



An Analysis of Indigenous Knowledge Systems through the Eye of 'iintsomi' (folk tales)

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ABSTRACT

The Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) are separate and different from the 'international knowledge system', which includes knowledge generated by the scientific community, namely: Universities, research institutions, and private firms. International knowledge is knowledge created based on modern scientific systems, research, and development, which are all part of the global scientific and technological enterprise of human civilization. This knowledge is acquired through formal education and 'book learning' and boosted by advanced study, internships, training, and mentoring that essentially ensure that the existing paths and developments for scientific knowledge creation, confirmation, and distribution are maintained and continued, which by and large is western in alignment. Therefore, this article aimed at promoting the value and the role played by Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the community. This was done by analysing the role played by songs in selected *iintsomi* (folk tales). Methodologically, this was a qualitative study based on a literature review assessment. The central thesis is that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) as opposed to Western universalism originates in a community of locals with a broader cultural background and is rich in its tradition (s), teachings and human conduct. IK is believed to be a critical basis of mannerisms and is the intertwining factor in society.

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INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) of South Africa, defines Indigenous Knowledge as originating from the human spirit; Indigenous knowledge systems are believed to be the foundation of well-organized and lively societies for humans and all forms of life. Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is often transmitted orally or through imitation and demonstration. The consequence is that writing it down changes some of its fundamental properties. Authors such as Senanayake, believe that although writing also makes it more portable and permanent, reinforcing results in dislocation.¹ Various forms of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) are stowed in culture, such as traditional customs, folk tales (*iintsomi*), folk songs, folk drama, and proverbs. The term culture refers not only to the way a certain community lives but has a more complex explanation. Through culture, deposits of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies' religions, notions of time, and roles can be accumulated. To Rozbicki and Ndege culture refers to a system of meanings and involves beliefs, customs values and rituals that together represent a way of life of a society or a group.² Therefore, culture acts as a guide that helps in how certain people of a certain place live and how they conduct themselves.

¹ S.G.J.N. Senanayake. "Indigenous Knowledge as a Key to Sustainable Development," *The Journal of Agricultural Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2006).

² Michal Jan Rozbicki and George O. Ndege, *Cross Cultural History and the Domestication of Otherness* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

Most social scientists today, such as Spencer-Oatey, view culture as consisting primarily of symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies.³ It is not the artifacts which define the fundamental nature of a culture is not its artifacts, but how the members of the group understand, use, and identify with them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one person from another in modernized societies. For this research to be successful, it must be grounded in theory. This article aims at promoting the value and the role played by Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the community. This will be done by analysing the role played by songs in selected *iintsomi* (folk stories). Methodologically, this is a qualitative study based on a literature review assessment. The central thesis is that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) as opposed to Western universalism originates in a community of locals with a broader cultural background and is rich in its tradition (s), teachings and human conduct. IK is believed to be a critical basis of mannerisms and is the intertwining factor in society. The next section discusses the positionality of the article coupled with the reason (s) for choosing it.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theory is used as an explanatory tool to understand, foresee, and justify a fact that would have been difficult to understand. This article presents a social theory that focusses on social constructivism. Nomlomo et.al states that social constructivism is an interconnection between Piaget's Cognitive Theory and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory.⁴ Social constructivism emphasizes the significance of the home language and experiential knowledge in learning. It believes that knowledge develops as one engages in dialogue or interacts with others.⁵ It views knowledge as a developmental, cultural and socially mediated process that involves interaction between the most knowledgeable others (MKOs) and the less experienced.⁶ According to social constructivists, an enabling and interactive environment is crucial in constructing new knowledge.⁷ It entails opinions regarding how cultures change and progress, processes of describing social conduct, control and social structure, class, origin, and challenges in the community. This theory will enhance what is being argued here since this article is about the role played by songs in *iintsomi* (folk tales). Through the lens of cognitive and socio-cultural theories, this study explores the kind of information embedded in Indigenous Knowledge through the eye of *iintsomi* (folk tales) and the role played by songs in the selected ones. The research methodology will be discussed below.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach will be applied in this article. This implies that the article is based on a qualitative literature assessment. Effectively, this is a desktop qualitative research. Largely because this is a descriptive and explorative study. Creswell states that in qualitative research, the use of theory may often serve as a lens for the inquiry.⁸ The approach that is used is the socio-cultural in collaboration with the African approach which enabled us to observe these changes within the community.

Background of *iintsomi* (folk tales)

In African communities, the *iintsomi* (folk tales) were usually narrated by the *Umakhulu* (grandmother). After all the household errands are done, the family will gather around the fire and listen to the narration of the tale. During the narration participants also took part in asking questions and singing along with the narrator. Children were informally trained in different survival skills through *iintsomi* (folk tales). Although they were not told about the objectives, of *iintsomi* (folk tales) narration, they became aware of the accepted morals within the community through listening to the teachings of *iintsomi* (folk tales). African people, especially the elderly, narrated folktales, and stories to instil discipline and, at the same time, provide enjoyment. When the children were gathered in one place by their grandmother for *iintsomi* (folk tales) narration, it was for their entertainment but also to impart moral teachings and to reprimand the young ones.⁹

³ H. Spencer-Oatey, *Culturally Speaking. Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory*, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2008).

⁴ Vuyokazi Nomlomo and Zilungile Sosibo, "Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Early Literacy Development: An Analysis of IsiXhosa and IsiZulu Traditional Children's Folktales and Songs," *Studies of Tribes and Tribals* 14, no. 2 (December 3, 2016): 110–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0972639X.2016.11886738>; Jean Piaget, *Genetic Epistemology* (Columbia University Press, 1970); L S Vygotsky and M Cole, *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), https://books.google.com.gh/books?id=RxjjUefze_oC; A. Sullivan Palincsar, "SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING," *Annual Review of Psychology* 49, no. 1 (February 1998): 345–75, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.345>.

⁵ Palincsar, "SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING."

⁶ Ihsan Yilmaz, "The Challenge of Post-Modern Legality and Muslim Legal Pluralism in England," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 343–54.

⁷ Yilmaz, "The Challenge of Post-Modern Legality and Muslim Legal Pluralism in England."

⁸ John W Creswell, *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research* (SAGE publications, 2014).

⁹ G.R. Veel, *The Voice of Africa; Intsomi, Africa III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., 2020).

Masilela says Xhosa stories are heavily loaded with serious teachings and an inherent philosophy of socialization.¹⁰ Although they are not facts, *iintsomi* (folk tales) draw their power and understanding from ethics, traditions, and expectations that represent the identity of the Xhosa people. Within the Xhosa people, there are acceptable aspects such as *intlonipho* (respect) in particular. It is also a known factor in African culture that concerning knowledge, the adult knows, and the child does not know. Therefore, it was an acceptable factor that children must listen and obey their elders. It is believed that *iintsomi* (folk tales) not only played a vital role in shaping and moulding children to become responsible adults but also helped in shaping the morality of society. It should also be noted that African values have been marginalised in mainstream scientific knowledge and scholarship. This is largely because of the conception of Western universalism. Effectively, it has been due to the application of Western values in the name of universality. The notion of universalism also imbeds itself in whiteness and white privilege.

Among other things, this article attempts to contribute to the Africanisation of scholarship by bringing the values, and views of the powerless and oppressed. The authors argue that it is through the message embedded within songs in *iintsomi* (folk tales) that social ills can be understood from the viewpoint of a child and further, through the imagination, be opposed. These songs found in *iintsomi* (folk tales) enhance the teaching and convey the message contained in *iintsomi* (folk tales). It is in the personification of the *iintsomi* (folk tales) that a child can begin to make inner choices that build his main strength, make him aware of the surroundings, and be able to contribute towards developing the idea of activism and be obliged to make responsible choices.

Traditional Songs

Traditional songs, as mentioned earlier, form part of Indigenous Knowledge. Even though traditional songs are sung, they can easily be forgotten since they are not codified.¹¹ Oghiator also states that due to social challenges, parents at home do not have the time to teach their children the local language and their traditional songs.¹² These songs are not written down or codified but are passed from one generation to another orally in the same manner as *iintsomi* (folk tales). They are also transmitted by what is described as “homemade, hand-made-down in words and music, songs accepted by the whole community, songs voted well by the generation of singers and passed on by word of mouth to succeeding generations.

Songs play a crucial role in the everyday life of the Xhosa people. Each occasion or gathering is accompanied by singing. Through singing Xhosa people can reflect their anger or pain, sorrow or joy. Although these songs are composed for social purposes and entertainment, they are also educational. One can describe African tradition as the indigenous music of Africans. As been argued previously, no written documentation; and no person can say when and how traditional music started because traditional music is as old as man.¹³ Traditional songs, as part of Indigenous Knowledge, are usually performed during traditional gatherings, where different types of people meet, sing, and perform different dances. In these gatherings, the different groups of different ages will sing songs relevant to the gathering. The singing of these songs had a vital role to play because each song had a specific meaning. The main objective of this study is to analyse the role played by songs in *iintsomi* (folk tales). As explained above, the way people live is embedded in culture. Culture is the level of understanding which a group of individuals have amongst each other and is reflective of the verbal and obvious behaviour differentiating them from other groups.¹⁴

Culture in African communities helps the people in the community to set behavioural standards and adhere to those standards. For example, in an African culture, a child does not belong to his biological parents, the child belongs to the whole community. The upbringing of that child is not the responsibility of the parents only but the whole community. Also, in an African community setting, if a person misbehaves, he/she will be chastised or expelled from that community. The previous statement acknowledges the influences of culture in people’s lives, including their dress code and the language used. Also, culture embeds, and at the same time reflects, society’s customs, knowledge, art forms, morals, habits, ideologies and politics.¹⁵ What is uniquely characteristic of human societies is what requires symbolic perception, which consequently leads to the evolution of culture.

¹⁰ N. Masilela, “The Modern World of Xhosa Folklore (12 of 18),”

file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/xiaoyu/Desktop/temp/essays/xhosa.htm, November 16, 2009.

¹¹ K. Oghiator, “The Use of Folk Songs in the Education of Children.,” <https://www.academia.edu/66993567>., 2014.

¹² Oghiator, “The Use of Folk Songs in the Education of Children. .”

¹³ John Briggs, “The Use of Indigenous Knowledge in Development: Problems and Challenges,” *Progress in Development Studies* 5, no. 2 (2005): 99–114.

¹⁴ George Sugai, Breda V O’Keeffe, and Lindsay M Fallon, “A Contextual Consideration of Culture and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support,” *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* 14, no. 4 (2012): 197–208.

¹⁵ Hester Du Plessis and Gauhar Raza, “Indigenous Culture as a Knowledge System,” *Tydskrif Vir Letterkunde* 41, no. 2 (2004): 85–98.

Western influences have played a vital role in changing the African culture. Through Western influences, the African way of living has become extinct not only did this influence affect the material things but also the mindset. One of the influences from the West that affected the African culture is the aspect of individualism. The African way of living is that of inclusivity, which involves social justice and equal rights for all. In the African culture, an individual acknowledges the presence of other people because what happens to an individual affects the whole community, Mbiti.¹⁶ Mbiti's statement above is consistent with the Xhosa proverb "Umntu ngumntu ngabantu" (*You are, because we are*).¹⁷ This statement used to have a positive and powerful impact on African lives. There were no poverty-stricken families in the olden days due to the spirit of Ubuntu. People used to share everything like food, clothes, and shelter helping one another to build the community.

One of the negative influences brought about by colonialism is the aspect of inferiority. African people are known for promoting Western culture and helping generate an inferior complex amongst Africans which leads to promoting individualism and interrupts unity amongst the African community. Africans have accepted defeat and are comfortable with the notion that they are incapable of being their own masters.¹⁸

The mind of an African child has been programmed in such a way that he must respect and accept everything presented by a white man. Colonial influences have managed to interject the African unity and introduced individualism. By so doing they have prospered in policing and controlling the Africans and introduced insecurity amongst the African nation. This resulted in Africans losing their identity and forgetting about their roots. The Xhosa nation has also paid a heavy price to colonialism because Xhosa people did not only accept and follow Western traditions, but in the process, they abandoned theirs.

Not only had Xhosa folklore embodied a different concept of temporality than it had had, be it sequentially or simultaneously, but it had also to negotiate the transition, or displacement, from orality to being reduced into written form. This conjuncture is symbolized by the historical figure of Tiyo Soga (1829-1871), the first modern major Xhosa intellectual. He was unequivocally aware that the new history of modernity that was in the process of being made into a living experience compelled forms of cultural expressiveness.¹⁹

Nyasani concurs with the above statement by identifying the traditional African family as a setting wherein the vertical power structure of the society is introduced and sustained as predominant over the freedom of individuals.²⁰ For Nyasani there is a "fundamental difference between the traditional African child and a child in the Western culture." The child in Africa was muzzled right at the outset and was thereby drilled into submission to authority from above. These are some of the teachings that are instilled in each African child and every child is expected to adhere to them. Society has a way of dictating the beliefs and practices that are performed either routinely by its members or whenever the occasion demands.²¹ This is embedded strongly in Xhosa culture because it is believed that to live long and avoid bringing curses into the family one must adhere to various beliefs and customs.

Cultural change

It is important to examine some of the changes in culture and the problems of adjustment. The authors argue that through colonial influences, African people, especially Xhosa people (since the focus of this paper revolves around them), experienced a lot of changes. Within this context, "change" means a significant alteration or marked departure from that which existed before. For example, Xhosa children received no formal education, they were educated informally at home by their parents and grandparents. Currently, because of colonial influences, there has been a paradigm shift. Since the day-to-day lives of many are overstretched, they sometimes approach parenting tired and overwhelmed and as a result leave the children to the neglect of house helps and caretakers. This reduces the amount of time parents spend with their children. It should be stressed that even when the extended family is no longer in function, parents especially mothers, should be around to help bring up the child in a responsible manner.

Again, colonial influences have taken precedence in families through media, children no longer listen to folk stories anymore; they are rather with the television, internet, foreign books and computers. These modern gadgets have limited information regarding African cultural values and proper traditional parenting which can easily be assessed by all. In view of that, many young people have lost touch with the rich cultural values we

¹⁶ John S Mbiti, "African Religions and Philosophy (London, Ibadan, Nairobi)" (Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1969).

¹⁷ Mbiti, "African Religions and Philosophy (London, Ibadan, Nairobi)."

¹⁸ M. W. Makgoba, *MoKoKo, The Makgoba Affair: A Reflection on Transformation* (Florida Hills: Vivlia Publishers and Booksellers, 1997).

¹⁹ Masilela, "The Modern World of Xhosa Folklore (12 of 18)," 1.

²⁰ J. M. Nyasani, "The African Psyche," [Http://www.Africa.Ufl.Edu/Asq/V4ila3.Pdf](http://www.Africa.Ufl.Edu/Asq/V4ila3.Pdf). (Nairobi: The University of Nairobi and Theological Printing Press Ltd, 1997), 129.

²¹ Gabriel E Idang, "African Culture and Values," *Phronimon* 16, no. 2 (2015): 97–111, 103.

have as Africans. A lot of young people presently no longer give a helping hand to adults and do not offer their seats to the elderly whether in public or private.

Presently, teenage pregnancy is on the increase because colonial influences have brought the notion of human rights. Some cultural values such as 'UKUHLOLA' (virginity testing) are being regarded as an invasion of privacy and young girls have a right not to participate. As a result, young girls do not regard their cultural values as far as virginity and marriage are concerned. A woman's virginity was integral to her worth. It should be mentioned that before the 1960s, a woman's virginity was the measure of her worth in all societies and cultures around the world. A woman known to have lost her virginity before marriage was universally regarded as a 'loose' and 'unworthy' woman. Virginity testing is conducted as a method of controlling the sexuality of girls. The process of 'Ukuhloolwa' played a vital role in the upbringing of girls. This is regarded as an attempt by men who want to control women and by elders to control the young ones. This involves physical examination by older women in the community to find out if they are still virgins. If the girl's hymen is still intact, she passes the test and is regarded as a virgin.²² This process of 'Ukuhloolwa', despite being criticized by some, has contributed to the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

Now young couples have children before they think about marriage. Others due to poor parental care and control, lack the love and commitment to stay with one woman. This has resulted in the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and bearing children who have been abandoned by their parents; roaming in the bigger cities as hawkers, prostitutes, pickpockets and armed robbers.²³ For example, a wife or mother who works and wakes up early dawn each day. If she has no extended family staying with her to help, then, she must make sure the children have been bathed, and have eaten before she leaves for work around 5:30 or 6 a.m. She generally spends the whole day at work and comes home when the children are often asleep. This will result in the children not being well-fed, and developing bad habits.²⁴

Xhosa Women in the Community

Xhosa women (especially the elderly) play a special role (Ramphela, 2004). They are not only the caregivers but also the custodians of indigenous knowledge, culture and biological diversity.²⁵ In Xhosa culture, this is done by *umakhulu* (*grandmother*) as informal learning through *iintsomi* (folk tales) and this plays a vital role in the survival of indigenous knowledge.²⁶ The indistinctness of women and the inter-generational gap are affecting the ability of indigenous communities to maintain their cultural values. This has severe consequences for younger generations as it weakens their social capital, which may in turn, their ability to respond to ecological and socio-economic challenges.²⁷ One of the vital responsibilities of Xhosa women and elders was to nurture children, this was effectively done before socio-economic challenges and colonial invasion. Nowadays women are employed and, on their arrival, back home, they are already exhausted, this has contributed to broken relationships with the children.

Over centuries, black people have seen old African traditions gradually fading away as they adopt Western traditions and slowly conform to Western influence, and this continues to happen right before their eyes.²⁸ *Iintsomi* (folk tales) is one aspect that has faded away and is depriving the young generation of an important part of indigenous knowledge. It is relevant to examine some of the changes in culture in the lives of Xhosa women and the bearing they had. Education, ideology, and mass media have played a vital role in enriching Western powers to maintain their cultural hegemony on the African continent and this has resulted in Africans being accustomed to acknowledging the supremacy of the Western value system over their own.²⁹

Before colonial influences African women were housewives, it was the man's duty to take care of the family. They had the responsibility of looking after the household, including nurturing and taking care of children. Presently mothers are not often seen in the house as they used to be. It must be emphasized that the

²² Heritage and Culture. *Culture of 'ukuhloolwa' (virginity testing) – the pros and cons*. SABC Kweek, 2014.

²³ Patricia Mawusi, "Parenting and Culture – Evidence from Some African Communities," in *Parenting in South American and African Contexts* (InTech, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.5772/56967>.

²⁴ Mawusi, "Parenting and Culture – Evidence from Some African Communities."

²⁵ Mirna Cunningham, "Laman Laka: Our Indigenous Path to Self-Determined Development," *Towards an Alternative Development Paradigm: Indigenous People's Self-Determined Development*, 2010, 89–116.

²⁶ Babalwa Magoqwana and Jimi Adesina, "Reconnecting African Sociology to the Mother: Towards a Woman-Centred Endogenous Sociology in South Africa," *African Sociological Review/Revue Africaine de Sociologie* 24, no. 2 (2020): 4–24; Babalwa Magoqwana, "Repositioning UMakhulu as an Institution of Knowledge," *Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Pre-Colonial Historiography* 3 (2018): 75.

²⁷ G. Magni, *Indigenous Knowledge and Implications for the Sustainable Development Agenda* (Geneva, Switzerland.: International Bureau of Education (IBE-UNESCO), 2017), 439.

²⁸ George Klay Kieh Jr, "The Roots of Western Influence in Africa: An Analysis of the Conditioning Process," *The Social Science Journal* 29, no. 1 (1992): 7–19.

²⁹ Kieh Jr, "The Roots of Western Influence in Africa: An Analysis of the Conditioning Process."

involvement of more mothers in the modern labour force, deprives the children as well as the whole family of the daily love and care so necessary for proper child rearing and development. During infancy, the child is breastfed for a longer time as compared to this modern time. This, it is believed, develops a bond between the baby and the mother. As the child grows, he/she sees the virtues being exhibited by the mother and all of these enhance good parenting. African culture and values see the mother as the keeper of the house. She is a housewife and makes sure that as the father is the breadwinner, she must cater for all the domestic aspects of the children. This is the period when informal teaching occurred. During the day children were expected to help their mothers with household chores and these chores were divided according to their gender roles. This helped them because as they were growing up they knew exactly what was expected of them. After doing all the chores and everyone was back in the household, *umakhulu* (grandmother) as an elder and more experienced person will narrate '*iintsomi*' (folk tales) to the children. '*iintsomi*' (folk tales) played a vital role in grooming and shaping the future of the children. It was through '*iintsomi*' (folk tales) that they received informal education because they were not only for pleasure, but the main aim was to educate them. The subsequent section will analyse in detail the role that songs play in *iintsomi* (folk tales).

Synopsis of '*Iintsomi kaNomaza negongongo*' (The folk tale of Nomaza and the dragon)

In this myth Nomaza and Nozihlwele were sent by their mother to gather grass and were warned not to stay until dark because of the danger of the place because it was near a forest with dragons. On the way back, Nomaza realized that she had forgotten her mother's sickle tool and asked the girls to accompany her to look for it. No one wanted to go back because it was starting to get dark. Nomaza went alone to look for her mother's sickle tool but could not find it. She heard something picking her up and asking with a loud voice what she was doing there. She tried to explain that she had been sent by her mother to pick grass and forgot her mother's sickle tool there. The dragon had no sympathy and took her and put her in a bag, promising to kill her. She cried and begged for forgiveness and gave up by promising to sing to the dragon, and the dragon agreed. The dragon was fascinated by this song and kept asking her to sing it. The dragon saw a group of boys roasting corn and asked them to give it to him, promising them to play the harp if they would give him the corn. They agreed and he asked Nomaza to sing...

Ndandiye kurhela ingca noNozihlwele

Ndaza ndalibala irhengqe kamama

Kwela hlathi lishinyeneyo

Ndizicelile iitshomi zindikhaphe

Akwabikho namnye ovumayo

I went to cut the grass with Nozihlwele

And I forgot my mother's sickle tool

In that dense forest

I asked my friends to accompany me

No one agreed.

In the above *iintsomi* (folk tale), the song played a significant role because through this song Nomaza's brother was able to recognise his sister's voice and lured the dragon to a house which was full of men. After hearing Nomaza's voice the men came up with a plan to help her. The men were able to trick the dragon by sending it to fetch water from a leaking bucket, thus trying to delay it to save Nomaza. They also put bees and wasps in the dragon's bag which ate it until it died.

Synopsis of '*Iintsomi yeenyamakazi*' (Synopsis of the folk tale of deer)

In this myth, the animals went out to plough the field and after that went hunting. On their return, they went to inspect their field and noticed that there was a lot of smoke in the middle of the field. One of them was appointed to inspect. It returned to the animals in shock after hearing the answer of the one in the field. They tried to go one by one, but they all returned in vain. It was the tortoise only that was left, and all the animals were against sending it there. With great determination, the tortoise went to the enemy and defeated it. All the animals were happy because they really despised the tortoise, but it disappointed them. After this, the tortoise sang the following song:

"Mna Fudwazana ndimncinanane ndinjalo!

Ndikwazile ukulubulala utshaba obelugqiba umbona wethu!

Yizani nonke nizo kubona isimanga!"

I, Fudwazana, as small as I am!

I was able to kill the enemy that was destroying our corn!
Come all and see the wonder

Fudwazana uses a song to announce her victory. She also uses a song to show other animals that size doesn't matter, courage and determination do. Mndende defines *ingoma* (a song) as a device that is used to express happiness, dissatisfaction, and disagreement, singing a song can give faith and assist as a form of restoration in any condition.³⁰

Synopsis of 'Intsomi kaNomanikiniki' (Synopsis of folk tale, of Nomanikiniki)

In this myth, Nomanikiniki's mother died, and his father married another woman. His new mother gave birth to two girls, which led to Nomanikiniki's bad treatment. After some time, there was a ceremony where the son of the king was looking for a wife. As usual, Nomanikiniki was left behind because she was a dirty rag who did not deserve such an event. Her heart was very sad, and she went to cry by the river and sang this song:

NdinguNomanikiniki ndinguNomanikiniki
Ndifuna wena mama wam
Andiphathekanga kakuhle mama wam
Ndincede mama wam.
I'm a Nomanikiniki I'm a Nomanikiniki
I want you my mother
I am not treated well my mother
Help me my mother.

The minute she finished singing this song, a voice was heard coming out of the water saying:

Ndikhola wena mntwana wam
Ndikhola wena mntwana wam
Ndiza kukunceda kaloku
Andifuni ukuba ukhathazwe kaloku
Ndiza kukulungiselela kaloku.
I am here for you, my child
I ama here for you, my child
I will help you now
I don't want you to be bothered
I will make it right for you

Her mother appeared and took her into the river where she came out a lady wearing beautiful clothes. She hurried to the party and when she arrived there, the king's son fell in love with her beauty and left all the other girls. They danced so happily that she even forgot her mother's order. When she looked outside, she realized that it was early morning, and she immediately ran away, leaving the prince distraught. The prince and his servants chased her but unfortunately, they did not find her, they only found her shoe. The prince went looking for someone who could fit that shoe, but it was difficult. When he arrived at Nomanikiniki's home, her sisters were ready for the prince, while she was locked outside. Unfortunately, the shoe did not fit, and the prince asked if there was another girl child present. Nomanikiniki was called and measured the shoe and it was a perfect fit.

The role played by the song in this tale is very important, because of this song, Nomanikiniki was able to communicate and be united with her mother and got the help she needed. This eventually led to her being able to go to a ceremony where she was spotted by the prince who fell in love with her beauty and ended up marrying her.

In the above myths, the song played an important role because in all three the victory was brought about by it. In Nomza's myth, it is the song that saved her from the mouth of the dragon because when she sang, her brother was able to recognize his sister's voice and saved her. In the tale of the deer, *Fudwazana* expresses her victory and joy in song. This led the deer to appreciate and respect him as they had previously disrespected him. In this tale of Nomanikiniki, the song plays a very important role because it reunited her with her mother who helped change her appearance. The change in appearance revealed the beauty of Nomanikiniki which attracted the prince, and she ended up marrying him. In all these tales, the role of the song is evident because the singing of the song in these tales has helped to change people's lives and that of *Fudwazana*.

³⁰N. Mndende, *Signifying Practices: AmaXhosa Ritual Speech*. (Cape Town: University of Cape Town., 2002), 83.

CONCLUSION

This research has examined the role played by Indigenous Knowledge (IK) focusing on the significance of songs in tales and the role they play. The changes brought about by the influence of the West were discussed in detail and the negative impact they had in the society of the Black people. The role of mothers in raising a child has been widely discussed, and the changes that have occurred due to the employment of mothers these days have also been highlighted.

This paper has also discussed in detail the role that songs play in 'iintsomi' (folk tales) because it focuses on showing the role played by songs in tales. This argument was strengthened by using scholarly articles of others who have already researched similar topics. The focus was on three 'iintsomi' (folk tales) with songs that highlighted this importance and the role that songs play in 'iintsomi' (folk tales). According to the discussions that took place in this paper, it is evident that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) has a great role to play in the society and in raising children. Songs have played a significant role in the development of the society, this is evident in the songs found in the tales that have been analysed in this research.

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