

**AN ANALYSIS OF WITCHCRAFT IN SOME OF
TSHIVENDA LITERARY WORKS**

BY

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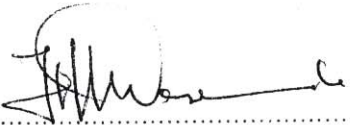
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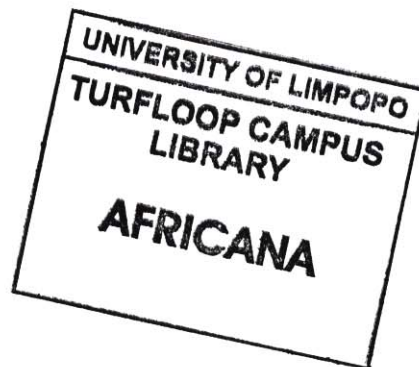
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Is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of compete references and that this dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any other degree, and is not submitted concurrently for any other degree.


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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the following people:

My hard-working mother ,Masindi Luvhengo Maselesele (Biana)

My guardian.Mr and Mrs Thomas(Tommy)Maumela

My beloved wife Thifhelimbilu Winnie

My children,Gudani,Dembe and Dilinde

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SUMMARY

This is an analysis of witchcraft in some of Tshivenda literary works.

Chapter One is an introductory chapter, which covers background to the problem, aims and objectivism, significance of the study, methodology and definition of concepts.

Chapter Two focuses on the literature review.

Chapter Three deals with the analysis of witchcraft in some of Tshivenda literary works.

Chapter Four focuses on the types of witchcraft in some of Tshivenda literary works.

Chapter Five concludes the study and summarizes the main findings of the previous chapters.

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The belief in witches has remained unshaken ever since, despite the common law which prohibits any action against presumed witches. Formerly the smelling out of witches was done at Phafula. After returning home, witches were sometimes brutally clubbed to death or banished from the area. Nowadays these measures are no longer permitted by law but this does not prevent the Vhavenda from taking action against the witches. Nowadays, the measures taken against witches are not merely protective, but are also believed to return the bad magic to the witch and to kill him.

The belief in witchcraft among the Vhavenda is very strong. Although it is today by law an actionable wrong to accuse anybody as a witch, the Vhavenda all know who are the recognised witches in their community and will secretly point them out to you. No overt restrictions are placed on the movements of such witches, and they are freely permitted to take part in all activities but their presence causes an immediate change in the atmosphere, a change of which they certainly must be aware. The general attitude of the Vhavenda forces such people to withdraw themselves to a great extent from social life, and their asocial behaviour naturally strengthens the suspicions against them.

1.1.BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Witchcraft is a universal phenomenon. This term is used in different ways, in various and historical and social context. Many people participating in the contemporary revival of witchcraft, known as the neopagan revival, identify themselves as benign witches.

Nevertheless the Bible also contained injunctions against witchcraft, such as

“You shall not permit a witch to live” (Exodus 22:18), a command that was used to justify the persecution of witches in mediaval Europe. The Greco-Roman world was permeated by belief in witchcraft. Offing (1991) define witchcraft as follows:

Witchcraft is the natural exercise of evil by
 Person who are possessed by malevolent but
 Sometimes innate power which can be employed
 to hurt people. Witches embody the workings of
 evil.

The concept of witchcraft is regarded as part and parcel of religion. Are there any Tshivenda literary works which have visited this topic of witchcraft? This question and others pertaining to this topic would be answered by this research. Nowadays the issue of witchcraft is seldom spoken as it is feared by both young and old, Christian and non-Christian. Are Tshivenda authors also afraid to write about witchcraft in their literary works? This research has analysed witchcraft in some of Tshivenda literary works.

2.AIM OF THE STUDY

The reason for this study was to examine critically the issue of witchcraft in Tshivenda literary works. In order to accomplish this task the following questions need to be answered:

- What do Tshivenda authors say about witchcraft in their literary works?
- Who are mainly involved in witchcraft as seen by Tshivenda authors.
- Which type of witchcraft is practised by the Vhavenda people as far as Tshivenda literary works is concerned.
- Are there zombies in Tshivenda literary works?

3.RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

An examination of witchcraft in Tshivenda literary works aims at aiding us in understanding how witches operate and how they affect the lives of ordinary men and women. A study of witchcraft in Tshivenda literary works will help contemporary society to understand why the South African Government tabled a law which prohibits the smelling or pinpointing at witches.

4.SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The fundamental significance of this study was to highlight why the South African Government tabled laws which prohibit people to pinpoint fingers at witches whereas in the olden days witches were pinpointed at by the sangomas

and often their heads were partially shaved to let the people know that they were witches . This study will also serve as research material for scholars in future.

5.METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the method used in collecting the information.

Mc Arthur (1992:55) define method as:

Method is a procedure for teaching
and learning language.

5.1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The textual analysis method which was used in this research would enable the researcher to establish what other authors actually wrote about witchcraft.

Abrams(1981:37) says:

Textual analysis , its aim is to establish as
accurately as possible what an author actually
wrote or intended to be the final version.

Martin(1984:33) says:

It is the study of the various printed version
of a literary work with the aim of discovering
what the author actually wrote.

Both Abram and Martin agree that textual analysis refers to what the author actually wrote.

To add on what Martin and Abram say, Cuddon says:

It is the branch of scholarship which is devoted to the study and analysis of extant texts in order to determine authorship and authenticity and where there is a multiplicity of texts of one work to determine which one is the best or the original.

5.2.PRIMARY RESEARCH METHOD

The primary research method is a method whereby first hand information is obtained from respondent. With regard to this method data was sought through consultation with people who have witnessed cases of witchcraft. Examples of such cases would be cited in this work.

For the purpose of this study ,semi-structured or open ended interviews were employed. This method is preferred because it displays the advantage of objectivity while still allowing a more thorough comprehension of the respondent's views. More over, this method is more flexible and allows the researcher to make a correct analysis of what the respondent really believes(Cohen and Manion,1994:227)

5.3. SECONDARY RESEARCH METHOD

The secondary research method was also used to utilise data already gathered by a variety of scholars. This task was achieved by consulting library books, articles from journals, research papers and dissertations.

6. DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS USED IN THIS RESEARCH

In this dissertation, unless the context otherwise indicate-

1. Thuri is a polecat which is sent by "vhaloi" (witches) to harm their victim and even gets inside their bodies.
2. Tshidudwane is a malignant water-sprite or spirit in shape like a human being but with one arm, leg, ear, etc.; supposed to dwell in lake Fundudzi and at Phiphidi and to be wanted to go about at night and throw stones especially wherever it sees a shining in a hut.
3. Tshivhimbili is a man supposed to be able to go about cohabiting with females in their sleep without being found out.
4. U phulwa bemu: Either the shaven or the unshaven especially of a person pointed out as "muloi" at a divination séance. Usually the divination is done by the diviner's assistance.
5. U vhonisa: Get a diviner to see .i.e. to consult a medicine man.
6. Badza: A fee especially or solely of witchdoctors/medicine man.
7. Aravhedza: Assist or cause, to take a vapour bath.
8. Tshinwanakadzi: Spirit of a deceased which has been turned into an agency of "madambi" (evil) sent to kill or harm people by a nanga or a medicine man.
9. Thovhela: The legendary founder of the leading groups of the most recent immigrants into Venda the Vha ha Thovhele (Singo, Kwinda); hence to and of any chief.
10. U fara muthu: To point to someone as a witch usually by a witchdoctor/medicine man.
11. U tshelwa: U tshelwa is said of a witch when found out.

12. Phafula: Any place far away believed to have specialist in divination a specially Shangaan people.

13. Zwitungulo: Any object associated with ancestral spirits or ancestor cult, especially heirlooms handed down in the family and used in the rites, to pour libations over them or to wear as protective amulet

CHAPTER 2

1.LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1.INTRODUCTION

There are various scholars whose studies are related to witchcraft in Tshivenda. Their earlier work is significant in this research as it will form a foundation on which the current study is based. It must however, be emphasised that fully-fledged studies on witchcraft are not many. The following are some of scholars who have written much about witchcraft :

1.1.1.Krige (1936:320) has this to say as far as witchcraft is concerned:

Just as the doctor is the protector of society because he cures sickness, averts evil omens and smells out evil doers, the "umthakhathi" or wizard is the enemy of society. He is the man or woman who uses the powers which he has learnt to employ by means of magic, for anti-social ends. The "umthakathi" uses his power for evil and against the welfare of society, he injures people's health, destroys life, prevents rain, occasions lightning, makes the cows to become dry, and is the cause of all manner of misfortune. Once he has been discovered, therefore he is shown no mercy, but is got rid of as speedily as possible.

Krige also went to an extent of showing how wizard effects his evil purpose to people. e. g an "umthakathi may kill you by using your footprint. He will collect soil from your footprint in a small shell and mix it with medicine, or cook it. Then your foot will swell up and the swelling will go to the rest of the body causing severe pain. Krige(1936:322).

Another method is for the wizard to use as an emetic an infusion of leaves of a small bush, mixed with a little earth from the footprints of the person he wishes to kill. He vomits the whole into a snake hole, calling out the name of the person after doing so, and the men will very quickly feel the effects. Krige(1936:322)

Krige further emphasised that it is also possible to harm people by spurting medicine. Medicine is chewed and spurted out, while the wizard calls his enemy by name and gives him imaginary stabs with an assegai smeared with the same mixture. This will cause the death of the person whose name has been called.(Krige(1936:323)

One of the worst crimes committed by evil-doers is the prevention of rain which they withhold by putting pegs dipped in the medicine in the ground and tying knots in the grass on the mountains and then sprinkling them with medicine. In the olden days, if there was no rain, the king would send round messengers to look for such pegs or knots and if any were found, the owner of the nearest kraal would be fined or killed.

Death is often caused by putting medicine on the road, and this may be done in various ways. One method is to smear a stick or a coin with medicine mixed with the dirt of an enemy, and to throw this away on the road, calling out the name of the person you wish to injure. Then when that person passes along that way or picks up the coin, he will become ill and die. If no name is called out, anyone who passes there will be killed. Krige(1936:322).

Krige also went to an extent of showing familiars who help witches in their evil work and obey his command. Among these familiars are snakes, owls, wolves, baboons and other animals. More important than any other of these animal familiars is however, the impala, a wild cat, for it has the power to bewitch various animals such as dogs, cattle and snakes and send them on a message of malice to those it hates. Krige (1936:324)

Again Krige in his book "The Realm of a rain-Queen" explicitly defines what witchcraft is all about:

Vuloi(witchcraft) is anti-social, it is illegal and aims at
 Harming people from motives of jealousy, revenge,
 Frustration or anger. Though witches are believed to
 Have a kind of compulsion to do evil-their fingers
 Burn to bewitch-they are never unconscious of their
 own evil deeds and powers. The witch knows his
 own powers and uses them to obtain his own ends.

Krige(1943:250).

Krige further showed his knowledge in witchcraft when he differentiate between night-witch and day witchcraft. The different between the two according to Krige is as follows:

Night -witchcraft is a born witch ,taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night; but can also work by day .The day witch is an ordinary individual who , by means of medicine obtained from some doctor or witch tries to kill his enemies .He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine he obtained for some definite end.

The night witch is able directly and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice. But his absence from home will never be missed, because he will throw his slumbering companion into a deep sleep or even leave a hyena in his own image ,but the soul is never sent out to do the work. When one wakes up from a dream in a sweat or fright, it is a sign that night-witches are near, and in consultations with doctors such symptoms are often described by patients as very relevant to the diagnosis of this illness

Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there are certain medicine which can be put in a village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the sport, unable to move till you come and find him .As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches describe them as naked,

perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine around the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest. Krige(1943:251)

It is quite clear from the above paragraph that Krige has a vast knowledge regarding witchcraft. Though in this paragraph he is referring to witchcraft practises among the Zulu nation, the same practises is more or less similar witchcraft practises among the Vhavenda people.

1.1.2. Makuya(1990:31) has this to say as far as witchcraft among the Vhavenda people is concern :

Kha Vhavenda muthu a nga shumisa matamba
 othe ane ra divha a tshi sema muthu a humbela
 pfarelo a farelwa fhedzi a vhuya a sema muthu nga
 samba la vhuloi, u hangwelwa have zwi nga vha
 khwine ila phukha ye ya ambwa Bivhilini I tshi nga
 didzhenela zwayo nga buli la lunzhi. Samba la vhuloi
 ndi lone li pwashaho midi mihulwane na mituku.

(Among the Vhavenda people one can use all types
 Of insults which are known and asks for forgiveness,
 But if he or she insult someone by naming her a witch,

he would not be forgiven. For him or her to be forgiven is likened to that animal mentioned in the Bible that it will enter the Kingdom of God through the eye of a needle. The insult of being a witch is the one which destroys bigger and smaller families.)

Makuya(1990:31) further shows the two types of witchcraft which people believes in i.e. witchcraft which even Christians believe it exists. This refers to witchcraft which one could kill one another by poisoning his food .This type of witchcraft is the one which is even tabled in laws. A person could be jailed a reasonable term for practising this type of witchcraft. What is interesting is that this is not the type of witchcraft which many people know about.

Makuya (1990:31) also maintains that when we speak about witchcraft or a witch we are referring the one who does strange things because he does those strange thing unseen .It is maintains that a witch woke up at night, when he has woke up at night he would go and enters someone's house whom he hates and bewitch him or her. How he performs his work is very difficult to answer .It is something which could be answered by the witch himself/herself. But the aftermath of the bewitched is known to people. Some of the bewitched became seriously ill and if no consultation is not done, the victim could die. Some became mentally disturbed and an expert diviner would be consulted. People experience that and such happening are attributed to witchcraft.

Makuya (1990:32) further maintains that in the olden days if a person would go to the headman's kraal and told them that he had been bewitched, they would

sympathise with him or her ;the alleged witch would be looked angrily at. If he or she could not try by all means to cleanse herself, he would be regarded as a real witch. Makuya maintains that there were many people whose hands and feet were cut because of witchcraft accusation.

What is surprising this days is that though the present government does not allow any person to be persecuted because of witchcraft accusation , there are people who still maintain that witchcraft exist .People travel from far away distance to places such as Phafula and Hamakuleke in search of a witchdoctor who will tell them about a witch who had bewitched so and so.

Makuya (1990:32-33) further maintains that there are witchdoctors which claim to have the power to name the witch .These witchdoctors are those who use divining dice before they name the culprit. It is maintained that these witchdoctors could also name the name of the clan or totem group which the witch is coming from. It is said that these witchdoctors could also tell the medus operandi of the witch(es).Makuya also speak about whom people call diviners. It is said that those are the one who tell what is hidden. A diviner could tell the name of the clan. his relationship and also tell his whereabouts. Makuya maintains that these diviner could mention the name of the witch if the going gets tough.

Makuya (1990:33) also mentioned another type of witchcraft which is seldom spoken. It is that type of witchcraft practises where a person could change into an animal or a wild animal .This type of witchcraft is mentioned by Phophi in

his book "Phusuphusu dza Dzimauli". In this book it is said people change into lions and buffalos and killed people.

It is quite clear that through Makuya wrote much about witchcraft, he himself was not quite certain about the existence of witchcraft among the Vhavenda people. There are still many questions which he asks about witchcraft and found no answer. Makuya did an excellent work concerning witchcraft among the Vhavenda people but there are still many questions which need to be answered as far as witchcraft among the Vhavenda is concerned.

1.1.3. Monnig (1967:71-93) wrote much about the witchcraft as part and parcel of the Pedi religion. Monnig defines witchcraft as according to Pedi as follows:

To the Pedi witchcraft (*boloi*) represents all that is evil and destructive. It is loathed and feared more than anything else and is a force which is even recognized by many who have become Christians. In the present time, when the smelling-out of witches and any legal action against them has been forbidden by law for many decades, it still remains one of the topics most frequently discussed, and which can be overhead daily.

Monnig maintains that although it is today by law an actionable wrong to accuse anybody of witchcraft or even indirectly to refer to a person as a witch,

involved, and the same magical methods of protection or remedy are used against all types of witchcraft.

According to Monnig night-witches are born with an inherent quality of heat. They have a compulsion to do evil which need not be activated by jealousy or hatred. They do evil to and harm others purely for the sake of the pleasure they derive. The ability to do evil coincides with the inherent quality of heat, and is inherited. A child inherits this quality and the ability from its parents. A child of a night-witch can, even at birth, be thrown against a wall without coming to harm. It will land softly against the wall like a cat on its hands and feet, and cling there like a bat. This proves that the child will also be a *moloji*. Monnig (1967:72)

Monnig further maintains that most night witches are women, and witchcraft seems to be usually transmitted unilineally from mother to daughter. It is commonly held that most night-witches are women, and it is widely accepted that all their daughters will inevitably inherit their ability. It is also generally accepted that the son of a witch need not necessarily become one also. It is usually accepted that when a female witch marries she will teach her husband to become a witch although she can carry out her witchcraft in such secrecy that the husband need not necessarily discover that his wife is a witch. Monnig further maintains that it is, however, usually assumed that a whole family will be communally active in its witchcraft but there is a definite conviction that the men in the family have been misled by the women. On the whole it would appear that the inheritable quality and compulsion for evil runs in the female line. Monnig(1967:72)

Monnig like Krige also mention familiars which are associated with witches namely: baboons, skunk, wild cat, dog, snake, owl and bat. It is held that the *baloi* can either capture these animals and tame them, or they can change live people into such animals. These familiars can be taught to carry out any wish of the witches, and are sent out to work for them, to steal and harm other people.

.Monnig(1967:74)

From the above discussion it is evident that Monnig did a marvellous work as far as witchcraft is concerned. The witchcraft Monnig mentioned above occurs among the Pedi people. However there are similarities and dissimilarities between witchcraft practice among the Pedi and the Vhavenda people. An in-depth study of witchcraft from the Vhavenda authors in some of Tshivenda literary works remain essential.

1.1.4.Ralushai et al(1995:14) also wrote about the issue of witchcraft in their Report of the Commission of enquiry into witchcraft violence and ritual murders in the Northern Province of the Republic of South Africa. In this Report Ralushai et al summarized all the key elements pertaining to witchcraft practices such as reasons for believing in witchcraft, gender of a witch, types of witchcraft, areas demarcated for witches and ritual murderers, animals which are commonly used for witchcraft purposes, articles commonly used for witchcraft and traditional method of punishing the witch.

There are similarities between some of the issues concerning witchcraft practices as outlined by Krige and Monnig. These similarities include issues such as gender of witch, types of witchcraft, animals which are commonly used for witchcraft purposes and articles commonly used for witchcraft. Monnig and Krige did not mention about areas demarcated for witches as their focus were mainly on witchcraft practice among the Pedi and the Zulu respectively.

Ralushai et al(1995:14) maintain the following as some of the reasons for believing in witchcraft:

- Scholars who have read William Shakespeare; Macbeth strongly argued that Shakespeare would not have referred to witches if they did not exist during those days. They argued that since time immemorial witchcraft has been in existence and therefore there is no reason why they should not believe in it.

- The fact that all Africans historically believed in witchcraft indicates that our forefathers regarded witchcraft as an integral part of our lives.

- Many young people, especially student attribute unexpected illness to witchcraft, for example during exam time, some students suffer from extreme headache and partial blindness. The student would argue as follows: why does this happen during examination time only. This means that a jealous neighbour or relative whose children are not doing well at school is behind this unexpected illness.

Ralushai et al(1995:14)

Concerning the issue of traditional method of punishing the witch, Ralushai et al(1995:14) have this to say:

After the diviner has pointed out a witch, part of his head was shaven, but this could be avoided by paying a special fee by the people accompanying the witch. Upon reaching home, they would proceed to the royal village where the tribal court could impose a fine or order the witch to leave the area and settle elsewhere. In some extreme cases, the witch could be killed as follows:

- By being tied to a rock and pushed into a pool of water by a hooked stick called "khakhanwa."
- The witch could be thrown down a precipice
- During the time of Ngungunyane a witch would be wrapped with grass and the grass would be set alight and he would then run away and die in the bush.
- The witch would be taken to the bush where he would collect firewood and this firewood would be packed around him. A fire would then be made and he would then be roasted to death. Ralushai et al.(1995:29).

From the above discussion, it is quite clear that Ralushai et al were on a fact finding mission pertaining to witchcraft, violence and ritual murders in the Northern Province only. They did a marvellous job as far as witchcraft is concerned. Since their area of concentration were those characterised by violence

,ritual murderers and witchcraft , much need to be done as far as this issue of witchcraft is concerned .Ralushai et al 's research concentrated mainly in the three key areas i.e. Venda,Lebowa and Gazankulu .A special attention regarding witchcraft among the Vhavenda people remain essential.

1.1.5.Stayt(1931) also wrote much about witchcraft practises among the Vhavenda people.from a comparison point of view ,Stayt 's work is more or less similar to that of Monnig. though their area of their focus were not the same ,their findings towards witchcraft practises among the Vhavenda people and tha Pedi people appear to be similar to each other. There are many areas of interest which the two researchers share the same field such as the gender of witches and types of witchcraft.

Stayt maintains that the "vhaloi" may be of either sex, but are generally women. They carry on their nefarious practices by night, sometimes travelling long distances on the back of a hyena or some other animal, and sending snakes ,owls and particularly the "thuri" (stoat) into the hut of the object of their spite, to bite the unfortunate person or to enter his body in order to cause disease or death .The family of "muloi" is always feared and suspected as it is possible that the parent will teach her offspring her evil practices. Stayt(1931:273)

Stayt like Monnig maintains that there are two distinct types of "vhaloi"-the who acts subconsciously and is quite unaware of the fact that she is possessed of this evil genius, and the other who deliberately attempts to encompass the death of her enemy through sympathetic or contagious magic.

Stayt also maintains that various creatures, particularly those to whom the average person has a psychological reaction of dread or disgust, are the special agents of the "vhaloi". These are the hyena, crocodile, owls, all snakes except the python and the "thuri". The unconscious "muloi" nearly always acts during sleep. It is supposed that the evil spirit of the seemingly innocuous individual leaves the body and goes out into the world to carry on its evil mission. It is also maintained that a hideous monster, one of the instruments of the "muloi", is left in her place. It is said that during this metamorphosis the other inmates of the hut are put into a heavy sleep so that no ordinary person ever sees the disgusting creature that is his bed fellow. Stayt(1931:274)

Stayt also echoed that several "vhaloi" may meet together for a feast, beat drums, eat human flesh and dance; they may wage war on one another, one group trying to steal the corn of another group..

Stayt furthermore maintains that the "muloi" appears as a shadowy human form, always stark naked, having left her clothes behind in the hut to cover her metamorphosed body; her eyes are bright and shining like burning lumps of coals. A "muloi" may also act like a vampire going at night and sucking the blood of her enemies, causing them to become emaciated and anaemic. Stayt(1931:274).

From the above discussion, it is quite clear that Stayt did a thorough research regarding witchcraft practices among the Vhavenda people though these piece

of work by Stayt is recommendable, there are some areas which need to be answered by the Vhavenda people themselves.

1.2.SUMMARY

The above authorities have reflected much on witchcraft. Monnig wrote about witchcraft practices among the Pedi people. This research has found out that there are more similarities than differences between witchcraft practices between the Vhavenda people and the Pedi people. Monnig arguments about witchcraft are based on the religious point of view. Krige also wrote much about witchcraft, unfortunately he wrote witchcraft practices among the Zulu people. Though they are some issues which are relevant to witchcraft practices between the Vhavenda and the Zulu people, there are quite a remarkable difference between witchcraft practices of the Vhavenda people and the Zulu people.

Though Makuya's piece of work is very brief, he seems to be certain of what he was writing about. As a Muvenda he wrote about witchcraft as portrayed by a Muvenda. We hear for the first time that to be labelled as a witch among the Vhavenda people is an insult. Unfortunately Makuya's work is just an essay about witchcraft and it did not answered all the questions pertaining to witchcraft among the Vhavenda people.

Ralushai et al as mentioned earlier on also wrote about witchcraft. They concentrated not solely in witchcraft in particular, but their scope was on witchcraft violence and ritual murders in the Northern Province. Their detailed

report mentioned witchcraft as one of the causes of unrest in the former Venda, Lebowa and Giyani. If these report was solely on witchcraft only I have no doubt in my mind that they would have done more than they did. Regardless of all this, their work is very good.

Stayt(1931) also wrote much about witchcraft practises among the Vhavenda people. As has been mentioned earlier on, from a comparison point of view, Stayt's work is more or similar to that of Monnig. The only difference is that Monnig analysed witchcraft practices among the Pedi people whereas Stayt analysed witchcraft practices among the Vhavenda people. Both their findings towards witchcraft practices among the Pedi and the Vhavenda people resemble each other. It has already been said that the two researchers share the same field regarding some issues which are connected with witchcraft such as gender of witches and types of witchcraft.

Though the above researchers have done a recommendable work as far as witchcraft is concerned, there is still much to be done especially by the Vhavenda researchers. With the exception of Makuya and Ralushai who also shed some light about witchcraft, the remaining researchers are non-African whose research failed to answer some genuine issues pertaining to witchcraft practices.

CHAPTER 3

1. AN ANALYSIS OF WITCHCRAFT IN SOME OF TSHIVENDA LITERARY WORKS.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Witchcraft represents all that is evil and destructive. It is loathed and feared more than anything else and it is a form which is even recognised by many who have become Christians. Witchcraft is anti-social, it is illegal and aims at harming people from motives of jealousy, revenge, frustration or anger.

Krige (1943:250) differentiates between night-witchcraft and day witchcraft.

Night-witchcraft is a born witch, taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night; but can also work by day whereas the day witch is an ordinary individual who, by means of medicine, obtained from some doctor or witch, tries to kill his enemy. He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine he obtained for some definite end. The night-witch is able to directly, and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice and effect his evil purposes. The aim of this dissertation is to analyse witchcraft in some Tshivenda literary works.

1.1.1. TSHA RI VHONE

Mathivha, M.E.R. in his novel "Tsha ri vhone" wrote about the belief of witchcraft among the Vhavenda. The main theme in this novel is witchcraft.

Nyama^Λtamba is alleged as a witch and is held responsible for killing her principal wife's son and it is also alleged that she had killed the old man Ramaphosa through witchcraft so that the estate would remain with his son. Nyama^Λtamba here is regarded as a witch and her witchcraft is influenced by jealousy. She does not want her first-born son to share the estate with the other first-born son of another mother.

Nyama^Λtamba was expelled from home by her husband. His husband went to consult the witch-doctor about all what was taking place at his home. This is confirmed when it was said:

“Musi musadzi o no onesa a ya a vhonisa ha
 Vho-Rambevha nga ha khotsi awe. Thangu dza
 Vho-Rambevha dze khasa wo ya ,khasa wo vhuya”
 dze henengei musadzi mutshena mulapfu wa nd^Λou
 Thangavhuelelo a tuwa a ya hayani .

(When his wife had bid farewell he went to consult Vho-Rambevha about his father. The bones of Rambevha pointed to a tall white woman of the Nd^Λou and Thangavhuelelo returned home).

(Mathivha, 1961:33)

From the above, it can be seen that Nyamatamba was alleged as a witch to an extent that she was expelled from home. It can be seen that witchcraft is a punishable offence. Nyamatamba here is punished because of her witchcraft. It can also be seen that this type of witchcraft associated with Nyamatamba is not clearly defined whether it is a night witchcraft or a day witchcraft. This can be a night or a day witchcraft as the main reason for Nyamatamba to kill the two people was because of jealousy. Where there is witchcraft witchdoctors are consulted. Mathivha indicated that Nyamatamba's husband went to consult the witchdoctor, Vho-Rambevha. It is the evidence obtained from the witchdoctor's bones that Thangavhuelo expelled his wife though later on he followed her. It can be seen that Mathivha did not say much about witchcraft in this book. After reading this novel one would only assume that since Mathivha is a Muvenda, he knew that by alleging Nyamatamba as a witch. A Muvenda would automatically associate her with all sources of witchcraft. The fact that Thangavhuelo expelled his wife is very common among the Vhavenda People.

1.1.2.ELELWANI

Maumela T.N. in his book "Elelwani" also writes about the theme of witchcraft. Here Maumela shows us Elelwani, who was married to Ratshihule. She was expelled from the royal kraal because it was revealed by a Zionist, Matshinyise, that she was a witch and the chief accepted what the Zionist had said though later on it was again revealed that Matshinyise (the Zionist) was Vele who was Elelwani fiancée, who finally married Elelwani..

That chief Ratshihule expelled Elelwani from the chief's kraal it is because one morning the chief found an old earthen bowl full of blood, put near the door step of his palace. An old earthen bowl full of blood is associated with witches. The chief was terrified. To make it worse when the prophet was called to the chief's kraal, he labelled Elelwani, the most favourable wife of the chief, as a witch. The chief agreed to what the prophet Matshinyise told him and eventually he expelled Elelwani from the chief's kraal. The news that Elelwani was a witch spread like veld fire. This is echoed by Maumela when he says:

“U farwa ha Elelwani tsho vha tshianeo tsha shango
 Lothe la Makovheni. Musi vhe ndilani ya u
 ya mahayani ho vha hu sa ambwi mañwe
 arali e si enea”

(To be apprehended as a witch of Elelwani
 Was a house hold subject to the village of
 Makovheni When people were on
 their way home, there was no other talk
 than this .)

(Maumela,1954:58)

Chief Ratshihule expelled Elelwani from the chief's kraal because she was alleged to be a witch. When Elelwani was found to be a witch by the prophet, the chief immediately expelled her. The earthen bowl full of blood was thought to be the evil works of the wizard as it is possible to harm people by using blood of an owl, which is one of the familiar of the

wizard(Krige:324).It can be seen from this book that Maumela like Mathivha did not explicitly elaborate much on witchcraft. One may assume that Maumela knows his intended readers to be fully equipped with the knowledge of wizard from their birth .In Tshivenda if strange happening occurs like it did at the chief's kraal, one has to seek assistance from the witchdoctor or the prophet as chief Ratshihule did.

It is quite clear from this book that though Elelwani was expelled from the chief's kraal because of witchcraft activities ,Maumela on the other side wants to show that sometimes people can be alleged as witches whereas they were not .Elelwani was not a witch ,but it was because the prophet was her fiancée before Elelwani was forced to marry chief Ratshihule. The mere fact that Elelwani was alleged as a witch ,it was enough for her dismissal. This was another form of punishing the wizard. Regarding the traditional methods used of punishing witches Ralushai and et al(1995:29) have this to say:

After the diviner has pointed out a witch, part of his head was shaven, but this could be avoided by paying a special fee by the people accompanying the witch. Upon reaching home ,they would proceed to the royal village where the tribal court could impose a fine or order the witch to leave the area and settle elsewhere . In some extreme cases ,the witch could be killed .

Chief Ratshihule orders Elelwani, the witch to leave the chief's kraal as she was pointed out to be a witch by the prophet, the Zionist. What chief Ratshihule did was in line with the traditional method of punishing the witch. Maumela also did not write much about witchcraft. Here he only shows the effect of being alleged as a witch could bring about.

1.1.3. THILAIWI

Demana, I.P. also writes about witchcraft in his book, "Thilaiwi". Thilaiwi, as the main character of the story, after his herd of cattle were struck by lightning he immediately accused his father's brother, Vho-Rabada as the main cause of the lightning which struck his cattle. To support him we heard her mother Vho-Mukatshelwa saying:

"Ndi zwithu-vho-zwi no nga zwi a amba nwananga.
Zwino ni ri idzi kholomo vha dzi vhulahela mini?
fhedzi na vhone-vho a vha nga do zwi zuwa-vho. Na
vha no nyelisa a vha rali lini. Ni ri muthu u mbo
di tou danga la muniwe lothe undu nga yeneyi ndila
naa nwananga. Ha, na zwino aredi, havha khotsimunene
a vho ngo tsha zwi kona." Ndi mme a Thilaiwi vha
tshi khou ralo vho tou ita na u fhelelwa."

(This is something which appears as if it can speak
So why did he kill this cattle? But he is not going
to narrate all this. Even those who retaliate don't
do it in this way. You say a person can take all

your cattle in this manner? Oh! well your father's brother did it wrongly now. It is Thilaiwi's mother who looks so tired.)

Though the word witch or witchcraft does not appear anywhere in this book, there is no doubt that Vho -Mukatshelwa, Thilaiwi's mother is referring to none other than his father's brother, Vho -Rabaḁa as someone who was responsible for the killing of Thilaiwi's herd of cattle. In other words Vho-Rabada had bewitched Thilaiwi's herd of cattle.

Thilaiwi alleged that Vho-Rabaḁa is a witch and went to stab him to death by an assegai. Thilaiwi alleged that his father's brother was a witch for sending lightning to struck his cattle. In Tshivenda there is such a belief that lightning is caused by witches. If lightning could struck a house or just a tree, people would say it is the work of witches, no wonder why Thilaiwi killed his father's brother.

As it can be seen, Demana like his predecessors wrote little about witchcraft. There is no other places in the book where Vho-Rabaḁa was alleged as a witch except the incident where he was stabbed to death by Thilaiwi. Thilaiwi had insulted his father's brother by the highest insult among the Vhavenda people.

1.1.4. U NEMBELELA HA SHAMBA

Mudau, K.E. also wrote about witchcraft in her book, "U nembelela ha shamba". The case of witchcraft in this book came in the light when Ndiyafhi,

who was born with some abnormalities and his grand-father Vho-
 Liipfiliavhomba died mysteriously. As there is no death among the Vhavenda
 people without a cause, when the diviner was consulted, he just rubbed a rope
 with some medicine and placed the rope across the doorway so that each and
 every person who came for divination purpose should have to walk over
 the rope. If the rope could trip you up, it is a sign that you are a witch and
 that the diviner would shave part of your head as a sign that even those
 who remain at home would see who the witch is without asking questions.
 Mudau(1995:22) says:

“Ho ri musi makhulu wa Mabula vha tshi I pfuka vha
 Piringedzea vha wa zwa vhutungu. Vhathu vha thoma u
 lavhelesa fhasi. Mabula a vha takusa; a tshi vho lila.
 Vho salaho vha isa phanda na u pfuka vha vhuya
 vha fhelela.”

(When Mabula 's grandmother tries to walk over
 the rope, she entangled herself and fell down. painfully.
 People started to look down when Mabula tried to pick
 her up; crying. Those who remained continued to walk over
 until they finished.)

What followed here was that the diviner shaved Mabula's grandmother as an
 indication that she is a witch. The shaving of a witch is in line with the
 traditional method of punishing the witch though sometimes it could be

avoided by paying a special fee by the people accompanying the witch
(Ralushai et al (1995:29)

Though Mabula was not pointed as a witch, the mere fact that her grandmother was caught by the diviner as a witch, she was in for it. When the people were on their way home, people started to say ugly things about Mabula. We heard Vho-Nyadzanga's brother saying:

“Vhaloi vha vhaloi vhenevha, na hune na bva zwivhundu
ndi madzedze. Ni sokou vhulaha munna wa mukomana
wanga vha songo lwala.”

(Witches of witches you are, even the place you are
coming from, they have shaved your heads.
You just killed my brother's husband without illness.)
(Mudau, 1997:22)

Vho-Nyadzanga's brother is quite sure that Mabula's grandmother was a witch and that her grand daughter is now the victim.

It came as no surprise when Vho-Nyadzanga's daughter started to use insult Mabula accusing her also as a witch. We hear Vho-Nyadzanga's daughter saying:

“Ngavhe lo vha li tshi vuwa le nanyananya dana la muloi.
Li juwe fhanu mudini wa hashu; li sa athu mmbulahela mme
anga dzoi la dzoi leneli. Nda zwi funa ndi nga li vhubukanya nne
mubebwa nga Vho-Nyadzanga. Ndi do mu ruthutha nne, ha ndivhi
zwavhudi. U khou ri nne ndi do shavha nowa yawe,

yo faho?"

(I wish if this child of witch could be found dead tomorrow.

Let her leave my home when she has not yet killed my mother this witch. I can kick her if I wish, I, the daughter of Vho-Nyadzanga. If she does not know me, I will beat her up. She is thinking that I am afraid of her dead snake.)

(Mudau, 1997:24)

From the above paragraph it could be seen that people were against Mabula as her grandmother was accused of practising witchcraft. The person who is referred here as "this child of witch" is none other than Mabula. Because Mabula's grandmother has been accused as a witch, Mabula is here seen as someone who is dangerous that is why it is no longer good to keep her very long as she might kill Vho-Nyadzanga. Mabula's deceased son, Ndiyafhi is here referred to as a dead snake. A snake as has been indicated is one of the familiars of witches. There is no doubt that Vho-Nyadzanga and all her relatives were against Mabula. It came as no surprise when Mabula was chased from her in-laws because her grandmother was accused as a witch.

In this instance one could see that Mabula was expelled from her in-laws as a punitive measure which is indirectly directed to her grand-mother and Mabula suffered the consequences. It could also be seen that among the Vhavenda speaking people it is an insult to be regarded as a witch, as bad things like what happened to Mabula could happen to such alleged people.

1.1.5. ZWO ITWA

Mahamba in his book “Zwo itwa” write about issues of *vhuloi* Mahamba unlike his predecessors appears to be more informed about the issues of witchcraft. The conflict between Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze is brought about by the issues of witchcraft. Vho-Gumani accused Vho-Matidze as a witch. Vho-Gumani blames Vho-Matidze for all the misfortunes at his home. The situation worsened when Vho-Matidze bit Vho-Gumani’s son for letting his goats grazed on Vho-Matidze’s field. Nnditsheni was badly injured, coupled with his falling from the donkey, which he never reported at home. When Vho-Gumani consulted the witchdoctor, he was told that his son was bitten by a snake and not by a stick. He was also told that his son was put *thuri* in his body by Vho-Matidze.

The conflict between Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze was also entered into by other members of the family. In act one scene 1 we find Nnditsheni (Vho-Gumani’s son) busy insulting Vho-Gumani’s grandson. We hear Nnditsheni saying:

“A, he vhanna, lutukana ulu lu na swili ni khou zwi vhona?
 Ni khou tou [^]jongisa dzone thuri? O, muthannga, npe [^]ndi
[^]do ni rwa nadzo na shona-ha. Ni zwi pfesese muthannga,
[^]npe a thi khou ofha thuri dza makhulu wapu [^]na mudzhasi
 wavho u sa bvuliwi na bikoni lini.”

(With an exclamation of surprise you men, this thin boy
 Can you see that this boy has impertinence? Do you
 want to show off your polecat? *Thuri*, Oh!, young man,
 though you possess them, I shall hit you. You must

understand young man, I am not afraid of the polecat of your grandfather and even his overcoat which is not even taken off even when it is very hot.)

(Mahamba,1993:1)

In Tshivenda as is in Pedi Thuri is associated with witches. Thuri is one of the familiars of witchcraft. From this paragraph it is quite clear that though Nditsheni uses the name thuri, Musiwalo simply understood that Nnditsheni was referring to his grandfather that he was a witch. Nditsheni also associates Vho-Matidze's coat with his witchcraft. that is why it said is not taken off even when it is very hot.

The argument between Nditsheni and Musiwalo reached its climax when the two started to fight each other. Before the fight we hear Nditsheni saying:

“Hai, vhanna vhashu litshani ndi mu rwe hoyu muthu; nna a ni vhoni uri u na biko uyu mutukana? He inwi muduhulu wa muloi .Muduhulu wa muloi diwe,ndi do u vhulaha namusi.”

(No, my men, let me hit this man; can't you see that this boy want a fight? You grandson of the witch. You grandson of the witch ,I shall kill you today.)

(Mahamba,1993:2)

It is quite clear that Nditsheni was certain that Musiwalo's grandfather was a witch. Nditsheni repeatedly say that Musiwalo was a grandson of the witch. It is not surprising to find the two boys fighting each other because to be

associated with a witch, come what may you have to fight to cleanse your name, hence Musiwalo fought Nditsheni though he was defeated.

That Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze were enemies is exposed when the people were working at the chief garden. Vho-Gumani immediately went nearer to where Vho-Matidze were praising people who were about to finish their work. Vho-Gumani indirectly challenged Vho-Matidze and this ended in a fight.

That Vho-Gumani was very angry is noted from his tone when he says:

“Arali vha tshi ri “Gumani” vha khou amba nnyi heneffa?

N[^]ne na vhone ane a khou levhela muñwe nga u amba dzina
 lawe ndi nnyi. N[^]ne hafhu a thi ofhi u loiwa; thi shavhi mvula
 ndo no di naiwa.”

(If when you say “Gumani” whom are you referring to?

Who is provoking one another by calling his name between
 you and me. I, again I am not afraid to bewitched; I don't
 mind the rain once I am wet.)

(Mahamba, 1993:4)

Vho-Gumani here explicitly told Vho-Matidze that he is a witch. From this argument it is also quite clear that Vho-Gumani is telling Vho-Matidze that it is quite a long time since he has been bewitched by him. That is why he says he does n't mind the rain once he is wet. In other words Vho-Gumani is not afraid of Vho-Matidze since he has been bewitched by him, for a long time. Before the two men fought each other we again hear Vho-Gumani uttering these words:

“Ni khou zwi vhona uri uyu muthu u na biko ^Λ li a phopha?
 Litshani ndi mu bwise mbanzhe yothe ^Λ ya vhuloi hoyu muloi
 wa muloi”.

(Can you see that this man has sweat which is dropping?
 Let me take off all the dagga of witchcraft out of him
 this real witch.)

(Mahamba,1993:4)

The fact that Vho-Matidze has been alleged as a witch by Nditsheni is now clear that Nditsheni has been told by his parents particularly his father, Vho-Gumani. The emphasis of “muloi wa muloi” by Vho-Gumani shows that according to Vho-Gumani, Vho-Matidze is a witch. After the fight of the two men, Vho-Gumani was fined for his bad behaviour by chief Ravhudzulo, he accepted the fine but he said:

“Ndi na mbudzi ya thongo ya u ^Λnea thovhele; mbilalume
 Vhaloi vhone vho ^Λdadzaho shango vha fanela u tou bvelwa
 fulo na dzimba^Λo”.

(I have a castrated goat to give His Majesty; mbilalume
 (a praise epithet for a chief). Witches who are many in this
 world must be get rid off by means of axes.)

(Mahamba,1993:5)

There is no doubt in my mind that when Vho-Gumani refers to witches who are many is not referring to none other than Vho-Matidze. In other words Vho-

Gumani is telling the chief that witches including Vho-Matidze must be killed as a form of punishment for practising witchcraft. This also means that from time in memorial Vhavenda used to punish people found to be practising *vhuloi*.

Mahamba further shows us that he is acquainted with the issues of witchcraft. when Vho-Matidze caught Nditsheni and Mukosi for letting their goats grazed into Vho-Matidze 's field we hear Vho-Matidze saying:

“U a zwifha , ndi kha di dou wana dzoyana”.

“You are lying, I will still find you , you small witch”.

(Mahamba,1993:10)

The tables are now turned the other way round .From the previous encounter Vho-Matidze was the' victim, now Vho-Gumani is alleged as a witch by Vho-Matidze. Dzoyana is a small witch and in this paragraph is referring to Nditsheni ,Vho-Gumani's son. If Nditsheni is a small witch ,it is obvious that Vho-Gumani is the big witch. Though Nditsheni ran away from Vho-Matidze Vho-Matidze did not stop to curse him .We hear Vho-Matidze saying:

“Tshimbila u yo mu vhudza ene Gumani arali e ene a nou ruma u lisa mavhele anga nga u pika tokoloshi .U vhudze na mme vha hungulule phele dzothe vha shatulule na tshitemba tsha thuri.Madzoi enea; hoi.”

(Go tell Gumani if he was the one who had sent you to let your goats graze in my mealies for the sake that he has tokoloshi. Also tell your mother to let go all her hyenas and also let her open her medium-sized squat wide-mouthed calabash of thuri, you great witches; oh!)

(Mahamba, 1993:10)

Mahamba has used words which are part and parcel of witchcraft. Words such as tokoloshi, thuri, and phele are associated with witchcraft. Tokoloshi, thuri and phele are familiars of witchcraft and the Vhavenda believe that these creatures belong to witches. How the witches tame these animals is not known. It is not surprising to hear about tokoloshi and thuri which are to be released, because among the Vhavenda people familiars such as thuri and tokoloshi are said to be hidden in large pots in the courtyard of the witches, and to see them means certain harm. This really indicates that Mahamba is used to the worldview of witches.

Mahamba also distinguished between night-witch and day-witch. We came across this after Vho-Matidze hit Nditsheni by a stick. Nditsheni immediately hurried home to report the deeds of Vho-Matidze, though he did not report about the issue of falling off from the donkey. When Vho-Gumani learnt that it was Vho-Matidze again, we heard him saying:

“Namusi o guma. U nkona nga ha vhusiku; o no tou swika
na kha ha masiari, ndi do mu lugisa. Zwino...”

(Today it is final. He overcame me by that of night ,He had reached to those of the day, I will fix him up. Now...)

(Mahamba,1993:11)

That of night here is referring to the *night-witchcraft*. In other words Vho-Gumani agreed that since Vho-Matidze was a witch, he performs his witchcraft at night and there is nothing he can do, he accepts defeat. *Those of the day* is referring to *day-witchcraft*. In this paragraph Vho-Gumani is accusing Vho-Matidze to be after him, at night and during the day, something which he is not going to tolerate now.

Mahamba again shows that the issue of witchcraft is not new to him when he introduces the witchdoctor Malukuta. After Malukuta has finished his work at Vho-Nemadzivhanani's place we hear him saying:

“Hafhu a hu nga fheli vhege vha songo fara muloi. Duvha
 linwe na linwe nga madautsha vha vuwa vha tandule. Ho
 shumaho nne a hu toti u tou anetshelwa. Nowa vha do
 kuvhanganya luraru nga vhege vha tshi fhisa sa zwi la
 muthu a tshi fhisa mavhivhi khwivhoni. Gwitha la fhira
 nga ntha ha mu di li sa vundee phapha la wa vha divhe
 uri ndi tshinoni tsha daka kana li songo rumelwaho fhano.
 Magwitha haya a no la o tou avhelwa vhuswa vha do
 vhona i popopo. Hu khou amba Malukuta tshifhungu tsha

Vhanyai”.

(A week is not going to pass without catching up a witch. Every day at dawn you have to wake up and take a walk around your home. Where I had worked. It is not necessary for someone to speak on my behalf. You will have to collect snakes and burn them three days per week like what happens when a man burns a newly freshly garden. An owl which passes over your house and does not break its wing when it falls you must know that it is just an ordinary wild bird or it was not sent to you. Those owls which eat a prepared dish will often fall down).

(Mahamba, 1993:16).

From this paragraph it is quite clear that Mahamba uses words which are associated with witchcraft. Malukuta as a witch knows that witches can be trapped up by some medicine. It for this reason that Malukuta tells Vho-Nemadzivhanani that a week cannot pass without trapping a witch. He also spoke of snakes which are going to be trapped. Snakes and owl are also familiars of witches. They are sent by witches at night. Mahamba here also highlighted us that some familiars such as owls are taken care of by their masters e.g they prepare a dish for them.

That the conflict between Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze centred around vhuloi is again noted when Vho-Gumani went to Vho-Matidze's home and started

hitting him with a thick stick. When Vho-Matidze pleaded to stop Vho-Gumani from hitting him we hear Vho-Gumani saying:

“Thi na tshifhinga tsha u amba na muloi .U tshi rumela
dzinowa u khou thoma u amba?U shavha ndi u sokou ita, u
nga si ntsie masiari,vhusiku ee,hu musi wo tou namela phele.”

(I don't have time to speak to a witch. Did you make a
signal when you sent your snake to me? You are just
running. You cannot overrun me during the day .At night yes, if you are
on the hyena's back.)

(Mahamba,1993:28)

Again it is quite clear from this paragraph that Vho-Gumani is confident that Vho-Matidze is a real witch. Mahamba here again shows his knowledge as far as witchcraft is concerned. Vho-Gumani this time is also sure that Vho-Matidze practices his witchcraft at night.It is for this reason that he says, that is why he says during the day he cannot overrun him .But , if it was during the night, he could overrun him because he would be on hyena's back. Again here Mahamba is showing us that a witch is able to use his familiars to carry out any wish of him. It is also quite clear that witches have the ability to sent snakes to carry out his wish. Vho-Matidze here is alleged to have sent snakes to Vho-Gumani 's place.

Beside Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze who always blame each other as a witch,Mahamba shows that other community members at Tshihondwa also believe that witchcraft exists. From the discussion between Vho-

Nemadzivhanani, Vho-Rathiyaya, Vho-Mulelu and chief Ravhudzulo we hear Vho-Nemadzivhanani saying:

“...Nge arali a songo tou vha Semani we afhira a tshi nnzhenisa hayani ndi musi ndo lala nnda. Vhaloi Vhone vho vha vha tshi do tou nnzhiela tsini. Huriwe zwino ro vha ri tshi amba ndo no vha litukwane ho tou sala u tshewa lulimi.”

(If it was not Semani who passed by and took me Home, I would have slept outside. Witches would have less problem to take me. Maybe this time I would have been turned into a zombie waiting only for them to cut my tongue.)

(Mahamba, 1993:32)

Vho-Nemadzivhanani is quite aware of the deeds of the witches. He knows that if one sleeps in the open, witches could come to you and you end up being turned into a *zombie*. Here, Vho-Nemadzivhanani thanked Semani for what he did to him. Witches are the one who are responsible of turning people into *zombies*. After people have been turned into a *zombie* by a witch, the front part of his tongue is cut off to make it impossible for him to speak. *Zombies* are tools of witches. They do all manual work for their master(witch). They can also work in towns for their masters.

Again Mahamba shows us the issues of witchcraft in the incident which had happened when Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze and other members of the royal family were busy with the case of Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze. Vho-Gumani explained to the chief and his men why he hit Vho-Matidze. The following were his reasons:

“Hoyu mukalaha muhali na vhone vhakoma nne ndi khou mu rwela hovhu vhuloi hawe vhune a vho tou tandama ngaho. Kha vha vhone uri ndi lini kale-kale u lovhani ha n'wana wanga mahojha fhano-fhano hune a vha o no mbo di dzhenisa Nditsheni linwe dambi. Hezwino a hu tshee na na nga inwe ndila; hoyu mukalaha ndi tou ndo bva nae. Khamusi a vhuya na bemu Phafula u do vhuya o tokomelwa ra thoma u rwiwa-vho nga phepho mutani wanga.”

(Your majesty and you the induna's, I am beating this old man because of his witchcraft act which he did openly. See, it is not long since my daughter passed away last year, now he had put again inexplicable force into Nditsheni. This time there is no other way. I have to go out with him. Maybe if he returned with partially shaved head from Phafula he would cool down so that we could live better.)

(Mahamba, 1993:38)

From this paragraph it is clear that Mahamba is familiar with issues of witchcraft that Vho-Gumani is always at loggerheads with Vho-Matidze because

of witchcraft is now obvious. Vho-Gumani here blames Vho-Matidze for his daughter's death. Again Vho-Gumani blames Vho-Matidze for being behind Nditsheni's illness. What is interesting is that Vho-Gumani knew where this problem of who is the witch could be resolved. This problem could be solved at Phafula. If one is pointed to be a witch at Phafula his head will be partially shaved as a sign that he had been pointed. Words such as Phafula, *u phulwa bemu* are associated with witchcraft. This indeed shows that Mahamba is familiar with issues of witchcraft. When Vho-Gumani had finished speaking, Vho-Matidze was given the opportunity to respond to the allegation labelled to him. In his response Vho-Matidze says:

“Muhali ndi khou humbela u amba-vho. Ndi fulufhela uri kha rothe ri re fhano a hu na na muthihi a sa zwi divhi uri hoyu munna u na tokoloshi na tshinwanakadzi zwe a renga zwino... zwino...”

(Your majesty I am requesting to speak. I hope that all of us gathered here there is no one who does not know that this man has tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi which he has bought recently).

(Mahamba, 1993:39)

It is quite certain that Vho-Matidze is very sure of what he is talking about. According to Vho-Matidze, Vho-Gumani is said to have bought tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi and this gives us an impression that Vho-Gumani has bought

his witchcraft from medicine men and he falls under his witchcraft of the day Tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi are also familiars of witches. Both are said to be very dangerous when it comes to affecting human lives. Among the Vhavenda people, people who possess tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi are witches. They send these creatures at night for evil purposes.

These familiars such as tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi are not seen, but usually hidden in large pots in the courtyard of the witches. This view is supported by Vho- Matidze when he says:

“Hezwo zwithu u vha hone zwi hone naho zwi tshi nga
 tou sa vhonala nga ma^o zwao. Ene mu^e u a divha^u uri zwi
 hone unga o zwi fha^tela na ku^u.”

(Those things are there even if they are not seen through naked Eyes. He knew about them as he had built a small hut for them.)

(Mahamba, 1993:39)

Tshinwanakadzi is not a familiar associated with the Vhavenda people but originated with the Tsonga people. But if the Vhavenda want to have tshinwanakadzi they buy it from the Tsonga people, as did Vho-Gumani. If tshinwanakadzi is not well attended to, it can cause a deadly harm to the entire family as it seeks human blood annually. To support this we hear Vho-Matidze saying:

“Nne ndi ri khamusi unga izwo zwitungulo zwi dzulaho nga u lila malofha a muthu nga n'waha ene u vhuya a zwi renga a zwi fuwa o divha uri uri u do tou ita hani. Zwino zwo khakheaho ndi hezwi o no zwi fha n'wana wawe.”

(I say maybe those creatures associated with ancestral spirit which seek human blood annually, when he bought them and kept them, he knew how to handle them. What is wrong is that now he had given them to his daughter.)

(Mahamba, 1993:39)

Again it is quite clear from this paragraph that Vho-Gumani had bought zwitungulo (tokoloshi and tshinwanakadzi), which simply suggests that these creatures are not kept by the Vhavenda people. That they are dangerous is supported by the fact that they seek human blood annually. These creatures are associated with witches.

1.1.6. GUNDO

Magwabeni in his book “Gundo” also write about the issue of witchcraft. The issue of witchcraft came about when Khoro, the protagonist, is married to a certain young girl by the name of Muhangwi. Khoro is said to be married to Muhangwi as he did not propose love to Muhangwi, but her elder sister Vho-Raele did it for him as it was a custom among the Vhavenda people. Khoro who was working in Johannesburg at that time soon came home

to fetch his newly bride. Soon Khoro realised that his wife was not hundred percent normal.

Khoro soon find out from Muhangwi herself and some family members that Muhangwi had spent most of her youth alone at her aunt ,Vho-Dora at Duthuni. Khoro also learnt that When Vho-Dora was away from her home on business matter Muhangwi was left alone at home. But Muhangwi was not alone in the true sense of the word because we heard her saying:

“Ndi tshi ofha mara ndi sa ofhesi ngauri Makhadzi vho
vha vha tshi ri ndi songo ofha ngauri vhadzimu vha
hone vha do ndinda.”

(I was afraid but not that much because my aunt had
told me not to be afraid as gods would protect me.)

(Magwabeni, 1988:44)

Khoro wanted to find out who these vhadzimu were and where they stayed and Muhangwi says:

“Iii!mara vha sa dzuli nduni lini. Nga murahu ha
ndu ya makhadzi ho vha hu na dunungudzi lihulu
line vhadzimu vha dzula nga ngomu.”

(Yes! but they did not stay within the house. Behind
my aunt's house there was a thick bush were gods
stay)

(Magwabeni,1988:44)

From this paragraph , it could be seen that Muhangwi's aunt description is that not of an ordinary woman as she possesses gods which live behind her house. Muhangwi also told Khoro that these vhadzimu were three in number and they were like real people, the only difference was that they were very short and that they could not speak. When they heard voices of people they ran away into thick bush behind the house. By this description Khoro could deduce that Muhangwi was staying with the so called zwidudwane. Van Warmelo (1989:394) defines tshidudwane as:

Malignant water -sprite or spirit ,in shape like a human being but with only one arm, leg, eye, ear, etc.; supposed to dwell in lake Fundudzi and at Phiphidi falls, and to be wont to go about at night and throw stone, especially wherever it sees a light shining in a hut.

Muhangwi used to cook for them when her aunt was not around. Muhangwi was warned that if ever she would dare mentioned that to anybody she would become mad. According to Khoro Muhangwi had seen the invisible things and this was how her abnormality came about and she was lucky to be alive.

Muhangwi's aunt Vho-Ludoi is described here as someone who possess Zwidudwane. Krige(1943:251) says this as far as tshidudwane is concerned:

The most fearful of all familiars is however the tshidudwane, a human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The tshidudwane is not an corpse though witches call corpse out of the grave only a person specially killed for the purpose can be tshidudwane, when they bury him, it is only his shadows that goes into the grave; the real been enslaved and put in an earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master and cuts poles for building. If you a tshidudwane, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment ,your body may feel dried up as though it has no blood.

Khoro also leant about a goat called malume which Muhangwi had to report to him everything she wanted ,if this goat agreed ,Muhangwi would get what she wanted. From this paragraph it could be clearly seen that this malume acted as the foreseer of the family .How the witch tame this goat is not known but they become so intimate that they communicate with each other. when a Muvenda man and woman heard about a goat which communicate with a human being he or she thinks of witches .It could also be seen that Muhangwi 's aunt was a witch. That Muhangwi's aunt was a witch was also echoed by Vho-Wlliamu Musunda when he said:

“ ...inwi arali ni tshi pfa u pfi hu na vhaloi shangoni,hoyo

ndi muñwe wavho. Muñini wawe a hu dzuli muthu mara ni nga si pfe hu tshi
 pfi ho tswiwa tshithu. U na zwidudwane. Mme a havha vhana hu pfi vho
 vhulawa ngae.”

Whenever you hear that there are witches in this world,
 This is one of them. There is no one who stayed in her
 home but you can't hear of any case of theft there. She
 possess zwidudwane. She is alleged to have killed this
 children's mother.

(Magwabeni, 1988:52)

From this description it is quite clear that Muhangwi's aunt was a witch. She
 possesses, zwidudwane. Anybody who possesses zwidudwane is a witch. No
 wonder why Muhangwi's aunt was alleged to have killed her sister's wife.
 Who knows, maybe she had turned her into a tshidudwane.

That Muhangwi's aunt is a witch is again echoed by Khoro when he was
 with her elder sister, Ruth. We hear Khoro saying:

“Nazwino ndi vhaloi, Vha kha di tou ri khamusi. Makhadzi
 wawe hu pfi a hu na muloi ane a nga lowa navho. Na
 hoyu muthu hu pfi o itwa ngavho.”

(Indeed they are witches who are still testing. There is no one
 who can be compared to her by practising witchcraft.

This person has been bewitched by her.)

(Magwabeni,1988:69)

There is no doubt that Khoro has concluded that Muhangwi's aunt is a witch and that she was responsible for Muhangwi's condition. Indeed ,even Khoro's sister who married Muhangwi for admitting that she is to be blamed as she had married Muhangwi without full knowledge of her and her background. That Khoro has concluded that Muhangwi's aunt is a witch is noticed when Khoro forcibly went to look her at White City. Khoro went to White City to beg Vho-Dora to redress the condition of Muhangwi. Khoro also went there with a notion that he could be turned into a zombie but he was ready for anything. It is clear from this passage that Khoro was certain that Vho-Dora was a witch.

The issue of witchcraft is again noticed when Khoro reached White City. The old man found at the original dwelling place of Vho-Dora has this to say:

“Ludoι tshawe ndi vhuloι,hezwi zwa u lafha ha tou
zwi konesa.....”

(What Ludoι can do is witchcraft,She is not good
In healing people.)

(Magwabeni,1988:76)

From this discussion, one could see that the witchcraft of Vho-Ludoι was known to members of the community even though the old man in question used to reside with her .

Khoro eventually came face to face with the alleged witch, Vho-Dora. In Tshivenda it is very difficult for a person who is alleged as a witch to accept the allegation, he or she would simply say: "it is said I am a witch". In Gundo Magwabeni explicitly shows us an incident where an alleged witch agrees that she is a witch. Khoro was told by Vho-Dora, Muhangwi's aunt to return the following week as she would have to consult with the gods whether to heal Muhangwi or not as these gods do not stay with her in the township because of lack of space but stays in the city. These gods are not the ancestral spirits we know about, but they appear to be strange human beings who are kept by witches. Muhangwi used to cook for them. Now that Khoro has married her, these gods were now in trouble as there was no one who cooked for them.

When Khoro reached home, his sister Ruth was very angry with her for having gone to Vho-Dora as she was alleged to be a witch and thus dangerous. We heard Ruth saying:

"Phanda ha muloi a hu yiwi. Lin'we duvha ni a ri
Ni tshi ya hangei na wana vho ita zwithu zwavho
vha ni dzhia milenzhe."

(You cannot appear before a witch. Suppose you go
there and find them having done their things and
take your feet.)

(Magwabeni, 1988:82)

Khoro's sister strongly believed that Vho-Dora was a witch that is why she even went to an extent of telling Khoro that if Khoro returned to Vho-Dora, Vho-Dora would take Khoro's feet. Krige (1936:322) support this view of Ruth when he says:

An umthakathi may kill you by using your footprint.
 He will collect soil from your footprint in a snail shell
 and mix it with medicine, or cook it. Then your foot will
 swell up and the swelling will extend to the rest of the body
 causing severe pain.

Khoro finally decided not to return to Vho-Dora as he had promised. The issue of witchcraft is revealed when Khoro did not show up at Vho-Dora's place. Vho-Dora also learnt that Khoro was no longer working in town. She immediately summoned her three gods, Majoni, Musaido and Rungani to follow him in Venda. We hear Vho-Dora giving instruction to these gods saying:

“Majoni, houla muhannga we a dzhia musadzi wa vhoiwe hu
 pfi o no vha Venda! Ndi khou toda ni tshi mu tevhela. Ndi
 khou toda ni tshi mu tevhela ni mu tode ni vhuye ni mu
 wane! U khou zwi pfa zwine nda khou amba iwe Musaido?
 Na iwe Rungani?”

(Majoni, that young man who took away your wife it is said

he is now in Venda. I want you to go and look for him and Find him. Do you hear me you Musaido? And you Rungani?)

(Magwabeni, 1988 :96-97)

From this paragraph it can be easily seen that Vho-Dora is a witch. It is said before these Majoni, Musaido and Rungani appear before her, she first blew her small flute (usually made from reed) and the three men appeared before her. Who are these men? They were men of the same height. These were men whom we were told that they stay in the city. From my own interpretation, when Khoro visited Vho-Dora the first day these men were there because it is said that Vho-Dora blew the flute immediately Khoro was about to go. Vho-Dora might be calling her men or soldiers to come for a meeting as she did when Khoro did not show himself up.

Muhangwi had once told Khoro that she used to cook for gods when her aunt was not around. These men were soldiers of Vho-Dora. That they were messengers we heard Vho-Dora instructing them again:

“Ndi khou [^]to[^]da ni tsh[^]hi mu wana! No[^]the ni a zwi [^]divha uri ni [^]do ri u mu wana na ita mini ngae. Muhangwi ene ndi khou mu [^]to[^]da hafha. !Arali Muhangwi na sa vhuya nae vuhombe vhu [^]do [^]di vha ha vhoiwe. Madekwana ano a [^]namusi ni fanela u vhone uri ni vhe ni tshidimelani. Tshelede khe! Iwe Majoni u vhone uri hezwi u tshidimelani hezwi zwi[^]ahela zwivhili zwa sa thanyele thungo zwa vho

kunga mato a vhatu. Ane a sa ite zwine nda khou amba a vhuye a tshi mmbudza. Ndi do mu swotela tswaro hedzo dza sala dzi tswukutswuku!"

(I want you to find him! You all know what to do with him when you find him, I want Muhangwi here. If you don't return with Muhangwi you will remain bachelors. This evening you should see to it that you have board the train. This is the money! You Majoni should see to it that this two fools shouldn't misbehave in the train and attract the attention of people. Whosoever disobeys what I am saying, you must report him. I will pinch him the inner sides of upper thighs.)

(Magwabeni, 1988 :97)

In this paragraph we find Vho-Dora instructing her three messengers to Venda. What is amazing about these men is that they were of the same height and they were instructed not to attract the attention of other passengers in the train. It is said they were Muhangwi's husbands that is why they were sent to bring back Muhangwi or else they would remain bachelors. These men appeared like real human beings. They were given money to pay for their transport to Venda. We are told that whosoever disobeys the instructions of Vho-Dora is liable for punishment. Before these men left for Venda, Vho-Dora threw her bones down and found the way to Venda clean. Majoni Musaido and Rungani were the gods we hear Vho-Dora speaking about. These men are not ordinary men, they are under the control of Vho-Dora. When Muhangwi spoke of the gods who stay

in a thick bush behind the house at Duthuni she was referring to these strange men. In Tshivenda these men are called matukwane(plural)

Monnig(1967:73) has this to say as far as litukwane is concerned:

Litukwane(sing.) is a resurrected person. In the night, the witches will go to a grave and call the dead person by his or her praise name. When they have called him, the grave will begin to shake and the body will come out. The witches will then pull out its tongue and cut it off, so that it cannot speak. Litukwane is the worker of the witches. They send him at night to plough the lands, to thresh the corn and bring it home, to fetch firewood and water. Litukwane cannot speak, he only works. You see that the witches are always rich and have lots of food, but you seldom see them working, because litukwane does this for them.

Any person who keeps matukwane in his or her home is a witch and therefore Vho-Dora is a witch.

That Vho-Dora is a witch is also testified by her sister, Mushavhi whom we heard saying:

“ Houla Ludo! u a penga! U khou dinwa nga vhuloi hovhu

he a tou renga. Arali ndo vha ndi tshi ^Λdivha hune a dzula
hone ndo vha ndi tshi ^Λdo mu yela na ^Λlikhavha ,nda swika nda
mu vhudza - uri a lokolole niwana wanga “.

(That Ludo is mad. She is confused because of witchcraft
she had bought. If I knew were she stayed, I would go with
a bill-hook, and tell her to undo one's witchcraft.)

(Magwabeni, 1988 :101)

Mushavhi is Muhangwi 's father. He is a brother to Vho-Dora. As has been
said in the beginning no one agrees to be a witch or agrees to be related to a
witch, but here we find Mushavhi telling Khoro that his sister is a witch and
also told him that the witchcraft which is practised by Vho-Dora is not
inherited as it is said that it was bought. This clearly indicates that Vho-Dora
is a witch. In Tshivenda the family of *muloi* is always feared and suspected as
it is possible that the parent will teach her offspring her evil practices. Mushavhi
here is bold enough to point out that his sister is a witch.

Vho-Dora is described as someone who was built like a man. Her eyes were
always going up and down, and were red like those who smoke dagga.

The other instances of witchcraft is found when Vho-Dora's messengers did not
return as expected. Vho-Dora thought something awful would have occur to her
messengers. She decided to go to Venda herself. What is surprising is that one
day on Saturday Khoro found his wife and children outside the house. They

were afraid to enter the house because there was a strange bird which was sitting on the headboard of his bed. When they tried to catch it, it bites them. When Khoro looked to that bird, it was strange indeed. Its eyes were red and it was not like the birds he used to see. Khoro start to pluck all its feathers and remain without feathers but he did not kill it

The same day Khoro caught the bird it was the same day Vho-Dora was not feeling very well. She felt her body as if it was tightened by ropes. Her body was feeling cold as if she was not wearing anything. She felt powerless.

At sunset Khoro decided to kill that bird even though her mother was against his idea. He immediately pressed his thumb into its neck and that bird started to open its mouth, gasping for breath. Khoro's mother wanted to take the bird to the diviners and Khoro immediately threw it down and let it die.

When Khoro returned from work on Monday, he was greeted by the news that Vho-Dora is late. Khoro also learnt that Vho-Dora passed away on Saturday. Khoro also learnt that Vho-Dora was not feeling well that Saturday and at sunset she died complaining of suffocation. Of all the death Khoro had heard about, this was the only one which he was not even astonished. He felt it in his blood that he is the one who killed Vho-Dora unknowingly. That bird which was sitting on the headboard of Khoro's bed was Vho-Dora who came in the form of a bird. The description of its eyes which were red fits exactly to those of Vho-Dora. It is quite clear that Vho-Dora is a witch. Her deeds shows that she is a witch. Stayt(1931:273-276) has this to say:

A muloi may also act like a vampire, going at night and sucking the blood of her enemies, causing them to become emaciated and anaemic. They carry on their nefarious practises by night, sometimes travelling long distance on the back of a hyena and sending snakes, and particularly the thuri into the hut of the object of their spite to bite the unfortunate person or to enter his body in order to cause disease or death.

To add on what Stayt and Monnig say about matukwane ,Ralushai et al (1996:5) further say:

A *zombie* is a person who is believed to have died ,but because of the power of a witch he is resurrected, but he works for the person who has turned him into a *zombi*. To make it impossible for him to communicate with other people, the front part of his tongue is cut off so that he cannot speak .It is believed that he works at night only .It is also believed that by the power of witchcraft ,he can leave his rural area and work in an urban area, often far from his home; whenever he meets people he knows he vanishes.

It came as no surprise to find Vho-Dora at Khoro's place in the form of a bird.

Witches ,as shown above can transform themselves into different forms.

1.1.7.SUMMARY

From the discussion of each book, it is quite clear that Demana, Mathivha, Maumela and Mudau have written very little about witchcraft in their literary works. All of them touches on the issue of witchcraft along the periphery and avoid going deep into the thicket of what witchcraft is all about. One could assume that these authors knew their intended readers before they wrote.

To them, just to mention the name *vhuloi* was enough simply because the intended reader knew about it before he came across such a book. What is very interesting is that the belief of witchcraft in their literary works is very strong. e.g. in *Elelwani*, *Elelwani* was expelled from the chief's kraal because of witchcraft allegation. In *U nembelela ha shamba*, *Mabula* was also expelled from her in-laws because her grandmother was pointed out to be a witch. In *Thilaiwi*, *Thilaiwi* stabbed his father's brother because he accused him of killing his herd of cattle by lightning.

It can also be seen that though these authors wrote little, all of them have shown the confusion and the danger which could be caused by witchcraft. Some people lost their lives because of witchcraft allegation. Even those who are alleged to be witches, if given a chance would try by all means to cleanse their name.

Mahamba and *Magwabeni* are the only two authors who have written more about witchcraft in their books, *Zwoitwa* and *Gundo* respectively.

Although *Mahamba's* book, *Zwoitwa* is a drama, one could feel that he was writing about something he knows as part of his cultural upbringing. The

authors have used terms which are associated with witchcraft e.g. tshin'wanakadzi, tokoloshi, matukwane, tshivhimbili, u phulwa bemu, Phafula etc.

Magwabeni on the other hand is quite clear that he had gone an extra mile than Mahamba as far as the knowledge of witchcraft is concerned. There is no doubt in my mind that Gundo could be regarded as the only Tshivenda literary works which explicitly shows the strong belief in witchcraft. Like his predecessors, Magwabeni also used similar terms as used by Mahamba. The conflict between Khoro and Vho-Dora centred around witchcraft issue. That Vho-Dora visited Khoro in the form of a bird is frightening. This and the other issues pertaining to witchcraft explained above show that these two authors wrote more about witchcraft than the rest.

CHAPTER 4

1. TYPES OF WITCHCRAFT IN SOME OF TSHIVENDA LITERARY WORKS.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Witchcraft is considered as a wrong of the highest order and is legally punishable with death. It is feared and scorned above all things. Witchcraft is considered to be a supernatural ability which is inherited, a knowledge of which is passed down from parents to children. As the ancestors of those who practice witchcraft were practitioners of the same craft, the living are protected in their evil actions by their *vhadzimu* (gods)

The Vhavenda and the Pedi distinguish between *vhuloi ha vhusiku* (night-witchcraft) and *vhuloi ha masiari* (day-witchcraft). The same distinction is also drawn between witches of the night and witches of the day.

1.2. NIGHT-WITCHCRAFT

Night-witchcraft is a born witch taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night, but can also work by day. Night-witches are born with an inherent quality of heat. They have a compulsion to do evil which need not be activated by jealousy or hatred. They do evil and harm others purely for the sake of pleasure they derive. The ability to do evil coincides with the inherent quality of heat, and is inherited. A child inherits this quality and the ability from its parents. A child of a night-witch can, even at birth, be thrown against the wall

like a cats on its hands and feet, and cling there like a bat. This proves that the child will also be a *muloi* /witch.

Most night witches are women ,and witchcraft seems to be usually transmitted unilineally from mother to daughter .It is commonly held that most night-witches are women, and it is widely accepted that all their daughters will inevitably inherit their ability. It is also generally accepted that the son of a witch need not necessarily become one also. Some say that sons can inherit this ability, while others deny this. Those that say that sons can inherit the ability are usually vague about whether they inherit it from their mother, from their father, or from both., while there seems to be no doubt that daughters inherit the ability directly from their mothers .It is usually accepted that when a female witch marries she will teach her husband to become a witch, although she can carry out her witchcraft in such a secrecy that the husband need not necessarily discover that his wife is a witch. On the whole it would appear that the inheritable quality and compulsion for evil runs in the female line.

The child is born with the innate ability and quality of witchcraft, but is also taught how to make use of this ability, and instructed in the secrets of night witch-craft. The instruction is also usually ascribed to women. They teach their children or their husbands the craft of the *vhaloi*. How this is done is not known but it is generally assumed to be a very intensive training which lasts throughout childhood. It usually starts with the mother throwing her child against the wall, as described above ,to establish whether the child has inherited the necessary ability. Monnig(1967:75)

The night-witch is able directly and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice. But his absence from home will never be missed, because he will throw his slumbering companion into a deep sleep or even leave hyena in his own image, but the soil is never sent out to do the work. When one wakes up from a dream in a sweat or fright, it is a sign that night-witches are near, and in consultations with doctors such symptoms are often described by patients as very relevant to the diagnosis of their illness.

Night-witch are not often seen by people, but there are certain medicine which can be put in a village fence to keep night-witches rooted to the spot unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he or she is addressed, he or she will scurry away. To confirm this, Ralushai et al(1996:251) has this to say:

Those who have seen witches describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water.

1.3.DAY -WITCHCRAFT

The day-witch mainly works during the day although it may also be practised during the night. The difference between night and day witchcraft lies in the methods employed and not in the time of operation. Night -witchcraft is something completely mysterious, unknown and sinister, as is the night. Day-witchcraft is the application of much the same magical and medicinal practices as are used in what may be termed good-magic, and differs only in that it is used solely to the detriment of others. Night-witchcraft depends on an inborn ability which is incomprehensible to normal person, while day-witch depends merely on a learned ability which, theoretically at least, may be acquired by anybody. Even if one does not wish to become a day-witch, it is possible to obtain the services of one should one wish to employ such methods.

The day-witch is an ordinary individual who by means of medicine obtained from some doctor or witch tries to kill his enemies. He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine he obtained for some definite end. The day-witch is always a man, since woman cannot easily buy medicine. A knowledge of causing evil or misfortune or death is usually not inherited from parents but "bought" from a traditional healer, e.g. a traditional healer may give a person *tshiganame* (deadly poison prepared from a crocodile brain or liver, and so called because the victims fall on his back forthwith and dies). He is distinguished from the night-witch by his use of medicine spells. Spells have no fixed phraseology, but consist in telling the medicine what to do, mentioning the name of the person. The day-witch employs no familiar, belongs to no fraternity, does not inherit his knowledge. He is called a day-witch, not so much because he

works by day, for he may work at night too, but because of the technique he uses. Whereas the day-witch puts medicine on the soles of his feet and walks through your fields; and while the day-witch introduces substance into your body by means of a medicine, the night-witch employs a stoat to take up its abode in you and eat all your food. Ralushai et al (1996:253).

Tshivenda authors pay little attention to types of witchcraft. In Tsha ri vhone Mathivha did not distinguish between day and night witch. Nyamaṭamba was expelled from her home because she was alleged to have bewitched the first born son of her co-wife. Nyamaṭamba was expelled but later followed by his husband. Mathivha did not bother himself to tell us whether Nyamaṭamba was a day witch or a night witch.

In U nembelela há shamba, the distinction between day and night witch is not mentioned. From the look of things, Mabula's grandmother was accused as a witch which resulted in Mabula's expulsion. One would possibly believe that Mabula's grandmother was accused as a night witch. The reason for going to Phafula by the ḲiipfiḲiavhomba family is an indication that they wanted to know the culprit responsible in bewitching the late Vho-ḲiipfiḲiavhomba and his grandson, Ndiyafhi.

In Thilaiwi, Demana did not distinguish between day and night witchcraft. Thilaiwi believed that his cattle were struck by lightning caused by his father's brother, Vho-RabaḲa. Thilaiwi immediately went to Vho-RabaḲa and stabbed him to death (Demana, 1974:60). Though lightning usually struck during the day, one

would assume that the act of bewitching the cattle was done at night as is generally believed.

In Zwo itwa, Mahamba tried to distinguish between day and night witchcraft. This is indicated when Vho-Gumani was after Vho-Matidze. We hear Vho-Gumani saying:

This suggest to me that Mahamba knew about day and night witchcraft. The mere fact that Vho-Gumani and Vho-Matidze went to an extant of going to Phacula to consult a diviner was fuelled by the believe that Matidze is bewitching him at night. In page 34 we hear Vho-Gumani saying:

“A si kale kale n'wana wanga a tshi kha χ bva u lovha ,ndi tshi tshimbila nda χ fara onoyu ,zwino ndi Nnditsheni.....”

(Mahamba,1973:34)

By this Vho-Gumani is telling the people that Vho-Matidze is held responsible for all the misfortunes he is facing. Most of Mahamba 's referral to witchcraft act pertains to night witchcraft. From the discussion among Vho-Nemadzivhanani, Vho-Rathiyaya, Vho-Mulelu and chief Ravhudzulo we hear Vho-Nemadzivhanani saying:

“N χ e arali a songo tou vha Semani we a fhira a tshi nnzhenisa hayani ndi musi ndo lala nn χ a. Vhaloi vhone vho vha vha tshi χ do tou nnzhiela tsini. Hun'we zwino ro

vha ri tshi amba ndo no vha litukwane ho tou sala u
 tshewa lulimi.

(If it was not Semani who passed by and took me home, I would have slept outside. Witches wouldn't have had difficulty to take me. Maybe this time I would have been turned into a zombie waiting only for them to cut my tongue.)

(Mahamba, 1973:34)

This discussion shows us that witches operate during the night. There are no cases of day witchcraft in this book.

In Gundo, Magwabeni also did not distinguish between day and night witchcraft. Though Magwabeni speaks more about the issue of witchcraft than other authors, he did not mention whether it was a day- witchcraft or night- witchcraft. A case of day- witchcraft could be that of a bird which was sitting on the headboard of Khoro's bed. This incident happened before sunset. The same day Khoro killed the bird by suffocating it, was the day Vho-Dora died complaining of suffocation. Other strange things in this book occurred during the night.

1.4.SUMMARY

Tshivenda authors did not clearly distinguish between day and night witch. Though the belief in witchcraft is very much alive, they only refer to it and did not elaborate much on it. One could be of an idea that this is because the belief in witchcraft among the Vhavenda people is deep seated in the hearts

for long time in such a way that when one speaks about witchcraft ,to every Muvenda he is referring to a night witchcraft.

2. GENDER OF MULOI

2.1.INTRODUCTION

Traditionally women were mostly accused of practising witchcraft ,but from recent investigation ,males were also victims of witchcraft burning. As women generally outnumber males ,there are more female witches than male witches. Many males argued that women kill men once their sons have reached adulthood so that they(women) would remain in control of the family .

2.2.GENDER OF MULOI IN SOME OF TSHIVENDA LITERARY WORKS

In *U nembelela ha shamba* Mabula's grandmother was accused as a witch by the family of *Liipfiliavhomba* and Mabula was expelled from her in-laws because her grandmother was alleged as a witch. Later on the family of *Liipfiliavhomba* ,after a thorough investigation found out that Vho-*Liipfiliavhomba* and his grandson *Ndiyafhi* were killed by Vho-*Nyadzanga*(Vho-*Liipfiliavhomba*'s wife)so that she would enjoy the wealth of his son, *Nndanduleni* alone.

The knowledge of witchcraft is generally believed to have been acquired from the maternal side .It is therefore not surprising that women teach their daughters witchcraft practices .The *Vhavenḁa* go to an extent of saying: *Vhasadzi ndi vhaloi* ,*vhanna ndi zwivhimbili*(women are witches and men are *zwivhimbili*

(male witch)

Witchcraft practice starts from 20 years and above .It is however important to note that at a very early age a mother tests her baby whether he could be a witch or not as follows:

The baby is thrown against the wall ,and if he clings to the wall, such a baby will grow up as a witch and will remain a witch until he dies .Such a baby, when he grows up ,is not in a position to control his witchcraft practice.

Ralushai et al(1996:14)

Night-witch is hereditary and always operate at night. They are said to originate from a common ancestral root and the *vhuloi* is passed on from mother to daughter or grandmother to granddaughter in her lineage. After her death, the mother may choose only one of her children for this purpose but she may also pass on *vhuloi* to all her offspring. When she bears a child ,she takes it to the crossroads and leaves it there while goes off to her victim's hut to bewitch her. Gelfend(1967:25-26)

In **Tsha ri vhone**, the witch was a woman, Nyamatamba. Even though Mathivha did not discuss the issues of witchcraft in details ,one could say that Nyamatamba was alleged as a night -witch because her action were influenced by jealousy of not wanting her first born son to share his estate with another.

In **Elelwani**, the suspected witch was a woman, Elelwani, Maumela has shown the effect of the insult *vhuloi* could bring to a person as it happened to Elelwani. As has been clearly shown, Elelwani was accused as a witch by a Zionist Matshinyise, though latter on it was revealed that the Zionist was Elelwani's fiancée'. She was pointed at as a witch by her former fiancée who wanted to win her, which eventually happened.

In **Thilaiwi** the suspected witch was a man, Vho-Rabaḁa, a brother to Thilaiwi's father. Thilaiwi suspected his father's brother to have struck his herd of cattle. As has been thoroughly explained in this dissertation, witches can transform themselves into different forms, so this type of witchcraft would fall under night-witches. The power to cause lightning as Thilaiwi alleged, would be practised by not a day witch who usually buy his medicine stuff from the medicine man. Unfortunately in Thilaiwi there is no place where we ever read about the witchcraft practices of Vho-Rabaḁa except this incident wherein he was stabbed to death by Thilaiwi. Whether Vho-Rabaḁa was a witch or not is not thoroughly outlined.

In **Zwo itwa**, the suspected witch is a man, Vho-Matidze. Mahamba did some excellent work here. Vho-Gumani, who is always a complainant, alleges that Vho-Matidze is a witch who is always behind him and his family. On the other hand Vho-Matidze disagrees to all this accusation in such an extent that their differences were solved by a far away witchdoctor.

In Gundo ,the suspected witch is a woman,Vho-Dora. That Muhangwi was bewitched by Vho-Dora is clearly stated. That Vho-Dora is a witch is clearly shown. It was also revealed that Vho-Dora kept gods who latter on were identified as *matukwane*(zombies), which acted as messengers of Vho-Dora. These gods were kept behind her house in a thick bush. Khoro's wife, Muhangwi used to cook for them. Khoro accused Vho-Dora to be responsible at bewitching his wife Muhangwi. Khoro fought strongly to free his wife from witchcraft bondage and won the battle, though the suspected witch ,Vho-Dora did not live long to see the success of her victim.

2.2.SUMMARY

The witch may be of either sex but are generally women. Night witchcraft is a born witch taught in early infancy by his mother. It is not surprising that women teach their daughters witchcraft practices. A day witchcraft is always a men since women cannot easily buy medicine. The Venda saying that Vhasadzi ndi vhaloi,vhanna ndi zwivhimbili(Women are witches and men are zwivhimbili) summed it all. Van Warmelo.(1989:454) define vhimbila as:

Go about and by means of magic drugs cohabit with females
in their sleep.

From the literary works shown above ,it is clear that most of Tshivenda authors agree that generally women are witches. It is only in Zwo itwa were the accused witch is a man, whereas in others literary works , the accused are women .this further emphasised that witches may either be men or women.

3.METHOD OF PUNISHING A WITCH

3.1.INTRODUCTION

Witchcraft is considered as a wrong of the highest order in the community and it is legally punishable with death. In the past , traditional courts used to try cases of witchcraft .Once an individual was found guilty of practising witchcraft ,he was sentenced by this court.

An alleged witch would try everything he could in order to cleanse himself from this insult of being accused as a witch .It is the belief of Vhavenda people that once a person had been accused as a witch ,he could be cleansed at Phafula. This does not mean that if one is pointed out to be a witch by the diviner at Phafula, he would be satisfied but generally speaking many people regard Phafula as their ultimate destiny once they are accused of practising witchcraft.

Traditionally once the diviner had pointed out a witch part of his head was partially shaved as an indication that he was a witch ,but this could be avoided by paying a special fee by the people accompanying the witch. Upon reaching home, they would proceed to the royal village where the traditional court could impose a fine or order the witch to leave the area and settle somewhere. In some extreme cases ,the witch could be killed as follows:

- By being tied to a rock and pushed into a pool of water by a hooked stick, the purpose being to draw the witch.

- During the time of Ngungunyane, a witch would be wrapped with grass and the grass would be set alight and he would then run away and die in the bush. Ralushai et al (1995:29)
- The witch would be taken to the bush where he would collect firewood and this firewood would be packed around him. A fire would then be made and he would then be roasted to death.
- In Bolobedu area if a witch commits an offence, twice or more, he is taken to a bush by tribal police to collect firewood which is brought to a selected spot where a hole is dug and fire is made. The witch is ordered to get into the hole with hands downwards. The soil is then thrown into the hole covering the lower part of the body up to the hip. Embers are then placed in front of the witch roasting him to death. Ralushai et al (1995:29).

During 1990, when the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela was released from prison, there was chaos in the former Republic of Venda. People who were alleged as practising witchcraft were hunted and their houses together with all their belongings were set alight. The unfortunate ones were killed by angry mobs led by the so-called comrades. Those who escaped were accommodated at various police stations. This prompts one to ask if the allegation levelled against the culprits was really based on substantial evidence.

3.2.METHOD OF PUNISHING A WITCH IN SOME OF TSHIVENDA

LITERARY WORKS

In **Thilaiwi**, Vho-Rabaḁa was alleged as a witch by Thilaiwi simply because his herd of cattle were struck by a lightning. It is a belief among the Vhavenda people that lightning is caused by witches. On the other side it is a common knowledge that lightning especially in our area is very common. Immediately Thilaiwi heard that his cattle were struck by a lightning, he went to his father's brother, Vho-Rabaḁa and killed him with an assegai. Nowhere in the book have we heard about the cases of witchcraft pertaining to Vho-Rabaḁa. In this case Vho-Rabaḁa was the unfortunate victim. Thilaiwi was thus sentenced a reasonable jail term (ten years) for killing this innocent man. (Demana, 1973:60)

In **U nembelela ha shamba**, Mabula was expelled from her in-laws because her grandmother was alleged to be a witch. Mabula's grandmother was pointed out to be a witch simply because she failed to jump over the rope which was put up by the divine man. Though the writer did not tell us her exact age, she was old enough that to jump to the required height would be impossible. When she entangled herself and fell down it was evident enough for them that she was a witch. As a result, Mabula was expelled from Llipfiljavhomba's family as she was a grand daughter of a witch.

In **Elelwani**, chief Ratshihule expelled Elelwani from his kraal after she was pointed out to be a witch by the Zionist Matshinyise. Neither Elelwani nor her parents were witches. The people of Makovheni were convinced that Elelwani was a witch. The expulsion of Elelwani from the chief's kraal was a blessing in disguise in Vele, Elelwani's former fiancée. It is quite clear that though Elelwani was publicly pointed out to be a witch by the Zionist, she was not a

witch at all. But the mere fact that she was pointed at as a witch was enough for chief Ratshihule to expel her. The Zionist Matshinyise used the insult of witchcraft for personal gains. At the end Matshinyise who was Vele obtained what he was looking for.

In **Zwo itwa** Vho-Gumani killed Vho-Matidze for alleging him to be a witch. Chief Ravhudzulo was also killed for trying to intervene between the two men. It is quite obvious that the chief's right hand man, Vho-Rathiyaya and the witchdoctor Malukuta, were behind the killings. That Vho-Matidze bewitched Nditsheni is also not true. Nditsheni fell from the donkey Skofani, and did not report this to his parents. His report only mentioned that he was bitten by Vho-Matidze. The other cause of Nditsheni's death was that he did not receive the necessary treatment immediately he was bitten by a snake. Had he received the necessary treatment, he would not have died. Vho-Matidze was blamed for his death and was stabbed to death by Vho-Gumani as a form of revenge.

After the death of Vho-Matidze and chief Ravhudzulo we hear Vho-Malukuta saying:

Yo, zwino ashu masheleni ri do a tevhelela lini ngei Phafula?

Kani ri lindela avha vho vhulahlwaho vha tshi pomoka we a

tatshilela Gumani uri ri do dzhia I nnzhi? Hafhu rine ri kha thumbu; thumbu

vhakoma.

Oh ,when will we go and fetch our money at Phafula. Should we wait for the bereaved family to point out who bewitched Gumani so that we could take it when it is more? Sub-headman! we are working for our stomach; stomach.

Sub-headman Rathiyaya and Malukuta is quite clear that they were only behind money and nothing else. They did not mind whether some people have lost their lives or not, all they needed was money .It can also be seen that Vho-Matidze was killed for nothing .

1.2.SUMMARY

Of all the literary works ,I had gone through, the alleged witch was punished by different method. As has been shown, in “ Tsha ri vhone” ,Nyama^Λtamba has been expelled from her in-laws because of witchcraft practices .Vho- Raba^Λda was stabbed by an assegai to death by Thilaiwi because he was suspected as a witch. Thilaiwi was also jailed for ten years for killing his father’s brother Mabula was expelled from ^ΛLiipfiliavhomba family because her grandmother was accused as a witch. Vho-Matidze was stabbed to death by Vho-Gumani because he was accused as a witch and believed to have caused all the misfortune suffered by Vho-Gumani

Vho-Dora was killed by Khoro in a strange manner. Vho-Dora visited Khoro in a form of a bird. When Khoro killed the bird by suffocating it, Vho-Dora died instantly.

From the above observation it could be seen that Tshivenda^Λ authors show that witchcraft act is a punishable offence .Though the methods used varied but the suspected witches were not left on their own. This clearly shows that Tshivenda^Λ

authors are also aware that witchcraft practice among the Vhavenda is a punishable offence. Of all the writers, Magwabeni emerged as the only one whose victim was treated fairly though she lost her dear life. Other characters in the above literary works were either expelled or killed.

4.IS WITCHCRAFT A MYTH OR A REALITY?

4.1.INTRODUCTION

This question is very simple to answer among the Vhavenda speaking people. Averagely speaking 9 out 10 believe that witchcraft is not a myth but a reality .It has already been said in the introduction that the Vhavenda all know who are the recognised witches and will secretly point them out for you .From the interview held with different Vhavenda people it is quite interesting to find that people would give an example of witchcraft practice which took place even recently .The following are some findings regarding whether witchcraft is a myth or a reality:

4.1.1. A CASE OF AN EDUCATOR AT TSHIVHASE SECONDARY SCHOOL.

In 1981,an educator X at Tshivhase secondary School maintains that he was tipped by his friend that he will be visited by witches at school because he was a book-worm .It is said that witches were grumbling as they were failing to find him at home, as he was by then sleeping in the school library with some of his friends studying. The educator confessed that at that time he did not take the matter very seriously. The educator continued with his studies at the school. One early in the morning, at about 4 a.m. when he was going to the toilet, he was greeted by five naked women next to the boys' toilets. Some of the women were those he was told about by his friend. He was amazed and only looked at them and never said a word to them. He immediately returned to the library where he left some of his friends and never told them what happened at the toilet. He attributed his survival to God who protected him from the witches. It is maintain that those who come face to face with the witch, usually encounter

bad things in their lives. This educator is happy to be alive today because if you could see a witch you either become seriously ill and eventually die. (Interview held with an educator, 46 years at Tshivhase Secondary School on 2004-10-02.)

4.1.2.A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT RADALI VILLAGE

One of my informant, a labourer woman at Tshivhase Tea Estate, who reside at Ha-Radali village which is under Tshivhase Territorial Council maintains that one day she woke up at about 3 a.m. to prepare herself for work at Tshivhase Tea Estate. She maintains that when she descended to the downstairs closed yard, she was greeted by a group of half naked women, seated next to each other. It appeared as if these half naked women failed to ascend the stairs to the upper closed courtyard. She maintains that she did not utter any word to them, she only returned to the house.

When she finally went outside after an hour, they were gone. It is maintained that after this incidence, the woman became seriously ill and she was admitted at Donald Fraser Hospital. Her condition deteriorated in such a way that her brother decided to remove her from the hospital so that she could go with her to consult a traditional expert at Vuwani area. It is further maintained that at Vuwani the woman was healed. Unfortunately the woman is late by now. (Interview held with the deceased brother aged 74 years who reside at Ndarieni village at Makhuvha location on 17 December 2003.)

4.1.3.A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT MUKULA AREA.

It is said that in 1989 ,a lady teacher at Mutavhe Primary School came face to face with a witch at her home at Mukula village. This case is well known at Mukula by young and old . Mukula falls under Tshivhase Territorial council. A lady teacher confessed to me that one day when she woke up early in the morning ,she found a naked woman standing at her closed courtyard. She was found out. The lady teacher did not speak to her, she just looked at her and recognized her. It was still early in the morning.

It is maintained that the lady teacher then called her neighbours to come and witness the witch themselves. People came in large numbers and witnessed this incident themselves. The lady teacher confessed to me that she used some stick with some medicine from an expert witchdoctor and hit the witch at her elbows, knee and the witch started to speak and walk. This case was never reported to the headman or the police.(Interview held with a lady teacher X ,age 62 years old on 2003-12-13.)

4.1.4. A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT TSHILAPFENE AREA.

Tshilapfene area falls under Tshivhase territorial council. It is maintained that in 2001 a group of women who work at Tshivhase Tea Estate saw a group of naked women standing at the gate of a certain young man who was about to be deployed to one of African countries as a peace keeping force. It was still early in the morning while they were on their way to Tshivhase Tea Estate. What is still a shock today at Tshilapfene and its neighbouring areas is that the

intended victim did not last. He was ambushed at one of African country. His death was mourned by millions of fellow South African citizen. Those who knew what happened in 2001 were not surprised when they received the news that he was no more. (Interview held with the deceased friend, age 49 years at Tshilapfene on 2003-12-22.)

4.1.5.A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT VHUFULI AREA

Vhufuli area falls under Tshivhase Territorial council. It is maintain that in 2003 a young girl aged between 16-18 years who was in grade 10 by then, confessed to her teacher that she was a witch. She confessed to me that she and a number of people of mixed sexes gather at night at a nearby ground and receive instructions from her superior, the big witch. She confessed that she sleep little hours at night as she would be called up at night by other witches to go out and perform other manual labour such as 'fetching the wood from the mountain, fetching water while other would be tilling the land if the time is due and fetching soil for decoration purposes etc. She confessed to me that some of the people I knew, who died many years ago were still alive. They have been turned into zombies by her master. Those whom I knew who died while they were still very young were said to have married.

She pointed out to me other two girls who always complain of their uncured illness of falling down as if possessed by the spirits, that they were their victims. Those two girls were treated in that manner because they were at loggerheads with her but they will not kill them. She also confessed to me that her mother was not aware of the whole drama which was taking place. When her mother called at the school in my presence, she was not surprised when she

learnt what her daughter was going through as she had already seen some strange things her daughter spoke about. Her mother went to an extent of mentioning that she once saw some fur next to where her daughter sleep. The young girl confessed that they were furs of a hyena which come and occupy the girl's position when she was out with other witches. What is interesting now is that the girl is a born again Christian at one of the local church at Tshitereke area (interview held at Tshivhase secondary school where the girl was schooling in 2003-03-10.)

4.1.6.A PROPHET /HEALER AT MANIINI AREA

At Maniini, a village on the left hand side of the Punda Maria route, immediately after passing the Thohoyandou Stadium on the way to Kruger National Park, it is maintained that there is a woman who is healing different types of diseases. This woman is said to have been housed at the pastor's house (the owner of the church). What is interesting is that the people who are said to be bewitched are also getting healed. "Thuri, tokoloshi" and snakes are said to be removed from people at day light by the prayer. "Thuri, tokoloshi and snakes are familiars of the witch and it is maintained that they speak before they are driven out. Believers and non-believers visit the church in large numbers as they are healed by this woman through her prayers. (Interview held with one congregant aged 70 years at Tshisaulu village on 2004-01-20)

4.1.7. A CASE OF U TSHELWA (FOUND OUT) AT TSHITEREKE VILLAGE

A male informant interviewed confessed to me that a woman was found out ("u tshelwa") early in the morning naked at the courtyard of Mr X. What it is

still a shock to many people today is that the woman found was about seventy five years old and was found over the other side of the tarred road .When asked why she was there ,it is maintained that she had been left out by other group of witches who after several unsuccessful attempts to enter the courtyard ,they decided to vacate the place, thus leaving the eldest behind before dawn catches them. Her children (adults) were called to the place and witnessed that event. This event of a witch who was found out at Tshitereke attracted people from neighbouring areas such as Vhufuli, Makhuvha, Vondwe and Tshidimbini area and thus making it one of the most common example of witchcraft practices in those areas.(Interviewed held at Tshitereke with the witchdoctor ,aged sixty four years ,who was responsible of letting the found witch go ,on 2003-12-31.)

4.1.8. A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT MUTUVHI VILLAGE

Mutuvhi falls under Vhufuli village but it has its own induna who in turn report at the headman. An interviewee ,an elderly woman aged eighty six (86) years who is still very strong ,confessed to me that she had witnessed a case of witchcraft on a day light .She confessed to me that a certain woman stole a chicken from her neighbours. When her neighbours complained about the stolen chicken, she also helped them with the searching so as to fool them. When the search ended it is maintained that the owner of the chicken promised people who helped her in her search that the person who stole her chicken would be seen by all one day.

The woman who stole the chicken was pregnant at that time of the incident. When it was time for her to gave birth, she gave birth to a black chicken. My informant reiterated to me that what he was saying was not a joke but a true

story which she had witnessed one which she will never forget(Interview held at Mutuvhi village ,with an elderly woman, aged 86 years old on 2004-03-27.)

4.1.9.A CASE OF A MILLIPEDE

One of my informant ,a pastor of a local church maintained that her mother used to practise witchcraft when she was still alive. She used to practise witchcraft with two of her friends .It is maintained that they reached a stage where they agreed to kill their sons through witchcraft means. After they had killed the sons of the two women ,the mother of the remaining son tried to save her son.

It is maintained that she instructed her son not to sleep that night as he would be visited by the witches in the form of a millipede. She instructed her son to keep a burning primus stove with a frying pan the whole night. Her mother told him that he would see three millipedes creeping under the door. It is maintained that the mother instructed her son not to kill the first millipede because it would be her in the form of a millipede. The other remaining two millipedes would be her two friends who would be there to kill him. They should be killed by placing them into the burning fry pan .He was instructed to throw away their ashes the following day.

It is maintained that the young man stay awake the whole night until his visitors arrived at midnight. The young man carried the instruction as instructed ,and only saved the first millipede(her mother)The next day he threw away the ashes of the two burned millipede away. The same day he threw the ashes away ,the two women who visited him in the form of a millipede passed away. The young man believed that her mother was right(interview held with the pastor aged 55 of Makwarela Location on 2004-04-11)

4.1.10. A CASE OF WITCHCRAFT AT THE MAGISTRATE OFFICE.

It has already been said that it is today by law an actionable wrong to accuse anybody as a witch. It is maintained that a certain witchdoctor was arrested for pinpointing that Mr X was a witch. During the court proceeding, the magistrate blamed the witchdoctor why he lied to the people telling them about things which do not exist (witchcraft). It is maintained that the witchdoctor became very angry. It is further maintained that he told the magistrate that because he (magistrate) did not believe that witchcraft exists, he would receive a call from his close relative informing him of some strange event which had cropped out at the magistrate home. It is maintained that soon the magistrate received a telephone call informing him that his first born son was insane. It is maintained that before the magistrate could attend to his problem, he fell down and was treated at the hospital for a shock. This event, though it took place in the late seventies, was witnessed by many people who attended that court. (interviewed held with the relative of the magistrate, a man aged fifty five (55) years old on 2004-03-08.

2.SUMMARY

These cases are just a minute in the ocean, as there are many cases at different areas which support that witchcraft is alive and kicking. The examples of cases mentioned above are cases only at Tshivhase area. Similar cases are also found at different areas. Just before we reach Tshilidzini Hospital after we have crossed Dzindi River on the left hand side of the route to Kruger National Park, there is an area known as "Itsani" which means to go down. Though it is today an area open for all citizen who want to stay there, formerly it was not so, the area

was demarcated for all those people who were accused as witches and who were accommodated at various police stations because of witchcraft accusation. These people never returned to their place of birth, they were given residence at Itsani. If you could asked any person who knew Itsani, you would not be surprised if for argument sake want to qualify it, he would asked, "Itsani vhaloini?" (where there are witches). What is quite interesting in the above cases is that the majority of people found were women. This however does not sent a signal that all witches are women, there are cases, as shown above which involves "tshivhimbili" (a male witch). All the above cases of witchcraft are very frightening and as such they won't be swept over the carpet as if they never happened. I have no doubt in my mind that witchcraft is a reality and not a myth.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1.FINDINGS

The aim of this study was to analyse witchcraft in some of Tshivenda literary works.

The following observation have been made.

5.1.1. There are few Tshivenda literary works which speak about witchcraft. The theme of witchcraft is seldom visited. Most of Tshivenda literary works concentrate on other themes such as love, robbery, corruption, perseverance etc. It is high time that the Vhavana authors be encouraged to write more on witchcraft as this issue is still giving many people headache. The more literary works about witchcraft in Tshivenda, the more understanding about witchcraft among the Vhavana people. If the Vhavana authors could be encouraged to write more stories about witchcraft either from a negative side or a positive side, I believe it could help the new generation to face witchcraft issue from another angle which could yield good results.

Of all the literary works I had visited, only two concentrated on the issue of witchcraft from the onset. The two literary works are *Zwo itwa* and *Gundo* respectively. The other literary works such as *Tsha ri vhone*, *Thilaiwi*, *U nembelela ha shamba* and *Elelwani* speak very little about witchcraft. The different authors of the above mentioned literary works only concentrated much on how the insult of being named a witch could have an effect on the individual's life. In *Tsha ri vhone* Nyama^atamba was expelled from her in-laws because of witchcraft allegation. In *Elelwani*, *Elelwani* who was the most favourable wife of chief

Ratshihule, was also expelled from chief's kraal because of witchcraft allegation. In U nembelela ha shamba, Mabula was also expelled from her in-laws because her grandmother was accused as a witch and was alleged to be responsible of the death of Vho-Liipfiliavhomba and his grandson, Ndiyafhi. In Thilaiwi, Thilaiwi killed his father's brother because he alleged him to be responsible of lightning which struck his herd of cattle. It is quite interesting to see that though the abovementioned authors wrote little about witchcraft in the different literary works, they all show the effect of witchcraft among the people

5.1.2. Most of Tshivenda literary works do not show explicitly death as a method of punishing the witch. The common punishment of witchcraft accusation in most of the above literary works is expulsion. In Tsha ri vhone, Elelwani, U nembelela ha shamba, the alleged culprits were expelled from their in-laws because of witchcraft accusation. It is only in Thilaiwi and in Zwo itwa where the alleged witches were killed. Vho-Rabaḁa, Thilaiwi father's brother was killed by an assegai by Thilaiwi because he was accused of being responsible of the lightning which killed his cattle. On the other hand Vho-Gumani killed Vho-Matidze because of witchcraft allegation. All in all it is quite clear that most Tshivenda literary works show that expulsion is the most common form of punishment as far as cases of witchcraft are concerned.

5.1.3. Tshivenda literary works do not explicitly show cases of zombies (tshidudwane). Van Warmelo (1989:394) define tshidudwane as:

Malignant water-sprite or spirit, in shape like a Human being but with only one arm, leg, eye, ear Etc.; supposed to dwell in lake Fundudzi and at the Phiphidi falls, and to be wont to go about at night and throw stones, especially wherever it sees a light shining in a hut.

Ralushai et al(1995:14) define a zombie as follows:

A zombie is a person who is believed to have died, but because of the power of a witch, he is resurrected, but he works for the person who has turned him into a zombie. To make it impossible for him to communicate with other people, the front front part of his tongue is cut off so that he cannot speak.

From the selected Tshivenda literary works I had gone through, cases of zombies are very few. Where cases of zombies are raised, it would be for reference purposes. e.g. In Zwo itwa Mahamba (1995:32) mentioned about the issue of zombie when Vho-Nemadzivhanani says:

“...Nne arali a songo tou vha Semani we a fhira a a tshi nnzhenisa hayani ndi musi ndo lala nnda.
Vhaloi vhone vho vha vha tshi do vha vho tou nnzhiela tsini. Huñwe zwino ro vha ri tshi amba ndo no vha litukwane ho tou sala u tshewa lulimi.”
(If it was not Semani who passed by and took me

home ,I would have slept outside. Witches would have less problem to take me. Maybe this time I would have been turned into a zombie waiting only for them to cut my tongue.)

It is quite clear that the above citation is just a reference to a zombie and nothing else .If one reads the above paragraph without a pre knowledge of a zombie one ends without knowing what a zombie is all about. Cases of this nature are very common in Tshivenda literary works. A detailed description about a zombie is rare to find in Tshivenda literary works. Magwabeni on the other hand is the only author who tried than the rest to write about zombies in his book, Gundo. Musaido, Rungani and Majoni fit the description of a zombie. Even here Magwabeni did not elaborate much about zombies .It is therefore imperative for Tshivenda authors to start writing about issues of zombies so as to enlighten even the new generation about some issues which are related to witchcraft.

5.1.4. Of all the literary works I had gone through, even those which have a detailed discussion about the issue of witchcraft i.e. Gundo and Zwo itwa ,they do not differentiate between night witchcraft and day witchcraft. In other words they all make reference to witchcraft but they are silent about the type of witchcraft they are referring to. It is high time that Tshivenda literary works include this important knowledge as it will help the new generation to comprehend the issue of witchcraft from the onset.

5.2.RECOMMENDATIONS

The trial of witchcraft is today prohibited by South African law(The witchcraft Suppression Act ,No 3 of 1957 as amended in terms of witchcraft Suppression Amendment Act, No 50 of 1970.) but the belief in witchcraft still persists.

Witchcraft is as a result combated by employing necklace method and burning houses which belong to them. Many of the accused are no longer staying at their birth place ,they have been assisted by the police to seek an alternative accommodation at various place such as Itsani, Maniini, Muledane and Maungani etc. Itsani ,now a populous area started as an area of witches ,especially those who had been housed at various police stations in the former Republic of Venda. What can be done to stop the killing of the alleged witches? There are a number of recommendations based on the findings of this study regarding the issue of witchcraft

5.2.1.The court of law should be replaced by a traditional court .In the olden days cases of witchcraft were tried by the chief .If the case was too difficult to resolve, the practice of consulting a diviner from another tribe especially from Tsonga people was the order of the day. These cases generally result in the imposition of a fine and frequently in banishment. while compensation may also be awarded .Formerly most accusations of witchcraft led to a death sentence. Nowadays , cases of witchcraft are no longer handled by chiefs and his councillors but they are tried by the court of law. The accused is generally not found guilty but the plaintiff could be jailed a reasonable jail term or a

reasonable amount. I strongly recommend that chiefs and their headmen together with their councillors should be empowered by the Justice department to try cases of witchcraft at their respective kraals. If this is done, both the accused and the plaintiff would receive a fair judgement than what is happening today at the court of law. If both the accused and the plaintiff are not satisfied, they would be referred to the well known specialist diviner especially in a Tsonga tribe where their case would be resolved amicably. If these practises could be revisited, cases of witchcraft could be reduced dramatically.

5.2.2. Diviners and witchdoctors should be recognised by the court of law.

Diviners and witchdoctors play a very significant role as far as witchcraft is concerned. They are the ones who point witches and partially shave their heads. Usually diviners work hand in hand with chiefs or headmen e.g In *Zwo Irwa*, the induna Rathiyaya accompanied Vho-Matidze (accused) and Vho-Gumani (the plaintiff) to the Tsonga divine man, Timhaka. (Mahamba 1973:)). Again in Elelwani, induna, N_Aemavhulani was the one who find the Zionist, Matshinyise (Maumela, 1960:)

When cases of witchcraft are tried at the court of law, the diviners are not even called and their assistance is not even thought off. If the accused could mention that he was pointed at by the diviner, such a diviner or a witchdoctor could be jailed a reasonable jail term for pointing at the witch. My recommendation here is that if the government wants to try cases of witchcraft, they should do this hand in hand with the diviners or witchdoctors. Today cases

of witchcraft are not given a fair hearing as the court of law usually dismiss it in favour of the accused and this prompts people to take the law into their hands and consequently unnecessary death occurs.

5.2.3. The accused should be mentioned and made known to public. Usually the court of law would conceal the name of the accused to the public in fear that the public would go wild because the accused would have been free and the plaintiff would have been found guilty. Because the accused has been freed, he would continue with his work of practising witchcraft. This time he would double his performance as he knew that the court of law would be unable to prove it. But if the accused could be made known to the public, he would watch his steps and the level of witchcraft would drop. The government should make it a point that the accused if found guilty though it is very difficult, should be mentioned and made known to the public. As stated earlier on, the government should allow the diviners and witchdoctors to name the witches. The public should know who these witches are. If the name of witches could be publicised, this would reduce cases of witchcraft as they would be afraid to perform their dangerous task.

— should refrain from accommodating witches During 1990, a

accommodation to witches should be done by the chiefs or headmen. I have no doubt in my mind that if the alleged witches would have been accommodated at the chief's kraal or the headman, those who were innocent would by now be staying at their respective homes. But because they were referred to the court of law, they have banished themselves for good.

5.2.5. The witchcraft suppression act should be repealed. According to the law of South Africa, cases of witchcraft must be referred to the formal courts. Cases of witchcraft now come under the witchcraft Suppression Act, No. 3 of 1957 as amended in terms of witchcraft Suppression Act No. 50 of 1970. This piece of legislation has remained unchanged to this day. The following are two examples of offence which fall under this act:

Any person who-

(a) Imputes to any other person the causing, by supernatural means, of any disease in, or injury or damage to any person or thing or who name or indicates any other person as a wizard,

(b) Employ or solicits any witchdoctor, witch-finder or any other person to name or indicate any person as a wizard shall be guilty of an offence and liable to conviction.

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