhyme was the height of fashion. Having started with rhyming metre, these two languages later reverted to unrhymed metre, making their versification practice more of an exception rather than the rule.

- * With no exception, the African languages are found to have started using free verse or unrhymed metre in their indigenous poetry, which is a representative sample of their earliest poetical works. This creates a striking analogy between the historical development of poetic devices in non-African languages on the one hand, and African languages on the other hand, which again goes to prove that **rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages**, and that there is no scientifically defensible reason why this should not be the case.

CHAPTER 3 investigates the arguments relating to rhyme in non-African languages on the one hand, and African languages on the other hand. These arguments said to be raised by the two divergent schools of thought, namely the **anti-rhyme school of thought**, and the **pro-rhyme school of thought**. The ambivalent attitude of the representatives of these schools of thought to rhyme in both non-African and African languages is a study in analogy, once again proving the fact that **rhyme has as much potential in African languages, as it has in non-African languages**. Westland (1966:123), seems to be striking a

harmonious note with respect to the dispute of these two schools of thought, when he says:

... the dispute may continue without our feeling obliged to attend to everything that is said in it. It is good, we feel, to be able to appreciate rhyme and also be able to enjoy verse music which has no rhyme. If we can do both things, the pedantry or ruffled tempers of disputants can pass unnoticed.

CHAPTER 4 handles the structural analysis of three rhyming Southern Sotho poems by Maphalla, Ntsane and Khaketla, respectively, who need no introduction in the literary scenario of Southern Sotho. These poems are estimated to contain a diversity of poetic elements serving equally diverse poetic functions.

- * As a bonus, these poems also contain rhyme, seen to be performing, as indicated, **some** of the functions of rhyme, such as those spelt out by the advocates of rhyme in Chapter 3, in its defence.
- * The interaction between rhyme and the other poetic elements in each of the three poems does not reflect rhyme to be a hindrance to the creative process. On the contrary, it shows rhyme to be a valuable aid. This is the kind of thing that is expected of any poem that is worthy of being called by that name, regardless of the language in which it is written. This suggests a pervasive situation of analogy between Southern Sotho and other African languages with which it is cognate, on the one hand, and non-African languages on the other hand. This analogous situation proves even more convincingly that **rhyme has as much potential in African languages as it has in non-African languages**, and that what its adversaries in African languages say against it is but a **suggestio falsi** in the guise of prosodic exercise.

CHAPTER 5 embraces miscellaneous literary material:

- * 5.1 General conclusion
- * 5.2 Appendices
- * 5.3 Selected bibliography
- * 5.4 Summary