

## **Intercultural Conflict and Traditional Leadership in the Indigenous Communities of South Africa**

Munzhedzi James MAFELA  
University of South Africa, South Africa

**Abstract:** The choice and installation of a leader differs from one group to another. Whereas some groups adopt the Western way of choosing a leader, some stick to their traditional cultural practices. The West considers all members of the community for a leadership role, whereas many African cultures do not consider all members of the community. In many instances, a traditional leader is identified in the royal house among the Africans. South African indigenous communities abide by their cultural practices when it comes to the choice of a chief or king. They choose their leader among the children of the deceased leader. The role of members of the royal family plays a dominant role in this regard. Cultural conflict is created when the Western way of choosing a leader is imposed on indigenous communities. The article seeks to highlight the conflict that results from mixed cultural practices. A literary work will be analyzed to illustrate the arguments.

**Keywords:** Bantu affairs, colonialists, chief, heir, indigenous communities, intercultural conflict, marriage, Tshivenda custom, traditional leadership, traditional practices

### **1. Introduction**

Nations worldwide practice various forms of leadership in their communities in order to maintain the peace. Cultural groups have different methods of identifying leaders. For example, Western nations claim to be democratic in their choice of leaders as they involve all citizens in the process. Communities that still abide by their age old traditions follow practices in choosing their leaders that many societies might consider undemocratic. With the introduction of Western practices all over the world, many cultural groups now tend to mix both Western and traditional practices when choosing their leaders. In many instances, this mix of cultures creates tension and conflict in communities, which in turn disturbs their prevailing peace. In her Lesson Transcript, Sullivan (n.d) explains Western culture as a culture that has its origin in Europe and is characterized by democracy, rational thinking, individualism, Christianity, capitalism, modern technology, human rights and scientific thinking. She further mentions that Christianity is a major component of Western culture. African culture on the other hand is regarded as an embodiment of different values with all of them related to each other, for example, social, moral, religious, political, aesthetic and economic values of a culture. Africans hold kinship relation highly; they live a collective life style. Political values are linked with religious, social and moral values (Idang, 2015).

South Africa is characterized by traditional and Western forms of leadership: Western forms have not succeeded in assimilating the traditional forms. Although indigenous communities are

found in both urban and rural areas, the majority of indigenous people remain in rural areas and are led by traditional leaders. Urban areas are characterized by Western forms of leadership. Even though South Africa is considered a Christian country, a religion that originated in the West, its indigenous communities, especially those in rural areas, still respect the traditional methods of choosing their leaders. The indigenous forms of government show characteristics of traditional practices (Wiseman, 1995). According to these traditional practices, leaders are born, not elected. There are rules that guide the rightful heir to leadership. Traditional leadership is inherited through kinship ties (Seara-Robitaille, n.d.). Transition from leader to leader is smooth and peaceful in this process. However, the West preaches that a leader must be chosen by the members of the community. Usually, this is accompanied by political parties contesting the position. This practice divides communities into opposing factions. The mixture of the two, that is traditional and Western forms of leadership, causes conflict that disturbs the peace of these communities. In South Africa, leadership at national level and in urban areas has adopted Western practices, and leaders are elected. In rural areas, however, a mixture of traditional and Western practices is followed. This paper seeks to highlight the conflict that arises from mixed forms of leadership practice, i.e. Western and traditional forms. A textual analysis approach to the data is followed and a literary work is used to illustrate the arguments.

## 2. The Concepts ‘Intercultural Conflict’ and ‘Traditional Leadership’

Hall and Hall (1994) mention that all human beings are captives of their culture. This implies that all humans are characterized by one form of culture or another. Culture guides human conduct and is symbolically transmitted, generation to generation, through a learning process (Chan & Starosta, 1998). Kim (2005) asserts:

*The ways of being a person are patterned according to the means and practices of a given cultural community, and communities are maintained by these ways of being in the world. Each person is embedded within a variety of sociocultural contexts or cultures (p. 104).*

Culture entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies (Idang, 2015). As a result, cultural practices differ from one group to another. Cultural differences are created and sustained by a complex set of forces that are deeply embedded within a culture’s members, such as history, ecology, technology, biology, institutional networks and interpersonal communication patterns (Lustig & Koester, 1999). Differences in culture do not prevent people from living together as this is experienced all over the world, be it in the place of work, at schools and universities, in settlement areas and so on. When different cultural groups live together, they are bound to be involved in intercultural communication. People involved in such communication are expected to be tolerant of each other. Gallois et al. (1995) observe that “Interactants from different cultures will, to a greater or lesser extent, endorse different and perhaps incompatible values, different relationship styles, and different communication styles and rules” (p. 125). In this regard, Burgoon and Hubbard (2005) argue that intercultural communication involves

communicators adjusting and influencing the behaviors of each other, partly through the lens of expectations. However, in some instances intercultural communication gives rise to intercultural conflict. Intercultural conflict is the opposition of two or more cultural viewpoints; it takes place between people belonging to different cultural groups or between two cultural groups (Mafela & Ntuli, 2017). Dai and Chen (2017) believe that intercultural conflict may arise from inappropriate behaviors or contradictory expectations. In the South African context, it arises from inappropriate behaviors and when people from the West look down on the traditional practices of indigenous people.

Khunou (2009) mentions that the institution of traditional leadership embodies the preservation of culture, traditions, customs and values. Seara-Robitaille (n.d.) defines a traditional leader as an individual who by virtue of his or her ancestry occupies the position of leader in an area, and has authority over the people who live in that area. Traditional leaders are expected to ensure the welfare of the tribe. Their practices differ from one area to another. In many parts of the world, traditional leadership is associated with rural areas. The more “civilized” societies associate traditional leadership with backwardness.

### 3. Background Information on Traditional Leadership in South Africa

Traditional leadership in South Africa had been practiced for some time before the arrival of the colonialists. Bizana-Tutu (2008) asserts that “... South Africa was for many years before the White settlers, ruled by a succession of kings such as Shaka, Makhado and Sekhukhune who were regarded as the sole source of political power” (p. 8). During the pre-colonial era, traditional leaders played an important role in traditional life as they were responsible for the daily administration of their area as well as for the lives of indigenous people (Seara-Robitaille, n.d.). This is emphasized by Khunou (2009), who observes that traditional leaders and traditional authorities were important institutions that gave effect to traditional life. These leaders were not elected to the position; they inherited it from their ancestors. As Seara-Robitaille (n.d.:1) writes:

*During the pre-colonial era, for one to assume the leadership position, one had to be related by a tie of kinship or based on his common ancestry. The traditional leaders qualify for office by their ancestry alone and therefore require no special training.*

The tribe believes that the chief or king rules them with the guidance of the ancestors. In this regard, Mönnig (1978) writes about the Basotho ba Leboa’s (Bapedi) chief or king:

*As their hereditary ruler, his position is derived from antiquity and is confirmed by divine authority. His authority lies mainly in his ritual power as the only link between the tribe and their most active gods, his ancestors (p. 252).*

Bapedi is one of the ten indigenous groups of South Africa. They are concentrated in the Limpopo, Mpumalnga and Gauteng provinces. Their language is Sesotho sa Leboa, also known as Sepedi.

Regarding the belief in the role of ancestors, Gyekye (1996) also states:

*The chief of the African state is, traditionally, both the political head and the religious head. ... The stool (throne) he occupies is believed to be an ancestral stool. This is the source of the great dignity, respect, and veneration with which he is always treated (p.109).*

Although the heir is born a leader of the community, this is not public knowledge; even some members of the royal family may not know of this. However, people know that the heir is the son of a chief's or a king's wife whose marriage proceeds were paid by the community. In many instances, this woman would be a close relative of the royal family. The *makhadzi* (eldest sister of the reigning or late chief) and the *khotsimunene* (younger brother of the reigning or late chief) are responsible for designating one of the sons to be the heir. But, the *makhadzi*'s word is final in this regard because she is the one who communicates with the ancestors. There might be some differences before the identification of the heir, but once he is chosen by the *makhadzi*, all members of the community take the decision as final and any differences are resolved. *Makhadzi* and *khotsimunene* are terms in Tshivenda, one of the indigenous minority languages of South Africa. Tshivenda is spoken mainly in the Limpopo and Gauteng provinces, and the southern parts of Zimbabwe. Like other indigenous languages in the Republic of South Africa, together with English and Afrikaans, it has been given the status of an official language.

The advent of the colonialists affected traditional leadership in South Africa. The powers of traditional leaders were reduced. The identification of the heir was no longer the responsibility of the *makhadzi* and the *khotsimunene*. The colonialists regarded the African way of choosing a traditional leader as outdated. The Western system thus divides indigenous people in that enlightened Africans tend to accept it, whereas traditionalists abide by their cultural practices. In some African societies, both the Western and traditional African systems have been used, leading to dualism. Sanders (1983) reveals that most African countries labor under the "system" of legal dualism, i.e. tribal government on the one hand, and Western styled central government on the other. Settlers used traditional authorities to control Africans. This dualism was alien to the indigenous Africans and proved divisive. Sanders (1983) adds that the two types of government, i.e. the traditional and Western, show considerable differences. The Western government exerted its authority through the medium of traditional rulers. In the case of the Bapedi, Mönnig (1978) observes:

*The greatest effect of the chieftainship and the whole political organization of the Pedi resulted from the Bantu Administration Act, 1927, as amended; which provides for the Governor General (now State President), to be recognized as the Paramount Chief of all the Bantu in South Africa, for the recognition or appointment by him of chiefs and headmen, and for the granting of administrative powers and civil and criminal jurisdiction to such chiefs and headmen over their tribes (pp. 250-251).*

With the introduction of the Western system of choosing a leader, indigenous Africans forfeited the power to designate heirs in their communities; this became the responsibility of the State

President. The State President would choose a person who supported the Western system even if he did not qualify to be a chief or king according to the rules of the culture of the particular community. In effect, the policy has been to appoint as successor to the chief the person who, but for the discretionary powers of the State President, would be entitled to succeed (Mönnig, 1978). Although the chief and his council administered the affairs of the tribe, the supreme political and judicial authority was the European administration acting through the Bantu Affairs Commissioners (Mönnig, 1978, p.251). The Western form of choosing a leader disturbed the peaceful choice of heir by Africans themselves. The position of the heir became an issue that brought conflict.

#### 4. Intercultural Conflict and Traditional Leadership

Currently, there are many chieftainship or kingship disputes in South Africa. The peace that used to reign among communities is fast disappearing as people are no longer willing to abide by the practices of choosing an heir. They regard the Western practice as preferable. Some are so attracted by the Western economy that they involve themselves in corruption. These disputes create division between members of the royal family, with sisters and brothers turning against each other, and members of the community forming opposing groups. The current government establishes commission after commission in attempts to resolve such disputes. With the sole reliance on the Western practice of choosing an heir, these disputes are not satisfactorily resolved. However, the government is attempting to preserve the culture of respect for indigenous practices with regard to the designation of an heir. This is a difficult task because members of some communities see Western democracy as a solution even if it cannot resolve their disputes.

In his novel *Vhuhosi vhu tou Bebelwa* (One is born to be a chief or king), Maumela (1976) addresses the problem of ignoring traditional practices to do with the choice of a traditional leader. In this regard, Mafela (2005) writes:

*In the narrative, the author depicts a chieftainship dispute and bribery among the Vhavenda leaders. The author abides by the traditional Tshivenda customs that a chief is not elected or nominated, but is born one (p. 50).*

After the death of Chief Ragaḁa, a traditional leader of the Ngwenda people, it becomes necessary to identify an heir. Two camps in the royal family emerge because members cannot agree on one person, i.e. the *makhadzi's* camp (those who support the elder sister of the deceased and led by Mukondeleli) and the *khotsimunene's* camp (those who support the brother of the deceased and led by Mantsha). Mantsha knows very well who should be chosen as the leader of the tribe, but ignores the traditional practice of choosing a chief. His choice is Ndaedzo, the eldest son of the late chief. During his discussion with Ndaedzo, he remarks:

*Zwino-ha nḁe ndo ḁa u ni vhudza zwauroi vuhosi ha hone a ho ngo lungama inwi, ho lungama murathu waḁu Mulindathavha. Naho e inwi mutuka muhulwane hafhano muḁini, a ni tshithu, vhukoma ho lungama Mulindathavha. Ngauri ni ḁwana zwanu ni*

*sa athu u qivha milayo ya Tshivenda, thariwe ni do mmudzisa uri ndi ngani zwi tshi itwa nga u ralo. Hai, ni songo ri zwi khou sokou itiwa, zwi bva kha vhubvo ha thakha yo malaho mme anu vha tshi da hafhano mutani wa ha Ragaḁa (Maumela, 1976, p.27-28).*

(For now, I have come to tell you that the chieftainship position is not yours, it is for your half-brother Mulindathavha. Even if you are the eldest son, you are nothing in this family, the chieftainship position is for Mulindathavha. You might ask me if it is to be done like that because you are still young. No, do not think that it is done without a purpose, it emanates from the marriage proceeds paid towards your mother when she was married to the Ragaḁa family.)

This reveals that being the eldest son of the chief does not mean that one is automatically the heir. According to the Tshivenda culture, a traditional leader is decided by the source of marriage proceeds paid for the wife of the chief. Vhavenda are polygamists, especially the traditional leaders. The marriage proceeds of one of the chief's wives are paid by the royal house, and this woman is the one who gives birth to the heir. The other women's marriage proceeds are paid by the chief himself. Their children are therefore not in line to be chosen as the chief of the tribe, even if born before the son of the woman whose marriage proceeds come from the royal house. Marriage proceeds for Ndaedzo's mother were not paid by the royal family; Ndaedzo does not therefore qualify to be the heir. Mantsha knows this very well, but wants Ndaedzo to be the chief because he (Mantsha) will benefit financially from the arrangement.

At a meeting of the royal house to choose the heir, Mantsha proposes the name of Ndaedzo for the chieftainship position, because the latter has promised him money. *Makhadzi* (Mukondeleli) and her followers argue that this is the wrong choice; they believe that Mulindathavha is the rightful person. When defending the choice of Mulindathavha as the heir, Londololani (Ndaedzo's half-sister) states:

*Nna vhone vho-khotsimunene namusi vho dzhenwa nga'ni? Vha Muvenda a qivhaho milayo ya Tshivenda zwavhudi, zwino vha lilela'ni u fhiritanya mafhungo ane a tou vha khagala? Vhuhosi hovhu nga pfanelo ndi hanga nxe uno, Londolani, mubebwa nga Vho-Ragaḁa. ... Ngauri vhuhosi nxe ho nkunda nga u vha musadzi, ndi vhu xea Mulindathavha we mme awe vha vhuya mutani wa khotsi anga nga thakha yanga (Maumela, 1976, p.36).*

(What is happening to you today, uncle? You are a Muvenda who knows Tshivenda tradition very well; so why do you want to create problems in matters which are obvious? In reality, this position of chieftainship belongs to me, Londolani, daughter of Ragaḁa. ... I am handing over the position to Mulindathavha, whose mother got married to my father with marriage proceeds paid for me, because as a woman I could not be the chief.)

Londolani preaches that people must respect Tshivenda practices. According to Tshivenda custom, she ought to have been designated as the heir, but as a woman she was overlooked. For



this reason, Mulindathavha should be the heir because his mother's marriage proceeds were paid with the *lobola* paid for Londolani. Mukondeleli supports her niece:

*Vho-khotsimunene vha songo vhona vha tshi vho ṭoda u dzhenisa mufhirifhiri kha mafhungo aya, vha vho ṭodou sokou zwifha. Mazwifhi avho ha nga shumi ngauri riṇe ri khou zwi ḍivha zwauri mme a Ndaedzo vho malwa nga dza maandḁ, zwino a nga dzhena nga liḥio vuhosini? Ra ralo na shango ḽi ḍo ri pfela'fhi? Riṇe a ri humi kha ḽa uri khosi ri ḍivha e Mulindathavha (Maumela, 1976, p.36).*

(Uncle, do not create problems in these matters and start lying. Your lies will not help because we know that Ndaedzo's mother's marriage proceeds were paid by my father himself. How can he become the chief of the people? How will people view us if we continue behaving like this? As for us, we maintain that Mulindathavha is the chief of the people.)

Mukondeleli makes people aware that Mantsha has created conflict in the royal house by telling lies. She mentions that Ndaedzo cannot be the chief because his mother's marriage proceeds were paid by the late chief (Ragaḁa) himself. She reiterates that they will continue to uphold Mulindathavha as chief designate. The arguments of the two sides confuse the king's representative. However, Mantsha mentions that his late brother told him that Ndaedzo should be the heir. He even recites a Tshivenda proverb: "*Ipfi ḽa mufu a ḽi pfukhwi*" (People should abide by what the deceased has said). Although Vhavenda understand this proverb, Mukondeleli, Londolani and the majority of the royal house do not agree with Mantsha. The representative of the king suggests that the matter be taken to the king himself for a final decision. Although the *makhadzi* and her followers argue that there is no need for this, as should have the final word in this matter, in the end the meeting accepts the idea of referring it to the king for a final judgement. However, Matsha and Ndaedzo pay a bribe to the king before the meeting takes place between the senior royal house members and the king to ensure that he will make a judgement in their favor. On the day of the judgement, the king points to Ndaedzo as the rightful person for the position of chief. Mukondeleli and her niece are not happy with the judgement and Ndaedzo reigns as the chief of the Ngwenda people amidst continuing conflict that has arisen from general dissatisfaction with his anointment.

After three years of Ndaedzo's reign as chief of the Ngwenda people, the relationship between him and Mantsha sours to the extent that Mantsha visits his sister Mukondeleli and confesses that he erred by recommending Ndaedzo as chief. At a meeting with his sister and Londolani, Mantsha says:

*Zwino ndo ḍa-vho fhanḁ kha vhone khaladzi anga, na kha vhone iwana wa mukomana wanga, u ḍisola kha haya mafhungo a musi ndi tshi fhirifhanya hovhu vhukoma ha hashu. Yowee, vhathu vha hashu ndi khou rabela vhukuma-kuma uri ndi farelwe lufhanga, zwino ro dzula fhanḁ nga tshashu, ri dovhe ri vhe vhathihi, ri lulamise mafhungo haya a muḍi washu, ra sa ralo vha matongoni vha ḍo ri vhoneḽa'fhi? (Maumela, 1976, p.127).*

(Now I come to you my sister, and you my brother's daughter, to express regret for having created problems in our chieftainship. Please, my people, I really ask you to forgive me, right now, together as relatives, so that we may be one again and correct our family's matters. If we do not do this, what will the ancestors think of us?)

Meanwhile, Mukondeleli, as the *makhadzi* of the royal house, continues to visit the king in order to impress upon him that he has made a mistake by installing Ndaedzo as chief of the Ngwenda people. At one of these meetings, King Thavhakhulu tells Mukondeleli and Londolani that it is not possible to remove Ndaedzo from the position because his name has already been registered by the Commissioner. Thavhakhulu is referring to the Commissioner of Bantu Affairs who represents the State President. In this regard the King says:

*Hai, a zwi tsha konadzea u lulamisa haya mafhungo. Nhe nahone a thi tsha funa u dzhena haya mafhungo. Tenda vhe vhoiwi nga tshahanu no a khakhisaho. Nhe ndi ri kha litshwe a fhele zwao o rali, ngauri uyu iwana a re ngomu hufhani ndo no mu sumbedza khomishinari na dzina lawe lo no iwawwa henengei* (Maumela, 1976, p.102).

(No, it is not possible to correct this matter. As for me, I do not want to be involved in this matter. It is you yourselves who made a mistake. I say, let us leave this matter as it is, because I have already taken this child to the Commissioner and his name has been registered over there.)

The king mentions this because he knows that he took a bribe from Mantsha and Ndaedzo. He does not want to disappoint them as they may then expose him for accepting a bribe. Mukondeleli and Londolani threaten to take the matter further if he does not deal with this issue. The king changes his mind and brings up another obstacle that could delay the overturning of the appointment:

*Ndo no zwi humbula zwavhudi zwino. Ii, zwi nga itea u a lulamisa haya mafhungo. Fhedzi huiwe zwi nga dzhia tshifhinga tshilapfu, ngauri hu do vha na u mu phumula dzina ngei tshikhuwani na u dovha u sumbedza uyu ane ha fanela u dzheniswa ene. Kana khomishinari ndi tshi mu vhudza a do ri u do thoma u jola mafhungo nga tshavhukoma uri a wane ngoho ya mafhungo* (Maumela, 1976, p.103).

(I have thought about this now. Yes, it may be possible to correct this matter. However, it might take a long time, because his name must be taken off the white man's register, and the one who should be installed as chief must be indicated. The Commissioner might decide to investigate the matter himself when I tell him to find the root cause of the dispute.)

King Thavhakhulu uses delaying tactics to correct the mistake he committed, intending to force Mukondeleli and Londolani to abandon the matter. In the end, however, as the two insist on the



instatement of the rightful person as chief of the Ngwenda people, the king does the right thing and proclaims Mulindathavha to be the chief of the Ngwenda people. Ndaedzo and his family migrate to his uncle's village when he learns that King Thavhakhulu has arrived to anoint Mulindathavha as chief of the Ngwenda people.

## 5. Discussion

The dispute depicted in this novel is caused by a clash between two practices of designating a traditional leader, i.e. the traditional Vhavenda practice and the modern practice. Mantsha is aware of the Tshivenda tradition regarding the choice of an heir in the royal house, but chooses to ignore this because of corruption brought about by modern ways of living. He asks Ndaedzo to help him solve his financial problems, recommending him as the chief of the Ngwenda people in return, although he knows that Ndaedzo is not the appropriate person. *Makhadzi* Mukondeleli and her niece Londolani, on the other hand, know that the rightful person for the position of chief is Mulindathavha because this is in keeping with traditional Vhavenda practice. They abide by the Tshivenda custom and never shift from their beliefs. As in real life, Vhavenda women are the protectors of traditional Tshivenda practices and culture. Both Mukondeleli and Londolani, and in particular the *makhadzi*, defend Tshivenda practice against a male, Mantsha, when it comes to the designation of the traditional leader. Londolani supports Mukondeleli because she is a future *makhadzi*; when Mulindathavha is anointed chief of the Ngwenda people, she will become a *makhadzi*.

The actions of the king when asked to resolve the dispute do not show respect for traditional Tshivenda practice. Thavhakhulu accepts a bribe from one group, an action that Africans would deem unworthy of a traditional leader. He places the wrong person in the position of chief. To make matters worse, he follows the western practice of sealing Ndaedzo's position as chief of the Ngwenda people by registering this appointment at the Commissioner of Bantu Affairs offices without consulting any senior members of the royal house. Nor does the Commissioner bother to verify this information. In traditional Tshivenda practice, there should be no need to register a leader as he would be known by all subjects, having been designated as chief by the *makhadzi* and the royal house. The king's refusal to correct his mistake is based on the fact that what has been registered by the Commissioner cannot be corrected. However, in the end, the traditional practice of choosing a traditional leader triumphs as a result of the pressure exerted by women, in this case Mukondeleli and Londolani. Ndaedzo's chieftainship is overturned and Mulindathavha becomes the rightful chief of the Ngwenda people.

## 6. Conclusion

The review of this novel has established that women are the protectors of traditional Tshivenda practices in the face of the influence of Western practices. This is attested by the actions of both Mukondeleli and Londolani. Men, on the other hand, do not treat traditional practices as seriously. Mantsha undermines traditional Tshivenda practices by involving himself in corruption. He supports Ndaedzo, the illegitimate heir to the throne of the Ngwenda people, in exchange for financial gain. He bribes King Thavhakhulu to install Ndaedzo as chief of the

Ngwenda people. King Thavhakhulu accepts a bribe from Mantsha and Ndaedzo in the full knowledge that Ndaedzo is not the rightful heir, and submits Ndaedzo's name to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner. In the end, however, the traditional Tshivenda practice of choosing a leader for the Vhavenda triumphs over modern practices. The author emphasizes the importance of the protection of traditional practices when choosing an heir. The role of the *makhadzi* (elder sister of the reigning or deceased leader) is important in resolving conflicts concerning the choice of traditional leaders in several African communities. Consultation with the *makhadzi* could also assist in resolving current chieftainship and kingship disputes in South Africa. This would foster unity in these communities.

## References

- Bizana-Tutu, Doly. (2008). *Traditional leaders in South Africa: Yesterday, today and tomorrow*. Unpublished MA dissertation. University of Western Cape. Cape Town.
- Sullivan, Nate. n.d. Modern Western culture & social life. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/modern-western-culture-social-life.html> accessed on 10.10.2018.
- Chen, Guo-Ming & Starosta, William J. (1998). *Foundations of intercultural communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gallios, Cynthia; Giles, Howard; Jones, Elizabeth; Cargile, Aaron C. & Ota, Hiroshi. (1995). Accommodating intercultural encounters: Elaborations and extensions. In Wisema, Richard L (Ed.), *Intercultural communication theory: International and intercultural communication annual volume XIX* (pp. 115-147). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Gyekye, Kwame. (1996). *African cultural values: An introduction*. Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company.
- Hall, Edward T. & Hall, Elisabeth. (1994). How cultures collide. In Weaver, Gary R. (Ed.), *Culture, communication and conflict: Readings in intercultural relations* (pp. 5-14). Needham Heights: Simon and Schuster Custom Publishing.
- Idang, Gabriel E. (2015). African culture and values. *Phronimon*, Vol. 16 n.2. [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1561-40182015000200006](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1561-40182015000200006) accessed on 10.10.2018.
- Khunou, Samuelson Freddie. (2009). Traditional leadership and independent Bantustans of South Africa: Some milestones of transformative constitutionalism beyond Apartheid. *Potchefstroom Elektroniese Regsblad*, 12(4), 1–26.
- Kim, Min-Sun. (2005). Culture-based conversational constraints theory: Individual- and culture- level analyses. In Gudykunst, William B. (Ed.), *Theorizing about intercultural communication* (pp. 93 – 117). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Lusig, Myron W. & Koester, Jolene. (1999). *Intercultural competence: Interpersonal communication across cultures* (3rd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Mafela, Munzhedzi James. (2005). *Tshivenda literature: A historical sketch with special reference to its bibliography*. Pretoria: Khande Publishers.
- Mafela, Munzhedzi James & Ntuli, Cynthia Danisile. (2017). Intercultural conflict and conflict management in South Africa as depicted in indigenous African literary texts.

- In Dai, Xiaodong & Chen, Guo-Ming (Eds.), *Conflict management and intercultural communication: The art of intercultural harmony* (pp. 179-193). London and New York: Routledge.
- Maumela, Titus N. (1976). *Vhuhosi vhu tou Bebelwa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mönnig, Hermann Otto. (1978). *The Pedi*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Seara-Robitaille, Savannah. n.d. Chieftaincy and kingship in South Africa. <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/chieftaincy-and-kingship-south-africa>. 1–6. Accessed on 05.06.2018.
- Sanders, Antonius Johannes Gerardus Marie. (1983). Chieftainship and Western democracy in Botswana. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 2(2), 365-381.

### Author Note

Munzhedzi James Mafela is Professor of African Languages at the University of South Africa. His language of specialization is Tshivenda. He is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies*. He has published widely in the areas of African literature, lexicography and translation, and culture including intercultural communication studies. His recent publications include *Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela: Reflections Through the Eyes of Poets* (editor), published in 2016, and *Issues of Indigenous African Literature and Onomastics: A Festschrift in Honour of D.B.Z. Ntuli* (co-editor), published in 2018. This paper was presented at *The 24<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the International Association of Intercultural Communication Studies*, 5 – 8 July 2018, in Chicago.