

A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF DIESCHO'S DICTUMS PUBLISHED FROM JANUARY

2014 TO DECEMBER 2015

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## ABSTRACT

This study analysed the stylistic features of foregrounding and figurative language as used by Diescho in his “Dictums” published in the *New Era* newspaper between January 2014 and December 2015, using the formalist theory. The researcher selected 20 of these dictums that dealt with social and political issues. Though Diescho is an author of several works, a political analyst and a commentator on various issues who is articulate and creative in style, especially when it comes to language use, no analysis has yet been carried out to study his authorial style that is linguistically fascinating. The study was guided by two objectives namely; to analyse Diescho’s use of foregrounding in the form of parallelism and deviation to effectively convey his message, and to explore how Diescho stylistically constructs meaning through figurative language and other linguistic expressions. The study adopted a qualitative research design. Being explorative in nature, the design aided in seeking to understand how Diescho used language through foregrounding and figures of speech to air his views on several issues. The study employed a purposive sampling procedure to select the sample; however, the selected sample cannot be claimed to represent the author’s entire style since it is only a small fraction of Diescho’s publications. The study found the following regarding Diescho’s style: (a) Diescho is an archetypal scholar, author and a great writer whose authorial style can aid in creating great writers in Namibia. (b) Diescho is an author with multiple authorial styles, who creatively combine styles to write what he intends the readers to read (understand). (c) In addition to deviation and parallelism, Diescho employed other writing techniques such as reference, rhetoric questions and extensive use of quotes to strengthen and enhance his arguments, as well as to voice his views, beliefs and opinions on multiple issues.

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Thank you all very much.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to the following children (my daughter, nieces and nephews) whom I believe will achieve greater things in their lives: Tuyakula, Meisie, Ndatiwa, Tatshiya, Mdu, Frans, Pena, Boeti, Ndapandula, Etuhole, Evelyn, Iyaloo, Kuku, Zicko, Konis, Itshi, Smarty, Navula, Gundji, Papa, KaBoy Ristoh, Johlin, Tangi, Alushe, Omwa tutala and Mdu.

**DECLARATION**

I, Theresia Nepolo, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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Theresia Nepolo

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Date

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTARCT.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Orientation of the study.....	1
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	3
1.4 Research objectives.....	4
1.5 Significance of the study.....	4
1.6 Limitations of the study.....	4
1.7 Organisation of the study.....	5
1.8 Conclusion.....	5
<b>CHAPTER 2.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	6
2.2 Theoretical framework.....	6

2.2.1 Foregrounding.....	8
2.2.2 Figures of speech.....	10
2.2.3 Metaphor.....	11
2.2.4 Simile.....	12
2.2.5 Personification.....	13
2.2.6 Irony .....	14
2.2.7 Hyperbole.....	14
<b>2.3 Review of related literature.....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.3.1 Style.....	16
2.3.2 Stylistics.....	20
2.3.2.1 The meaning of stylistics.....	20
2.3.2.2 Stylistics analysis.....	22
<b>2.4 Deviation.....</b>	<b>24</b>
2.4.1 Phonological deviation.....	24
2.4.2 Lexical deviation.....	26
2.4.3 Grammatical deviation.....	27
2.4.4 Syntactic deviation.....	29
2.4.5 Graphological deviation.....	30
2.4.6 Semantic deviation.....	31
<b>2.5 Parallelism.....</b>	<b>31</b>

<b>2.6 Figures of speech.....</b>	<b>32</b>
2.7 A review of studies conducted in Africa.....	33
2.8 Conclusion.....	34
<b>CHAPTER 3.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	35
3.2 Research design.....	35
3.3 Population.....	38
3.4 Sample.....	39
3.5 Procedure.....	40
3.6 Data analysis.....	40
3.7 Research ethics .....	42
3.8 Conclusion .....	43
<b>CHAPTER 4.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	44
4.1.1 A brief biography of the author.....	45
4.1.2 The dictums.....	46

4.1.3 Titles of the dictums.....	47
4.1.4 Themes dealt with in the dictums.....	47
4.1.5 Authorial styles.....	48
<b>4.2 Textual analysis.....</b>	<b>49</b>
4.2.1 Foregrounding.....	49
4.2.2 Deviation .....	56
4.2.2.1 Lexical deviation.....	56
4.2.2.2 Phonological deviation .....	60
4.2.2.3 Syntactic deviation.....	63
4.2.2.4 Grammatical deviation.....	69
4.2.2.5 Graphological deviation.....	73
<b>4.3 Semantic deviation and figures of speech.....</b>	<b>78</b>
4.3.1 Metaphors.....	79
4.3.2 Personification.....	83
4.3.3 Proverbs.....	87
4.4 References.....	90
4.5 Parallelism.....	94
4.6 Conclusion.....	97
<b>CHAPTER 5.....</b>	<b>98</b>

<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>98</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	98
5.2 The significance of the study to the researcher.....	99
5.3 Recommendations.....	101
5.4 Conclusion.....	102
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>109</b>

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the study and the main focus is based on the orientation of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study and limitations of the study. The chapter also focuses on how the study is organised.

#### 1.2 Orientation of the study

The purpose of this research was to analyse the stylistic features of foregrounding and figurative language as used by Diescho in his “dictums” published in the *New Era* newspaper between January 2014 and December 2015 using the formalist theory. Formalists’ technical focus on literature is to treat the theory as a special use of language. This language must be distinct and deviate from normal everyday use (Zainul, 2009, p. 6). Reading through the dictums, the researcher discovered that Diescho used language in a special way. He did not write in the same way that one usually finds in newspapers. Various elements of literary language can be found in the dictums, which may be said to make his writing deviant from the norm.

According to Shuaibu, Soye and Cletus (2013, p. 22), “Newspapers are among the most accessible texts available to the vast majority of people - literate and illiterate, young and old, students, workers and elites and peasants in any community”. This observation therefore led to the researcher’s decision to study Diescho’s dictums published in the *New Era* newspaper.

The choice of the *New Era* newspaper as a platform in which Diescho, a renowned author, a political analyst, academic and professor, presents his dictums, was in itself a cause of interest and a cause of academic inquisitiveness, which in turn was one of the purposes of this study. Diescho employs a complex, yet fascinating writing style that is captivating and unusual, arousing interest and enabling him as an author to present a wide array of issues and concerns. According to the Encarta World English Dictionary (1999), a dictum is “a pronouncement, authoritative saying, or a statement” (p. 525). The study therefore sought to analyse stylistically the manner in which Diescho structures and chooses topics for his dictums, his creative use of language and linguistic devices and how he expresses his ideas and opinions on multiple issues ranging from the social to the political.

Jaafar (2014, p. 239) defines stylistics as “the linguistic analysis of literary language”. Busse and McIntyre (2010, p. 10) argue that “stylistic studies have come a long way since beginnings and primary concerns with literary texts are a direct result of the early interests of the formalists and structuralists, though it is by no means exclusively focused on literature any more”. Along these lines, the study sought to examine the dictums which were presented as prose texts and as poems, in search for linguistic and literary devices employed by the author such as foregrounding and figurative language. Bingyan and Qianyu (2013, p. 1) also define stylistics as “a discipline that is concerned with literary studies, linguistics and discourse studies as well”. It is therefore universally acknowledged that when language is used, stylistics is always used as well in as much as appropriate for the given context (Bingyan and Qianyu 2013, p. 1). Diescho’s dictums, though not literary pieces per se, are vested with the author’s writing style that contains stylistic features which the researcher studied and analysed in detail.

Krishnamurthy (2010, p. 13) opines that “the interest in academic stylistics in the field of English Studies has grown in the past five years”. Though Krishnamurthy (2010) relates the latter about stylistic studies, this field is less explored in the Namibian context and it is this paucity of academic research that this study aimed to fill. Moreover, critical to note is that stylistic deals with the analysis of how authors choose their writing approaches and the style they employ to present their ideas. Busse and McIntyre (2010), Iftilchar and Mustaq (2014), Jaafar (2014), Liu (2015), Shauaibu, Soye, and Cletus (2013), and Timucin (2010), are some of the scholars who have conducted stylistic studies on various literary works, most of which are poems. So far there appears to be no stylistic studies done on prose texts and or newspaper articles in Namibia, specifically on the dictums, that this study examined.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

This study carried out a stylistic study on the works of one of the prominent authors, the political analyst and academic, Professor Diescho. Diescho’s dictums were published in the *New Era* newspaper from January 2014 to December 2015. The researcher selected 20 of these dictums that deal with social and political issues. Though an author of several works, a political analyst and a commentator on various issues, who is articulate and creative in style, especially when it comes to language use, no analysis has yet been carried out to study Diescho’s authorial style, a style that is linguistically fascinating. It was therefore the purpose of this study to examine how Diescho uses foregrounding through parallelism and deviation to bring forth what he intended his readers to grasp. The study also explored the use of figurative language as illustrated in the dictums that were presented as metaphorical poems.

#### **1.4 Research objectives**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- To analyse Diescho's use of foregrounding in the form of parallelism and deviation in order to effectively convey his message.
- To explore how Diescho stylistically constructs meaning through figurative language and other linguistic techniques.

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

With this study the researcher critically analysed the linguistic techniques or devices used by Diescho in his dictums to pass on his convictions, beliefs and concerns as well as ask questions pertaining to issues of interest or concern. This study therefore aimed at contributing to the available body of knowledge on stylistic studies, and other scholars will likely learn from this analytical study on how to write and analyse texts stylistically. The study may be an eye opener for linguistic and literature scholars in Namibia since it might enable them to realize that more still need to be done and more stylistic studies can be carried out on numerous works and authors whose works have not yet been studied or explored.

#### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The study only gave attention to Diescho's newspaper contributions in the *New Era* newspaper. The study only focused on 20 selected dictums and not on Diescho's entire written works, which limited it in scope, making it not fully a representation of the complete analysis of the author's writing style. The latter leave a room for further stylistic studies of

Diescho's works in order to unravel his style fully. Therefore, the researcher will not claim to have studied the author's style with regards to his oeuvre completely.

### **1.7 Organisation of the study**

This study is organized in the following manner and contains the following parts: Chapter 1 introduces the study and is comprised of the orientation, statement of the problem, study objectives, significance of the study and limitations of the study. The second chapter deals with the review of literature as well as the theoretical frame work employed to inform and direct the study. Chapter 3 introduces and explains the methodological issues and presents the research design used for the study. This chapter comprises the research design, population, sample, procedure, data analysis and research ethics. The fourth chapter deals with data presentation and discussion; while the last chapter (chapter 5) presents the recommendations and conclusions of the study.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the aspects and elements that introduced what the study is about. Such elements include the background information as well as descriptions of what triggered the study. It is in the same chapter where the main questions of the study were presented and a brief focus into the study's organisation was highlighted. The following chapter deals with the theoretical framework that informed and guided the study. Within the same chapter, the review of literature will also be presented and discussed to clarify the literature's relevance of this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that the author employed as well as the literature reviewed and used in this study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010, p. 66), “each thesis or dissertation contains a chapter that reviews the related literature and describes the theoretical perspectives and previous research findings regarding the problem at hand”. It can be agreed that it cannot be sufficient for the researcher to solely bring forth her/his own findings without considering what others have already done in the same field. Reviewing others’ works as well as employing a specific theory to guide, direct and inform one’s study aids the researcher in enlightening him/her on how best he/she can tackle the study. Adding to the latter, the review of related literature helps the researcher to gain confidence in dealing with the research problem at hand since “The more you know about investigations and perspectives related to your topic, the more effectively you can tackle your own research problem”. (Leedy & Ormrod 2010, p. 66)

#### 2.2. Theoretical framework

This study is informed by the formalist theory or Russian formalism. According to Zainul (2009, p. 6):

The Formalist theory, also called Russian formalism is a literary theory that generally looks at the pattern or the form of a literary text. It treats literature as a group of

literary devices and investigates the relationship among the smaller parts in literature text. The theory also considers literature as a system where each and every component in it plays its own function in making up the whole text.

Furthermore, Devardhi and Nelson (2013, p. 7) argue that “the Russian Formalists introduced a new, highly focused and solid method of literary and linguistic analysis. The formal method used in linguistics was based on the analytical view of the form, and the content of a literary work was seen as a sum of its stylistic methods”. It is vital to mention that Formalist stylistics is linked more to the Russian formalism and the Prague School Structuralism. According to Smit (2012, p. 45), the above fields of academic enquiry (Russian formalism and Prague School Structuralism) had direct and lasting impact on the methods of contemporary stylistics since the early 1900s. Most central ideas of these two schools of thought can be found in contemporary stylistics.

Important to mention here is that (since this study focused on textual analysis) the formalist theory has been of great service since “the formalists are textualists: meaning that they regard the stylistic features of a particular text as productive of an empirical unity and completeness” (Smit, 2012, p. 45). Therefore, according to Mlambo (2015, p. 32) formalism attempts to treat each work as its own distinct piece, free from its environment, era, and even author..., and that the keys to understanding a text exist within the text itself”. Additionally, the formalist theory’s proponents, namely Jakobson and his followers “exclude readers and context from consideration and only study the intricate patterning of literary text” (Smit, 2012). The latter can be regarded as a setback because it implies that the social context is not considered whereas it could be helpful in unveiling the meaning of a text and add value to the overall study and interpretation of a text. Another distinct setback of the formalist theory is “its exclusive concern with the literary, that is, the non-literary elements against which the

literary is defined are insufficiently theorized. The Marxists have also criticized formalism based on the fact that there is stark absence of any social dimension in their conception of the future” (Mlambo 2015, p. 35). However, this study breaks this barrier as it contends that the context as well as the biographical information of the author are important. Another renowned proponent of the formalist theory is “Shklovsky who was the lead critic, and has contributed two of the most well-known concepts, namely: Defamiliarization (estrangement) and the plot story distinction (syuzhet/fabula)” (Mlambo, 2015, p. 35). Of particular interest for this stylistic study, therefore, is the use of formalist theory in relation to foregrounding and figures of speech as explained in the next sections.

### **2.2.1. Foregrounding**

According to Liu (2015, p. 76) “foregrounding is the opposite of automation”. According to Short (1996, p. 11), the term ‘foregrounding’ is borrowed from art criticism. Jaafar (2014, p. 241) defines foregrounding as “giving unusual prominence to one element or property of a text, relative to other less noticeable aspects”. Thus, Gregoriou (2009, p. 27), outlines that “in the context of text analysis, foregrounding is achieved by a variety of means, which have largely been grouped into two main types, ‘deviation’ and parallelism”. Salomo (2015, p. 30) elaborates that:

Foregrounding can be classified into two types: qualitative foregrounding and quantitative foregrounding. Qualitative foregrounding is the deviation from the language code itself (deviation from some rule or convention of English), which can be realized by deviation and may appear at various linguistic levels. Quantitative foregrounding happens by parallelism or repetition.

The same ideas elaborated by Salomo (2015) above are also voiced by Liu, 2015 (p. 76). Ui (2014, p. 38) explains that:

Poetic language is different from the standard language, as standard language is the norm of language and it is for the purpose of communication. In poetic language, on the other hand, the purpose of communication remains in the background and replaced by the aesthetic purpose.

Liu (2015) further states that this stylistic device (foregrounding) has its origin in the Russian formalist school of thought and its proponents are the Czech theorist Jan Mukarovsky of the Prague School and Garvin. Alazawi (2014, p. 32) stresses that “foregrounding is the opposite of automatization, that is the deautomatization of an act, the more an act is automatized the less consciously executed; the more it is foregrounded the more completely conscious it becomes”. Similarly Ui (2014, p. 38) asserts that foregrounding is a term that is suggested by Jan Mukarovsky for defining the effect of the stylistic variations on the readers. McIntyre (2003) further notes that:

The notion of foregrounding comes originally from the visual arts and refers to those elements of a work of art that stand out in some way. According to Russian formalists, for scholars working at the beginning of the last century, the purpose of art and literature is to defamiliarise the familiar, and by defamiliarising a work of art or a text, we make it to become foregrounded. Foregrounding (theory) was seen as a means of explaining the difference between poetic and everyday language, and despite criticism from scholars such as Fish, foregrounding became widely accepted as one of the foundations of stylistics. (pp. 2-3)

Moreover, though Jaafar (2014) accentuates that foregrounding is the most important part of stylistic analysis in poetry, it is believed, too, that this concept is also applicable for use in analysing prose texts, such as the dictums this study analysed. In his dictums Diescho

presents his ideas and opinions in a way that makes his written works protuberant. As they are newspaper articles, Diescho's dictums are written in a manner that makes the reader wonder or become curious to read more about what they are about. The latter is due to linguistic features such as the use of deviation and parallels in the dictums, and that makes them (the dictums) prominent, defamiliarised and hence foregrounded.

Ongunsiji (2013, p. 60) argues that "foregrounding is a concept of making certain features prominent in a text... for special effects against the background features in the text". One can mention that when reading the dictums one notices some features that in addition to the fact that most of the dictums are conspicuous as newspaper articles, some parts are outstandingly foregrounded. Some of the foregrounded features include phrases that are written in capital letters in the middle of sentences, some similar concurring repetitions at beginnings of sentences, as well as poems that are presented in the form of metaphors. Other features of foregrounding are eminent in the dictums in the form of deviation at various levels as will be discussed further in the literature review under deviation.

### **2.2.2. Figures of speech**

Aritonang and Ownie (2009) state the following about figures of speech:

A departure from the ordinary form of expression or the ordinary course of ideas in order to produce a greater effect. Figures of speech are another way of adding an extra dimension to language. There are twelve types of figures of speech namely: metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche, metonym, symbol, allegory, overstatement, apostrophe, understatement and verbal irony (p. 4).

Figurative language or figurative expressions are words or terminologies that differ from the customary every day conversational use of such expressions for the purpose of assigning them a special meaning which should be understood by their connotative meanings rather than their denotative meanings (Omozowa & Ezejideaku, 2008, 51). Putri (2011) defines figures of speech as “a mode of expression in which words are used out of their literal meaning or out of their ordinary use so as to add beauty and emotional intensity” (p. 15). Thus, Gregoriou (2009, p. 24) makes reference to the aspects of ‘figure’ and ‘ground,’ and accentuates that they are terms that relate to the phenomenon of prominence where things essentially draw attention to themselves. Some figures of speech elements that are explained in this section and form part of the analysis in the study include metaphor, simile, personification, irony and hyperbole.

### **2.2.3 Metaphor**

A metaphor can simply be defined as a comparison of things/objects/ or people that are unlike to each other directly. To say it more clearly, a metaphor according to Omozowa and Ezejideaku (2008, p. 51) is “a figure of speech that expresses an idea through the image of another object.” Metaphors suggest the essence of the first object by identifying it with certain qualities of the second object.

In the dictums that this study focused on, one finds numerous metaphors. An example of a metaphor that one can look at here is the title of one of the dictums, “*Anthem of the lonely Namib*”. This title has a metaphorical meaning than a denotative one. The Namib (which is the name of the desert in south west Namibia) is a representation of (is compared to) humans in Namibia, and again by attributing the ‘anthem’ to the Namib (which is non-human) as something one is able to sing, as well as attributing the trait of loneliness which is also a human peculiarity, makes this title imbued with a rich form of personification.

Hipkiss (1995, p. 74) argues that metaphors “consist of an object of comparison (the subject or “tenor,”) and the metaphoric word or phrase (the “vehicle”) in a partially comparative context (the “ground”) which establishes the basis for the comparison that the metaphor makes. To make it more precise, Hipkiss (1995, p. 76), further defines a metaphor as “a means of condensing the expression of thought... that has a role in discovering meaning, simplifying and exaggerating (p. 77). According to Gregoriou (2009, p. 38), “‘figurative or metaphorical meaning’, in semantics, describes a word’s extension of meaning, which is in contrast to a word’s literal, basic or conceptual meaning”. The latter description of metaphor clarifies the meaning and role of metaphors to linguistics and literary studies. Said differently, a metaphor communicates more than its literal meaning, hence metaphorical meanings can be said to possess extended meanings than what immediately meets the eye.

#### **2.2.4 Simile**

A simile can be defined as figurative language employed to compare things or people by using the words ‘as and/or like’. A simile, according to Croft and Cross (2004, p. 331), is a direct comparison of one thing to another in order to make description more vivid by using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’ in their comparison. In the definition above, Croft and Cross (2004) bring out one of the many reasons why we employ similes, be it in speech or in writing, by relating that similes are used to make descriptions more vivid. It means then, by using other or like items or things that the hearers or readers are familiar with to clarify the other forms, becomes the main purpose for the use of similes. Jaafar (2014, p. 238) also argues that similes can easily be recognised by the use of the words such as ‘as’ or ‘like’. Unlike metaphors, similes employ words ‘like’ and ‘as’ to make a comparison of an object or person to the other, making it easier for the reader to understand or recognise the meaning that is

intended by the author of the text under scrutiny. Although similes may seem to be easy to comprehend and identify, they are also tricky in arriving to a real meaning, as may be intended by the author. It thus requires the reader/audience to look at aspects such as the context as well as the subject under study in order to arrive to a sensible or acceptable understanding and interpretation of specific similes.

### **2.2.5 Personification**

Literary language is often used in ways that make the written or spoken language interesting by using language more creatively, as compared to our normal everyday use of the same language. Personification is figurative language where the speaker/author takes human characters/traits and/or attributes and uses them on what is not human. According to Croft and Cross (2004, p. 331) personification is “the ascription of human feelings, emotions or sensations to an inanimate object. It is a kind of metaphor where human qualities are given to things or abstract ideas”. Agemo (2011, p. 19) emphasises that personification “invests abstractions or inanimate objects with human qualities. In other words, a quality associated with man is given to a non-living phenomenon, thereby making it look like or act like a person”.

The title of one of the dictums this study looked at that was the form of personification, was “Cry the praying country”. In this title, the country which is inanimate is given human traits of ‘crying’ and ‘praying’. It is not customary to hear people say that the country is crying or praying but rather the people are crying or praying. This explanation implies that the author of the dictums is employing the attributes of crying and praying alongside ‘the country’ instead of using it alongside ‘the people’ for a specific reason. Often one finds that numerous personifications have become so much part of our daily language that we no longer regard

them as such. Another personification expression such as ‘the running sun’ commonly used by the Oshiwambo speakers no longer sounds nor seems a figurative language, but rather as another normal way of saying time goes by fast, since it has gained momentum and wide usage among the speakers. In his dictums one sees how Diescho employs numerous of such expressions.

### **2.2.6 Irony**

This figure of speech, though commonly related to drama and plays, can also be found in written prose texts such as the dictums under study. Croft and Cross (2004, p. 330) define irony “as saying one thing while meaning another and it usually occurs where a word or phrase has one surface meaning but another contradictory, possibly opposite meaning is implied”. The use of irony is common in political, religious and sometimes social speeches or written work.

It can be argued that usually people use irony to avoid telling the truth for fear that their audience and/or readers may reject them as people or their ideologies, or discover some truth that they wish to keep to themselves. At times irony is used as a means of mockery, habitually to keep the other person in suspense or not to understand what is being said about her/him at all.

### **2.2.7 Hyperbole**

Another word for hyperbole is exaggeration. As the name says, a hyperbole or exaggeration is a way in which one expands or intensifies the amount or character of something or somebody. Mlambo (2015) defines hyperbole as an “exaggerated statement which gives readers a deep impression”.

There are a number of renowned hyperbolic expressions such as: *'the whole world attended'*. This hyperbole is used to express the idea that a large number of people attended a certain function or event. It is not to be understood word by word, namely that all the people in the world came or attended. It is interesting that the above expression is inherently understood correctly.

The aim of the foregoing presentation was to capture the basic essence of the theory which was used to navigate this study, together with its components. The study used the formalist theory which served as a mirror through which the analysis was done, as well as a basis on which conclusions were drawn. Lastly, Putri (2011) defines figures of speech as “a mode of expression in which words are used out of their literal meaning or out of their ordinary use so as to add beauty and emotional intensity” (p. 15). Thus, Gregoriou (2009, p. 24) makes reference to the aspects of figure and grounding and the author accentuates that “‘figure’ and ‘ground’ are terms that relate to the phenomenon of prominence where things essentially draw attention to themselves”. Some figures of speech elements that are focused on in this study include metaphors, similes, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, irony and hyperbole as discussed above. The next section provides the review of literature. The literature review is aimed at enabling the researcher to conduct the study with an enlightened mind and to make use of appropriate methodological approaches, and be informed about how and what others used in their (stylistic) studies. McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 119) argue that “without reviews of the literature, it would be difficult to build a body of accepted knowledge on a specific topic”. Thus, the researcher for this study, too, reviewed relevant literature to aid herself in coming up with acceptable knowledge on this stylistic topic namely ‘A stylistic analysis of Diescho’s dictums published in the *New Era* newspaper between January 2014 and December 2015’. The next section presents relevant literature reviewed for this study.

## 2.3 Review of related literature

Several stylistic studies in stylistics have been carried out on numerous literary and non-literary works the world over. Several scholars and linguists hold varying views and opinions regarding what stylistic studies entail or what such studies should focus on.

One can take note that there has been not much done on stylistic studies in Namibia, except for Krishnamurthy (2010), who did a few studies such as; *The chutinfication of English: An examination of the lexis of Salman Rushdie's Midnight children*. Following the latter, therefore, most literature that is reviewed for this study are of authors and researchers from other countries. This scenario, therefore, makes this study timely, worthwhile and necessary, since it becomes part of literature that can be used by other scholars who intend to carry out stylistic studies in Namibia.

The following section first explains what different authors say about style, as this is important in as much as a stylistic study on any kind is concerned. One may agree that without style, there would be no stylistics since stylisticians primarily concern themselves with studying the style employed by the author or speaker. Thereafter, the section discusses stylistics and its meaning, stylistic analysis, deviation at various levels and then the conclusion of the section will be drawn.

### 2.3.1 Style

In order to carry out a stylistic study on any author's work(s), the researcher may largely be required to look at the style of the author since every author has a unique way of expressing him/herself consciously or unconsciously (Jaafar, 2014). What makes a person's way of self-

expression unique is what can be referred to as his/her style. Greogoriou (2009, p. 1) proffers that style can be defined in numerous ways. That is, style can be expressed as “the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and in stylistics, style can be interpreted as a property of all texts, as opposed to a property of literary texts exclusively”. Ogunsiyi (2012, p. 2) defines style as “the effective use of language, especially in prose, which can be to make statements or to arouse emotions”. Jaafar (2014, p. 240) considers style “as a choice of certain structures over others which are available in the language”. At its simplest, style refers to the manner of expression in writing and speaking, just as there is a manner of doing things, like playing squash or painting (Devardhi & Nelson, 2013, p. 7).

Diescho has a special way of expressing himself and his dictums display such traits which in turn attracted the researcher’s curiosity to study his works as containing the ‘essence and a display of the language’ for stylistic analysis (Norgaard, Busse, & Montoro, 2010). Once more, it can be agreed that there are many styles that authors employ for different purposes and contexts. A specific author may use one style in one case and employ completely a different one in another. Bell (1976, p. 189) opines that “there are no single style speakers or authors”. Hence one may need to take good care before arriving at a conclusion regarding any person’s style. It can perhaps be said that, to unearth an individual author’s style’ one may need to study broadly various works of such an author in order to identify the way she/he writes and or speaks about situations and contexts. The dictums studied in this study are written on different issues and topics, and of course by the same author, thus the relevance of this stylistic analysis of the author’s (Diescho) style. Robins (1989, p. 50) writes in agreement to Bell’s idea that “the differences within the linguistic range or choice of a single person is

often called style"... and in literary criticism style, it is the field in which the linguist has his/her contribution to make.

Short (1996, p. 327) elaborates on the meaning of style as follows:

When people talk of style they usually mean authorial style: in other words a way of writing which recognisably belongs to a particular writer. This way of writing distinguishes one author's writing from that of others, and is felt to be recognisable across a range of texts by the same writer, even though those writings are bound to vary as a consequence of being about different topics, describing different things, having different purposes and so on. It is this ability to perceive authorial style in the writings of a particular author that enables us to write pastiches and parodies.

This study was aimed at stylistically studying Diescho's style through the selected dictums. However, as stated earlier in Chapter 1, and as Short (1996) referred to above, there cannot be claims made that this study is a full study or a full representation of the author's style because the author of the dictums (Diescho) is an author to more works as well as other dictums that this study did not analyse. One can only be able to write pastiches and parodies on parts of the works of a specific author that he/she has specifically studied, since several authors write for specific or different occasions and purposes which cause variations in a single author's style.

Short (1996, p. 327) divides style into three segments that is, authorial style 1 (related to meaning in a general way), which is dealt with in this section, authorial style 2 (style that is completely unrelated to meaning: fingerprinting) and authorial style 3 (style intrinsically related to meaning: text style). This study employed the formalist theory or Russian

formalism that generally looks at the pattern or the form of a literary text. It treats literature as a group of literary devices and investigates the relationship among the smaller parts in literature texts. This study explored Diescho's style based on the linguistic choices he made, as well as other devices he employed, that brought out meaning in his dictums. The latter is finely related to the following view of Short (1996, p. 329) that:

When the style of texts or extracts from text are examined we are even more centrally concerned with meaning than with the "world view" version of authorial style discussed above, and so when we examine text style we will need to examine linguistic choices which are intrinsically connected with meaning and effect on the reader.

Short (1996) elaborates that:

Style has four aspects of meaning when investigating English styles, namely; style may refer to some or all of the language habits (i.e. speech) of one person, style may refer to some or all of the language habits shared by a group of people at one time, over a period of time. The word style is given a more restricted meaning when it is used in an evaluative sense, referring to the effectiveness of a mode of expression and the last aspect of 'style' refers to literary language which is widely spread.

The four aspects of style discussed above are relevant to this study since the study, too, focuses on the linguistic behaviour of the author, linguistic expressions used in the dictums as well as literary devices such as figures of speech.

One may agree with Jafaar (2014, p. 240) that it is not easy to define style, especially the way it is used in literary criticism and stylistics. Hence adopting Jafaar's words, this section can be summarised by briefly outlining some broad areas in which 'style' is used:

Style means the way of expressing oneself in writing and speaking, hence, there is a distinctive style for every person... There are different styles in different situations, also that the same activity can produce stylistic variation (no two people will have the same style of writing on the same subject). Thus style can be seen as a variation in language use whether literary or non-literary. Style differs too according to the medium and degree of formality. In each case, style is something that is really special, the set or sum of linguistic features that seem to be characteristic: whether of register, genre or period, etc. When applied to the domain of an author, style is the set of features peculiar to, or characteristic of an author: his or her language habits or idiolect. Therefore, there are many different styles according to the style of the author. People can speak of racy, formal, colloquial, or even nominal and verbal styles. (Jafaar, 2014, p. 240)

Diescho (the author of the dictums this study explored) can be said to have used various styles even in writing the dictums. Some dictums are written as normal prose texts while some are presented as metaphorical poems, though all are 'dictums' by the same author. One may as well, conclude from these variations that the author (Diescho) should have found specific styles better fitting for specific topics or situations, hence the choice of such variations.

## **2.3.2 Stylistics**

### **2.3.2.1 The meaning of stylistics**

Having looked at the meaning of 'style' within the linguistic and literary parameters, as well as in an attempt to clarify the concept 'stylistics', it is essential to have a review of how several authors define stylistics. Kang and Yu (2011, p. 130) explain that "stylistics is a

discipline that studies the sum of stylistic features of the different varieties of languages... and it is the branch of linguistics that studies language style that explains the relationship between the text and its context". In the above definition it is proffered that stylistics seeks to study the "sum of stylistic features of the different varieties of language". This statement has relevance to this study because the study sought to study the linguistic features or elements of stylistics, namely: the phonological, lexical, grammatical, semantic and pragmatic or discourse features found in the dictums. Hence, stylistics studies the use of language in specific contexts and attempts to account for the characteristics that mark the language use of individuals and social groups (Kang & Yu, 2011).

According to Devardhi and Nelson (2013, p. 8), the academic discipline of stylistics is a twentieth century invention, yet its roots can be traced to its relationship with its notable predecessor - Rhetoric. The term is derived from the Greek "techne rhetorike", the art of speech, an art concerned with the use of public speaking as a means of persuasion. Jaafar (2014, p. 239) defines stylistics as "the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation that involves both literary criticism and linguistics". Norgaard et al., (2010, p. 1) state that stylistics "is the study of the ways in which meaning is created through language in literature as well as in all other types of texts". Putri (2011, p. 13) delineates stylistics as "the study of meaning conveyed through signs and language". Furthermore, Barry (2009, p. 196) defines stylistics as "a critical approach which uses methods and findings of the science of linguistics in the analysis of literary texts". However, Barry (2009) is quick to mention that stylistics should not be confined to the analysis of literature only. It can be equally applied to other texts such as non-fiction prose, which qualifies stylistic analysis for use in this study and focuses on both literary and non-literary texts (p. 197).

Additionally, Gregoriou (2009, p. 3), states that stylistics, first of all, normally refers to the practice of using linguistics for the study of literature. Moreover, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010, p.1) argue that “stylistics has a firm place within linguistics, providing theories of language and interpretation which complement context-free theories generated within other areas of language study”. This makes this proposed study relevant and timely. According to Krishnamurthy (2010, p. 13), “the interest in academic stylistics in the field of English Studies has grown in the past five years”, though the same cannot be said to be true for Namibia. Stylistics is concerned with relating linguistic facts (linguistic descriptions) to meaning (interpretation) in as explicit a way as possible (Short, 1996, p. 5). In providing its historical background, Barry (2009, p. 198) explains that:

Stylistics is, in a sense, the modern version of the ancient discipline known as ‘rhetoric’, which taught its students how to structure an argument, how to make effective use of figures of speech, and generally how to pattern and vary a speech or a piece of writing so as to produce the maximum impact.

Bloomfield (1976, pp. 273 - 275) enumerated some types of stylistics as:

1. Aesthetic stylistics: This has to do with rightness or truth.
2. Theoretical stylistics: The type that is more frequently called poetic although poetics probably goes beyond linguistic speculations.
3. Descriptive stylistics: This has to do with an attempt to describe the linguistic elements in the texts without attempting to evaluate them.
4. Rhetorical stylistics: This is the oldest of all the types of stylistic analysis and use, that part of rhetoric which deals with language and style.
5. Historical stylistics: The study of style diachronically or synchronically if the style studied is limited to a certain period in the past.
7. Cultural and group stylistics: This encompasses the study of characteristic styles of a whole culture, society or school or a group of writers.
- 8.

Topographical or visual stylistics: This is about the physical shape in the form of letters on paper. 8. Psychological stylistics: Studies language and style in order to discover the mind of a man or writer.

### **2.3.2.2 Stylistic analysis**

Having taken cognisance of Diescho's style as discovered in the dictums, the researcher carried out a stylistic study of its possible effect. Elnaili (2013, p. 2) is of the opinion that stylistic analysis can be confusing to some, especially when people sometimes consider it as literary criticism. Hence scholars stress the importance of drawing the boundaries between the two fields. According to McIntyre (2012, p. 1)

At the heart of stylistics is creativity. Most research in stylistics focuses on the analysis of creative work but it is also the case that stylistic analysis requires creative thought. Doing good stylistics means balancing the rigour of the linguist with the sensitivity of the literary critic.

Stylistic analysis is therefore unique, in that "it attempts to provide a commentary which is subjective and scientific, based on concrete quantifiable data, and applied in a systematic way" (Barry, 2009, p. 201). Norgaard et al. (2010), Jaafar (2014) and Kang and Yu (2011) are of the opinion that stylistic analysis focuses either qualitatively or quantitatively on the phonological, lexical, grammatical, semantic and pragmatic or discourse features of a text. The focus of analysis for this study will be placed on the latter features with the intent of unravelling the style of the author and the meaning that is vested in the words that meet the eye.

In addition, Kang and Yu (2011, p. 130) argue that stylistic analysis is about:

The study of patterns formed in the process of linguistic encoding of information which is of importance to any major research focusing upon the production or analysis of language. English stylistic analysis describes and investigates the language characteristics of each English style, and emphasizes that each style has its own typical way of expression, which demands the choice of language to be equal to its purposes. In other words, stylistic analysis is to analyse the use of language with the purpose of identifying some linguistic features, ranging from the general, mass of linguistic features to those which are restricted to some social context.

Barry (2009, p. 197) adds that “stylistics is not confined to the analysis of literature: it can be applied equally to expository prose, political speeches, advertisements, and so on”. Therefore “Stylistic analysis attempts to provide a commentary which is objective and scientific, based on concrete quantifiable data, and applied in a systematic way” (Barry, 2009, p. 201).

#### **2.4. Deviation**

Deviation is qualitative foregrounding. Timucin (2010, p. 132) says deviation is “a linguistic phenomenon that has an important psychological effect on readers (hearers)”. In any literary text, if a part is deviant, it becomes especially noticeably or perceptually prominent. The latter explains the relationship between deviation and foregrounding, deviation being a child of foregrounding, since the psychological effect (deviation effect) that any text has on the hearer is foregrounding (p. 132). Gregoriou (2009, p. 28) takes deviation as the difference between what we take to be normal or acceptable and that which is not and that deviations are essentially violations or departures from certain linguistic norms”. Therefore, as outlined by Jaafar (2014, p. 241), this study focused on the stylistic analysis of deviation at the following levels: phonological, lexical, grammatical, syntactic, graphological and semantic.

Among the many other forms of literary studies, stylistic analysis of texts at various levels helps in readers' admiration of the specific work they deal with or study. Elnaili (2013, p. 11) emphasizes that "stylists have investigated literary texts through different elements to help reflect the content of these literary works in one way or another". Additionally, deviation can occur at many levels, and stylisticians need to be aware of the level of language at which each deviation occurs, keeping in mind that deviation can occur at more than one level at the same time (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 28). The deviation elements or features which are the levels of analysis referred to earlier are explained and defined as follows:

#### **2.4.1 Phonological deviation**

This form of deviation has to do with sound. This deviation includes such things as unusual sound effects, alliteration and assonance, the altering of normal spelling to represent particular accents and dialects and the phonetic misspelling of words (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 32). The author, at many times, although not always, chooses to make decisions on the type of sound effects to employ depending on the results he/she desires to obtain in the end on this kind of deviation. A certain sound may as well, too, be done or employed with regard to the rhyme (Jafaar, 2014, p. 241). The sound effect or phonology can be said to aid in the understanding of the text or any literary works by the reader. Literary works worth mentioning are poems or simple statements such as: "I *chewed up litterer chewer and spat on the bones*" (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 32). Mlambo (2015) outlines the following phonological irregularities.

#### **Omission**

**Aphesis** – the omission of an initial part (unstressed vowel)

‘mid ← amid; ‘lone ← alone

**Syncope** – the omission of a medial part of a word.

ne’er ← never; o’er ← over

**Apocope** – the omission of a final part of a word

a’ ← all; wi’ ← with; o’ ← of; oft ← often

Another demonstration of how the sound effect meaning is illustrated by Elnaili, (2013, p. 12) in the following extract:

*And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;*

*But when loud surgeon lash the sounding shore,*

*The hoarse, rough verse shou’d like the torrent roar*

However, Short (1996, p. 54) resonates that because language belongs to speech and most of our literature is written, there is relatively little scope for phonological deviation. Though the above is said about phonological deviation, this type of deviation is found in some dictums studied.

## 2.4.2 Lexical deviation

Jafaar (2014, p. 241) accentuates that a poem or a piece of written work is considered to have lexical deviation if its words deviate from their actual and standard form in order to have a deeper value in meaning and in aesthetics (words created by the writer). It can thus be said that lexical deviation is about getting away from the norm of written or spoken language or both. Mlambo (2015,) relates that lexical deviation is usually associated with neologisms (invention of new words), these new words are called nonce-formations if they are made up ‘for the nonce’. Correspondingly, Gregoriou (1999, p. 30) reiterates that “lexical deviation

has to do with the use of words inappropriate for their context, the conversion of word classes, or neologizing: that is the making up of new words... some new words include ‘*whiffling*’ and invented verb and ‘*mimsy*’, an invented adjective”.

Elnaili (2013) notes that the lexical feature or deviation is about the choice of specific lexical terms, their distribution and relation to each other, and how they contribute to the meaning of the text. Mlambo (2015) expands on the definition of lexical deviation by using the following sentences as examples:

There was a ‘*balconyful*’ of gentlemen.

We left the town refreshed and ‘*rehatted*’.

They were ‘*else – minded*’ then, altogether, the men.

In the above examples it can be noticed how the authors blended words together or played with words to create new words. In the first example, the ‘*balconyful*’ of gentlemen, can be understood to mean there was a large number of men who filled up the balcony. Lexical deviation can also be linked to creative use of language. It is commonly only a creative speaker or writer who can come up with new words which are usually created to fit a specific context for a specific purpose.

Overall, “examining a text in terms of its lexicon can often reveal sources of cohesion that we might not otherwise notice and can help us discover the recurrent themes and images of a text” (Elnaili, 2013, p. 13).

### **2.4.3 Grammatical deviation**

“Grammatical deviation is to do with deviation either at the level of a word’s individual make-up or at the level of syntax” (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 31). According to Short (1996, p. 47), “a number of grammatical rules in English is large, and therefore the foregrounding possibilities via grammatical deviation are also very large”. Jafaar (2014, p. 241) articulates that “grammatical deviation is the kind that poets disregard the rules of sentences. The authors sometimes put no period between sentences; make no space between words, also use the tenses incorrectly”. The following poem by *William Carlos William* was adopted by Mlambo (2015) to demonstrate how authors deviate grammatically:

***This Is Just To Say***

*I have eaten*

*The plums*

*That were in*

*The ice box*

*And which you were probably*

*Saving*

*For breakfast*

*Forgive me*

*They were delicious*

*So sweet*

*And so cold*

The above poem's title runs into the first line making it interesting and mind triggering to the reader who might ask questions such as: Why did the author prefer to present the poem the way he did? It is uncommon to find poems written like this (with the topic that is part of the poem) and thus one may say that the author has succeeded in catching the attention of the reader by deviating like that. The way the poem is linked to its title may also show that the poet wishes that the readers read the poem as a whole and place emphasis on the unity of the discourse (Mlambo, 2015).

The following two examples used by Short (1996, p. 48) may assist in comprehending the grammatical deviation feature:

1        *O goddess! Hear these tuneless numbers, wrung*

*By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear...*

2        *Little enough I sought:*

*But a word compassionate...*

In the examples above some of the 'poetic' flavour is imparted by adjectives appearing after the nouns they modify whereas in English, the adjective usually comes before the noun (Short, 1996, p. 47).

#### **2.4.4 Syntactic deviation**

This type of deviation has to do with the structures of sentences. Elnaili (2013, p. 14) elaborates that:

Sentence structure (syntax) in language plays an important role in revealing some of the meaning in a literary text. Grammar in literary language has always attracted linguists, especially the language of poems. Patterns in language structure can participate to the overall meaning of a literary discourse. A pattern of structural

equivalences can condition the lexical items in the structures concerned in such a way that they take on meanings other than those they have in the language code.

Mlambo (2015) extends that “in syntax, deviations may be 1. bad or incorrect grammar and syntactic rearrangement/hyperbaton. These are such as:

*I doesn't like him* instead of *I do not like him*

*I know not* instead of *I do not know*

*I saw you anything?* Instead of *I saw nothing*

*He me saw* instead of *He saw me*

In the above examples it is noticeable how the supposed meaning becomes hidden behind the way in which the writer wrote. It is no common practice in formal language use that one writes like in the above sentences. For example in the first sentence, “I doesn't like him” the use of ‘does’ instead of ‘do’ causes the entire sentence to sound incorrect because of the common known rules of concord. However, one may argue, too, and say that anybody reading or hearing this expression surely understands that the speaker or the author is referring to one person in the present tense and is communicating his/her dislike towards that specific individual. Summed up, therefore, just by saying/writing differently, it causes the text to draw attention to itself, thus catching the attention of the reader or the hearer.

#### **2.4.5 Graphological deviation**

The estrangement of text through uncommon letters and or word arrangements can be defined by the term graphology. Gregoriou (2009, p. 32) enunciates that:

Graphological deviation includes unusual layout and use of space, strange word and letter arrangement, as well as altered punctuation. Essentially anything that is visually

unusual constitutes graphological deviation. The use of capital letters and the omission of the gaps between some of the words in the following title: COMECLOSE and SLEEPNOW' is graphologically deviant.

According to Short (1996, p. 54), the way poetry is marked off from other forms of writing is graphological. This means that it has lines which do not run out to the right hand edge of the page, and begins all lines with capital letters.

Graphology is the encoding of meaning in visual symbol. Hence, graphological deviation is related to type of print, grammatics, punctuation, paragraphing and indentation (Ageo, 2011, p. 21, Mlambo, 2015). Once more, Gregoriou (2009, p. 32) gives an example of ‘\*. Fat’ (pronounced ‘star dot fat’) as graphologically deviant band names in the use of a symbol to spell out words.

Ageo (2011, p. 21) elaborates that “paragraphing involves a section of a piece of writing, usually consisting of several sentences dealing with a single subject. The first sentence of a paragraph starts on a new line”.

#### **2.4.6 Semantic deviation**

The hidden meaning behind linguistic expressions or creative use of language is semantically deviated. “Semantic in literary discourse drives our attention from the meaning of an individual semantic feature to a bigger picture, that is, how all features are combined together to serve meaning” Elnaili (2013, p. 15). Gregoriou (2009, p. 30) defines semantic deviation as referring to “illogical or paradoxical meaning relations between words, such as with the use of metaphors”.

Jafaar (2014, p. 241) argues that this (semantic) deviation shows that a simple word can have an extraordinary meaning, and that a word can have differences in meaning depending on the poet's life and background. Mlambo (2015) provides the following examples of semantic deviation:

*The child is father is the man*

*She was a phantom of delight*

*Beauty is truth, truth beauty*

## **2.5 Parallelism**

According to Gregoriou (2009, p. 36), parallelism is the unexpected repetition of norms, whether these norms are linguistic, generic or norms of a particular historical period/ or author. Parallelism will thus also be studied in this research at various linguistic levels just like deviation.

Maake (1994) defines the following types of parallelism:

Parallelism of thought through the repetition of words and phrases; (2) Parallelism of thought through the re-statement of ideas by synonyms and indirect references, and (3) Parallelism of grammatical structure through the repetition of syntactical slots.

The main form which the device takes is repetition. (p. 223)

This stylistic study on Diescho's dictums dealt with parallelism the same way it did with deviation. The parallel structures or features that are found in the dictums were identified and discussed.

## **2.6 Figures of speech**

The last aspect reviewed is figures of speech. According to Putri, (2011, p. 15) a figure of speech is a mode of expression in which “words are used out of their literal meaning or out of their ordinary use”. Figures of speech can be said to be closely linked in meaning with figurative language and figurative expressions. According to Omozuwa and Ezejideaku (2008, p. 51), figurative expressions are “words that differ from the customary everyday conversational use of such expressions for the purpose of assigning them a special meaning”. “The poet uses figures of speech to 'distort' what he is talking about. He uses hyperbole, understatement, imagery, symbolism, metaphor and simile” (Maake, 1994, pp. 227-228). This study also focused on the above aspects in all the dictums analysed but specifically in the dictums presented as metaphorical poems. More discussion on figures of speech have been dealt with in the theoretical framework section of this study.

This chapter dealt with the theoretical framework that directed and informed this study. The study is cognisant of the formalist theory whose main focus is largely on the text. The formalist proponents opine that a specific text holds value, and is meaningful in itself, taking no cognisance of the author, context and social elements. The latter caused the Marxists and other critics to analyse formalism and pinpoint some of these omissions in their (formalists) consideration as a weakness. Unless the researcher gains awareness of what is being and has been done in his/her specific area of interest or study, it is likely that he/she will struggle to understand what he/she is supposed to do in his/her own study. He/she will also find it challenging to know which features to analyse from the text which he/she intends to study. The next chapter deals with the methodology employed in conducting this study.

## **2.7 A review of studies conducted in Africa**

Several stylistic studies have been carried out in Africa, though for this study a few were revised. Krishnamurthy (n.d.) in the study titled “Cause and effect: A stylistic analysis of the story in Ngugi’s “A grain of Wheat””, analyses stylistically the story of a novel with an emphasis on the cause and effect relationship. The latter study, though stylistic in nature is different from this study, because it focuses on the novel while this study focuses on the newspaper articles “dictums” that are written on different issues and presented in different ways, for example some are written as poems while some as prose. This study further employed the formalist theory and a guide to analyse the style that Diescho employs in his writing, while

Krishnamurthy (n.d.), employed Halliday’s analysis of clause representation to analyse dynamic motifs. The latter are two distinct studies indicating that there has not been a similar study to this study, hence its timeousity and relevance. Again, in another study related to stylistics, Krishnamurthy (2010) critically analysed the lexicography used in *Salman Rushdie’s Midnight children*, in the study she titled “*The chutnification of English: An examination of the lexis of Salman Rushdie’s Midnight Children*” making it more a linguistic than stylistic analysis. Another study that was intensively consulted during this study is by Ageo (2011) titled “*A stylistic analysis of some selected poems of Wole Soyinka*”. In this study main stylistic elements such as: style, stylistics and deviation at various levels are dealt with. Given the above account, one may realise and therefore agree that none of the studies are focused on a combination of prose and literary texts similar to the dictums that this study analysed. Notable to mention therefore is that there has not been stylistic studies of this nature done in Namibia, which created a paucity which this study aimed to fill.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

From this chapter, one learns that a lot has been done and numerous authors wrote on stylistics, though largely on poetry. The formalist theory found its place and relevance for use in this study due to the elements of foregrounding and figures of speech it contains. The literature studied and consulted shed ample light into how data would be better presented and analysed, later in Chapter 4. The next chapter deals with the methodological issues of the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical framework that informed this study, as well as the literature review relevant to this study. The present chapter will present the methodology.

It is important in any research to discuss the methodology since, as defined by Kothari (2004, p. 8), it is a way to solve the research problem systematically or a science of studying how research is done systematically”.

The methodology chapter offers the researcher an insight into the steps that one uses to study one’s research problem and find the rationality the question might have. Kothari (2004, p. 8) further states that “researchers need to know how to apply particular research techniques and which of the methods or techniques are relevant to their research problems as well as what they would mean and indicate and why”. Therefore, this chapter presents the research design, the population, sample, procedures, data analysis and research ethics respectively.

### **3.2 Research design**

The research design section guided and directed the researcher on how to go about carrying out this research. Several authors have defined the research design and some of the definitions are as follows. Durrheim (1999, p. 29) defines a research design as “a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research... which should provide an explicit plan for action”. Mushaandja (2007) explains that:

Research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer the research questions. The design describes the procedures one uses to carry out the study .... Therefore the ultimate aim of the research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers to research questions (p. 47).

There are two main types of research designs, namely qualitative and quantitative. Some authors, such as De Vos (2002) claim that the two designs are better used together for they complement each other. This study, however, was carried out using a single design, the

qualitative design because this study was concerned with understanding how Diescho used language through foregrounding and figures of speech to air his views on several topical issues through the dictums. The study's outcome can also not be generalised to all Diescho's works because it was only based on a few selected dictums he authored and not on his entire works. The latter is in line with what Mapani (2012, p. 61) summed up, that "it is a basic tenet of qualitative inquiry to seek deep understanding of the phenomenon (by selecting few information-rich cases) and not building theories and generalising knowledge". It might be challenging to define the qualitative design. Thus, Kumar (2011, p. 133) puts forward that qualitative study designs are not as specific, precise and well defined as designs in quantitative research.

However, several authors have made attempts to define and explain the qualitative design and what it entails, as well as what those, who employ this design in carrying out their studies, do. Neuman (2003, p. 146) points out that "qualitative researchers use language of causes and contexts, employ bricolage, examine social processes and cases in their social context, and look at interpretations or the creation of meaning in a specific setting". This study sought to analyse Diescho's dictums stylistically through a close analysis which were written on specific issues, including social and political. The study further looked at specific dictums that were found to contain the elements that the researcher sought (as indicated above) guided by the theoretical framework employed. As highlighted by Neuman (2003), this study looked at interpretations of the language used by Diescho to create meaning by employing various elements in his dictums.

Moreover, Kumar (2011, p. 104) posits that "the main focus in qualitative research is to analyse, explain, explore and discover the perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and

experiences of a group or individuals”. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 389) elaborate that “qualitative research may be generally classified as primarily an interactive field of research or an interactive document research. Within these classifications, there are many styles of enquiry... including analytical research”, which is what this study is about, a stylistic analysis. As indicated above by Kumar (2011), qualitative studies are aimed to, among others, analyse, explain, explore and discover the perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group or individuals”. This study was focused on exploring the values, beliefs and experiences of Diescho that he expressed in the studied dictums, mainly through the study of the elements of language (foregrounding and figures of speech) used.

This study was aimed at analysing and exploring Diescho’s style using the formalist theory. It was a desktop study that used primary sources (dictums). The researcher critically analysed and explored in-depth, the 20 selected dictums. The dictums were stylistically analysed using the two premises of formalist theory (as stated earlier) namely: foregrounding and figures of speech. Foregrounding analysed the stylistic features of deviation and parallelism. The figures of speech unpacked imageries, such as similes, metaphors, personification and others that were found in the dictums that were studied. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 66) opine that:

qualitative research has, distinguished, and sometimes anguished history in the human history in the human disciplines... Soon the qualitative would be employed in other social and behavioural science disciplines...

This study is part of communication, under which language falls, hence the appropriateness of using qualitative design for this stylistic (linguistic) study.

In line with the above, therefore, the present study falls under the category which Denzin and Lincoln (2000) classify under social and behavioural science disciplines. Finally, Kumar

(2011) outlines the two main functions of the research design namely to “identify and/or develop procedures and logistical arrangements required to undertake a study, and to emphasise the importance of quality in the procedures to ensure their validity, objectivity and accuracy” (p. 94). Given the latter, this study sought to identify and analyse how and what tenets Diescho uses to enhance and make his writing attractive, understandable and appealing to his readers. This study once more, guided by the design, can be said to have achieved a substantial degree of objectivity and validity to a larger extent.

### **3.3 Population**

De Vos (2002, p. 198) presents various definitions of a study population as follows;

Firstly, as “individuals in the universe who pose characteristics. Secondly, as a set of entities in which all the measurements of interest to the practitioner or researcher are represented”. Thirdly, as the total set from which the individuals or units of the study are chosen. Finally, as the totality of persons, events, organisation units, case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned.

Using the above explanations, therefore, the population of this study was all the dictums written by Diescho that had been published in the *New Era* newspaper. Though there are numerous publications that Diescho wrote and is still publishing (writing) it was found fit for this study to focus on the selected dictums since it is not possible to study all his works in a single study.

### **3.4 Sample**

De Vos (2002, p. 198) states that “the major reason for sampling is feasibility, since a complete coverage of the total population is seldom possible, and all the members of a

population of interest cannot probably be reached". There are two types of sample designs, namely non-probability sampling and probability sampling. According to Kothari (2004):

Non-probability sampling is that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample. In this type of sampling, items in the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher. Probability sampling, on the other hand, is also known as 'random sampling' or 'chance sampling' whereby every item of the universe has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. (p. 60)

The sample for this study was selected purposefully which is part of non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling entails that the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest (p. 171, Berg 2004, McMillan & Schumacher, 1997,). Thus, 20 dictums were selected as a sample (from all other dictums written by Diescho) based on the criteria that they contain foregrounding and figures of speech elements and dealt with social and political issues. This was done in accordance with what Blanche and Durrheim (1999) explain:

Sampling involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and or social processes to observe, and what is of utmost importance in sampling is representativeness... The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions (p. 45).

### **3.5 Procedure**

Data for this study were collected from the *New Era* newspaper's website. An in-depth study of the dictums was undertaken, and 20 dictums were selected based on the issues they discussed which were political and social, as well as the availability of foregrounding features

and figures of speech elements. The premises of formalist theory were employed as mirrors within which the analysis of each dictum was done step by step.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The main purpose of data analysis, according to Durrheim (1999), is to “transform information (data) into an answer to the original research question” (p. 47). Being a qualitative study, this study employed an interpretive approach. Mushaandja (2007, p. 85) outlines that “qualitative data analysis and interpretation consist of phases that occur in overlapping cycles, namely data collection, and data analysis strategies.” The analysis of this study too, began when the researcher had to study the dictums and identify those that were fitting for the study. The analysis process was continued throughout every stage of the study, since reference had to be made in each section to the dictums as well as to the study questions and problem statement.

Furthermore, according to Durrheim (1999):

Interpretive approaches are best suited for use in qualitative studies. Unlike when we follow an explicitly positivist approach, the interpretive approach tries to harness and extend the power of ordinary language and expression, developed thousands of years, to help us better understand the social world we live (p. 123).

As stated earlier, this study employed a qualitative design, hence an interpretive approach for analysis was suitable. It is also important once more, to mention that the dictums studied were published in the newspaper, thus they fitted to be analysed by using the interpretive analysis approach. Hence, there is a correlation to the latter with what Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 153) recount about interpretive analysis that “sometimes interpretive analysis makes

use of documentary sources such as letters, newspaper articles (such as the dictums), official documents and books”.

According to Neuman (2003, p. 438), “qualitative data are in the form of text, written words, phrases, or symbols describing or presenting people, actions and events in social life”. Consequently, given the latter, analysing qualitative data can be a little bit challenging to researchers as compared to quantitative data which gets condensed in numbers; then the researcher manipulates the numbers in order to see patterns or relationships (Neuman 2003). On the contrary:

Qualitative data are in the form of words, which are relatively imprecise, diffuse, and context-based, and can have more than one meaning, and in their analysis qualitative researchers look for patterns, features or relationships, and they begin their analyses early in the research project, while they are still collecting data (Neuman 2003, p. 440).

Data for this study were analysed using content analysis which is part of the interpretive approach. Patton (2002, p. 250) explains that “content and thematic analyses are performed so that the experimental group patterns can be compared and contrasted”. In the light of the above the formalist theory was instrumental in identifying related content and themes from the dictums which enabled the comparison and contrasting of reoccurring patterns found in the texts. The above elaborations denote that the formalist theory’s elements of foregrounding and figures of speech were used to identify similar stylistic features that were found embedded in Diescho’s dictums. Individual dictums were stylistically analysed and elements of deviation, parallelism as well as figurative language were extracted, using the formalist

theory checklist, and then discussed. The analysis is presented in the form of detailed written annotations grouped in themes as they emerged from the analysis (Patton, 2002).

### **3.7 Research ethics**

Strydom (2002, p. 62) accentuates that “for researchers in the social sciences, the ethical issues are pervasive and complex, since data should never be obtained at the expense of human beings”. This study, however, did not involve human objects in obtaining data. The data were collected from a public publication, namely, *New Era newspaper*, and the study did not focus on the views expressed or the personality of the author or anything that pertains to the author as a person, but, this study solely focused on the stylistic analysis of how language was used and how the author used language through foregrounding and figures of speech to express himself on a number of issues.

Nonetheless, the researcher did not need to seek permission from the *New Era* newspaper because the dictums are in the public domain and do not require specific permission from the author nor the publisher (*New Era*). However, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the UNAM ethics committee as well as the permission to conduct research from the UNAM postgraduate studies committee – see attached Appendix B and C.

Care was also taken to ensure that the analyses of the dictums did not ridicule or tarnish the images of individuals or institutions. It was equally ensured that the data (dictums) collected for this study were used only for this study.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the methodology used in carrying out this study. The following topics were discussed and elaborated upon: the design, sample, procedure, data analysis and ethical consideration. In the next chapter the researcher will present the findings and the discussion.

## PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher deals with the presentation and discussion of the research findings. The presentation and analysis were done in a way that it would provide answers and information on the research objectives that guided this study. The objectives of the study, (as outlined in Chapter 1) are:

- To analyse Diescho's use of foregrounding in the form of parallelism and deviation in order to effectively convey his message;
- To explore how Diescho constructs meaning through figurative language and other linguistic expressions.

As alluded to by Neuman (2003, p. 440) "qualitative researchers look for patterns, features or relationships..." each dictum was studied, analysed and elements of foregrounding in the form of deviation and parallelism, as well as aspects of figurative language, were identified and analysed according to the formalist properties.

Elements of foregrounding and figures of speech were identified, presented and stylistically analysed as explained previously in the methodology chapter of the research. The aforementioned (foregrounding and figures of speech) elements were set as sub-topics under which detailed descriptions and explanations were done, as they were found in each dictum. It means that the researcher did not, in this chapter, present the complete dictums themselves, owing to their lengthy nature. In this chapter, however, the researcher presented the titles of the dictums. Full dictums are to be found as Appendix A at the end of this thesis.

It is vital to mention once more that the dictums selected for this study are twenty, and they are about social and political issues. Again the dictums are not presented and analysed in a certain order or according to specific topics they deal with. Instead, the researcher employed the formalist elements to stylistically analyse the content of all the twenty dictums, which served as sub themes under which the analyses were done. On various junctures the researcher indicated from which dictum certain elements were taken by making reference to the titles and or parts of such dictums

#### **4.1.1 A brief biography of the author**

Diescho is a Namibian writer and political analyst. He hails from Andara - Kavango in the Region in northern Namibia. He attended Fort Hare University in South Africa where he studied law and political science. In 1984 he became a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University in New York City, where he completed his PhD in Political Science in 1992. His doctoral dissertation was titled “The role of Education in the Politics of Control in Namibia: 1984-1988,” wherein he explored the relationship between politics and education in Namibia. He won an award as a television announcer for the programme ‘South Africa Now’ an American public television. In 1997-8, he was the founder and presenter of ‘The Big Picture’, a weekly economic and political analysis programme on SABC 2. Diescho is the author of two novels, namely; *Born of the Sun* which was published in the US in 1988 and *Troubled Waters* published in 1993. In July 2013, Diescho was appointed as the Executive Director of the Namibian Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM) a post he held from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2013 to December 2015.

In January 2014, Diescho began to write a column in the New Era newspaper that he titled “Diescho’s Dictums”. Such articles (dictums) are still published to date (2016). Twenty (20) of the dictums were identified and stylistically studied in detail in this study.

#### **4.1.2 The dictums**

As defined in the introduction chapter of this study, dictums are pronouncements of some sort on several topics usually by an authoritative figure in the given area of expertise. It is further illustrated that usually, an example of occasions where dictums are issued are such as in the court of law. Unlike all other dictums elsewhere, the dictums this study dealt with are written as newspaper articles on various topical issues, ranging from social to political. By presenting them as dictums, the author consequently elevates himself to the position of someone who is authoritative and highly knowledgeable about issues he writes about.

One may argue about from where Diescho gets the authority and/or power that liberates him to make such multiple ‘pronouncements’ on a wide range of issues. The answer might be found in his biographical information which presents him as “a jack of all trades”, meaning that being a scholar in the social sciences as well as having lived and travelled around the globe, Diescho (the author) is vastly vested with the knowledge of social issues that impact people globally as well as locally (in Namibia), taking cognisance of the fact that he is a Namibian. Secondly Diescho holds a doctorate in Political Science, hence his informed statements on political issues both at home and abroad. The latter became a critical source of curiosity worth being well understood as well as listened to, through every means, one of which is a stylistic analysis which is the role that this study played. When reading through each dictum, one discovers a sense of ownership, knowledge, and expertise that the author writes with. The author makes informed statements, which is demonstrated in many ways, for

example when he made reference to the world's respected, renowned leaders, revolutionists, academics, beliefs, authors and many others. The dictums are well informed and make use of references and detailed explanations of the issue the author writes about in every particular dictum. One gets a sense of vigilance and knowledge-based arguments as well as pronouncements in most, if not all, of the studied dictums.

#### **4.1.3 Titles of the dictums**

The following are the titles of the dictums that the researcher selected and dealt with in this study (see Appendix A). *Lack of clarity and purpose leads to peril, Diversity in Namibia (part 2), The agony of change, Constitutional amendments and pot politics (part 2), The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration, Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? (part 2), The state and the future of the public service in Namibia (part 1), Quo vadis Namibia (Where are you going Namibia?), Namibia's developmental state in the making, Anthem of the lonely Namib (part 1), Anthem of the lonely Namib (part 2), The seven cardinal virtues of the Namibian nation, Is continuity and change the return of African politics?, The Black curse, Is the world coming to an end?, Wisdom of African proverbs on love, If the world was a village of just 100 inhabitants, A letter to the Namibian child, and When the centre does not hold, things fall apart.*

#### **4.1.4 Themes dealt with in the dictums**

As might be evident from the topics outlined above, and even clearer in the dictums, the dictums selected for this study are those that are written on social and political issues. The following are some of the main themes dealt with in the dictums - Political issues: elections,

leadership, and the constitution; Social issues: land, the plight of the citizens (especially the youth), education, language, the church, sense of self, and of belonging.

#### **4.1.5 Authorial styles**

As a renowned author, Diescho is a writer with multiple authorial styles. His ability to use language in a multiplicity of ways gives him an added advantage totting to his well-developed and thus well-rounded skills and styles of writing. The latter enabled him to successfully reach out to his envisioned audience directly or indirectly without losing them on the way nor loosing focus on the message he intends to convey with each piece he wrote. Authors have various styles; however, it is not uncommon for a single author to have more than one style. Bell (1976) argues that “there are no single style speakers or authors,” meaning that for most, if not every author the use of various (appropriate) styles for different contexts in which they write becomes explicit in their particular texts. This defines, therefore, the reason why one author uses multiple styles as befits a given time in a given context for a given purpose.

It is against the above background that Short (1976) particularises that ‘when people talk about style, they usually mean authorial style’. Authorial style can be understood as the single/combined style an author employs in writing/authoring a certain text. Through the study of the dictums, Diescho used multiple styles, which qualifies him as possessing multiple authorial styles. Diescho employs styles such as academic style, non-formal style, literary style and others. All these listed styles are found evident in the studied dictums.

## 4.2 Textual analysis

### 4.2.1 Foregrounding

All dictums contain several elements of foregrounding at some varying level. One aspect that stands out (foregrounded) about the dictums in this study is the way the author titles and presents each dictum. Some titles are presented as metaphors, while some titles are presented as questions; others are foregrounded because of the language used, which is not English.

Here are some examples of foregrounded titles:

*'Quo Vadis Namibia?'* is a title or a phrase in the Latin language which in English means 'Where are you going Namibia?' This title is different from all others because it is not written in English, though the dictum is. Readers are left to seek its meaning, either, through reading the dictum, which I believe is the main reason for the author to write it as such or to find the meaning of the phrase/title by seeking for its rendition in English. Through the use of such a title, the dictum becomes catchy and exotic such that it whets the potential reader's reading appetite. This is coupled with the fact that in addition to the Latin, which in itself is a mark of sophistry and mastery of linguistic prowess, the phrase is also adjoined to the word Namibia. Through the use of a Latin phrase and the word Namibia, this makes the title stylistically intriguing and as the title is thus foregrounded, the dictum stands out prominently out of the other articles in the newspaper, thereby catching the fast-pacing newspaper reader. Whilst other authors and novelists might use catchy titles on glossy front covers, coupled with an artistic blurb, Diescho's dictums appear in a newspaper. Therefore, in order to be regarded as worthy a read, the use of foregrounding in the instance has immense stylistic qualities which stand out prominently.

Other foregrounded titles are; *'Anthem of the lonely Namib and 'Cry the praying country'*. The two titles are personifications. The Namib is given a human trait 'lonely' while the country is given human attributes 'cry' and 'praying'. The author causes the reader's mind to ask questions such as what anthem can the "Namib" possibly sing? Why and what causes the country to 'cry'? And perhaps how can the country possibly cry, for it is not human? While the latter can be the basic questions, the main target of the author can be understood as intended to attract the reader's attention to read the dictums by composing catchy titles creatively for such texts. It is worth noting that the medium being used by the author to carry his dictum is a newspaper, a form of print media and a daily paper. This has the disadvantage that the life span of the newspaper is rather short as every morning there is a new paper. Therefore for one's article and in this case the dictum to appeal to wider readership and also to command serious attention, the author had to use such foregrounded forms of titles, to attract a lot of readers.

The third set of titles that are also foregrounded are the following: *Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream?; Is continuity and change the return of African politics? And Is the world coming to an end?*

One striking element in the titles above is the fact that they are formulated in the form of questions. As it is with rhetorical questions (where the questions asked do not require answers from the addressed), it is inherently human that the reader will be persuaded to read these dictums in order to obtain answers to the questions. In addition to being questions in nature, the above titles are also provocative, in a way, because for example, the author uses hyperbolic words such as 'explode' as well as the expression the 'world coming to an end'. The sense of action evoked by these hyperbolic words is equally startling and alarming,

thereby creating a sense of curiosity. This is due to the “apocalyptic” connotations which are aroused in the reader. Additionally, the author uses a simile to compare Namibia’s dream to the African dream. With this comparison the reader is likely to be attracted to make an effort to find out what the African dream is to which the Namibian dream is compared. With all the above techniques, Diescho may be understood to aim at reaching out to as many readers as possible, and consequently his message spreads broadly through making his written works as creative and attractive as possible. Foregrounding is the tool at his disposal which he utilises to a great extent.

While many of the dictums are written in the form of prose, some dictums are different, as they are written as poems. This makes them foregrounded or outstandingly different from others that are of the prose nature. They are foregrounded because the language that is used to write them is different from the everyday language that we use and that which is used to write other dictums, which is in agreement with Liu’s (2005, p. 76) accentuation that “foregrounding is the opposite of automation”. Ui (2014, p. 38) elaborates that “poetic language is different from the standard language”, thus for example when one reads the way the dictum ‘*Anthem of the lonely Namib*’ is written, beginning from the form and structure to the type of language that is used, it is different as it is filled with figurative language and metaphors.

A few of the following extracts from some of the dictums illustrate how Diescho used the foregrounding technique as a writing skill and or tool of communication to his readers in various ways:

**Example 1: From the dictum “Anthem of the lonely Namib”**

*... I cherish having a peek into the past,*

*But the lack of a lantern to illuminate the long road ahead gives me grief.*

*I love history told truthfully,*

*But I hate untruths told as history,*

*Especially the story of wars that others waged.*

*For wars occur because those who engage in them prepare for conflict,*

*Instead of peace.*

*That is their story.*

*Not mine.*

In the extract above, it comes to light that the manner in which the author expresses his views is different from the way that one expects writers to write newspaper articles and/or formal pronouncements (which is the denotative meaning of a dictum) on a given issue. The last four lines of this extract could as well be written in everyday (normal) language following the prose pattern as follows:

*“For wars occur because those who engage in them prepare for conflict instead of peace.*

*That is their story, not mine.”*

The implication here is that the author could use complete sentences and follow the rules of sentence construction. On the contrary, however, Diescho opted to deviate from the norm of language usage and syntactic structure rules as well as ignoring the correct norms of punctuation. He also used phrases instead of full sentences. It can also be noticed here that instead of using language in a way that everybody can easily understand, Diescho wrote in a foregrounded poetic way that makes his readers contemplate on the possible meanings of his texts through both the way he writes as well as the way he formats what he writes, before

readers attempt to understand the same. Through such a style of writing, the author therefore utilises some stylistic principles to craft the message and through the use of foregrounding the dictums become unique, captivating and they stand out from the rest of the “normal” and, to some extent, clichéd, everyday newspaper articles.

**Example two: From the dictum ‘Wisdom of African proverbs on love’**

*Here is a glimpse of what Afrika taught about love:*

*It is better to be loved than feared.*

*Where there is love there is no darkness.*

*Dogs don't love people; they love the place where they are fed.*

*The way to the beloved isn't thorny.*

*One doesn't love another, if one doesn't accept anything from that person.*

*Love doesn't listen to rumours.*

*Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly.*

*If a woman doesn't love you, she calls you brother.*

*Love put the eaglet out of its nest.*

*People who love one another do not dwell on each other's mistakes.*

*To be smiled at isn't to be loved.*

*The house of a person we love is never far.*

*A letter from the heart can be read on the face.*

*Love has to be shown by deeds not words.*

*Love doesn't rely on physical features.*

*He, who loves you, loves you with your dirt.*

*The one who loves an unsightly person is the one who makes him beautiful.*

*To love someone who does not love you is like shaking a tree to make the dewdrops fall.*

*He who doesn't like chattering women must stay a bachelor.*

*A young wife tends to cook too much at first.*

*The way you got married isn't the way you'll get divorced.*

*A bird can be guarded, a wife can't.*

*A man without a wife is like a vase without flowers.*

*It is the habit that a child forms at home, that follows them to their marriage.*

*If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes and the monkey remains as is.*

*Having beauty doesn't mean understanding the perseverance of marriage.*

*If you do not travel, you will marry your own sister. ...*

The extract above can be regarded as a vivid utilisation of the stylistic feature of foregrounding because this dictum is written as a poem and comprises mostly proverbs...

This agrees with McIntyre (2013) when he discourses that foregrounding (theory) is seen as a means of explaining the difference between poetic and everyday language. Therefore one may say that the dictum "*African proverbs on love*" was composed entirely of poetic language. As in the name, the entire dictum is embedded with or made up of proverbs. It is as well not a common style that one finds texts written using proverbs only, however, with this dictum Diescho successfully employed his skills to create a coherent and information rich piece. One may argue too, that it is not so common to find fine authors who can create such a proverbial masterpiece, since, common though it may be, many will have the knowledge of a number of proverbs in our native languages and other languages such as English, but we can rarely write as Diescho did in this dictum, presenting an entire three pages plus text using proverbs only. What is commonly evident in most written texts/pieces is the combined use of normal/everyday language with a few proverbs inserted here and there.

Additionally, this dictum is a brilliant depiction of how one can effectively employ figurative language (that is words used out of their usual or literal meanings) to create effect or to add beauty and emotional intensity to the text (Putri, 2011). Omozowa and Ezejideaku (2008, p. 51) elaborate that "figurative language or figurative expressions are words or expressions that differ from the customary every day conversational use of such expressions for the purpose of assigning them a special meaning which should be understood by their connotative meanings rather than their denotative meanings". Thus, unlike most dictums, a few of Diescho's dictums ('African proverbs on love' being one of them) are written as poems, which are not only poems in form but also in structure, and which are written either using metaphors and proverbs or other expressions plus imagery. Therefore, in the extract above, foregrounding is also evident through graphological and semantic deviation, parallelism and several occasions

of binary opposites. Detailed analysis of the latter elements will be presented under appropriate sections further in this thesis.

## **4.2.2 Deviation**

Deviation as defined previously is the element or elements in the text that affect(s) the reader psychologically as he/she comes into contact with the given text, which arouses emotions and responses in the text. Deviation occurs at different levels within and around the text. There is marked relationship between deviation and foregrounding because as soon as the author deviates from the norm, be it of written or spoken language, the part that is deviant becomes foregrounded or noticeable more than others that are not. In the dictums dealt with in this study, deviation occurred at different levels.

### **4.2.2.1 Lexical deviation**

A text qualifies to be lexically deviant when the words in it diverge from their actual and standard form in order to have a deeper aesthetic value (Jafaar, 2014, p. 241). In almost all dictums the aspect of lexical deviation is prominent. One may agree that for most parts of numerous dictums, the manner in which words are used is deviant in individual words, in the context they are used or with other words (as phrases) within the same context. Here are a few examples extracted from some dictums, to aid our comprehension and appreciation of lexical deviation:

**Example 1; from the dictum *Anthem of the lonely Namib***

<b>Deviant form</b>	<b>Denotative (normal) form</b>
... <i>But I know not enough</i> ...	... But I do not know enough...
<i>I am your yesterday and your tomorrow – not you mine</i>	Your past and future are part of me – though you are not my yesterday and tomorrow

**Example 2:**

*Unrepresented* – instead of not represented – (Diversity in Namibia)

The *pornography of wealth and political power* – instead of caress/irresponsible use of wealth and power – (Diversity in Namibia)

Namibia is a small country *sandwiched* between two big economies –instead of, located – (Diversity in Namibia)

A situation which compels a choice between unpleasant and *disfavourable* alternatives – instead of unfavourable – (Diversity in Namibia)

... the old *recycled* people. – instead of the same people who have been serving for long – (The agony of change).

... the policy of development which meant *bantustanization* of ethnic government... - a blended word that expresses a model – (The role of the church in Namibia).

The church played a *pioneering* role – instead of a leading role... (The role of the church in Namibia).

... others who do not have clothes as inferior and *sub – human* – instead of less human – (Diversity in Namibia (Part 1))

The *Afrikanrecord* shows that... - instead of African record – (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration).

...between the *land-rich and land-hungry*... instead of those who have land and those in need of land – (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration).

Here begins to *germinate* the fundamentals of the Namibian dream – instead of to grow – (Is Namibian dream likely to explode like the African dream? (Part 2)).

...to manage tribe and ethnicity in the *furtherance* of a one Namibia – instead of continuing – (Is Namibian dream likely to explode like the African dream? (Part 2)).

...better than the *Africanmindset* of subsistence economy – instead of African mind set – (The state and the future of the public service in Namibia: part one).

In the above examples of lexical deviations from several dictums the following understanding may be consequent as a result of stylistic analysis.

The author used words such as unrepresented, sandwiched, disfavoured, and furtherance as new or unusual words. Given the context within which they appear, though the meaning can be understood when the reader uses context, such words are new in normal and common

language use in similar situations, hence rarely would one find them used in normal everyday texts especially among local authors. For instance, the word *furtherance*, though a contextually correct English word as it is used, readers might find it unusual and new since words such as continuation are commonly used instead. Using such words that are uncommon in the day to day use of English, especially in Namibia, the author makes his work interesting by bringing in the element of newness in language use, an element that is common in Diescho's authorial style throughout the dictums studied. It is important to mention here that though Diescho makes use of some new or strange words which does not make his written works complicated or difficult to understand. One of the reasons is that he has a way of crafting the context in which he uses such words to bring out the understanding of the same. Since it is the wish of every author to reach out to as many readers as possible, with this style Diescho makes his audience love and passionate about reading his works, hence attracting more readers.

Moreover, words such as *Africanrecord* and *Afrikanmindset* are eminent examples of compounding where several words are fashioned as one word that expresses an idea. Compounding in linguistics refers to a process by which an individual word is formed through a combination of two or more other words that function as one unit of meaning. The following words, therefore, are compounds *Africanrecord* is made up of the two words; African and record, while the word *africanmindset* is made up of three words, namely African, mind and set. The use of the compounds above makes the reader stop and seek the meaning of the words and the reason why the author used them. Therefore through lexical deviation, the author's writing in this instance becomes more novel and deautomised and, by so doing, the stylistic effect is affectively effective.

The use of the word *germinate* with ‘dreams’ is metaphorical. It is commonly known that seeds do germinate, but dreams do come about, get realised or true. Comparing the action of realisation/development of dreams to germination successfully shows the author’s creativity in his use of language.

Again, it may be argued that with such, rather, strong authorial style, Diescho seems to introduce a new and or improved way of using the English language as a means of strengthening his (written) works successfully to achieve his intended purpose of communicating his message in an enhanced manner. Another success that Diescho attains with using such a style is that it enables him to reach out to his readers, and this can be a great learning opportunity for upcoming linguists and authors to emulate and learn from him. With his model, one realises that language is not static but alive as long as its usage gets advanced and grown by creative minds every time they set themselves to bring into it (language) some elements of nuance through language expansion methods such as blending, borrowing, compounding and other means of adding new words to a language or using same words creatively, that is a little bit more than usual.

#### **4.2.2.2 Phonological deviation**

Everything related to sound that is unfamiliar in a text, ranging from unusual sound effects, alliteration and assonance, the altering of normal spelling to represent particular accents and dialects and the phonetic misspelling of words (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 32), is classified under phonological deviation. This section presents the occurrences of phonological deviation in the dictums deliberated upon in this study.

The following are some examples of phonological deviation from the dictums:

*9<sup>th</sup> line ... good and bad. [d].* The rhythmic effect is created by the use of the [d] sound at the end of each of the two words namely; good and bad. (In Anthem of the lonely Namib)

*48... yesterday and yesteryear....* In this excerpt, there is rhythm that the author formed by using parallels in the two words (yesterday and yesteryear) by the prefix ‘yester...’ (In Anthem of the lonely Namib).

*Lines 74 - 77...I am here, hear me*

*I am real, feel me*

*I am for you need me*

*I am with you, be me* (In Anthem of the lonely Namib)

In the quotations above, (lines 74 – 77) the author deviates phonologically in such a way that he creates rhythmic effects and rhyming patterns. The rhythm is produced by the use of words such as ‘*I am...*’ at the beginning of each line and ‘*me*’ to end each line. Though of different sounds, there is a certain sound pattern that is created in these lines through the use of parallel structures which make the entire verse to possess a common rhythmic pattern and a rhyme scheme.

*... Similar as they are dissimilar (Diversity in Namibia)*

Here the sound is created by repeating the word ‘similar’ concurrently. In the same instance the author creates binary opposition by contrasting similar against dissimilar to create effect in the reader’s mind.

In the following sentences the author uses repetition. *It was* unavoidable. *It was* the end of the war. *It was* the time of reuniting families that were torn apart by history, good and bad. *It was* the end of the past. (The agony of change).

The author employed alliteration in the above sentences by creating a pattern of sounds through the repetition of the words *it was*, at the beginning of each of the four sentences successively. One main purpose for such repetitions is to create emphasis. Such repetitions, which is an example of phonological deviations, are likened to the ones usually created and used by music and song writers who use it as a mechanism for whoever hears such sounds over and over again, be impacted upon, and eventually get the intended message.

Other sound effects that the author created in the same pattern as above are:

This was a *big* moment. Namibia was *big* in the family of African nations at that moment. I belonged to *big* people. (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration)

... for a *better, brighter, and a more glorious* Namibia (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration)

In the above sentence, the author uses comparatives to once more create emphasis drawn from applying tautology of the three adjectives consecutively to create aesthetic effects in the readers as well as for emphasis. Aesthetic effects are concerned with the creation or appreciation of beauty. The repetition of the word 'big' makes the sentence look and sound beautiful and more than just an ordinary sentence. The reader is likely to be allured into feeling 'big' too and therefore relate to the text as being one of the 'big' people since (especially if) he/she too is a Namibian. The same is true for the concurrent use of the words

with similar meanings namely *a better, brighter, and a more glorious...* that create a sense of musicality which, in turn, make the reader enjoy reading. Such usage is also a powerful tool that authors use in creating an impression on the reader regarding the subject on which they write.

*Beginning with nothing from nothing* (Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the African dream, Part Two). The sound effect... and the creation of parallels by the repetition of the ... *ing* at the end of the three words namely beginning, nothing and nothing. Consecutively herein allows the creation of musicality, effects on the reader as well as emphasis. The latter aspects can easily be causes of curiosity and encouragement for the reader to read the dictum and seek the meaning of the message in it.

#### **4.2.2.3 Syntactic deviation**

Syntactic deviation has to do with the unusual or incorrect sentence presentation and/or structure. Every language structure dictates the way in which sentences have to be structured, for example, the common order in which words are arranged in most sentences in English is Subject – Verb – Object or specific elements which should be present in the sentence to qualify as such. For instance a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. Whenever the latter rule is not adhered to, then we can say the writer or the composer of that specific sentence has deviated syntactically from the normal or correct way of sentence construction. Again a sentence should be placed in the same line and only when the specific line is filled then the sentence can be continued in the immediate following or next line.

It is furthermore, vital to mention that this type of deviation is common in poetry and it is usually used as a creative tool to make writing and mostly reading a joy-giving undertaking

than a boring exercise. This forces the readers to stop and think about what they are reading for a while, which enables them to intensify the meaning of what they read too. During the process, the reader gets satisfied and fulfilled by the discovery of the actual meaning he/she makes out eventually through ‘critical thinking while reading’, a process that is enforced by the style (syntactic deviation) employed by the author. With this type of (syntactic) deviation, the reader is enabled to see that whatever he/she reads (doesn’t matter how many times he/she has already read it) as new since the way it is presented brings out that sense of novelty. Stylisticians and other linguists are usually attracted to studying such authorships; hence, Elnaili (2013, p. 14) emphasizes that “the grammar in literary language has always attracted linguists, especially the language of poems. Patterns in language structure can participate to the overall meaning of a literary discourse”.

Syntactic deviation is apparent in several dictums, especially those that are written as poems. They are identified and explained briefly as follow:

The dictums titled: *Anthem of the lonely Namib*, *Wisdom of African proverbs on love*, *if the world was a village of 100 inhabitants* and *letter to the Namibian child*, contain syntactic deviations. One main reason for the last claim is that they are composed as poems. It is a common practice that poets have the tendency of writing their texts in such a way that they do not necessarily follow the rules of language structure, especially the rules of sentence structure and grammar rules. The way poems are written, too, is such that the poets use multiple tools in their works to ensure that their readers do not get bored as they read their work.

As for the afforelisted poems (dictums) Diescho successfully employed the following tools:

### A) Writing using lines

Writing using lines, instead of sentences with this the author enables his readers to read shorter pieces of work rather than reading full sentences that can be a cause of boredom to many. That means the utilisation of such a style aids the author to make his work attractive for his audience. The same is true, for using verses than paragraphs. Verses look/appear naturally shorter than paragraphs. Usually verses attract more readers than paragraphs that can appear long and with too many words. Therefore, just by looking at a packed paragraph, the reader can easily be drawn away especially by the feeling that whatever it is that they are supposed to read is too much, since it usually appears that way.

In the following example, Diescho uses lines and not sentences. It is noticeable that he does not adhere to the rule of ending a sentence with a full stop, even though, with some lines, he expresses a complete idea or thought. This type of writing one may say allows light reading and does not present any form of complication for the reader, for example numerous punctuation and difficult or complicated format. Even the lazy reader may be drawn with ease to read such text. The secret with this style, especially in this context, is that the author seems to have aimed at passing on the message in these lines using such a simple format knowing that whatever message he wants to pass on is sufficiently expressed and can be easily understood the way it is put.

*The world is safely unsafe*

*The world is ours*

*The word is itself*

*A world of contradictions: There are more people and fewer relationships*

*There are more educated people but fewer solutions*

*More information yet less understanding*

*More knowledge yet less wisdom*

*More stories yet more ignorance*

*More medicines yet less wellness*

*More food yet more hungry people*

*Safer to go to the moon yet unsafe to cross the road to visit neighbours*

*More expensive weddings yet more costly divorces*

*More safety weapons yet more rage and aggression*

*More love songs yet more family-based violence ... (If the world was a village of just 100 inhabitants)*

The author has not only ignored the sentence construction format or rule, he also simply put down ideas with no explanations or elaborations whatsoever. He additionally did not make reference to any source or any person as to what and on whom he is basing his claims, but solely places ideas, one may say, as randomly as he perhaps could have generated them in his head. The author can be implied to have employed this technique consciously to plainly say what he intends his readers to hear or read. Again the author should be presumed to be aware that the very message that he intends for his readers will better be comprehended and enjoyed when written in plain language like this. That is without punctuation, expanded explanations, examples and all other elements of writing that may cause confusion or may make a text somehow complicated for the (novice) reader, for instance. With such style, once more, even the non-experienced reader will read and easily understand because all the main ideas are apparent, nothing is hiding them or making it hard to identify such ideas. One may say the

author employed enjambment to trick readers as he moves from one idea to introduce another, usually opposed to it or sometimes related.

Another outstanding effect that is created by the author with this kind of deviation is that when one reads these sentences, it sounds more like listening to a person speaking to her/him on a one to one basis and there is no other option left than to listen attentively and seek to clearly understand each statement as uttered individually. The latter creates more appreciation of the words and ideas, and this form of articulation has a double effect upon the reader as it visually and aurally reaches to one's intellect. For example, statements such as

*The world is safely unsafe*

*The world is ours*

*The word is itself*

*A world of contradictions: There are more people and fewer relationships*

cannot be read at a fast pace and without sojourning to think about what the author may actually be saying with the words that meet the eye, plus what could be the deeper meaning hidden behind such words. In other words, it is the skilfulness of the author and his style that yield such results in a way that in the end he does not say and or write so much but gets to be understood more and deeply through critical analysis of the work.

## **B) Enjambment as a form of syntactic deviation**

Usually it is expected that everyone writing in English would write in such a way that he/she fills the lines as he/she writes sentences or anything of a prose nature. The author of the dictums made use of incomplete sentences that fill half the line and the continuation of the

same sentence in the line that follow without interrupting it with punctuation. That is the use of incomplete sentences that fill half the line and the continuation of the same sentence in the new line. The latter description fits well to express enjambment as a technique that is commonly used by poets and creatively used by Diescho in the following extract.

*I am aware of what went on before this day,*

*But I remain ignorant about the details that would transport me into my new world.*

*I know my politicians, good and bad,*

*But I have yet to know my leaders (Anthem of the lonely Namib)*

The application of the above kind of syntactic deviation is common in poetry more than in prose texts. Since it is allowed for the poets to transgress grammar rules, language usage rules and other essentials of language usage and writing, such poets tend to be creative in every possible manner that they find best fit for their piece of written work. The use of such techniques is usually intentional and meant to simplify and make it easy to understand the message of the author. On the other hand, however, poets use such styles or techniques to create a whole sense of newness for the readers/audience and such novelty is also attained.

Writing using lines instead of sentences, which results in what is supposed to be one sentence becoming two or more lines and as a consequence an idea is expressed in bits and pieces spread over many lines. Such distribution makes reading light while at the same time the reader forced to go from one line to the other before he/she finally arrives at an understanding of the idea that is communicated. Though words can appear somewhat scattered for some readers, such type of texts are enjoyable to many since one is not faced with multiple lines

filled with words which discourage and push away some readers as well. There is a sense of ponderous reading, with each line written using enjambment in such a way that the dictum becomes poetic, lyrical and, above all, densely packed with ideas.

#### **4.2.2.4 Grammatical deviation**

All languages are guided by rules that direct their users as to how to use it. Every user who fails to keep and maintain such rules can thus be said to be deviant from the norms of such language. Among numerous language rules, grammatical rules are some of those that govern every language. According to Short (1996, p. 47), “the number of grammatical rules in English is large, and therefore the foregrounding possibilities via grammatical deviation is also very large”. “Grammatical deviation occurs either at the level of the word’s individual make-up or at the level of syntax” (Gregoriou, 2009, p. 31). With this, the authors sometimes put no periods between sentences, make no space between words and also use the tenses incorrectly.

As alluded to earlier, regarding the fact that there are numerous grammatical rules in English, there are also, thus, numerous occurrences of grammatical deviations in the dictums dealt with in this study which Diescho used in attempt to attain several ends. The following are some examples and elaborations of grammatical deviations from the dictums.

#### **From the dictum Anthem of the lonely Namib**

*I know who I am in my tribe and in my village,*

*But I know not enough about my home, my nation and my extended family beyond my*

*childhood memories.*

*I am aware of what went on before this day,*

*But I remain ignorant about the details that would transport me into my new world.*

*I am grateful for the vast sacrifices made by countless who make them on my behalf,*

*But I do not possess sufficient grammar to express my gratitude at the most appropriate moments so that the relevant people can hear me.*

*I know my politicians, good and bad,*

*But I have yet to know my leaders.*

In the extract above, the author deviates clearly and grammatically, first and foremost at the sentence level. One observes that the very first line of this extract is an incomplete sentence which is ended with a comma. The second line (*But I know not enough about my home, my nation and my extended family beyond my childhood memories*) however, can be clearly understood to be a continuation of the first line which the author opted to start with the capital letter which in a way can be very confusing since the line that preceded it, is not ended with a full stop. Again, the idea introduced in the first line is not complete which makes this specific second line a continuation of the first.

The pattern described above is evidently repeated in this whole extract where a sentence is not placed in the same line though that specific line is not full. The author writes as such indeed for a purpose. One main purpose that causes the writers to avoid the use of full sentences and hence compacted paragraphs is so that they can attract all types of readers, especially those who easily get driven away from a text by merely seeing many words and compacted paragraphs. The way this extract is presented allows spaces between the words

and the fact that the author decided to begin continuing lines with capital letters even if what he wrote is an extension of what he introduced in the previous line, created a sense of newness. With the two latter tactics, the reader, without knowing, might easily be driven to feel that he/she is moving on to something new every time he/she moves to a new line which is begun with a capital letter, a strategy that aids readers to remain interested throughout their reading session.

Other examples of grammatical deviations are evident in the following:

**From: A letter to the Namibian child**

*Oh my child of the truth*

*Know yourself*

*Know your name and say it wherever you are,*

*Without apology, without fear*

*Shout your name to complete the symphony*

*And the meaning of the anthem*

*None will know you*

*If you do not state your presence*

*And your warmth to those around you.*

This example is fashioned in the same way that the one discussed earlier is formed, and the implication of the style employed can be said to be likely the same. Therefore, the readers are almost made to feel and believe that they are being introduced to something new every time they move to read a new line, as well as whenever the line they start reading is introduced with a capital letter. It is interesting that with such an approach, the readers get carried away by what they read than how what they read is written or presented.

**From: If a world was a village of just 100 inhabitants**

*Now there is light to banish the dark and leave us all bare and unsafe. Information, good and bad, travels faster than our fear. All the time. At the same time. Information gets more and more – yet poorer and poorer in every respect. And as information becomes more it gets more unhelpful to help us negotiate our human existence. Our world shrinks all the time, not in size, but in power to intimidate us. We intimidate it, do we?*

*The world is safely unsafe*

*The world is ours*

*The word is itself*

In the above example, the author deviated grammatically at sentence level, phrase level as well as word level. In the second line of the extract above, the author writes the following phrases: *All the time. At the same time*, which he begins with capital letters and ends with full stops. If such phrases are read in isolation as they appear here, one will hardly understand what message is being conveyed or referred to, which means there is no complete idea expressed. The latter is due to the absence of verbs and or verb phrases as well as subjects and objects, which are all grammatical elements whose presence in a sentence qualifies it as such. This type of deviation is commonly found in the language of poetry where it is allowed that poets can intentionally not adhere to grammatical rules and still be acceptable. In the context of this dictum, the author used a mixed strategy where he partly wrote in prose form and partly poetry. With this approach Diescho successfully captures various readers, those that love reading any kind of text as well as those that are not so much fond of reading compacted texts.

Another apparent indicator of grammatical deviation in this excerpt is the element of repetition, in the following sentence: *Information gets more and more – yet poorer and poorer in every respect.* In normal language usage, the author would have been judged to be unnecessarily repetitive. However, herein the author successfully uses binary opposites with ‘more’ and ‘poorer’ to create emphasis in bracing the point he is making, that is to make his readers aware of the reality of the much received information nowadays and the danger of such information being not useful and at times misleading and/or not truthful.

The last three lines of this piece are grammatically deviant too, in that, though they are begun with capital letters, they are not ended with full stops, which do not grammatically qualify them as sentences.

*The world is safely unsafe*

*The world is ours*

*The world is itself*

What was striking in these lines, however, is how the author creatively used the verb ‘is’ to point to what and how he viewed the world, which was done in a way that left the reader to ponder on the various presentations of the world and what meaning could the author be driving at with such allusions. The reader is likely to ask questions such as why and how can the world be safely – unsafe? The issue of the world being ours as referred to in the second line might not so much be a cause for questioning; however, the world being itself as stated in the third line, can cause a reader to pause and ask what this could mean to him/her. What could be deducted and hence concluded is that the author succeeds in getting his readers to read intensively, that is, the reader is made to think deeply about what they read every time he/she is made to stop and think about what he/she is reading.

#### 4.2.2.5 Graphological deviation

Another form of deviation this study looked into is graphological deviation. Graphology has to do with the estrangement of text through uncommon letters and/or word arrangements. The more elaborated meaning or definition of graphological deviation is expressed by Gregoriou (2009, p. 32) who enunciates that:

Graphological deviation includes unusual layout and use of space, strange word and letter arrangement, as well as altered punctuation. Essentially anything that is visually unusual constitutes graphological deviation. The use of capital letters and the omission of the gaps between some of the words and/or sentences form part of such deviation.

Graphological deviation is found in most dictums that are dealt with in this study, and ranges from entire text structure or layout, paragraphs and/or verses, sentences, phrases to individual words. Graphological deviation is apparent in the following ways or levels:

##### a. Unusual layout and use of space

The unusual structure and/or layout and the unusual use of space are found in the following dictums: *Anthem of the lonely Namib*, *African proverbs on love*, *If the world was a village of just 100 inhabitants* and *A letter to the Namibian child*. The dictums listed here are entirely and some largely written as poems, hence the layout appears like that of other poems, written in lines rather than in sentences, in verses rather than in paragraphs and at times contain individual sentences or lines or phrases standing alone. The latter means that the dictums are characterised by short sentences and multiple lines rather than full, long sentences that fill lines. Another obvious element in these dictums is that they are written more in verses than in paragraphs, as well as that they are at times written using short phrases or words that are sparsely distributed on the page. The way the author wrote seems to give a message that what

matters is what you read and not necessarily to save space and/or paper. The way the author thought best to let his readers read his works seems to have been more important here than anything else, hence using a lot of space on few words and/or lines. The author should probably have had knowledge of his targeted readers and found that for the kind of message he wanted to pass on to be received and understood well, the audience would better read it in such format.

### **b. Deviation through capitalisation**

It is a common practice and a language rule that capital letters should be used at specific places for specific reasons. For example, we use capital letters in English at the beginning of sentences, when we write names of people and places as well as when we write the entire sentence, paragraph and or essay using entirely capital letters for a specific reason. In studying the dictums by Diescho, one realizes how he used capital letters in unusual manners at unusual places for specific reasons. One of the many purposes for which Diescho used capital letters is to make loud, inviting, as well as vigorous beginnings to his dictums, which is by writing most first words of various dictums in capital letters. The following illustrations depict how capitalisation was employed:

#### **From: Diversity in Namibia (part 2)**

*LIKE with many issues in development and the changing dynamics in any society,...*

*They only know the story of the liberation struggle, but NOT what the country has going for it.*

*In spite of the not so hopeful picture above, Namibia remains a Land of Opportunities.*

*Namibia has her challenges, and they are growing, starting this Year of Great Expectations...*

**From: The agony of change**

*THE premier British naturalist, Charles Darwin, that one who gave us the theory of superiority versus inferiority types of human races, is quoted often to have said: ...*

*First, are the changes that are to come in March this year about bringing about a real New Beginning.*

**From: Constitutional amendments and pot politics (part 2)**

*IN all honesty...*

*ONE NAMIBIA ONE NATION!*

**From: Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream?**

*AS we celebrate the silver jubilee of our nation...*

*...their Founding Fathers...*

*This solidarity without principles is what led President Nyerere to describe the OAU as a 'Trade Union for Afrikan Heads of State'*

*Samuel Maharero first articulated the Namibian Dream*

*Here begins the realization that tribe alone did not make One Namibia.*

**From: The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration**

*Afrikan Heads of State and Government*

*...is setting the trend and indeed the pace for a New Afrika.*

*Wouldn't it be a better day for ALL...*

*... they are imploring Hage, the new President, to lead, to take US ALL forward.*

**From: The state and the future of the public service in Namibia (part one)**

*BEFORE Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated...*

**From: Namibia's developmental state in the making**

*SINCE independence almost twenty-five years ago...*

*Namibia is exponentially becoming a Developmental State. A Developmental State, or 'hard state'*

**From: If the world was a village of just 100 inhabitants**

*It's time to speak OshiAfrika! To Find Our Place In This Village*

The use of capital letters in an unusual manner at unusual places as illustrated in the above examples from various dictums is one of the common forms of graphological deviation used by Diescho in most of his dictums. Mention can be made here that the author successfully began many dictums scripting the first words in capital letters. The latter can be explained to mean that Diescho wanted to create an impression or sense of command for each piece of dictum he begins, as he brought forth whatever opinion and/or message he intended to communicate. The many times capitalisation was employed by Diescho, was for creating emphasis on, or about, specific aspects he was writing about. The way that most parts are written (with capital letters) and appear, as if they are inviting the reader to pay special attention to those specific parts and/or words more than other parts within the same text. For example, starting some words in the middle of the sentence with capital letters and not others of the same value will indeed cause the reader to examine and try to understand the significance of such words compared to others within the same context. Such a technique

makes readers read intensively and ponderously, that is, reading while asking questions and seeking for answers at the same time, which in turn leads to a better understanding of what they read.

Another way that Diescho used capital letters was by writing out some words and phrases suddenly in the middle of a sentence entirely with capital letters. Examples such as ... *but NOT what..., day for ALL..., ...to take US ALL forward...ONE NAMIBIA ONE NATION!...* show how the author used capital letters to both create emphasis as well as give insight. It is as if the author is silently but loudly saying to the reader ‘this you should not miss or keep this in mind’, hence creating impression too, for the reader. In the context in which the above words are used, capitalisation can be understood as intended to highlight the aspect of inclusivity. Moreover, such a use of graphological deviation through capitalisation also startles the reader, inviting a more serious concern and thoughtful reading. In essence, it can be argued that this form of graphological deviation is a form of rebelliousness, in as much as the author also is known for writing about contentious issues.

Another outstanding element of graphological deviation in almost all the dictums studied is the way the author wrote the word ‘Afrika’ instead of ‘Africa’. Being one of the most used words in almost all the dictums, the author opted to write it slightly different from the way it is known to be correct. Several native languages in Namibia use the letter ‘k’ more than the letter ‘c’. Though reading a piece that is written in English, a local reader will first of all feel that they are reading something very close to them because what they are reading looks quite familiar to what they know. One may be caused to even ask questions such as why is Africa written with a ‘c’ and not with a ‘k’ anyway? What difference does it make when we use ‘k’

or ‘c’? All in all, as related to earlier, the author appealed to the reader’s knowledge and or culture and with this technique, making readers feel close to the text and thus to relate to it.

### **4.3 Semantic deviation and figures of speech**

There is a closely related link between semantic deviation and figures of speech. One aspect that clarifies this relationship is that semantic deviation is about language used literally but the meaning is literary. That is, what one reads, is not what is meant directly, the meaning is to be understood or found through interpretation, be it contextually or linguistically. The explanation just made brings us to the understanding that semantic deviation is achieved through the use of figures of speech elements such as metaphors and other expressions. Hence Gregoriou (2009, p. 30) defines semantic deviation as “illogical or paradoxical meaning relations between words, such as with the use of metaphors”; while similarly, Jafaar (2014, p. 241) relates that “this (semantic) deviation shows that a simple word can have an extraordinary meaning, and that a word can have differences in meaning depending on the poet’s life and background”.

Adding to the definitions above, one may further say that it is not only a simple word that can have a completely different meaning, but also a whole complete set of phrases and/or sentences. “Figurative language or figurative expressions are words or expressions that differ from the customary every day conversational use of such expressions for the purpose of assigning them a special meaning which should be understood by their connotative meanings rather than their denotative meanings” (Omozowa & Ezejideaku, 2008, p. 51). Having said the above, it can be agreed that semantic deviation and figures of speech are broad terms and the applications of such in writing by many is eminent, and draws readers to the works they

make a hobby to read. In this section I will highlight and indicate how Diescho used the above elements as part of his authorial style in the dictums studied.

### **4.3.1 Metaphors**

When an object or person is directly compared to the other to clarify meaning or to entertain, this is called metaphorical comparison. This is usually done because it might be that the hearer or reader is not familiar with what is being spoken/written about at that moment, but well acquainted with the other. Simply put therefore, Omozowa and Ezejideaku (2008, p. 51) define a metaphor as “a figure of speech that expresses an idea through the image of another object”. The following extracts are some illustrations of how Diescho used metaphors in various dictums.

#### **From: Wisdom of African proverbs on love**

*Love is the tissue of the thread that binds and weaves human interactions and mutual living.*

*A letter from the heart...*

*If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes and the monkey remains as is. A woman is a flower in a garden, her husband is the fence around it. He who loves the vase loves also what is inside.*

*If the full moon loves you, why worry about the stars?*

*Don't be so in love that you can't tell when it's raining.*

*Love is a painkiller.*

#### **From other dictums:**

...we are doomed to the pornography of wealth and political power. (Diversity in Namibia, Part 2).

... imagine how many goodwill visits the president-to-be is receiving from people, many of whom did not harbour the best feelings about him... (The agony of change).

Afrika is hungry for a new leader (ship) ... (The agony of change).

It seems like we are throwing out the baby with the bath water. (Constitutional amendments and pot politics (part 2)

The end result is a disconnection of leaders from the people, which is the bed on which dictatorship sleeps. (Constitutional amendments and pot politics (part 2)

To take the government to the people (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration)

I wondered how the Presidents for Life from Africa and the bogus king felt... (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration).

There is no title I shall wear more proudly than that of an ordinary citizen (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration).

Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? (Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? part 2)

Let us die fighting (Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? part 2)

... Prime Minister Hage Geingob, in his characteristic style of getting to the point, lamented the inefficiency in the nation's public service ... (Quo vadis Namibia)

... urged those who are paid by tax payer's money to pull up their socks... (Quo vadis Namibia)

In the extracts above one notices how Diescho used numerous metaphors, indeed, for different purposes. As discussed earlier, the use of metaphors in one's work performs various tasks and meet specific ends. One such end that can be of relevance to how Diescho used metaphors is that metaphors indeed allow a person to turn the difficult and the provocative pleasant by simply playing around with words. One does not need to sound rude, for example, to be actually rude or for people to be straight and on point in their approaches and dealings, they do not need to be on point and clear. The latter is what metaphors and their users are good at and indeed how they are used in most instances in the dictums they are found.

The first set of metaphors above are taken from the dictum "Wisdom of African proverbs on love" which is made up of mainly figurative expressions such as proverbs, metaphors and personifications. The significance of the use of metaphors in this dictum is that they are meant to inform, clarify and persuade the readers about what 'Africa' believes to be the true meaning of love, according to Diescho's observation and experience. Readers can possibly identify with what is written about and since the author used no plain language to bring this forth, the metaphors in this dictum made it enjoyable, insightful and didactic. From the metaphors above the reader was somehow warned about how to behave and how not to behave when in love, so there is also a great aspect of advice and warning that can be helpful to the readers, which attracts even more readers, Africans and non-Africans, to read and study this dictum. A non-African native might be drawn to read and set out to compare his/her traditional beliefs about love, relationships and marriage to those of Africa in line with Diescho's perspective.

Metaphors from other dictums that are indicated above are written in reference to politics and or political leaders. Diescho successfully brings forth positive criticism, enlightens and encourages other citizens to be aware of the types of politics that are being played out around the country at that specific time. Without being highly philosophical or sounding highly political Diescho explains politics and its surroundings, which is a complex topic, in such a way that even the ordinary citizen can understand what is happening around them easily. The use of metaphors indeed can aid in explaining a seemingly complex issue in simple language or terms. Additionally, with metaphors such as: *“Let us die fighting, lamented the inefficiency in the nation’s public service and pull up their socks”* allows the reader to create pictures in their heads while reading. This does not only create fantasy for the reader, but also allows the reader to understand what they are reading easily as well as to retain and remember the message.

Using the metaphor *“There is no title I shall wear more proudly than that of an ordinary citizen”*, the former president of Namibia Pohamba can be understood to mean that it is an important and sufficient position to be a citizen than sticking to the presidency. However, he can as well be understood to ironically say thank God it is my time to go because it has been challenging being a president. The two meanings above can be derived from such an ambiguous statement by different people in Namibia depending on their understanding of the politics of the time and their encounters with the former president and his term in office as president. It is also common knowledge that the former president was not becoming just an ordinary citizen as such, but indeed a special citizen with the title ‘former president’ which comes with multiple benefits, far unlike those of a true ordinary Namibian citizen. Again one realizes that metaphors are such powerful linguistic tools that the speaker and/or author can use to say little and or nothing, about what they were supposed to truthfully and plainly say, yet leaving the audience satisfied and some lost.

### 4.3.2 Personification

Personification can be defined as “the attribution of human feelings, emotions or sensations to an inanimate object” Croft and Cross (2004, p. 331). It has become a common application in language use by several linguists to use personification to either beautify their work or to clarify meaning. Diescho in his dictums followed the same style.

The following are illustrations of how Diescho used personification:

#### a. Personified titles

*Anthem of the lonely Namib, Is Namibia’s dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? Quo vadis Namibia (Where are you going Namibia?), The seven cardinal virtues of the Namibian nation.*

The author opted to use personification to construct titles to his dictums above. It is interesting that in all three titles ‘Namibia’ as a country is the inanimate object that is given human qualities, while in the other one (title) it is the ‘Namib’ (The oldest desert in Namibia) that is humanised. In the title ‘Anthem of the lonely Namib’ one realises the following human traits that are given to ‘the Namib’, namely, anthem and lonely. It is only known that human beings have the ability to sing the anthem (a solemn patriotic song officially adopted by a country as an expression of national identity) and their own hymns. Again usually it is common that people sing because they are joyful. In the case of this title, therefore, it is interesting how the author ironically relates singing to the desert (the Namib). One may argue that the desert is one of the places that is naturally surrounded by harsh weather conditions and one would rarely imagine that there can be songs heard from it. It can thus be explained as ironically put, using the two realities that are not commonly associated with each other to

enable the reader to relate to what they read easily, since it is humanly common that human beings tend to relate with ease to what is human than to what is non-human.

Another element worth noting in the same title referred to above, is the human element 'lonely' that is again associated with the Namib. It is only human beings that are associated with the emotion of loneliness. The author, however, puts this quality on the Namib for a reason. The use of this figurative expression can be understood to appeal creatively to the emotions of the readers in such a way that when they read something that is brought to life, they can better understand it. All of us, or most of us, have had an experience of feeling lonely at a certain point in our lives and can well relate to the situation. Reading a dictum that is titled as such we can with ease relate to the situation and our feelings as well, go to the 'Namib' which makes the readers go out all sympathetically in their emotions to hear as they read about the situation of, or in, which the Namib finds itself that makes it lonely. The author can be said to have used a powerful rhetoric tool of 'appealing to people's emotions' in this case successfully.

In the title 'Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream?' Namibia and Africa are allocated a human trait of 'dream'. Once more the use of dreams in relation to the country and the continent can be understood to be aimed at bringing a deeper meaning and understanding to the situation in which Namibia as a country finds itself. The metaphorical use of dream in relation to the country and continent which literally cannot dream, is noteworthy in it that, as can be understood dreams are associated with hope for the future or generally positive thinking. Therefore, for the author to use a strong negative verb 'explode' in relation to the dream, is significant. It is well known that only heavy and strong explosives such as bombs explode. Now comparing the dreams to explosives is in itself a way of

intensifying the depth of the meaning of what he (the author) wants the readers to understand. The reader is driven to the realisation that the dream 'is something that is compacted and intensified with thoughts, great ideas and ideologies' and if it explodes, there is less likelihood that anything of value can be left behind. Explosion is associated with destruction and eventually death. Does Diescho want his readership to understand that the African dream has long ceased to be and hence Namibia is heading to the same direction? Once more Diescho successfully got his readers to understand and to think deeply, just with the title, about the current state of affairs regarding the situation in which Namibia was found at the moment.

The third personified title is '*Quo vadis Namibia (Where are you going Namibia)*'. It is as if Namibia is walking and the author is keen to know where to it is heading. Namibia is portrayed as able to 'walk'. While this is a personification, it is also a strong image. Usually, when the way or the direction in which the person is walking towards is uncertain and is a cause of concern for those who care and or close to them, the first immediate act they do is to slow him/her down and seek to assist by (usually) asking this rhetorical question where are you going? The meaning to this question is usually not literal. It is usually easily understood deeper than how it is said. The one addressed usually hears that either the one asking is not happy with where he/she is going or he/she should not go there at all. The readers are invited to hear where Namibia is heading to and as well as where it is going wrong. To wrap it up, one may conclude to say Diescho used personification to develop a new perspective for his readers on the issues he discussed.

#### **b. Personifications within the dictums**

Institutions of higher learning must claim their fair share in fostering a self-respecting culture as they are the moulders of young minds who are to carry forward a meaningful civilization.

(Lack of clarity of purpose and roles lead to peril)

The Land of the brave is infested with a psychosis of fear (Diversity in Namibia)

A welcome affirmation of what Namibia was and is saying to herself and the world... (The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration)

A letter from the heart can be read on the face (Wisdom of African proverbs on love)

As alluded to earlier, the prime purpose of using personification is to clarify and deepen meaning as well as improve understanding of the words being read. Again, since the process of personification involves investing constructs or lifeless objects with human qualities, it has the ability to be understood easily since it is easier to understand and view the world from our own perspectives as humans. The above examples make the reader relate the experience read to life which in the process allows it to be understood easily because of the human traits it possesses. For example, in the last personification indicated above, 'the letter from the heart', the author beautifies the source of the letter. Usually the heart is regarded as the source of beauty and goodness. Instead of saying that the letter is from a person with a good heart or the like, the author directly compares the author of a love letter to the heart. The heart is given the human trait of being able to write and express itself in the form of a letter. Again, as alluded to earlier that the heart is associated with goodness, love and beauty, it is only human for the reader to be moved emotionally and feel the sense of beauty and admiration upon reading this expression. This powerful symbolic expression is an appeal to people's emotions and the use of such by the author can be said to be successful in giving the message he intended to pass on to his readers.

### 4. 3.3 Proverbs

Other figurative expressions used in the dictums studied are proverbs. In one of his dictums Diescho used a lot of proverbs to explain how love is understood in the African context. The dictum titled 'Wisdom of African proverbs on love' is composed of mainly proverbs. The use of proverbs is common in most African societies. It is regarded as wisdom when the elders speak to the young using proverbs. Again it is the wise youth who gets to understand the right meaning hidden behind the wise words of the elders (the proverbs). In some cultures there are some things that are not spoken about directly because they are considered as taboo, and therefore, they are never mentioned. Something else should be said that is usually understood to mean that which cannot be said directly. It is in such cases when the use of proverbs become handy. Love is one aspect that is believed to be very personal and quite sensitive to many in the African context for and within which Diescho expresses what and how it is viewed.

In Oshiwambo, for example in the past, when a man falls in love with a woman and would like to marry her, this man does not say to the woman directly that 'I love you and I want to marry you' instead wise sayings such as I need a helper in my life and I am convinced that you are the right one, or I realised that I am a grown man now and I can no longer live alone, will you become my companion for life; The wise woman will right away understand and usually respond in the same way, such as 'I need to examine myself first and I will come back to you', or if she does not want to do anything with that man at all, she will, for example give an excuse such as 'I am already suited to somebody else, go back and search again'. In the same way, the man is usually aware of the position of the woman immediately after she

answers. For example, the first answer above shows that chances are there that this lady will say yes, but with the second one it is clear that there is no chance of a yes answer.

Here are some proverbs used by Diescho in the dictum 'Wisdom of African Proverbs on Love'

*... Here is a glimpse of what Afrika taught about love:*

*It is better to be loved than feared.*

*Where there is love there is no darkness.*

*Dogs don't love people; they love the place where they are fed.*

*The way to the beloved isn't thorny.*

*One doesn't love another, if one doesn't accept anything from that person.*

*Love doesn't listen to rumours.*

*Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly.*

*If a woman doesn't love you, she calls you brother.*

*Love put the eaglet out of its nest.*

*People who love one another do not dwell on each other's mistakes.*

*To be smiled at isn't to be loved.*

*The house of a person we love is never far.*

*A letter from the heart can be read on the face.*

*Love has to be shown by deeds not words.*

*Love doesn't rely on physical features.*

*He, who loves you, loves you with your dirt.*

*The one who loves an unsightly person is the one who makes him beautiful.*

*To love someone who does not love you is like shaking a tree to make the dewdrops fall.*

*He who doesn't like chattering women must stay a bachelor....*

The proverbs used by Diescho are packed with meaning beyond the words that immediately meet the eye. As mentioned earlier, they (these proverbs) are all written about love, and most ideas are expressed in such a way that for one to understand them he/she needs to analyse the deep meaning embedded beyond the words heard or read. For example, looking at the meanings of these two proverbs *the way to the beloved isn't thorny* and *love doesn't listen to rumours*, one may come to the following understanding: Firstly, the proverb 'the way to the beloved isn't thorny' can be understood to mean that when one wants to be with the one they love circumstances of any kind no matter how bad or painful they may be, will not prevent such an encounter. It may not necessarily mean that there is a physical thorny road that has to be undertaken. Again the proverb 'love doesn't listen to rumours' may be understood to mean that a person who is in love with the other does not believe the bad things (that are usually not truthful) they hear about the one they love; they would better make their own experiences with them in whatever it is that they hear. With the dictum that the author writes using proverbs more audience, especially those who are culturally and traditionally oriented, will be allowed to enjoy as they read, and more of such readership is thus attracted to read it.

#### 4. 4 References

Most authors make reference to other authors or quote from other sources for many reasons. Some reasons why making reference to other authors or quote from other sources are to strengthen one's argument about a specific subject in which he/she is not totally an expert, to show that what he/she is saying has been also said by others (usual well known people), to show that he/she has made thorough research on the specific subject of discussion and finally with all the above reasons, as in rhetoric, the author usually succeeds in convincing his/her readers by appealing to their emotions, to authority, as well as employing other fallacies to get their messages across successfully.

In his dictums, Diescho made reference in the following ways:

**From: The agony of change;**

*THE premier British naturalist, Charles Darwin, that one who gave us the theory of superiority versus inferiority types of human races, is quoted often to have said: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent; it is the one most responsive to change." Another philosopher said that the only condition in life that is constant is change. The Chinese sage, Lao Tsu, commonly known as Confucius taught: "Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way." The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche wrote: "The snake which cannot cast its skin has to die. As well the minds which are prevented from changing their opinions; they cease to be mind." The Mother of Black Poetry Maya Angelou warned: "Stepping onto a brand-new path is difficult, but not more difficult than remaining in a situation, which is not nurturing ...." Then Albert*

*Einstein says: “The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”*

In the extract above Diescho quotes 5 renowned persons to cement what he was going to write about regarding change and its implications. Though he titled his dictums ‘the agony of change,’ in his presentation of this dictum Diescho explains the pros and cons that come with change. Furthermore, Diescho clarifies the impact of change, both good and bad. To the reader who is uncomfortable with change and is afraid of change, this dictum will calm her/him and at the same time create an awareness that it does not matter how we meet and deal with change in our lives, it is inevitable and the best way is to seek ways in how to deal with it as well as how to go through it. All in all, the use of other people’s views aids Diescho to gain the trust of his readers and to take to heart what they read.

**From: The state and the future of the public service in Namibia:**

*BEFORE Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a single bullet fired by Nathuram Godse on 30 January 1948, he articulated his wishes for the future of India in different ways. One of such wishes was for the civil service to assume more of a role and relevance in establishing nationalism in that vast country. Gandhi turned to the civil service as a vehicle to fashion the type of body politic for a new India as a home for all – Hindu and Muslim alike.*

Turning to one of the most celebrated personalities worldwide (Mahatma Gandhi), Diescho clarifies and shares his views, observations and conclusions regarding public service in Namibia. With this quote Diescho can be heard to be saying out loud that the topic of public service and the search to better it has and is not exclusive to Namibia only. While the readers are sensitised about issues regarding public service provision and its current status, the reader is also cautioned and advised on how best as a public servant, one should conduct oneself. With the quote above, the author is made aware of the possible role that he/she can play and

the contribution he/she can make towards the political situation of the time as a public servant. Diescho successfully used the rhetoric device of appealing to authority, in this case using Mahatma Gandhi's powerful influence on the people as an authority figure in his search for conviction. The readers, especially public service office bearers, are convinced by this style to take keen interest, read and take the necessary advice from this dictum.

**From: Wisdom of African proverbs on love**

*Love, which is almost impossible to define or explain, is the tissue of the thread that binds and weaves human interactions and mutual living.*

*In the debate about which of the ancient four cardinal virtues (Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance) was more important than the others, the Apostle Paul concluded by his additional three Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. He sealed the conversation with these words: 'And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love' (1 Cor: 13.13)*

The bible is one book that many in the world tend to believe in easily. By making reference to the biblical text that is taken from one of the great apostles of the time, Paul, Diescho rhetorically appeals to the beliefs of people. Biblical allusions can be said to be very powerful tools in it that people take as truth whatever is taken from the bible and rarely argue about it. By starting this dictum 'Wisdom of African proverbs on love' with the biblical quote, Diescho makes a loud, yet convincing invitation for the readers to read this dictum. It is, as if he is saying 'Believe what I say because even the bible has said it'. This may, however, be ironic because even if the bible and the Apostle Peter specifically wrote something on love, it is not necessarily the same as the type that Africa believes as Diescho

presents it in the dictum. In the end, the reader is lured into taking serious what is in the dictum and keenly reads it.

**From: When the centre does not hold, things fall apart**

*Shortly after the Second World War, the Irish poet, William Butler Yeats immortalised his work through, amongst other writings, his poem 'Second Coming', wherein he opined:*

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre*

*The falcon cannot hear the falconer;*

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold*

*Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...*

Using a similar title 'Things fall apart...' to Chinua Achebe's novel for his Dictum, Diescho quotes the renowned Irish Poet William Butler Yeats' poem from which the line 'things fall apart; the centre cannot hold' to show the reader that he is writing the dictum based on the ideology of Butler. With this appeal that Diescho makes to popularity, with Butler being a highly celebrated poet, lovers of poetry are caused to immediately be drawn to reading this dictum and in the end access the message embedded in the dictum as optimally as possible.

Having looked at a few examples of how Diescho made reference to various authoritarian figures and issues, one realises as well as concludes that this is one of the powerful styles an author can make use of to reach out to his/her audience. It is naturally easy to convince people if you refer to what is said by the people they trust or what they believe in.

**4.5 Parallelism**

The use of parallel structures is one of the prominent elements that characterise Diescho's work dealt with in this study. Short (1998, p. 14) highlights that:

What is interesting about parallel structures, in addition to their perceptual prominence, is that they invite the reader to search for meaning connections between the parallel structures, in particular in terms of the parts that are varied, i.e. 'wounded and bruised' and 'transgression and iniquities'.

In the following instances Diescho used parallels in different ways:

**From: Constitutional amendments and pot politics**

One is no longer sure and there are rumblings of *discomfort and lack of confidence*.

... Whereas to all *intents and purposes*...

... When change is introduced and manged with *speed and urgency*...

... The struggle for *freedom and liberation*...

There is a paucity of *good and clear* communication to assuage this state of anxiety in the nation.

Let us *hope and trust* ...

... *good faith, and in good* time. *Good* intentions are not *good* enough when affecting other peoles's lives.

**From: The meaning of Namibia's silver jubilee celebration**

... With *peace, security and stability* in the sooner Namibia has done ...

Those norms and values that beckon us to come together again even when and after we quarrel and disagree.

... It is noteworthy that our leaders over the last 25 years have been exceptionally adept at ensuring that all of us develop minds and hearts that are tolerant, accommodative, secular and integrative of all known and known.

... Setting the trend and indeed the pace for a New Afrika. Our leaders, with all the weakness and challenges we have ...

... but to take the pledge further to see that we all work unceasingly to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and the land-hungry, between the haves and have-nots...

#### **From: Quo Vadis Namibia**

... tackle the 50/50 gender and zebra balancing expectations.

One Namibia, One Nation...

... Insist that the process be free and fair ...

...to serve and not to be served, and not to eat on behalf of the people...

... as it lurches towards its rendezvous with history and destiny, when we are a nation, small but powerful and tone setting...

The illustrations of parallelism presented above serve as a sample of the many instances that Diescho used parallels in various different ways. The following observations are worth noting about the use of, and the way, Diescho employed parallels. In examples, such as 50/50 gender and zebra balancing, One Namibia, One Nation, free and fair, to serve and not to be

*served, minds and hearts* the author uses words that are commonly used together in English to create emphasis and highlight the message.

However, with the following parallels, Diescho uses words or expressions with opposite meanings; *small but powerful, rich and the poor* and the *land-hungry*, between *the haves and have-nots*. The author uses binary opposites to highlight contrast that in turn aid in creating clarity, since the reader will be intrigued to look for, and think deeply about the relationship between the words that are used together though opposite in meaning. With this application the author does not only cause the reader to think deeply, but also creates a sense of novelty by pairing words in an unusual manner and makes the work interesting to read.

Parallels created through words that have the same meaning used concurrently are *discomfort and lack of confidence, intents and purposes, speed and urgency, freedom and liberation, good and clear, hope and trust*. As with other types of parallels discussed, these types of pairings are used to create emphasis, as well as for aesthetic (beauty) purposes. Though a form of repetition, the pairs above do not irritate the reader as redundancy; they rather carry a musical rhythm and are pleasant to the ear.

To wrap it up, parallels, as used above by Diescho are strong authorial tools that assist in giving clearness and life to the words. While parallelism was used by Diescho as an instrument to foreground parts of a text, it is also a means that he used to take charge of our understanding of, and reaction, to what we read and the way it is written.

## **4.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter the researcher presented and discussed the findings. Since the dictums studied are long pieces of texts, the author worked through them by identifying elements of stylistic analysis and not presenting the entire dictums. The major stylistic aspects found and dealt with included style and stylistic, deviation and parallelism as forms of foregrounding, as well as figures of speech elements.

The study finds that Diescho is an author with a multiplicity of authorial styles, who writes on a wide range of topics and issues. In addition to the above, Diescho is also found to have used other devices in his writing that the researcher did not find as she reviewed literature on stylistic studies. Devices such as references, enjambment, capitalisation, compounding, coining of words as well as proverbs are some that brought out his authorial styles with a command of authority and wide understanding and knowledge of whatever he writes about. The biography of the author of the dictums was presented as well as the titles of the dictums, to help in understanding who Diescho is and what he writes about.

The biography also shows where he lived, educated and worked which may help any reader of this thesis who is not well acquainted with him and his works to understand this study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The author's choice of words plays an important role in the creation of a meaning he/she intends his/her audience to understand or derive from his/her work. Though it is of great

importance that the intended audience understands the intended message of the author, it is even more crucial that the author presents and communicates his/her intended message in the best possible way and through the use of the best available style or styles. Carrying out this stylistic study has brought about several issues that one can term conclusions, for they are like a clarification and/or definition of what, why and how Diescho (the author of the Dictums studied) creatively and interestingly communicates his views, convictions and beliefs to his readers.

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study. Firstly, Diescho is an author whose ability to express himself is not hindered by anything. His authorship, especially the texts studied in this research, ranges from social to political issues. The issues discussed are presented, and at times argued, in such a way that even if he is writing on a sensitive issue, the readers will actually rarely become offended or get to feel bad because he has a way of manipulating language. For example, to make even the ugly and the unpleasant sound good or at least acceptable through his use of figurative language and other expressions.

In his dictums, Diescho wrote, too, on issues that one may say are controversial, such as the plight of the youth and the poor, political power struggles, leadership challenges as well as governance. Some of such issues can be said to have been thorny to those who found themselves part of, or touched by, what he wrote.

Overall, the findings of this study show that Diescho is an archetypal scholar, author and a great writer who, if he can be emulated by novice and aspiring writers for especially his authorial style, can create great writers in Namibia.

## **5.2 The significance of the study to the researcher**

Through studying his dictums and his authorial style, as a researcher in the field of stylistics, the researcher has learned a lot and can attest that the researcher has learned to write better than before her encounter with Diescho's dictum through this thesis.

The researcher also found that, in addition to the theory used for analysis of data for this study and introduced in the first chapter of this study, Diescho used additional tools such as references, compounding, coining of words as well as proverbs in communicating his message. The latter devices have contributed to the quality of the work, as well as to bring about clarity on the issues he writes about.

Diescho's dealing with issues of current concern, and his way of touching on the unsayable, for example, challenging some decisions by government and/or the failures, is one aspect that attracts a wide readership to his work. The impact his work made can be said to be big, especially among the youth. This does not only show what an influential writer he is, but it is also an indication that he is one fine author whose narrations do not go to waste but gets to be understood and leave the impact intended by the author and more.

This study was guided by two objectives, namely 1. To analyse Diescho's use of foregrounding in the form of parallelism and deviation to effectively convey his message. In line with this objective, this study found that the author of the dictums has widely employed foregrounding and deviation in all his dictums. The foregrounding elements mentioned above were instrumental to Diescho since, through them, he managed to create a sense of newness as well as making his work look appealing and attractive to the reader. It appears also that Diescho has the ability to manoeuvre language so that his readers understand, like and

believe what he writes. The second objective was to explore how Diescho stylistically constructed meaning through figurative language and other linguistic expressions. In response to this objective, the findings show that Diescho used various figures of speech, such as metaphors, personification and proverbs in his dictums. Some figurative expressions were used to make reading more interesting for the reader by hiding the actual meaning, for example through metaphors, while some were used to bring in a sense of newness Others were used simply so that his language does not seem too common.

The formalist theory was, to a great extent, useful and helpful since it enabled the objectives of the study to be met. One can mention, however, that this theory has its shortcomings, that if they were part of its strength, it could have contributed even more to the findings and analysis of data for this study. One example of such a shortcoming is the theory's exclusion of considering in detail contextual information, as well as biographical information. One may argue that a text is a text because of the one who created it, hence analysing a text, and seeking for the meaning of such text away from the author and the context can be a limitation.

Having chosen the qualitative research design for this study, the results indicated that it was the appropriate design for this study. According to Kumar (2011, p. 104) "the main focus in qualitative research is to analyse, explain, explore and discover the perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group or individuals". This study had its main focus on the analysis and exploration of the use of language by Diescho in his dictums, with special focus on foregrounding and figures of speech. This qualitative design also enabled the researcher to come up with a sample that was information-rich, the sample the researcher knows will be in a position to provide answers to the research objectives. It is against this background that the dictums that were found to contain aspects of stylistics at several levels were identified and selected to be part of the study.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Since the purpose of the research is to seek for information and findings that can add to the existing knowledge, this study too can be said to have made its discovery which in turn can be a contribution to the existing knowledge. Being a novel field of study in Namibia, stylistics still needs to be explored and grow. The study also found that to write convincingly and well, one is largely required to have knowledge of the subject he/she writes about as well as a sense of who the readers are. The latter, then, dictates the level of language the author has to use as well as the way of presenting it, either as a prose text or as a poem.

Based on the findings and the experience the researcher made through this study, the following recommendations can be made:

More stylistic studies on Diescho's entire works need to be carried out in order to unravel his style as one of the prodigious authors in Namibia who is not only an author of the dictums, but also of novels and several academic and non-academic papers presented at various conferences.

Being one of the main subjects for language students at the tertiary level at both the University of Namibia as well as at Namibia's University of Science and Technology, there is need to encourage more students and academics specialising in the English language to embark upon more stylistics studies on different texts and authors so that in the future there can be more stylisticians to assist with lecturing and also to create a society with sufficient authors and linguists in general. Additionally, one may agree that through studying the way experienced authors write as well as how ideas and views are presented in various forms,

students and/or novice writers stand a great chance of learning and hence becoming good writers as well.

Another recommendation is that the same texts this study dealt with can as well be studied using different theories which may aid in bringing about a different perspective which in turn may provide avenues to look at other aspects in the same dictums. Theories that can be used may be; discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis given that the dictums handle issues concerning power. Additionally, language, pragmatics, rhetorical theory/stylistics can also be used since the dictums are inherently persuasive in nature.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter, being the last presented the main conclusions of the study, the significance and the recommendations of the study.

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## APPENDIX

## 20 DICTUMS SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

**DIESCHO'S DICTUM: Anthem of the lonely Namib**

February 3rd, 2015 | by **New Era Staff Reporter**

By Professor Joseph Diescho

1 I know who I am in my tribe and in my village,

2 But I know not enough about my home, my nation and my extended family beyond my

3 childhood memories.

4 I am aware of what went on before this day,

5 But I remain ignorant about the details that would transport me into my new world.

6 I am grateful for the vast sacrifices made by countless who make them on my behalf,

7 But I do not possess sufficient grammar to express my gratitude at the most appropriate

8 moments so that the relevant people can hear me.

9 I know my politicians, good and bad,

10 But I have yet to know my leaders.

11 I have a language that takes me back to my childhood dreams, but the language to link me  
to 12 my current challenges and to tomorrow is inadequate and elusive.

13 I know who liberated me,

14 But I honour not who is to take me into the future of my dreams.

15 I am confident in the names of my leaders today,

16 But I am very anxious about their individual strengths and spiritual fortitude to beckon me  
to 17 the future and deliver me to the Promised Land.

18 I have faith in the systems around me,

19 But I see no champions of these systems to stand the test of time.

20 I am proud to be called the Land of the Brave,

21 But I am alarmed by the fear in the hearts of the inhabitants of this Land.

22 I am happy with the past in so far as it has guided me and my sand to have come this far,

23 But I am nervous about the narratives that shine the light on the road already travelled.

24 I cherish having a peek into the past,

25 But the lack of a lantern to illuminate the long road ahead gives me grief.

26 I love history told truthfully,

27 But I hate untruths told as history,

28 Especially the story of wars that others waged.  
29 For wars occur because those who engage in them prepare for conflict,  
30 Instead of peace.  
31 That is their story.  
32 Not mine.  
33 I know that history is a more or less objective account by a more or less biased individual,  
34 about something which, with a greater or lesser degree of accuracy, occurred or did not  
35 occur at some point that did or did not happen in the past.  
36 My dunes flee from the history that causes me to choke in the life of others who created it  
for 37 the good of themselves.  
38 I need, I want my own story.  
39 I understand politics and appreciate mature loyalty.  
40 But I do not appreciate sycophancy.  
41 I have regard for gender equality,  
42 But I have to disregard gerrymandering.  
43 I yearn to hear the perspective of the youth in and of the Land of the Brave,  
44 In their search for the truth and meaning,  
45 And their role in the New Afrika!  
46 But I shiver at the militancy of half ill-informed logics  
47 That seeks sweetness and light,  
48 And disrupts the flow of wisdom from yesterday and yesteryear,  
49 As I cannot imagine the freedom to be and become,  
50 In the absence of the freedom that was given to me through sweat and blood of the older  
51 grains of sand that I shall never meet.  
52 I thirst for the voices of the youth with bodies that have spirit,  
53 And eyes with vision.  
54 And a lever to reach the souls that departed to make space for me to be.  
55 To have freedom:  
56 Freedom to think and freedom to act,  
57 With discipline and honour for others who have similar or dissimilar freedom.  
58 Freedom comes from education that brings me closer to the people,  
59 Not detach me from them.  
60 For when I am in education, I must eat the forbidden fruit,  
61 That I was once not permitted to come close to.  
62 I know that every generation speaks from a different vantage point.

63 Its own angle.  
 64 I am an angle:  
 65 I am the Namib!  
 66 I am ancient.  
 67 You can ask the stars for proof,  
 68 Yet I am abandoned by all.  
 69 I am not orange,  
 70 I am not green,  
 71 I am the house of the Welwitschia —  
 72 That dwarf tree, in need of both colours to grow into maturity.  
 73 Thus I say:  
 74 I am here, hear me  
 75 I am real, feel me  
 76 I am for you need me  
 77 I am with you, be me  
 78 There is no real Afrika  
 79 No New Afrika without me  
 80 For my sand houses more of you than you care to know  
 81 I shielded you over the centuries  
 82 And will in perpetuity if you listen  
 83 To my voice under the sun.  
 84 I hide you from the past  
 85 To which you do not belong  
 86 I deliver you  
 87 Into the future unknown to you.  
 88 I am your yesterday and your tomorrow,  
 89 Not you mine!

### **DIESCHO'S DICTUM: Lack of clarity of purpose and roles lead to peril**

January 6th, 2015 | by [New Era](#)

By Professor Joseph Diescho

The ancient Chinese Art of War guru, Sun Tzu, had an instructive dictum: “To win a war without fighting it is best.” This teaching is as true now as it was then. Human beings build and sustain civilizations by norms and values based upon a set of rules and precepts accepted by a critical mass of inhabitants of any given territory on this planet earth. Without these commonly accepted and as a guide, it is impossible to have a sense of a Bonum Commune, the common good and in the absence of this common good chaos, disorder and lawlessness ensue with an unavoidable outcome: the survival of the fittest – a world wherein the most

powerful, the most cunning, the most manipulative, survives better at the expense of the finest and all.

In the absence of clear and purposeful rules and guidelines, a civilization is bound to suffer an inherent inability to sustain itself over time, never mind get passed on to the next generations with a sense of self-worth, pride and a glue that holds together meaningful mutual relationships.

Clear guidelines assist members of any community to predict consequences, be it reward or punishment, of good and bad behaviour and such members are in a position to engage in meaningful interactions with others in ways that nurture the foundation for a better life for all.

Without a set of clear precepts to guide and mould positive human behaviour, the result is an expansion of a collection of people without a memory, without a history and a culture to illuminate the road they it has traversed.

Such a people are without a past, without a soul and are a dead nation without a compass to navigate its way into an unknown future.

This is one reality Nelson Mandela understood well as he tried to build the foundation for a non-racial, non-sexist South Africa.

One great foundation he laid was to rearrange the behaviour of the officials in the business of the state.

One area wherein Mandela set the scene upon which to build is clarity about state funerals.

South Africa had its first state funeral in December 2013, when that nation and the world buried former President Nelson Mandela. Does this mean that no important people died in that country since the advent of democracy in 1994?

The answer is No. With all the shortcomings South Africans have, they managed to sort out one thing clearly, namely that state funerals are for individuals who were a Head of State.

This makes it easier for all people to understand, accept and predict that a state funeral, which is a very costly affair, is possible only in certain rare circumstances, namely the death of a President.

Interestingly the first person to qualify for a state funeral in post-apartheid South Africa was former President P.W. Botha, who refused to lay under the new non-racial South African symbols and preferred to be left alone.

To honour that wish, he was not given a full-fledged state funeral even though the ANC-led Government offered it by virtue of protocol.

Consider how many state funerals there would have been if Mandela did not set clear rules and procedures governing government-related burials. Very senior ANC stalwarts died in the last 20 years without a state funeral: Walter Sisulu, the man who discovered and moulded Mandela into politics; his wife Albertina Sisulu; Adelaide Tambo, the wife of Oliver Tambo; Govan Mbeki, President Thabo Mbeki's father and Mandela's comrade in the underground movement and on Robben Island; ANC Youth League President Peter Mokaba; the first Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo; the first Defence minister Joe Modise; the first Sports Minister Steve Tshwete; the first Justice Minister Dulla Omar, the first Constitutional Court Justice Arthur Chaskalson; the second Constitutional Court Justice Pius Langa; Mandela and Mbeki's presidential spokesman Parks Mankahlana, the longest white liberal voice in apartheid parliament Helen Suzman; and the Dutch Reformed anti-apartheid voice

BeyersNaude, to mention a few. None of them got a state funeral because none of them was Head of State. They all received either a Government Funeral or an Official Funeral.

The case in Namibia is totally different as there is no clarity. Namibia had over six state funerals in the last 20 years without the death of a President.

What is the difference when the enemy of the liberation struggle in both countries was the same: apartheid colonialism? The difference lies in the clarity of purpose of a state funeral which is not meant for liberation struggle icons, but who were never Head of State. The determination of who qualifies for a state funeral is not the function of one person who is likely to act arbitrarily depending on circumstances and preferences on a particular day.

For instance, in Namibia any person who is in good standing of the President at a given time is accorded a state funeral. The Namibian model of state funerals cannot be sustained because it is based upon a set of rules that can not be countenanced even by the common man.

For example, it is not clear whether a decorated Plan fighter who would die this day as member of the RDP leadership would be given a state funeral.

That person would have been given it if he died in 2003. In addition, the trend that has been set creates undue expectations that the state cannot meet, such as families either expecting or lobbying that their family member be given a state funeral. This is likely to get worse until the rules are clear, blind and fair!

It is equally important to fashion a culture of rules and that has the potential to guide future generations to do the right things and for the right purposes.

Here we all have a role to play, wherever we are in the life of the Republic. Institutions of higher learning must claim their fair share in fostering a self-respecting culture as they are the moulders of young minds who are to carry forward a meaningful civilization.

For instance, the University of Namibia (Unam) as the founding university in the life of a free Namibia must resist the temptation of dishing out honorary doctoral degrees to high government officials who use them as recognition of their intellectual or academic qualifications and in the process undermine the culture of learning for which the university was created.

In the very least, when these degrees are dispensed with, the recipients must be informed that they are not meant to be used on a daily basis, but as an honour only by the granting university—it is not meant to be used as a title in official situations.

This brings me to the vexing issue of the 50/50 gender balance and zebra debate which is likely to be part of the political deliberations this year, and if not managed carefully, can pit families against one another in the context of who supports women for positions of power and who does not.

The ruling party's resolution should be seen as a progressive invitation to the nation to pay careful attention to how we determine who is entrusted with the responsibility to represent others and take decisions in the name of the represented.

It would be wrong and far too dangerous to expect that every decision the ruling party and any other political party for that matter makes in its life when representing its members must be based upon man woman equations.

This would essentially hamstring the leadership in finding capable leaders to cast their eyes over the horizon of the vast human resource base of the country in search of people who are connected to and respected by their constituencies. It would also be unfair to the next

President if he is weakened along the lines of gender rather than strengthen him to execute the task along democratic and meritorious lines.

Imagine if the next President were to be forced to have female Prime Minister just because that person must be a woman when the evidence suggests that the most capable person for the task is a male. That is not what the conversation should be about and around. It ought to be about combating old practices, habits, traditions and those set attitudes that preclude women from having the opportunity to prove themselves to the voters as leaders and in the corporate world as capable people who can make strategic and executive decisions.

But women must not wallow in a false consciousness that they are better leaders simply by virtue of being female. After all if the ultimate objectives are democracy with attendant attributes of justice, fairness and equality. It is up to the people to decide who their leaders must be. It cannot be a top down approach whereby the top few people shunt men out in order to wheelchair women in just for the fancy. **LEADERS MUST DESERVE THEIR POSITION AND MUST DERIVE THEIR POWER FROM THE PEOPLE.** We must not genderise democracy; we must strive to create the environment that creates opportunities for people to select their own representatives who they have the final right to recall when they are not satisfied. Blocking men who have the following of people and have the drive to serve others will be equally dangerous.

- Professor Joseph Diescho is a Namibian academic, a writer and a political analyst. This is an abridged version of a column New Era published on February 25, 2014.

## **DIESCHO'S DICTUM: DIVERSITY IN NAMIBIA (Part 2)**

February 24th, 2015 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

By Professor josephdiescho

LIKE with many issues in development and the changing dynamics in any society, successful management of diversity requires a leadership that understands the context of his/her people, where they come from, what their strengths and weaknesses are, the resources they have at their disposal with which to tackle the myriad of issues and challenges that come day in and day out, and appreciate and work with the strength there is in each and every community towards the betterment of the whole nation.

Namibians are as similar as they are dissimilar. To all intents and purposes, the unity that has evolved in the nation is thanks to colonialism and apartheid oppression that forced people who were otherwise dissimilar to unite against the common enemy. This is true to the rest of the Afrikan continent whose similarity as Afrikans is largely in the fact that we all fought against colonialism. In the absence of a common enemy, our unity remains elusive and slippery.

Today, there are many people, if the majority of us, in Namibia, even in high leadership positions who do not know the difference between a Nama and a Damara, between a Coloured and a Baster, between a Subia and Mbukushu, and/or cannot tell the difference of the languages that these people speak. Today, many of our ambassadors would not be able to market Namibia as a country with regions that have different strengths because they do not know. They only know the story of the liberation struggle, but NOT what the country has going for it.

This explains the flawed leadership Afrika often suffers from. Ignorance is one of the leading factors of underdevelopment and instability. A leader cannot steward his people well if he/she

does not know how they are constituted, what assumptions they hold of other people, and even what aspirations they have for their children.

What are our diversity challenges? The Namibian nation, like most countries, comprises parts that would not have been together had it not been for the path of human migration from north, central, east and west Afrika, followed by colonialism and the development of a western style economy, which has taken over most of the subsistence economy that the Afrikans brought with them. This means that today's Namibia is unlike what any ruler, leader or political party had in mind before independence. We have different Afrikan communities with their backgrounds and prejudices; we have Europeans who have their own issues; we have Christians with different orientations; and we have people who think their village is all there is for them in Namibia. There are those who believe that their political party membership is more important than their citizenship; there are those who believe that because of what they did or what their fathers/mothers did in the struggle, the world owes them everything; we have citizens who are half-here and half-somewhere else; and we have citizens who believe that unless they are in the leadership, the country is not safe.

The fundamentals of our diversity are as follows: Namibia is at the moment the most peaceful and most stable country on the Afrikan continent. Namibia is a small country sandwiched between two big and strong economies, Angola in the north and South Africa in the south, both which are unstable and where greed and corruption is more common a threat to peace and stability than here. Namibians remain very ignorant about one another, and this is even at the levels of top leadership.

Many Namibians are dishonest about their past and their history and they lie about where they have been in order to protect their bellies, so much so that we have citizens who served in the old ethnic or Bantustan administrations who lie that they were in the struggle, and there are those who have the gall to claim from the well-intended war veterans fund whereas they know they do not qualify as veterans.

Namibia is a dominant party state, and history shows that dominant party states are a breeding ground for opportunism and mediocrity such that there is very little room for meaningful opposition to the hegemony of the ruling party, which has developed great skills in co-opting possible dissenting perspectives to shut them up. In our case, opposition formations are dysfunctional because the opposition parties do not offer any alternative(s) by way of programmes that deal with fundamental policy issues of sustainable economic development, education, health care, safety and security, foreign policy, immigration and crime. In fact, the so-called opposition simply mimics the governing party.

Our governing party has vast experience and expertise in co-opting potential credible oppositional voices. The presence of church leaders in high government positions has to be understood in this context. In this way, the way, which ought to have remained a strong moral voice in the most Christian country in Afrika, has been silenced completely. In the absence of a moral and prophetic voice in today's world, we are doomed to the pornography of wealth and political power. A good political party with a countervailing voice such as the church's voice can only grow in arrogance and corruption as power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, to paraphrase an old warning.

The Land of the Brave is infested with a psychosis of fear. Everybody is afraid of something and the benefits of this fear are that there is no movement forward. We are all stuck in the past. Innovative and creative ideas can easily be seen as lack of loyalty and therefore oppositional in the greater scheme of One Namibia One Nation under one rubric: the liberation struggle!

Namibia is a Land of Paradoxes. Political science teaches that as humans, we live in a paradoxical situation that resembles the prisoners' dilemma theory. This theory explains that when we are in society, individual communities make what they consider rational choices, such that the outcomes of those choices are not as beneficial compared to the outcomes if they made collective choices. Whether we are acting as political parties, cultural groups, language groups or race groups, we continue to make choices that are harmful to the countries. Hence the need to heed the teachings of Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, individuals who had thought it through and envisioned a better society for all, not actually went against the grain and rose above the rest to dream bigger. Namibia needs such dreamers, not of the past but about the future. The one country that manages its diversity better than any other in our world is the United States of America where citizens' rights and duties proceed from their birth right — so much so that to a child whose father was not a citizen could aspire, be allowed to and indeed become the president. Nowhere else is this possible today! In Namibia, a candidate will have to embellish his/her story and even lie about his/her contribution to the liberation struggle. What we need is a common dream with selfless champions — a dream that is practical with policies and structures and around which we can all coalesce as equal citizens and each other's keepers.

Land of Dilemmas. As a new and democratic nation, we have to face and manage dilemmas from time to time, and these dilemmas are situations that we have to manage deliberately and purposefully. A dilemma is a situation where there is no clear or easy choice or answer and which necessitates informed arguments to different but more enlightened choice between equally disagreeable or disfavoured alternatives; a situation which compels a choice between unpleasant alternatives. In other words, we live in a society, which has to make room for all, including those we would not have liked if they were not here. Our ethnic make-up needs to be managed more purposely because when left to chance, there might be eruptions in the future that can derail our march to Vision 2030.

Let me break this down for clarity's sake: Namibians from the Zambezi Region are the most economically mobile in the country so much so that their presence in the national economy everywhere in the country would suggest that they are the second largest ethnic group in the country. Caprivians are in all the regions, all the banks, all the institutions and in senior positions, Kavangos remain the most unrepresented in the national economy. Kavangos prefer to stay at home, and those who venture out in the larger economy are in the security establishments as watchmen and bodyguards. A Kavango head of a national organisation will make sure he/she is the only one there as he/she does not trust other Kavangos who he/she wants to depend on him/her. The Hereros are more inclined than any other ethnic groups to bring other Hereros close to where they are. If a Herero is employed as a principal of a school, rest assured that there will be a few Herero teachers there in a matter of months. Damaras are not too eager to be identified as Damaras unless they are members of the UDF, and not all the time. Damaras do not want to be labelled as a minority with some certain unkind words, but would rather be part of other groups in the scheme of national politics. The Tswanas are grateful when they are acknowledged in national politics, and would take any position they are offered as an affirmation of the permanent status in the country. Tswanas are welcoming to the farmers, especially government top officials who want to do farming in the cattle country of Omaheke. Oshiwambo-speaking Namibians are conscious that they are in charge, and wish that other groups did not have to try too hard to be Aawambo. They encourage others to be confident in their own right, and that it is enough to sing all the freedom songs in Oshiwambo.

The German Namibians, a distinct European permanent tribe in the country, are not always sure whether they are coming or going. Germans are a very critical part of the success of our economy, yet they do not have the confidence to really belong here. They are proud of the country when things go well, but they miss Europe when things are not so good for them, even though they never lived in Germany and could never survive there either. The more reliable white Namibians are the Afrikaners, die Boere, who know this is their only place and they are part of the success or the failure. The Coloured Namibians have been the most afflicted by the history of white supremacy, which socialised them to internalise that they were almost white, “amper baas”. They were denied opportunities before because they were not white enough, and they feel they are denied opportunities because they are not black enough. The Basters’ altans the real Boorlinge of Rehoboth are more authentic in their self-understanding and self-definition as an Afrikan community who is at the epicentre of our evolution as a nation. The Baster does not only want to be in the construction business, but in essence represents the best and worst of the old Europe and the old Afrika. The San people, the more original people of our land, are neither here nor there but a ‘pet project’ of senior government officials whose job descriptions are not very clear.

Then there are Angolans, whose economic life is in Namibia but their emotions are in Angola. For some strange reason, they look down upon Namibians and sometimes insist that Namibians speak Portuguese to them because they have more buying power. Their children are more Namibian than Angolan and are likely to make Namibia their permanent home.

Oh, there is new tribe — the youth! Over 60 percent of the Namibian population is members of the youth who are between 13 and 35 years, yet the political leadership’s orientation is towards the have-beens, thus posing as threat to stability if the youth continues to grow in disenchantment and restlessness. Planners of economic development and builders of this nation who do not take these factors into consideration in their planning can only plan to fail.

Namibia has her challenges, and they are growing, starting this Year of Great Expectations. One feels for the leadership that will be ushered in in March when the expectations are so high that it will take a person or a team with unusual a commitment to the interests of the nation to deliver on them. It is unlikely that the top government bureaucracy will be smaller and will be one that will not take up more resources than required to propel development forward.

We know that Afrikan leaders are not ones who are very eager to do more with less. It is unlikely than we will see less motorcades pushing citizens off the roads; is unlikely than we will see more education reform for purposes of development; it is unlikely that we will see more executives appointed on merit and not political considerations to the peril of national development; we are likely to see the same recycled securocrats (government officials who care only about their job security and nothing else) in demanding positions which we and they know they cannot deliver in. We are likely to see more of the same as the more things change, the more they remain the same. Keith Richburg warned a few years ago that in Afrika, things stay the same until they fall apart.

In spite of the not so hopeful picture above, Namibia remains a Land of Opportunities. In the last twenty-five years, the country has done extraordinarily well under the circumstances when we started with virtually no system of governance and the leadership managed to build the foundations of a working democratic government system second to none in Afrika. What remains is how we build on these foundations and become better. The first challenge here is to read the times correctly. The affirmation towards this goal is encapsulated in the Government of the Republic of Namibia Grand Vision 2030, calling for a paradigm shift

from sector development to integrated approaches through strategic partnerships of various stakeholders and a readiness for innovative thinking, such that we all begin to do things differently towards a better future for all. If we continue to do things the way we have been doing, we shall get the same results we have been getting.

What we focus on becomes our reality; what we feed grows. Other countries that faced diversity challenges turned them into opportunities. Australia, Canada, Singapore, to mention but a few, had turnaround strategies to engineer diverse communities into one by giving incentives and having programmes to steer positive energies towards a collective vision from which all benefitted. We need to find the strengths in each community and work with them towards a common goal — a better One Namibia One Nation, where all have equal opportunity not because they belong to a particular political party, but because they are citizens. Out of our diversity we can build a Namibian personality with both rights and obligations. We need a mortgage a space for a common good. Our new common enemies are: poverty, greed, corruption, tribalism, ignorance, racism, diseases, nepotism, xenophobia, dishonesty, laziness, self-righteousness and the culture of entitlement. We ought to be united against these evils that eat away at our hard-won peace, unity and stability.

Duty is ours to make a contribution, however small, not because we are members of a political party, but because we are citizens, regardless of how and when we came here. Separately we are weak, as we have always been, but together we are strong, like we have never been! The opportunity to weave these parts together into one colourful quilt is now, by doing business unusual, and demanding from each according to our abilities!

### **Diescho's Dictum: The agony of change**

January 20th, 2015 | by [New Era](#)

By Joseph Diescho

THE premier British naturalist, Charles Darwin, that one who gave us the theory of superiority versus inferiority types of human races, is quoted often to have said: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent; it is the one most responsive to change." Another philosopher said that the only condition in life that is constant is change. The Chinese sage, Lao Tsu, commonly known as Confucius taught: "Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way." The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche wrote: "The snake which cannot cast its skin has to die. As well the minds which are prevented from changing their opinions; they cease to be mind." The Mother of Black Poetry Maya Angelou warned: "Stepping onto a brand-new path is difficult, but not more difficult than remaining in a situation, which is not nurturing ...." Then Albert Einstein says: "The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking."

It is not an overstatement to say that at no time since independence has there been so much anxiety about change as it is now in Namibia. The national elections that ushered in independence were accompanied by tremendous excitement and the conviction that Namibia would never be the same again. It was unavoidable. It was the end of the war. It was the time of reuniting families that were torn apart by history, good and bad. It was the end of the past. Euphoria was everywhere in the air.

People were ready to be told where to go and with whom. It was fine. No one knew the rules. There were no rules. No one was at fault. No one was greedy. We were all hungry. As Chinua Achebe would have put it, we were in the rain together and now all scrambling to get inside into the shelters that our former colonial masters left behind. Those who were fast and lucky to get inside began to barricade themselves inside and spoke through numerous loudspeakers that all disagreement should stop and the whole people must now speak with one voice. Still nobody was wrong. It was the past that was wrong.

Following the successful elections of last year, many people on urban streets and rural footpaths have a myriad of expectations for 2015. There are many, and range from fixing the problems of land, housing, education, service delivery, ending corruption, to making the government smaller, leaner and more effective. For the first time, most commentators in all these spheres are pinning their hopes on one person, the President-Elect, Hage Geingob. The expectations are so high that I received a request from an optimistic young woman in the village who wanted the President-Elect's email address so that she could write to him about a kindergarten project she has in mind. She is so frustrated with the local authorities and she wants the President-Elect to go fix her problem. There are many such stories, big and small, and they are all waiting for a direct reaction from their new President. One can just imagine how many goodwill visits the President-to-be is receiving from people, many of whom did not harbour the best feelings about him when he was either an ordinary man or in the political desert that prepared him to be the strong political leader that he has become. Admittedly, their expectations are vastly different from those of the village woman with kindergarten aspirations.

This lot has no expectations; all they have is opportunistic career interests either as tenderpreneurs or cabinet this or that. Still, they all look to him to do something. It is just not fair for one person.

In the main, the genuine expectations can be grouped under the following themes: First, are the changes that are to come in March this year about bringing about a real New Beginning or is the same old situation going to remain, perhaps a bit more expensive than before? The real fear is that in the nature of systems it is harder to change things that need change than start with nothing from nothing as it was in 1990. In 1836 Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr warned that 'plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose'—the more things change, the more they stay the same. It will be interesting to see what changes and what remains the same in terms of priorities, whether the officials to execute the policies and take forward the new President's vision will be the old recycled people.

Second, most political leaders, in the politics of democratic succession do not wish to rock the boat of their establishments and in so doing promise continuity with change in their campaigns. This is closer to our case here, especially in the context of the collective leadership ethos in the governing party Swapo. Understandable though the expectations are, the fact of the matter is that it is too much to expect of one person, let alone a person who comes through a democratic electoral process and who is not a dictator who is likely to rule by fiat. President-Elect Geingob is a representative of the Swapo collective, yet the expectations out there are that he is to fix all that was left unfixed, or the problems that developed over the last twenty-five years. It will be interesting to see what one individual who is not yet the President of the party can do, amidst all the expectations in the context of a long history of comradeship and collective 'suffering' for the cause.

Third, there is saying in America: If aint broke, don't fix it! The elections demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that the electorate is content with the record of the governing party

Swapo. This creates a challenge for the new administration to determine what must change after the voters gave it an overwhelming mandate to continue. The manifesto upon which the governing party sought to have its tender to govern for another five years renewed is still the social contract between the incoming government and the Namibian citizenry. To expect the new President to now suddenly change course and do the extraordinary is something outside of the mandate. We ought to be fair to him and appreciative of the system we have established.

Having said that, politics is about managing expectations, realistic and not-so-realistic and effective leadership is about reframing the populace to re-examine their expectations in order to have them realigned with the reality. This is embedded in the art of give and take. Leadership is also about naming the new issues that influence new expectations and inform the direction to be followed. It is said that good leaders are those who define the issues, even if they do not succeed in solving such issues. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. This is where the biggest challenge is for the Swapo leadership in general and the new administration in particular: naming the new world for Namibia, with attendant new rules of the game. Twenty-five years after the attainment of the noble goal of political independence, the language of liberation cannot sustain the movement going forward. The language and idioms of struggle or liberation are exhausted, stale, and jaundiced in so far as the youth, white citizens, faith-based leaderships, self-respecting professionals, and investment communities are concerned. They want to hear messages that are relevant today and tomorrow. They want to be empowered about how to survive today and tomorrow, because the struggle is not theirs to survive. In fact the more the leadership speak of how they liberated the country, the more distant they become from the voters who are sick of feeling guilty that they were not born yet to participate in the struggle. This is why the youth are getting more and more disaffected, and are turning to issues that are not particularly the remit of youth politics.

One of the sad realities of Afrikan liberation movements invariably is that they tend to colonise their own countries and turn them into political party countries. Afrikan ruling parties (not governing parties because these are two different animals altogether) tend to usurp the country and introduce a style of politics that is hostile towards citizens who are not their members. In this climate, political party loyalty goes awry and overtakes the nationalism that fueled the struggle for freedom so much so that professional people and those who can make valuable contributions to the development of their country opt to go and live elsewhere where they are not harassed by the small minded 'thought police', the securocrats and apparatchiks who operate ostensibly as the ears and eyes of the political leadership. These 'listeners' are the ones who get the jobs and the tenders in the game of patronage wherein the big politicians dispense largesse to the loyal comrades who are influenced purely by the politics of the belly while the national interests suffer on the altar of political expediency.

The agony that Namibia has to endure is to bring about change in the way we do things. If we continue to do business as usual, we shall get the results we have been getting thus far: an education system that does not work, a public service that is not responsive to the needs of the people but wish to peddle influence among politicians to gain favour, an SOE sector that is geared towards self-enrichment of the lucky ones who have the fortuitous responsibility to steer the sector in line with the government's commitment to fight poverty, unemployment and the wealth gap. The agony that we must all endure is to refuse to go the route our older brothers and sisters on the continent have gone, namely, that there are some of us who are more citizens than others. The agony we must endure is that we must learn to do more with less, all of us. We must all hurt when we see children learning under a tree, yet they are

expected to perform culture to the political elites whose children are getting high class education outside the country. The agony we need to embrace is that Namibia belongs to all who live in it and we can all make a contribution with gratefulness for the climate of peace and stability that we have.

Change is painful. Change is not without casualties. Change is not about who gets what big job from the President-Elect. The change we hope for with this New Beginning is neither about quick fixes that we can enjoy directly, nor a state of permanent transition from nothing to nothing. Like the President-Elect has said many times, people cannot eat a good constitution or nice sounding policies, they want to see change in their lives – change for the better.

Better education, less expenditure on the government bureaucracy, better service delivery, more efficient and effective officials to instill confidence in the people that the new administration will be faster and more responsive. The one fair expectation from President-to-be HageGeingob is that he is today's hope for all of Afrika: After Thabo Mbeki, Afrika's eyes are on HageGeingob as the one leader with the right credentials: the education, the experience, the maturity, the exposure, intellect and the presence. He has the rare chance to do something right and restore pride to Namibia and Afrika – to take us away from being the laughing stock of others in the world. Afrika is hungry for a new leader(ship) that we can all refer to without shame. Finally, we cannot expect change to come only from the President-Elect and or his administration, but from all of us – to support where we can and serve where we must with a new ethic to the people. Like Mahatma Gandhi poignantly said: We must be the change we want to see. Duty is ours in God's Events, and the time to stop blaming the past and everybody but ourselves is Now!

## **Diescho's Dictum Constitutional amendments and pot politics (Part 2)**

September 9th, 2014 | by [New Era](#)

### **By Joseph Diescho**

IN all honesty, whether one likes it or not, SWAPO had held the centre in and of our national life with excellence, supported by the elegance of the leaders at the top. Starting with the first cabinet of the Founding President, all Namibians regardless of political persuasions felt comforted by the quality of leadership representing them anywhere anytime. When world leaders encountered SWAPO leaders, they walked away with a story about Namibia. Good stories because of the quality of leaders that carried the banner of Namibia. One is no longer sure and there are rumblings of discomfort and lack of confidence. This is not about exiles and insiles, it is about the quality of leaders we are likely to have come next year. It would appear that we are likely to end up with a qualitatively poor National Assembly and cabinet and at best with an extraordinarily mediocre lot of legislators and executives. This was clearly not the intention of and with the changes, and it would make governing the nation very difficult.

There are rumblings of dismay within our body politic. If such rumblings within in SWAPO grow in size then we are likely to witness visible cracks in the cohesion that held the political centre in this country together. One thing Namibia had, for which we must all be grateful, is that SWAPO held the centre together. If disequilibrium enters SWAPO it can cause SWAPO to become nervous and apologetic not only to the citizens but the world whereas to all intents

and purposes SWAPO's record speaks for itself as the foundation and the edifice for ONE NAMIBIA ONE NATION! SWAPO got all the economic fundamentals in place for sustainable socio-economic development, and exhibited to the world that indeed out of Afrika can come something new.

It is unfortunate that in the year of national elections for the next parliament and the next President, and while the vexing issue of gender equality in leadership is being experimented with, the signs on the horizon are scary. The changes are not all good. It seems like we are throwing out the baby with the bath water. We cannot rejoice at the eruptions of the youth if such eruptions are accompanied by a lack of respect for good counsel, experience and good old wise minds. We have come this far by wisdom and maturity monitored by the hierarchy of values that fuelled the struggle for freedom and liberation – not self-enrichment and personal power. Human beings are generally suspicious of change, and when change is introduced and managed with such speed and urgency that these amendments are receiving, it is normal that the country experiences angst. There is a paucity of good and clear communication to assuage this state of anxiety in the nation. Again, what is needed is the confidence with humility in the leadership to communicate what is going on in order to reframe the citizenry.

As a matter of fact a hallmark of good leadership is the education of the followers. The lack of education leads to ignorance and ignorance leads to misperceptions and misperceptions lead to apathy and apathy leads to non-participation and alienation. The end result is a disconnection of leaders from the people which is the bed on which dictatorship sleeps. Dictatorship is the converse of instability and instability is the absence of peace, and ultimately, no development takes place in the atmosphere of strife and the survival of the fittest. This we cannot afford! We had seen what happened elsewhere around us. It is better to prevent this disaffection before it is too late.

Namibia has so much going for it, there is so much to be proud of and be grateful for – thanks to the leaders who steered the ship since 1990 when we became a nation. One therefore hopes and prays that the current political leaders and those around them will neither see the questioning nor hear the crying voices as oppositional. One hopes and prays that they will see these reactions of citizens as part of the participatory process which can only make our governance system better and stronger. One hopes and prays that the critical voices on the other hand will be constructive not to destroy what we have even if they have issues with leaders. Let us converge somewhere and agree to improve on what we have. The leaders we have need our support to take this nation forward, and let's trust that they listen. Brave we must be, however, to point out when leaders are faltering or flat-footed to lift them up to be the best they can be so that we can also be. We cannot afford to wish one another away. Let us tackle, as and when we must, the issues, not one another. Those who wish to be in the game of politics must learn to play the game not the people. After all, it is about the quality of our life in a country that so many have sacrificed for. It is, after all, about strengthening our democracy and presiding over the birth of a new world for our children and their heirs. Let us hope and trust that the leaders who wish to bring the changes have good intentions, and when people talk back, they also mean well. The challenge is that communication must be better, in good faith, and in good time. Good intentions are not good enough when affecting other people's lives. The devil is always in the detail. Admittedly, the process of democratization requires time, patience and mutual communication on the part of all role players. Elections alone do not make democracy. Building a democratic culture requires the participation of the people so that they are the owners and the best defenders of the system.

In the final analysis, it is important to learn from history and how leaders rise and fall as a consequence of people's will. People are feeling disaffected now and are worried, for better or for worse.

Scholarship instructs that there come times when people who occupy by a fluke of history positions of leadership take a few steps back to listen to what people, as in ordinary folk, are saying and use it as primary raw material for decision making, transformation and peace. History teaches that leaders who focus too much on themselves and make themselves great by making others and their countries small, disappear into historical oblivion as fast as they came. As we all must partake of the project of building a better Namibia for all who live in it, it might be helpful to bear in mind that it is, after all, not just about us and today, that ordinary people are affected positively or negatively, and that we are building a legacy. Perhaps it is not a bad idea to heed the words of Maya Angelou: ‘People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.’

### **DIESCHO’S DICTUM: The meaning of Namibia’s silver jubilee celebration**

March 24th, 2015 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

The completion of 25 years of political independence with peace, security and stability in the manner that Namibia has done, is indeed unprecedented on the Afrikan continent and arguably in most of the world’s nations for the same period of nation-building and establishing of institutions that were non-existent at the time of independence and self-rule. Firstly, the Afrikan record shows that in the period between 1960 and 1985 there were over 80 coup d’états or attempted coups across Afrika in the period that Namibia had none, except for the unfortunate hiccup by over-ambitious elements in the north-eastern tip of the country. South Africa which gained its liberation four years after Namibia’s independence already had one post-apartheid coup with the involuntary removal of President Thabo Mbeki in September 2008. This is the tapestry against which we have to appreciate what we celebrated last Saturday. Secondly, our silver jubilee coincided very neatly with the second transfer of power from one Head of State to the other, also in an unprecedented fashion in Afrika. One is certain that the many Afrikan Heads of State and Government who were in attendance were caught between equally strong emotions: on the one hand, they felt proud to witness real democracy at work and in progress in small country that is taking itself very seriously in the interests of all its citizens. On the other hand they must have felt a sense of shame that where they came from, there was strife and conflict due to their own refusal to let go of power. It is another of those moments when Namibia through its own narrative was educating older nations in Afrika about how it can and must be done if Afrika is to be respected around the world.

Since its foundation in 1990, Namibia has earned considerable appreciation for providing value-based governance systems and for imparting the ideals of democracy based upon the values of peace, security, stability, justice, unity, freedom and importantly inclusivity in the manner the country is governed by the leadership that wins a free and fair election. Herein lies excellence, a sense of discipline and high moral and ethical values, leading to the development of what is becoming the Namibian personality that can lead others in consultation. The precepts of Peace, Stability and Prosperity are there for all to see. What we saw was a process of awakening de novo the collective potential of Namibians to creatively look forward with confidence and faith with the knowledge and desire to excel in whatever we put our minds on as a nation with one history, one country and one future. It was noteworthy that the three Presidents the country produced thus far all have a sense of duty to nurture a people with strong values, and the youth that can leverage their individual strengths to march in tandem with all institutions towards our Grand Vision 2030.

The silver jubilee celebrations were not only about achievements and excellence but also a joyous moment to showcase the nation’s creative leadership talents and skills. The progress

of a nation is assessed not only by economic development and well-being, but also the role its leaders play in instilling a culture, a discipline, a sense of confidence, a set of attitudes of cooperation with others and principled commitment to the country and the people based upon its national interests – those norms and values that beckon us to come together again even when and after we quarrel and disagree. Hence the Gods up high blessed the celebrations with good rains, as if to shower us all with drops of congratulations. In the context of the diversity of our country – the vast geographical expanse, the multiplicity of languages, political party traditions – it is noteworthy that our leaders over the last 25 years have been exceptionally adept at ensuring that all of us develop minds and hearts that are tolerant, accommodative, secular and integrative of all, known and unknown. Listening around during the farewell dinner for President Pohamba, our foreign visitors were in awe of what they were witnessing, not in Washington, D.C., but in Windhoek, in the Land of the Brave!

In this great process of nation-building and the reconstruction of the Namibian Personality, we owe our gratitude to our leaders of all political persuasions for the crucial role they played, knowingly and unknowingly, as the path-breakers of a nation which, in spite of its small size, is setting the trend and indeed the pace for a New Afrika. Our leaders, with all the weaknesses and challenges we have, are a true and new lamp that is beginning to light a hundred other lamps across the Afrikan continent. As a child of international solidarity, Namibia is taking its rightful place in the global society as a partner in defining the new world of equality and inclusivity at home and abroad – a world with equal opportunity for all according to their ability and needs

Our Constitution visualizes a nation at peace with itself, at peace with its neighbours and at peace with the rest of the international community. As a nation, it is our duty not only to seek to achieve another milestone, but to take the pledge further to see that we all work unceasingly to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, between the land-rich and the land-hungry, between the haves and the have-nots, and to take the government to the people so that those who are in fortuitous positions of leaders are accountable to the people and not the appointing master alone. Wouldn't it be more glorious a day when the citizens of the Land of the Brave take more pride in the symbols of their nation rather the symbols of their political parties? Wouldn't it be a better day for ALL when our education system reaches a stage where learners internalize the self-evident truth that our country as a whole has a vested interest that its citizens should have the fullest opportunity of education, development and facilities for earning their livelihood? The new President is correct in his pledge that it is the duty of all of us to see that no one is left behind or left out in the pursuit of knowledge, excellence, and space to make a contribution to the welfare of all Namibians. It is humbling to appreciate that our leadership in all organs of state have always been alive to the needs of the people of the country in their diversity, taken cognizance of the need to pay attention to disaffected communities in the life of the nation. The real meaning of the celebrations became real to me on Saturday while sitting amongst the crowds in the Independence Stadium. I wondered how the Presidents for Life from Africa and the bogus kings felt when witnessing the peaceful handover of the Presidency in Namibia. My mind flashed back to what President Obama said during the Nelson Mandela memorial service in Johannesburg in December 2013, when he challenged those Afrikan leaders crying for Mandela in the following words: 'And so we, too, must act on behalf of justice. We, too, must act on behalf of peace. There are too many people who happily embrace Madiba's legacy of racial reconciliation, but passionately resist even modest reforms that would challenge chronic poverty and growing inequality. There are too many leaders who claim solidarity with Madiba's struggle for freedom, but do not tolerate dissent from

their own people. And there are too many of us on the sidelines, comfortable in complacency or cynicism when our voices must be heard.'

I was wondering what these Presidents for Life were feeling when witnessing how far Namibia has come in consolidating the meaning of democracy and the altruism that those who govern derive their power from the people. The moment was during the handover of the symbols of power. Whatever was in those boxes, I felt that something big was happening. Pohamba was leaving and Geingob was coming in. Pohamba was exiting and Geingob was entering. They were both happy. It meant so much for them. I felt something. I have never seen this elsewhere. Then my favourite cultural performers, Ndilimani, came on and did what they do best, namely to sculpture the moment in song and dance. When Ndilimani belted 'Hagetunana, Hagetulela', I felt tears welling in my eyes. I did not know I could be affected like that; I had to conceal my face from those around me so that they did not see my vulnerability. My sense of citizenship was overwhelming. Then the lead singer said: Inclusivity spells peace. This was a big moment. Namibia was big in the family of Afrikan nations at that moment. I belonged to big people. I belonged to a proud culture, a proud civilization that fellow Afrikans never had, even though they are older. In one song Ndilimani marched us further along the trajectory of our becoming a better nation which looked beyond race, ethnicity or tribe. The rhythm this time was no longer Semaoulipeni, no longer PohambaNdhiradhipiwayenda, but affirmatively Hagetunana, Hagetulela. Instead of asking where Sam was and what road Pohamba walked, they are imploring Hage, the new President, to lead, to take US ALL forward. I understood better the emphasis on Peace by the Father, Stability by the Uncle and Prosperity by the Big Brother of the nation. A welcome affirmation of what Namibia was and is saying to herself and the world came from my old friend in Johannesburg, Morley Nkosi when commenting on what he sees happening in Namibia in terms of its management of history and change. He writes: 'I am impressed and envious of Namibia's achievements'. In his parting words to the nation and as he handed over power to his successor, the second President of the Republic, and the recipient of the 2014 Mo Ibrahim Prize for excellent leadership in Afrika spoke great words that ought to have injected shame in the hearts of many Afrikan leaders in attendance, when he said: 'There is no title I shall wear more proudly than that of an ordinary citizen'. As the new President embarks on what he poignantly described as transactional and transformational leadership style for the next five years, we ought to join him in being, as he beckoned us, innovative, ingenuous and idealistic in our march to a better future for all with excitement and confidence. There are understandable rumblings of disappointment and disillusionment with regard to who benefitted from the dividends of peace and democracy. Like the President has admitted, the new administration is too top heavy and is difficult to countenance in the context of our failing education and health care systems, to mention but two. The anxiety that many people have about the calibre of the new leaders in the executive and what appears to be total misalignment between personages and roles, is legitimate. Let us allow time to allay those misgivings. Maybe we are in for positive surprises. Be that as it may, the direction is positive and deserving of honest support from all of us. Our criticism should aim at improving, not destroying what we have. As we congratulate our new Head of State and his team, we shall cheer them on to serve the nation in accord with the oath they have just taken, such that they deliver to the citizens of our Motherland without regard to race, tribe, gender, language, religion and political party affiliation quality and dignified services. In this process duty is ours to assist where we can and serve where we must. When we stand together as we did to our own amazement over the last 25 years, we can only do better. Let the coming days, weeks, months and years be for a better, brighter, and a more glorious Namibia!

## **DIESCHO'S DICTUM: Is Namibia's dream likely to explode like the Afrikan dream? (Part 2)**

March 10th, 2015 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

By Professor josephdiescho

AS we celebrate the silver jubilee of our nation, it is important that we pause, take a deep breath in order to interrogate and necessarily contextualize the milestones of this period by moving closer to the definition of the Namibian Dream. The prolonged honeymoon with our political independence since 1990 has not given us an opportunity to do that sufficiently, and failure to define our dream will render the future generations without the necessary armory to defend the nation and withstand the challenges of democracy within and without. In order to appreciate the Namibian Dream, it is important to return to the basics of our political story as a country with different communities. Like with the Organization of African Unity and later the African Union, things began to fall apart as circumstances and personalities changed and in that process the new cadres either did not know what buttressed the foundations for these cardinally important edifices, or they decided to take different directions which were not in tandem with the original intents. The same can be said about our own national dream, if there was one to start with, namely that as events change and political leaderships change, the dream gets forgotten. This is the one thing that Americans are good at – they always go back to the original intent of their unique republic when they evoke and invoke the words of their Founding Fathers: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So, whenever they disagree and quarrel, that dream beckons them to regroup as one people under the same Star Spangled Banner, the American flag – not the flags or symbols of the different political parties that contest for government functions.

The foundations of Namibia's dream are located in in the genesis and trajectory of the liberation struggle. First, what is known as Namibia was not the creation of the Namibian people themselves, but grew out of a collective experience of a people treated as a collective who were oppressed as such, a people who grew to know that by virtue of where they were located they had to suffer subjugation which they would not have suffered had they not been where they were, and that as a collective they stood up to defend their God-given rights to be humans with dignity, respect and honour. And that this struggle for humanity bestowed upon them a consciousness that they were one even though they would not have been that without their collective colonial experience. This argument is similar to Ali Mazrui's assertion in 1963, that what constitutes an African identity is the collective of European colonialism and very little else. Till today, the African Union would barely exist outside of the common struggle to either guilt-trip Europe, or fundraise from Europe, as we saw with the NEPAD experience. The talk about Afrikan trade is as hollow as the commitment Afrikan Heads of State make to international treaties, such as the International Court of Justice, which collapses under the weight of Afrikan Heads of States and Governments' solidarity to defend the indefensible. This solidarity without principles is what led President Nyerere to describe the OAU as a 'Trade Union for Afrikan Heads of State where they assemble to protect their interests against those of their nations, and in defiance of their own national dreams.'

The Ovaherero anti-German resistance leader Samuel Maharero first articulated the Namibian Dream by writing an advisory to the Nama leader Hendrik Witbooi on 31 January 1904. This was at a time when these two founder Namibian communities faced a common threat emanating from the German imperial onslaught on whoever would have been in their way to acquire occupation of the country they were designated at the Berlin Conference of 1884/5.

This was a real threat that was enveloped in the German Kolonialbund official ‘Vernichtungsbefehl’, the order of extermination. Maharero offered to Witbooi to put their differences aside and fight or die together in defence of their land.

Here begins to germinate the fundamentals of the Namibian Dream. First was the spirit of sacrifice over comfort and expediency, and for a higher ideal, this time the ideal of freedom from occupation, no matter what it took. The two leaders decided that the freedom and the safety of ALL the people were higher than whatever the German forces would have offered in return for surrender. The two fighting communities could have opted to collaborate with the enemy in exchange for some albeit short-lived comfort and safety, or even joined the enemy in exchange for material goods and German protection. After all, the Germans had better ammunition and had things with which to force acquiescence. Yet the two sides chose to fight for the good name of their people and ultimately the country. ‘Let us die fighting’, Maharero implored Witbooi.

Second, the principle of unity to cooperate towards a bigger goal was at the centre of the Namibian identity. Here begins the realization that tribe alone did not make One Namibia. This realisation, that our differences were used as a source of our own weakness made our leaders mature enough to go after the goal of freedom. Early on they knew that differences would only allow invaders of our land to take advantage of us as weak separate identities which, when united, could protect our land better.

Throughout the struggle for independence the spirit of unity and cooperation against the threats from outside of the country was a strong thread. When the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) became the vanguard of the independence of and for Namibia, the commitment to unity was like a lantern held by all the leaders on their march to the future.

Third is the critical component of successful unity and/or cooperation, namely the realization that self-sufficiency is perilous to any cause worth pursuing.

This mature consciousness of co-dependency was an essential component of the leadership amongst the Ovaherero, notably within the Herero Chief’s Council, which was the most critical political force in the country at the time. It was the Herero Chief’s Council that began to internationalize the Namibian cry for the right for self-determination. They sent Fanuel Jariretundu Kozonguizi and Mburumba Kerina to petition at the United Nations in New York. It was the Herero Chief’s Council that had the foresight and fortitude to smuggle Samuel Nujoma (the Founding President) out of the country to join the two petitioners to seek international solidarity for the Namibian cause. At this time already, the mature leadership in Namibia demonstrated an ability to look beyond tribe and ethnicity and cast eyes on the bigger picture.

This to all intents and purposes was an essential attribute of the real liberation struggle. Admittedly, there were moments when certain elements in the leadership reared off course and used tribe to advance their own agendas.

When one studies the leadership style of the Founding President, amongst the strongest qualities he possessed was his extraordinary commitment to the totality of Namibia and the sharp savvy to manage tribe and ethnicity in the furtherance of a One Namibia, One Nation. It is this commitment to the whole of Namibia that characterized the history of the liberation struggle.

It is this spirit that invaded and infected the minds of the youth in the 1970s and early 1980s to leave the safety of their homesteads and go into an unknown world to fight for the dignity of the Motherland.

As a country, we have not been able to appreciate the meaning of this time, not to mention that we have not been able to thank sufficiently those who truly dedicated their lives to the goals of freedom on our behalf and in our name.

As a matter of fact, many of those who are claiming to have been in the struggle are those who have not internalized the values of the liberation struggle and who use it for gain, either politically or materially. The struggle as such was never about positions or wealth! Third is the spirit of international solidarity. Second to the ANC of South Africa, it is SWAPO of Namibia that mounted an unparalleled international solidarity campaign that in turn gave shape to international law generally and the United Nations as an Assembly of Nations specifically.

Beginning with nothing from nothing, SWAPO gave the United Nations a litmus test by which its own track record was to be chronicled amongst nations in the world still struggling for the right of self-determination. It is thus no surprise that Namibia's peaceful celebrations of independence in March 1990 under the auspices of the United Nations Resolution 435 Plan was the most successful story in the history of the United Nations. It is against this background and in this context that in his first public announcement after his election as the third President of the Republic, President-Elect HageGeingob said Namibia is a child of international solidarity and remains a friend to all and an enemy to none.

Fourth is Namibia's commitment to national reconciliation. In the context of Namibia, reconciliation is not a mere crisis management tool as it was largely in South Africa, post-apartheid. Race relations in Namibia have always been more positive than in Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe before the attainment of independence.

One of the factors for this helpful history is the fact that as the country evolved into a nation, a consensus grew amongst black and white Namibians that the occupation of South Africa was to be thwarted. It was a matter of methodology that created tension, but in the main, both blacks and whites felt oppressed by South Africa and needed their own space to be free.

For example, there were many Finnish and a growing number of German church leaders and community activists who joined forces with the oppressed black majority to find ways and means to stop apartheid colonialism and oppression. It is this context that gave rise to leaders such as Dirk Mudge and a few respected black leaders to team up and increase the heat on the South African government and its apparatuses in Namibia. The credit for our successful democratic governance over the last 25 years, with its peace and stability, is due to many people who contributed to it.

## **DIESCHO'S DICTUM – The State and the Future of the Public Service in Namibia: Part One**

May 13th, 2014 | by [New Era](#)

### **By Joseph Diescho**

BEFORE Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a single bullet fired by Nathuram Godse on 30 January 1948, he articulated his wishes for the future of India in different ways. One of such wishes was for the civil service to assume more of a role and relevance in establishing nationalism in that vast country. Gandhi turned to the civil service as a vehicle to fashion the type of body politic for a new India as a home for all – Hindu and Muslim alike. In this regard, Gandhi said: A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of [India's] history.' Fired by the spirit of constitutional democracy, the Namibian government after twelve years of operation came to a collective

conclusion that the public service in independent Namibia was predicated upon a wrong business model and was not fit for purpose. This does not mean that the people working as public or civil servants were bad people, but that they arrived at their work stations on tickets whose *raison d'être*s were not geared toward assisting the government of the people, by the people and for the people to deliver on its mandate of making Namibia a better place for all who live in it. This calm realization followed an assessment by the leadership that revealed the following picture of the general public service of the nation.

Generally speaking, there are three categories of public servants in Namibia today. The first category consists of those 'Staatsdiens' officials who entered the public service before independence. This lot would include your old-style 'staatsadministrateur', who was schooled emotionally, and politically and behaviourally in the world of white supremacy and black subservience. They created the rules of public service and they remained important in moving the country forward when there were not many black people with the requisite skills to run the huge and cold bureaucracy of the state. The sad admission that must be made is that white folks put in place and left behind a foundation for a bureaucracy that can work. It is very sad that where Afrikans are on their own, they hardly create the type of economy and attendant infrastructure that we have inherited from apartheid.

At independence we found the foundations of an economy and an infrastructure that no Afrikan government could have built from scratch. In the building of this infrastructure, white people developed a mindset that fuels sustainable development better than the Afrikanmindset of subsistence economies. White people privatized the knowledge so much so that it is incumbent upon black people to have to learn from them the ways of running a post-subsistence economy in modern Afrika. Namibia's policy of national reconciliation assisted to retain the white Namibians such that the country could proceed with development. The altruism remains that there are certain things white people are better at and there are those that black people can do better. Learning from white people good professions is not a bad thing in this context, as long as this learning enriches the learner to borrow intelligently in order to contribute to the general wellbeing of the society and the country. It must be said that it will take a long time for black people to learn the coldness of bureaucracy and the work ethic that white people have developed over the centuries, so that black people take charge of their own resources and economies.

The Afrikan work ethic tells a different story that instructs us that where there are no white people development suffers. And we must deal with this to remain as sane agents of change and development of our nations. On their part, the white people with the skills that they have acquired in the bad old days are not enough to build a country. They need to transfer those skills they honed during colonial times to their black countrymen and women who happen to be in the majority – for the benefit of all. This first group also includes those many black people who served in the old ethnic government arrangements, such as the Owambo, Kavango, Caprivi, Nama, Coloured (Kleurling) administrations and the like, except that one would not find any of these people anywhere any more. They are either all dead or claim to have been in the struggle! This lot, together with the white 'administrateurs' was not schooled to serve all Namibians in a unitary state under the Constitution as the supreme law of the land. They were prepared to serve something else and not what the government of Namibia today requires from public servants.

The second category of public servants comprises former freedom fighters, real or imagined. There are those men and women who truly gave up their youth to make this country what it is today. They deserve all our love and respect for their great sacrifice. It is not their fault that they did not get the opportunity to learn and/or acquire a skill that is equivalent to a

qualification to run a system. By virtue of our politics, they have to be appointed to senior posts in the government sector. As such they are activists and not bureaucrats; they get bored by office work and would be happier attending political meetings instead. These people are augmented by those who joined liberation politics after independence and even very recently not because they embrace the values of the liberation struggle, but for career considerations. As a matter of fact, these are the people who shout ruling party slogans the loudest and even have the lowest tolerance levels for dissenting perspectives. Very often they claim to have suffered, even died for this country whilst they are still alive. In the main this group suffers an inability to tell the difference between the ruling party, the government and the state. To them the ruling party is higher than the government and higher than the state. With the best of intentions, this group does a great disservice to the Namibian government that has matured over the years and is seized to serve the citizens of the country.

The third category comprises the growing number of young Namibians from all race groups who are entering the public sector with qualifications from Unam, the Polytechnic, IUM and even from tertiary institutions outside of the country and who wish to make public service their life long career. They constantly face a brick wall from their older white supervisors, who loath to be challenged with new ways of doing things on the one hand, and by the freedom fighters who shut the new professionals up with the question: where were you during the struggle, on the other.

### **DIESCHO's DICTUM – Quo vadis Namibia**

February 18th, 2014 | by [New Era](#)

**By Professor Joseph Diescho**

On 9 February 2014 the Land of the Brave celebrated the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the most momentous acts in the continent's post-independence political history – the adoption of a Republican constitution, crafted by the country's own democratically elected leaders from various political parties for the first time in post-independence Afrika!

This year the country goes to the polls for the fifth time to elect the sixth Parliament and the third President of the Republic.

**This time there will be more voters in the queues who were not even there during the first democratic elections in 1989.**

This time will also be about real succession in the leaderships of most parties, including the ruling party. This time will see more casualties in the leaderships due to three factors, (a) the old guard that must give way to the young, (b) whoever emerges victorious will be required to turn to the future and stop recycling the same 'nothing to write home about' cabinet ministers and use merit to appoint men and women to execute the country's laws and (c) tackle the 50/50 gender and zebra balancing expectations.

On the occasion of welcoming the staff in his office, Prime Minister Geingob, in his characteristic style of getting to the point, lamented the inefficiency in the nation's public service and urged those who are paid by tax payers' monies to pull up their socks and stop using the politics of struggle as a license to public office.

By way of affirming the solid foundation of Namibia's constitutional democracy, the Prime Minister educated the audience that tribalism and attendant discomforts now rearing their ugly heads were not there in the first 10 to 15 years of independence and self-rule in this Land of the Brave where everybody is fearful of somebody or something or just fearful.

The Prime Minister was right. Tribalism, ethnic prejudice and preference, nepotism, racism, attitude of entitlement are visible in the country's body politic, all indicative of the reality that in the latter 10 plus years we had retrogressed by making one step forward and three steps backwards in the areas that really matter if we are to advance significantly towards our proclaimed, albeit amorphous grand Vision 2030.

**In all fairness the process of retrogression crept into our national politics during and following the Presidential 3<sup>rd</sup> term discussions that caused essential parts of what was becoming a functioning system to come unstuck.**

The ruling party became entangled in the issues of succession politics so much so that it took its eyes off the ball and the project of nation building got sacrificed on the altar of blind and opportunistic party loyalty.

The corridors were filled with self-serving fear of the Founding President, and the talk of who was to be next out. In this climate the values that fueled the liberation struggle for so long were replaced with the politics of *Us* versus *Them*, *comrade* versus *enemy/suspect*, back-biting for the sake of expediency and political-economic survival oiled by an unhelpful anti-democratic and anti-intellectual psychosis.

In this scramble for security the vision of One Namibia, One Nation suffered. The poor public servants and by extension the unsuspecting voters got in harm's way and became victims of the politics of the belly.

**In this state of affairs it is difficult to focus on the interests of the nation where voters are seen as voting cows in the game of one up-manship with no clear vision, no courage and no stewardship for the nation's meager resources.**

This year is likely to see more of this 'boogeyman politics' and fear mongering.

This year might be the worst year for opposition parties that seem to be in disarray and the beginning of a de-facto 'One Party' state, through no fault of the ruling party, but due to incoherence and lack of alternative policy leadership within the opposition in general.

It is therefore incumbent upon citizens to be informed so that they do not fall prey as cannon fodder and succumb to the party that brings more meat and drinks to the rallies, but call upon their leaderships of party, church, NGO and traditional communities to clarify not where the country has been in the last 130 years since the Berlin Conference but where it is going, and insist that the process be free and fair so that they are the ones to anoint the best leaders of the people and stewards of and for the nation's resources.

It will behoove all political parties who will submit their manifestos as documents to be given the tender to govern the nation for the next five years to reconsider their ways and place the interests of the nation above their parochial individual and party interests.

Political parties are mere vehicles by which like-minded leaders seek and obtain endorsement from the voting citizens to run the affairs on their behalf as the most peaceful and stable country in Afrika.

This means the political parties as such have NO affairs of their own outside of those of the citizenry who entrust them with the fortuitous responsibility to serve, not to be served, and not to eat on behalf of the people.

### *Whereto now?*

**In the last 24 years, solid foundations have been laid. As the most peaceful and stable country in Afrika today, let us hope, and indeed trust that this year will usher into our political life a new political culture with a work ethic: that of better and quality services, responsive and accountable leadership in all spheres of the state and the desired unity to soldier on as we build and refurbish our nation on its**

**gallant march to Vision 2030.**

This has to be a year of new beginnings, to move at a faster pace towards a Namibia wherein the Zebra Nation with its strands, has better life and equal opportunity for all who live in it, as it, lurches towards its rendezvous with history and destiny; when we as a nation, small but powerful and tone-setting, shall be at peace with ourselves, at peace with our neighbours and at peace with the rest of the world.

### **DIESCHO'S DICTUM: Namibia's developmental state in the making**

December 16th, 2014 | by [New Era](#)

By joseph diescho

SINCE independence almost twenty-five years ago when Namibia became a state, our country has witnessed significant change and stability that the continent has not known as many Afrikan countries had little room to plan their own development outside of the context of the Cold War which used Afrika as a kicking ball between the East and the West. The Government of a free Namibia has acquitted itself beyond expectations to bring the country and her people where we are today – with a bold Vision 2030 and National Development Plans 1 through 4.

Namibia is exponentially becoming a Developmental State. A Developmental State, or 'hard state', or 'capable state', or 'progressive state' are terms used by international economists and political scientists to refer to development scenarios of state-led macroeconomic planning. The first examples studied were the experiences in East and Southeast Asia in the late twentieth century. The process of planning that these nations followed were described as state development capitalism wherein the state had more control over the development of the economy. The government exercised more direct and indirect intervention to drive the economy. The terminology of a developmental state is often used to distinguish it from less successful states which are called 'predatory state', 'weak state', or 'failed state', a category under which most Afrikan political systems fall.

The first person to give a serious conceptual framework of a developmental state was Chalmers Johnson who in 1982 defined it as a state that was focused on economic

development and that took necessary policy measures to accomplish that objective. He posited that Japan's economic success, for instance, was a consequence of the far-sighted intervention measures of government bureaucrats, particularly the policymakers and implementers in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry. Johnson argued: 'In states that were late to industrialize, the state itself led the industrialization drive, that is, it took on developmental functions.'

In all fairness, the real foundations for a developmental state are whose goal is a development paradigm and framework wherein its citizens have equal opportunity to be empowered socially, economically, politically and intellectually. The Namibian Government has done most of the things a developmental state is expected to do by guiding economic development and using the country's resources to work towards meeting the needs of the people. Namibia, as a state tried to balance economic growth and social development by using state resources, state influence and state power to attack poverty and expand economic opportunities throughout the thirteen plus one regions.

States in all countries have a role in shaping the direction, structure and output of their economies by using various instruments and policies in regulating their industries and trade, redistributing incomes and assets, using fiscal and monetary policies and directing state ownership of key industries.

A developmental state, in contradistinction with other states, is reluctant to leave economic development and the necessary process of redistribution of resources to the whims of the free market. This is primarily because it is too conscious of its fiduciary responsibility to the voters, whereas the private sector does not have to account to the citizens as the elected government does.

In Namibia, the Government has in many ways committed to building a state that is ready to guide national economic development as it continues to mobilize available resources of society, and direct them toward the realization of common goals as articulated in National Development Plans 1 through 4, where the needs of the previously disadvantaged, the poor and social priorities like education, health care, housing and a social safety net are at the top of the national agenda. There are hardly any successful companies in Namibia that do not depend on the Government to survive.

Commitments of a developmental state include directing and supporting national economic development through building a strong and professional public service, creating an investor friendly environment, supporting small business development, using state-owned enterprises effectively and driving strategic investment initiatives in ways that support the general agenda of narrowing the gap between the wealthy and the poor, and by taking care of the needy and the vulnerable – the aged, the sick and the young. Importantly, a developmental state also plays a role in keeping its economy competitive by keeping abreast with leading edge trends in international development of knowledge, technology, research and innovation. Then the state, once it has developed and crafted its vision to create a society that coheres around its core values, proceeds to mobilize social, economic and political forces that in turn assist the state in galvanizing productive forces to ensure the pursuit of stated goals and objectives.

There is consensus amongst scholars that successful developmental states are those that are able to advance their economies much faster than regulatory states (such as the United States where the private sector is seen and treated as the engine of development, whereas the state only uses regulations to manage economic activities. A clear illustration of a developmental state is the difference of the rates of economic development between Japan as a

developmental state and the United States of America as a regulatory state. It took Japan 10 years to double its economy whereas it took the USA 50 years to do the same.

A Developmental State is characterized by the following:

- The Government puts strong emphasis on technical education;
- Schools place high premium on the development of numeracy and computer skills;
- The civil service is revamped and professionalized to go after stated goals;
- Government is populated with bureaucratic layers that are well educated people and have sufficient tools of analysis so that they can take leadership initiatives, based on a sound scientific basis, at every level of decision-making nodes within the government structure;
- Government has the ability and capacity to distribute and allocate resources and in so doing invest optimally in critical areas that lay the foundation for industrialization;
- Government focuses on the National Question, in brief, the wellbeing of the nation as a whole (Namibianness) and not on political party or ethnic loyalties;
- Government places sufficient emphasis on market share over profit;
- Government is strong in protecting the country's embryonic domestic industries and focusing on aggressive acquisition of foreign technology;
- Government is deliberate in deploying the nation's most talented youth and students strategically to institutions of learning abroad with sufficient incentives to bring them to plough back into their economies the learnings and skills they acquire;
- Government utilizes its foreign missions to execute strategic agendas for purposes of development back home;
- Government has tactics to encourage and reward foreign companies that invest in building productive capacity such as manufacturing plants with the aim that the local industrial sector will in time be able to learn vital success factors from these companies;
- Government constantly builds a harmonious social-industrial compact wherein all strategic stakeholders participate in order to construct an organic tri-partite alliance between the state, the industry and labour that is in turn critical to sustainable productivity, industrial expansion and job security;
- Government is clear about what and how to borrow intelligently (not copy) from other countries' experiences and adapt such lessons to own national characteristics, conditions and circumstances;
- Government stewards the population and resources with a belief that the state will attain legitimacy through efficient and effective quality service delivery to citizens rather than through the ballot alone.

In the context of Namibia's Vision 2030 President-Elect Hage Geingob has been emphatic on the need to build an economy towards industrialization, a key goal of which is to create a country that produces goods and services with high value addition. For instance, instead of exporting Namibia's mineral resources unprocessed, citizens are employed to beneficiate these products and manufacture other useful goods and in the process add economic value to the final products. This is important because the process by which countries add aggregate economic value to the goods and services they offer is the converse of the level of the industrialization stage of the country's economy.

What needs to happen? For Namibia to stay on the trajectory of building a strong and robust developmental state, more and deliberate focus ought to be placed upon the following factors:

- Build an education system that is able to increase the knowledge content in the fields of numeracy, mathematics, science and computer skills throughout the nation;
- Incentivize vocational training efforts and people taking up vocations instead of everyone wanting to follow an academic or corporate career;
- Strengthen safety and security of citizens and visitors and take a hard stand against all

criminal activity in the country, and,

- Appoint people on merit and competency, not political party or tribal allegiance, to carry out tasks in the interest of the nation in the short, medium and long terms.

As the country expands its output in the agricultural sector, particularly in rural areas, it ought to create local industrial centres where some of these agricultural products can be canned and preserved and utilized, and also strengthen co-operative strategies across the land so that small businesses can be integrated into the value chain between agricultural production and international markets.

In the scheme of things, the leadership ought to refocus its attention on economic growth, which can only come if more and more people become numerate and literate to think differently about where they are and their roles in their own communities. The need for some kind of social engineering cannot be overemphasized, beginning with a relook at the education system which is responsible for shaping the minds of the youth to whom the future belongs. In order to achieve this, Namibia must reconsider the efficacies upon which our current primary and secondary education are predicated.

Then there is a critical need to improve the subsidy funding formula to universities and vocational training centres so that education and training towards trades is sufficiently funded and incentivized to facilitate the pace of a knowledge-based economy with a growing pool of employment creators in the country in the medium and long terms. It goes without saying that it would serve the country well if we were to internationalize more our post-secondary education system so that students are exposed to different and diverse ways of learning, thinking, and doing things.

In order to move rapidly in this direction, the Government is not only expected to take the lead in the strategic definition of a common national agenda, but also to mobilize all of society to take part in its implementation and to direct society's resources towards the shared dreams. In this regard, the state has the responsibility to unite the public and private sectors, industry, labour and civil society in a partnership to steer the development programmes in tandem with one another. It is also crucial that the state stewards this process by establishing clear, measurable and time-bound targets for common goals and put in place transparent mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

To all intents and purposes, Namibia is on the right track. The fundamentals are in place and the recent elections can only strengthen us all to move in unison towards our stated goals and become the model nation in Afrika. Namibia is fast becoming a country of choice for citizens of other Afrikan countries who want to live in dignity and without fear, and make a contribution to Afrika; a recent World Economic Forum described Namibia in 2013 to will be the most competitive economy in the SADC region in 2017; Namibia has the fastest growing tourist industry in Afrika, thus surpassing Kenya at the moment; Namibia has the youngest aeroplane fleet which is more fuel efficient and requiring less maintenance in the continent; not to mention the fact that Namibia is the most peaceful and most stable country in Afrika today, in spite of the fact that we are sandwiched between two powerful economies, both of which are unstable.

## DIESCHO'S DICTUM – The Seven Cardinal Virtues of the Namibian Nation

March 4th, 2014 | by [New Era](#)

By Joseph Diescho

*'As from today, we are the masters of this vast land of our ancestors. The destiny of this country is now in fully in our hands. We should, therefore, look forward to the future with confidence and hope.'*

These words were spoken by the first President of a free and independent Namibia, Samuel Shafiishuna Nujoma, shortly after midnight on 21 March 1990. This was the day when history honoured its appointment with Namibia as a new nation ready to enter the family of nations as an equal participant – with rights and obligations not only to her people, but to the rest of the international community which played its part in making it possible for this country to be free at last.

This week twenty four years ago, Namibia was a baby whose mother's water was due to break in a matter of weeks according to the physician who was monitoring the condition of the expectant mother. There was anxiety on the part of the appointed midwives and the physicians who foretold that the birth was imminent. The siblings were equally anxious to see how this new unborn baby would look like once it came. It was a moment in time similar to the ordeal of the Roman colonial consul Plinius Secundum, or Pliny the Elder, who was stationed in Libya and who one day witnessed an usual scene of nature by the well during which two unrelated animals mated and produced an offspring upon which he remarked: *Ex Africa Semper Aliquid Novi* (Out of Africa comes always something new)! Indeed, something new happened in 1990. A healthy baby was born – a baby whose birth, to all intent and purposes, restored confidence in the international law system. Namibia's emergence as a new member of the international community was the first success story in the history of the United Nations, and as such, became a tale that pretty much became an international manifesto that anointed Martti Ahtisaari as the next President of Finland. The arrival of this baby also gave unprecedented assurance to the fear-filled white South Africa that a black government was not the worst that could happen and would not necessarily end the hitherto known and cherished white privileges. Namibia's peaceful transition to democracy signalled to white South Africa that in the new world, a black government could, in fact, be the best guarantor of white privilege without the ugly face of unfettered white political power. This time twenty four years ago, those able men and women who, through great argumentation and political rancour found one another as Namibians and managed for the first time in Afrika's political history, to agree on, write, craft and adopt a National Constitution, second to none in the modern world, bequeathed unto us and the future generations a Testament of Hope, a lexicon of political life that is to guide us for generations and generations to come.

These esteemed members of the Namibian Constituent Assembly, representing 7 political parties with disparate backgrounds and divergent political ideological orientations produced the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. When they appended their valuable signatures to that piece of paper, the document became the *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*—the voice of the people which represented God's will, in human terms the Supreme Law of the land – for as long as the nation lives.

We thus owe it to the founding fathers and mothers who wove the quilt for peace, security, stability, unity, justice, liberty and the harmony that we enjoy today. Our gratitude extends to the forerunners to this momentous decree – men like Tatekulu Herman

AndimbaToivoyaToivo, the founder of Swapo and Namibia's Nelson Mandela, Professor MburumbaKerina who coined the name Namibia, founders of Swanu, church leaders and the upright men of the Turnhalle conferences who in their own way prepared the stage for meaningful negotiations with the liberation movement. These virtues as pillars are the non-negotiable, self-evident truths that are the ingredients of the foundation of our democratic Republic and to which we must always return after and whenever we have our often warranted disagreements and squabbles, and whenever we as a nation experience growing pains. Whatever we do, however legitimate our divergent perspectives and emphases are, the core values of peace, security, stability, unity, justice, liberty and harmony of the Namibian nation remain beyond reproach. These pillars whereupon our nation stands are fundamental and from them proceed our rights and obligations, including the right of care that we all have toward one another, friends and perceived foes alike.

No nation can sustain itself and its civilization without a National Philosophy to guide us to manage its vicissitudes and paradoxes of life. In order for us to move forward as a nation which is not so young any more, we need to be clear about our national philosophy and its precepts – its Dos and Don'ts. In organic terms, Namibia is a young person of marriageable age, therefore possesses no excuse any longer to make mistakes without consequences.

The country must now be held accountable for its actions, good as well as bad. I hereby wish to take the first hazards to distil our efforts over the last twenty four years and suggest the Seven Cardinal Virtues as lights on our road ahead:

**Peace:** Not the absence of war, but the presence of and access to justice and fairness by all.

**Security:** The assurance that everyone has a place to be and to become without fear from the neighbour or the political system.

**Stability:** The knowledge and collective internalization that all are safe from strife, the assurance that tomorrow can only be better for all and the demand from all to bring our fair share.

**Unity:** The acceptance and the acknowledgement that the parts of the country, essential though they might be, are not as strong and steady as the whole from which the parts, be they linguistic, racial, religious, ethnic or other, derive their individual strengths.

**Justice:** The knowledge and certainty that all are equal before the law and as such are entitled to the same opportunity and protection under the rule of law, the context in which no one, including elected officials and the so-called traditional leaders, is above the law and that differences that exist do not lead to conflict, but merely signify the *other-worthiness*, “*die anderswaardigheid*”, ‘*Anders-Wertigkeit*’ of each unit in relation to the other in a climate of peaceful coexistence.

**Liberty:** The mature consciousness that each individual is free to choose and conduct his/her actions without unfettered control of political power, while at the same time accepting that one's freedom stops where the other's freedom starts in the interlocking networks of mutual human relationships under a fair and transparent governance system, which derives its authority and power from the people.

**Harmony:** The existence of equilibrium, the power of interdependencies of the various parts, roles and contributions towards a better future for all. This desired state of affairs is expressed by a Otjiherero adage: *Omunueumuekautooraona*, (*one finger cannot pick up a louse*) or Rukwangali saying: *Ni tooneho, ezurutalilili, nitooneezuru, ehotalilili* (*if I hurt the eye, the nose cries, if I hurt the nose, the eye cries*).

Against this background, it is incumbent upon us all to pause and consider some fundamental questions about the values that are very dear to us and upon which we can build what can become our way of life as a nation. We need to learn to truly appreciate the gains we have made in the last 24 years, discern the threats to our national well-being and tackle the challenges that we identify along the road that we have still to traverse.

We have made great progress towards building the nation that so many women and men fought for. I refer here to those who really dedicated their lives to the high dream of liberation and self-rule for this country. I refer here not to the Johnnies come lately, the *mafikizolos* who join(ed) Swapo at quarter to twelve, not because they believe in the high values that Swapo espoused for years, but jumped on the band wagon to get jobs and positions and are now acting as high priests of the liberation struggle while at the same time exhibit low tolerance for fellow Namibians who have different opinions. I am referring not to those who claim to have died for this country while they are still alive and well. I am speaking here of the many sons and daughters of the soil, who are no more and who cannot and will not enjoy the fruits of their sacrifice.

Namibia's leaders have laid a strong foundation for one Namibia, One Nation in accord with the theory of aerodynamics which instructs that an aircraft uses most of its fuel during take-off. The nation's beginning years were characterised by great work of the first National Assembly and the first Executive Cabinet. That was the take-off period the record of which demonstrates that these two organs of our government made giant strides towards solidifying the values I am lifting up here. Consider the quality of the men and women who constituted the team of these two organs of state. We can look back with pride that these were the best men and women in the nation at the time.

The Cabinet was small and comprised capable men and women committed to the high ideals of national independence and sustainable development. These pioneers heeded the Founding President's clarion call enunciated on Independence Day.

The earlier years of national independence and self-rule saw hardly any signs of tribalism, ethnic prejudice and fear. The nation was on a roll to become ONE NAMIBIA, ONE NATION. President Nujoma was at his best exuding statesmanship and nonpartisan leadership. Institutions (State Owned Enterprises) were created, such as Nampower, Telecom, Unam, Polytech, Namwater, Air Namibia, Namcol, NIED, Namcor, Transnamib, Namport, GIPF, the Development Bank of Namibia, Agribank, and the like, all intended to catalyse and to drive national development in the combating of poverty and underdevelopment and generally towards the creation of a better life for all. The nation had confidence in its leaders. Citizens had faith in the evolving systems. The centre was holding. The bus was lurching forward, huffing and puffing through the rough roads of the Namibian landscape towards the future. Neighbours were looking to us for a different situational leadership style in Afrika. The youth looked forward to encountering the leadership anywhere, everywhere.

I remember I was in New York and later in Pretoria and recall how proud the youth was when the President or Prime Minister was in town. They wanted to be there. And truly wallow in the greatness and elegance of their leaders. Then the bus hit its first wobble when the ruling party Swapo became entangled in the political debate around who was to succeed the Founding President.

This was the time when the political space lost its new-found freedom and became filled with the self-serving fear of Nujoma, with many people talking behind the backs of their hands about who was to be the next casualty. This is when most aspiring politicians in the party took their eyes off the ball, namely, the project of nation building, and sacrificed the values

that fueled the liberation struggle on the altar of personal political and economic survival. Good leaders in the party and beyond computed that blind and opportunistic party loyalty was the appropriate response and license for political safety. The vision of One Namibia, One Nation became elusive and progressively secondary to the politics of the belly. It is therefore important for us all to return to the ideals and dreams our leaders once had. The biggest challenge now is leadership, all across the board. This year specifically calls for clear direction and to move beyond mediocrity and drop the culture of jobs for comrades and pals. In all fairness, the country needs and deserves more than what it has right now.

The game is no longer about liberation, but the future. This year the voters have the right to challenge the leaders of all political parties to address issues in relation to the values of the nation, not who did what in the past. We know the past. We know how far we have come, now we want to know where we are going and who can take us there better than others. The stone-age did not end because there were no more stones. It ended because better implements were found and developed for human survival. The politics of anger give way to politics of compassion and caring. The politics of cynicism must give way to the politics of courage and commitment to serve.

The elections this year should be about the gains we had made and how to manage the knowledge and information about the past 24 years to build upon what we have. What is at stake now is about the leadership and party that best represent our core values and way of life. The narrative ought to be about the future we craft for our children and theirs based upon the values that shall live in perpetuity. Political leaders ought to resist the language of false triumphalism. For instance, it is not true that Swapo defeated apartheid. What is true is that Swapo waged a formidable armed struggle against apartheid forces, but Swapo did not march triumphantly into Windhoek in victory tanks with the masses celebrating while SADF and SWATF forces were lying vanquished on the road sides. The fact of the matter is that Namibia's transition under United Nations resolution 435 was a negotiated settlement with no winner, no loser! Swapo accepted the inevitable, namely to work with historical enemies for the sake of a better future.

The moment of independence was not a zero-sum game as it was in other situations in the world with the winner taking all and the loser losing everything. In fact, we must be grateful that UN Resolution 345 happened at the time and in the manner that it did.

Had the war continued after the collapse of the Soviet system, the liberation movement would have been weakened through outside interference, Swapo as the main liberation force would have imploded as a result of the unfortunate goings on in the refugee camps, enemy forces, *Koevoet* and *Rooioogbende* would have wreaked more havoc and we would have ended up like another Angola.

Accepting this truth will enable us all to demonstrate the proper gratefulness to our founding fathers and mothers, and allow us to move forward in one spirit. No one should harbour guilt, and no one should wallow in self-righteousness.

With this right attitude we can determine our own altitude and turn to the enterprise of education and training as the most direct instruments to continue to construct the durable castle we all wish to have. It is a long road, a road less travelled so that we can reach our destination as a family glued together by our cardinal virtues.

When we get there, we shall shout in unison: *We are not yet what we shall be; we are not yet what we still wish to be, but thank God we are not what we once were!*

## **DIESCHO'S DICTUM Is continuity and change the return of African politics?**

April 2nd, 2015 | by **New Era Staff Reporter**

By Professor josephdiescho

THE elections campaigns of 2014 were more about change than continuity, people wanted to see as much as they wanted to retain peace and stability the country has enjoyed over the last 25 years. President HageGeingob was seen by many as the only person who could bring about change, even though it was not clear what he was to change. Maybe it was too unfair to expect one person to change something that was not broken yet. History instructs us that only a few persons in history were able to effect real change and those individuals had to go against the orthodoxy of the time and risk a lot. The President is no such person as he is a man of systems. Also, continuity and change are a very difficult combination to juggle, and in Afrika it can be perilous.

The person who is responsible for Reformation in the history of the Christian Church, Father Martinus Luther, went against the grain and in defence of his conviction which he acquired from the teachings of the same church. Luther stood in defiance of the Roman Catholic Order which he found to be engaging in acts against the sacred promises of religious salvation. Pope Leo X introduced monetary malpractice policies to benefit his own agendas and that forced Luther to take an intellectual stance against the omnipotent papacy. In the end Luther was severely ostracized and in 1521 he was ex-communicated at the expense of his calling as a priest and church leader. Then Galileo Gallei who went against the traditional Copernicus wisdom that the sun moved around the earth, and produced a theory that fundamentally changed physics when he produced a scientific thesis that it was the earth that moved around the sun. In 1615 Galileo was severely punished by the existing orthodoxy based upon Christian beliefs that it took the Roman Catholic Church over 350 years to garner enough courage to apologize to this 'clever fool' who spoke the truth. Then came Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr, who in his seminal epigram in the January 1849 issue of his journal *Les Guêpes* wrote: 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose', (the more things change the more they remain the same). Karr hit the nail on the head in so far as human history is concerned. We in Namibia might in this era right now: the era of change with no change.

In 1991 Basil Davidson in his seminal book 'The Black Man's Burden' warned against the curse of the African state which Afrikan leaders inherited and use to exact heavy penalty from their citizens by imposing their weight upon the people who live in poverty and squalor and who are denied the right to express their views about what goes on around them.

Davidson argued that the state and its ceremonies are a curse on post-independence Afrika. The state continues to require of subjects (not citizens) to sing and dance for the elite leadership as an expression of patriotism. Davidson further decried the inability of Afrikan leaders to adapt the state and what they have inherited to suit the circumstances of their time.

In 1997 came the fatalistic indictment by Keith Richburg, an African-American journalist who was caught in harm's way in the genocide of Rwanda and upon his return to America wrote a book, "Out of America" wherein he offered two painful opinions of the state of governance in Afrika. Richburg thanked history for having allowed his ancestors to have been taken as slaves across the Atlantic so that he would not end up like the Afrikans he saw butchering one another barbarically in modern Afrika. He concluded his indictment of Afrikan leaders and their followers that: 'In Africa, things stay the same until they fall apart'. Must we in Afrika always wait for things to fall apart?

The specter of the celebration of the self-versus the good for ALL, has been a central feature of Afrikan governance since the demise of colonialism. Scholars had hoped and prayed that Namibia and South Africa as the last to gain their political freedom would have learned enough from the older experiences such that they would not repeat the mistakes of the past.

The evidence is clear: South Africa has fallen in the trap of African politics, and one is no longer certain that Namibia can escape this curse. After Mbeki was rudely removed from power by what Reuell Khoza described the post-Mbeki leadership in South Africa as a strange breed of leaders in the ANC, Mbeki remained disciplined about and loyal to the cause of fighting corruption and is still actively engaged as a mature Afrikan intellectual voice on the affairs of the continent whose future remains on a rickety boat sailing nowhere very slowly. It would appear that the cardinal error of Afrikan leaders lies in their lack of understanding of the business of the state – as a commonplace for all, not only the members of a particular party or ethnic group, but a space for the Gemeinwohl, the wellbeing of all. Afrikan leaders tend to focus on what is safe for themselves at the expense of the good for all. This is why they are dispensed off once they are no longer in power, or their successors tend to undo whatever was left by the predecessor. To populate the executive of the state with members of only one party, understandable though it might be, is devoid of the wisdom that previous leaders who built their nations possessed.

One feels for the new President. One is almost convinced that the new President is as concerned about this state of affairs as most thinking Namibians. Things could have been done differently in the interests of the nation, not just a few. One can equally understand the dilemma the President is in when trying to run a country which has two centres of power. He is the duly elected President of the country when he is not the President of the party in a country wherein the ruling party is seen to be bigger than the government and bigger than the state! This is the sort of conundrum that led to the recall of Thabo Mbeki in South Africa in September 2008 when there was consternation because of the two centres of power. In 2005 this same conundrum of two centres of power led to Malawian President Binguwa Mutharika's resignation from the party, the United Democratic Front (UDF) that secured his victory and in frustration formed his own Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and continued to rule as Head of State without the shackling of the ruling party.

Let us hope and pray that we in Namibia will escape this curse of Afrikan politics. In this context, one feels for President Geingob. In the first place, the Swapo leadership's choice of him as the third President could not have been better. He has the right educational background, the appropriate international exposure and experience, has demonstrated possession of the required key performance indicators to lead Namibia out of the perpetual transition, and has said the proper things to lift him up as one who understands what the country, not just the party, needs as to move towards its Grand Vision 2030. We know our leaders well enough to believe that he knows in his heart that his cabinet is not what his heart desired, but came as a result of a very delicate balancing act within the context of the needs of the party politics rather national needs and national interests.

In the last 25 years Namibia has done better than most Afrikan states in navigating the course towards a Namibia that is better for all. One has to say that one is not altogether confident any more in the light of what we have begun to witness with the new administration. Whether one is an opponent or blind loyalist of the governing party, the facts in one's face are clear, namely that something is not right. Starting with the constitutional amendments by which promises of inclusivity, and meritorious appointments, and better service delivery and combating poverty and that no Namibian should be left out, were made, the appointments indicate the exact opposite of these promises. In light of the crushing poverty across the land, the failing education system which forces Namibian children to learn under trees and force pregnant mothers to take their own linen to dilapidated health facilities and even give birth on the hospital stoeps, the enlargement of the Executive cannot be validated as right. In a population of the size of Namibia, it is not value for money to have an Executive President, an Executive Vice-President, a Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister with over 25 full Ministers and 32 Deputy Ministers and not see it as jobs for comrades, some of whom will sit

in their offices with very little to do.

The strength of the arguments for last year's constitutional amendments rested partly on the logic that it would allow for more inclusivity in the process of nation-building. Yet the mathematics of the cabinet also does not tally with the philosophy of inclusivity in today's Namibia. No one can explain that the two Kavango regions (Kavangos being the second largest ethnic group in the country) to be given only two ministerial posts with not a single deputy and one and a half ambassadors in the make-up of the executive is anything inclusive. One does not have to be a Kavango to see this shortcoming in the thinking of the state. Democracy is about representation and representation is about numbers. As a matter of fact the two Kavango ministers are both from Kavango East which tells the story that Kavango West is completely LEFT OUT! How would any one feel if s/he was on the outside of this 'inclusivity' calculus? Given the President's sophistication and commitment to building a reconciled Namibia, one would have expected him to reach out even more than his predecessors towards the opposition. There is also an odd Verwoerdian logic in creating a ministerial portfolio for the San community manned by a San member, a portfolio for people with disabilities headed by a person in a wheelchair, not to mention a portfolio for poverty eradication headed by priests. This was the whole philosophy of Separate Development which assigned leadership to people who had to go and fix problems of their own people along the lines of 'eie sake'. The intentions might be very noble, but the imagery of this thinking is not helpful at all!

It really does not matter from what angle one looks at the state bureaucracy. The fact is that it is unsustainable and does not speak well of us as a nation in the eyes of goodwill nations that wish to support us when they see that most of the assistance goes to sustaining government officials who add very little value to the lives of the citizens who deserve more. Only those whose names are on the list of driven and guarded honourables can say this is good for the country. Therein is the problem with our sacred values of peace and stability. Any measure of right thinking suggests that the President will cut down the size of the executive at some point. Now it is too big and has to be trimmed. The trouble is who will be dropped and why? Better if they were not appointed and govern the state of largesse and the trappings of power. If they are dropped, they will regroup. This raises the difficulty which would have been better obviated if he started small with the possibility of increasing it later. It would appear that one of our shortcomings as a nation is that we do not do scenario planning so that the best scenario is selected. This is the trouble when only a few individuals have the power to determine everything and there is no system that guides at all times and which has references to the core values of the nation at heart.

The budget considerations in the last finance speech by Minister CalleSchlettwein that includes giving the pensioners N\$1 000 a month is a very welcome gesture but it cannot end poverty. First of all the pension fund is abused by greedy officials and citizens who register for it when they are still too young. There are thousands of Namibians who receive this grant when they should be doing something with their able bodies, so that the government can look after those who are in real need. This sickness of greed is the same as the one in the use of the war veterans assistance funds that are eaten by people who are gainfully employed by the state! Further, as much it is a helpful move, it also encouraged people to be lazy and dependent on government support. In that way the goodwill of the government becomes a curse on the life of the nation. Subsequently, the government will not afford to assist as it wishes to, and its name is brought into disrepute

• Diescho's Dictum will from now on appear in the Friday edition of New Era or on the last day of the workweek if the Friday is a public holiday. – Editor

## **Diescho's Dictum: The Black Curse**

December 18th, 2015 | by **New Era Staff Reporter**

As far back as 1933 a descendant of former black slaves in America, Carter Godwin Woodson, wrote a seminal book titled 'The Miseducation of the Negro', wherein he attempted to explain what he identified as the root problem that always afflicts black people in their relations with one another, wherever they are in this big wide world.

Woodson summarised the seat of the problem to be the mind(set) of the black person himself or herself. This problem germinates in and from the black person's self-perception, self-definition, self-understanding, self-affirmation and self-direction – all of which are bereft of self-worth, so much so that black persons always despise themselves and what is theirs in exchange for what is not theirs.

Woodson concluded that a black person derives great pleasure and satisfaction from either witnessing the pain of another black person, and even feels better, accomplished and successful if he/she is responsible for the pain and suffering of the other black person. That is when a black person feels a sense of success and arrival, in essence the feeling that he/she is no longer in a position of suffering like the rest.

Frantz Fanon – in his treatises in 'The Wretched of the Earth' – warned poignantly against another manifestation of this black illness when he described the pitfalls of the national consciousness of the black political elite after the attainment of political independence in formerly colonised Afrika.

Fanon went on to illustrate that the post-colonial black elite, that is those who dislodged their erstwhile enemy, colonialism and seized political power from their former colonial masters are constantly incapacitated to lead their nations by two distinct diseases, namely intellectual laziness and moral or spiritual bankruptcy.

Fanon could not have been more correct, as it is evident that Afrikans have demonstrated that they have intellectual rigor and prowess during their fierce debates that informed and propelled the liberation struggle but once the days of their oppression are over and political independence is attained, intellectual debate is frowned upon by the political leaders in power and all people are expected to speak with one voice, to paraphrase Chinua Achebe.

Those with gifts to think, theorise, analyse and reason, as they try to contribute to unravel the great and eternal mysteries of life, are harassed, humiliated and banished to seek existence where they do not belong or outside of their motherlands.

The consequence of the anti-intellectual political culture that has engulfed the post-colonial Afrikan political sphere is continuous dependency upon others and those who deepen the psychosis of black inferiority complex that robs Afrika of the necessary self-confidence to dream and to reach for the dreams.

This dependency syndrome is the converse side of what Carter Woodson described as the root of the black problem of self-worthlessness, which continuously manifests itself in self-doubt, self-pity and self-hate. If we valued ourselves we would not treat ourselves and those who look like us so shabbily. Leaders would not steal from their own, knowing that what they are taking what belongs to the people and who think in the context of their own civilisations and political cultures.

Afrika remains standing at a corner with a begging bowl for fruits of ideas that their own intellectuals often generate outside. In post-colonial Afrika, the political elite continue to wallow in the glory of political independence and self-glorification – nothing more, nothing less.

Most of our leaders assume saviour stature manicured by themselves and those who carry the drums between their legs and beat their monotonous rhythm of praise around the politician, the Big Man, to whom they owe their economic and at times total survival.

Fanon had a premature hope for Afrikan youth when he implored them with the following words: “Each generation must, out of relative obscurity discover its own mission and betray it or fulfil it.” What seems to change in Afrika is the fact that people differ in generations that some are younger than others, and that the young people are more in number.

They are only more in number. They are copycats of the generations before them and even further. They act like them who have been. They represent issues and dreams of yesterday and yesteryear. Instead of discovering their own missions, the youth in Afrika try to replicate the struggle that had ended a long time ago and in the process render themselves more irrelevant and out of time.

Stephen Bantu Biko died in Pretoria Central Prison on September 12, 1977 after the Soweto uprising, which he assisted with his fresh reasoning around Black Consciousness, which he once described as a state of mind, not the colour of skin.

One of the core features of Biko’s Black Consciousness is the clarion call to black people to think differently about themselves first before they could turn to others, never mind to the oppressor, to certify whether what they were doing was correct or not. He argued most convincingly that the most potent instrument the oppressor has is the mind of the oppressed. Many of us have yet to find our own minds before we can be liberated!

The Rev Dr James David Manning of one of the major black churches in New York speaks of ‘The Problem of the Black Race’ and argues most painstakingly and painfully that black people have what he calls a ‘God Problem’.

He concludes that black people have not been able to and cannot develop anything on their own, because they have an unhelpful attitude of understanding the world. He peddles the opinion that black folk have a deficiency and, therefore, cannot run nations. This deficiency is inherent in how they value themselves as people and those around them.

In the 1990s an African-American international journalist Keith Richburg chronicled his experiences in black Afrika in the context of what he witnessed first-hand during the genocide in Rwanda and Burundi in 1994.

As a black person covering the genocide story he was easily mistaken for a Hutu by the Tutsi, or as a Tutsi by the Hutu. Thus his only protection was to convince both sides that he was neither Hutu nor Tutsi, that he was not an Afrikan, but that he was an American.

Upon his safe return to America he wrote a book ‘Out of America’, wherein he thanked God that his ancestors were taken away from Afrika as slaves and that this spared him from the barbarism he saw when Afrikans were slaughtering one another without a sense of humanity. The Kenyan firebrand Professor Patrick Loch Otieno (PLO) Lumumba is one of the most vocal contemporary progressive intellectual voices that castigate and indict the current crop of Afrikan leaders and Heads of State, when he says inter alia: ‘Because we have failed to see opportunities, our young men and women are drowning on a daily basis in the Mediterranean

Sea, where they are running away from our own countries to go to Europe... When I look at Africa many questions come to mind... Afrika is at war with herself.'

At the heart of the development rut across Sub-Saharan Afrika is the inability of us Afrikans, especially those in power, those who enjoy three meals a day, those who have more than enough to wear, and those who have seceded from the common women to feel the pain of the others.

The Afrikans 'who have arrived' are unable to see the tears in the eyes of those who look exactly like them. Afrikans who 'have arrived' patronise the rest with emulated mannerisms of speaking, often self-referencing to put on display positional power – the power that they exhibit day in and day out.

One Jewish leader in a conversation put it rather obnoxiously, but not too far from the hurtful truth that black folks need to heed, for their own sake. He says: 'Black people kill their fellow blacks daily instead of wanting to see them do well. Every successful black wants to spend his money in the country of his colonial masters... they go on holiday abroad, they buy houses abroad, school abroad etc. instead of spending money, this money, in their own country to benefit their people. Statistics show that the Jews' money exchanges hands 18 times before leaving his community while for blacks it is probably a maximum of once, or even zero.'

He goes on to rub it in: Well, nothing is ever the black man's fault. His compulsive habit of killing his own, compulsive material consumption. His inability to build business or preserve wealth are usually somebody else's fault...'

My Nigerian brother, Chika Onyeani, who wrote 'The capitalist Nigger', crowns this pessimistic reality by positing that if a black man wants his business to be successful in a black community, he will do well to have a white person to market his products. Black people are likely to believe the marketer, rather than the owner.

It hurts. We all know this to be true. Black leaders are self-congratulatory when things go right, yet hasten to blame the past for their dismal failures and shortcomings, forgetting that we are now our own worst enemies – no longer our colonial masters.

Let us face it: we have a problem. Afrikans in power are more cruel towards their own than they would be towards others. Let us hope and pray that this psychosis that the black race suffers from so chronically is not in any way an indication that we are the least evolved in the family of nations and, therefore, closer to the animal, whose life is ruled by basic instincts of survival and subsistence, whereas other races have moved on to create, develop and sustain institutions, systems, charters and laws that regulate life in in their social contracts in what is called a Republic.

Republics are inhabited by citizens who are equal before the law and have space to agree to disagree without fear or recrimination. All citizens in a Republic have equal opportunity to be and become, and to make a contribution to the best of their abilities to the general wellbeing of their societies and nations.

Ben Okri is correct. In his book, 'Strange Love', he alerts: 'Our history has not hurt us enough; otherwise these abuses would have ended a long time ago'.

When will we stop hurting one another so that we can start caring, for the sake of tomorrow, for the sake of Afrika, and for the sake of our children and theirs? Something must change before the Gods become crazy, or angry, or both!

## **Diescho's Dictum: Is the world coming to an end?**

November 20th, 2015 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

Just after the end of the Cold War in 1990, one of the most celebrated political scientists, Samuel Huntington, authored an article in the Journal of Foreign Affairs under the title: The Clash of Civilizations.

The good old professor hypothesised that after the Cold War (wherein nations were pitted against one another along the lines of the ideologies of East and West – the East represented by the then Soviet-led Marxist-Leninist system and the West represented by the liberal capitalist system, led by the United States) the conflicts in the new world would no longer be ideological as before, but cultural.

He argued that whereas the ideological Cold war was not between nation states per se, but between economic interests, in the new world the nation states would assert themselves more strongly culturally and religiously.

In more ways than one, Huntington leaned toward the conclusion that the new world would have its own war, which he termed a clash of civilizations: with Islam on the one side and Christianity on the other.

An Indian Islamic scholar, M.J. Akbar, agreed with this hypothesis and concluded that the new frontier of international confrontation would come mainly from the Muslim world.

This thesis was given credence on more than one occasion. For instance, on September 12, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI gave a lecture at the University of Regensburg in Germany in which he made reference to older authors who argued on the efficacies of war in the name of religion, such as the modern Jihad.

As a leader of Catholic Christians, the Pope articulated a fundamentally Christian doctrine, namely that violence is incompatible with the nature of God. By reference to other scholars, he argued it is not the same with the Muslim faith, in so far as the practice of violence in the name of religion is concerned. This lecture angered the Muslim community so much that death threats were made against the Pope, a Catholic nun in Somalia was killed and several Christians were threatened in different places in the world.

The Pope had to apologise to stem the tide of anger and threats of violence. The point is that there is a fundamentalism in the Muslim community, which is not matched by an equal fundamentalism in the Christian community. One could safely say that if this reality existed, conflict of the sort that Huntington spoke about would bring about a world war sooner.

In 1989, another political scientist and a student of Huntington, Francis Fukuyama published an essay, *The End of History?*, in the international affairs journal, *The National Interest*, wherein he proposed that the collapse of the Cold War represented an end point in history as we knew it.

Fukuyama expanded on his thesis in a book he brought out in 1992, *The End of History and the Last Man*. Both these scholars offered theories to assist policy makers plan their affairs in the changing world, anticipating as it were, what was possible in human affairs, based upon human experiences in earlier times.

Many people still believe that the lines between Christianity and Islam, unless dealt with honesty that has not been witnessed thus far, could generate the next international conflict. What seems to mitigate the conflict at the moment is the fact that Christianity lacks the fundamentalist fervour that Islam has in many sectors in the Arab world and Afrika, the likes of ISIS in Syria and Iraq and Boko Haram in Nigeria.

The fact remains that there is a clash between the past and the future. Where the past and the future intersect is the beginning of the end, and there are casualties, always.

The Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci warned that such crises are part of the human condition when he opined that the catchment area is: ‘precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born. In this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear’. We can all see the old world dying, yet we cannot see the new one, for it is still struggling to come into being.

What do we make of Huntington and Fukuyama’s theses of clashes of civilisations and the end of history, while we witness disturbing events unfold before our eyes? Could it be true that the Third World War is coming, perhaps?

Are the two major world religions, Christianity and Islam (with Judaism-cum-Zionism in between fueling the situation for opportunistic purposes) on a potential collision course? Will the next globalised conflict be a war fought along people’s unbendable religious convictions?

Or is the end of the world as we know it approaching to fulfill in a way the biblical prophecies, such as Matthew 24:7 ‘Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.’ Are we living in times of these warnings, or are we witnessing false alarms?

In our current human condition in the so-called post-modern world we live in, there is an eschatological sense that the signs of an impending cessation of the world are everywhere. One does not have to be a religious fanatic to begin to wonder about the meaning of all the chaos and senseless mayhem going on around the world. Is the end of history upon us?

Consider the following:

- November 1989 thousands of people in the then East Europe with conviction that fundamental freedoms were essential and no longer negotiable, used chisels, hammers and picks to bring down the Berlin Wall, the then Iron Curtain that divided the world in two ideological camps of Capitalism and Communism and their respective satellites;
- The wars and ethnic skirmishes in the former Soviet Republics and the ethnic cleansing in Bhutan, Nagorno–Karabakh, Kuwait, Croatia, Bosnia- Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sri-Lanka, Chechnya, Lebanon, Sudan, to mention but a few;
- The unending conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, which find expressions in Intifada on the one hand and a series of Shabak interventions on the other;
- The September 11, 2001 terror attacks on America, which to all intents and purposes altered the nature of foreign relations for a very long time to come;
- The July 7, 2005, London terror attacks on underground trains and buses;
- The November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks;
- The April 15, 2013 Boston Marathon bombing;
- The January 7, 2015 Charlie Hebdo terror shootings in Paris;

In Nigeria there have reported over 280 terror-related incidents in 2015 alone;

- The Paris terror attacks of this week. The list goes on.
- There is no doubt that these violent expressions, especially coming from the Muslim extremist sectors that continue to radicalize, are part of globalisation which started at the time Huntington and Fukuyama were theorising about the new world and its attendant contradictions.

As the global ideological alliances ended or shifted new patterns of us versus them entered the world body politic. New lines were being drawn in the sand, and we are witnessing some of the expressions thereof. It would be naive not to anticipate further conflicts between Christianity and Islam in the modern world, which is looking for meaning.

As much as we would like to believe otherwise, these two religions are very different: in their orientation, approach to conflict and diversity management, pathways to heaven, political civilisation, conflict resolution and international outreach operations. The two religions' approach to and appreciation of death are fundamentally different.

For instance, Christians do not like to die, even though they know that one cannot enter heaven without dying first. When Christians are ill, they pray to God to spare them from dying, which is the only way to get to heaven.

Muslims have peace with death, better yet if they die in the name of for the cause of Allah, in operations commonly known as Jihad. There was a time in history when Christian missionaries, the Zealots, killed in the process of converting others, the non-believers, to their faith.

The word "kaffer" for instance comes from these times when non-believers were considered lesser persons. Kaffir is an Arabic word for a non-believer or a person who has not yet embraced the new faith. Christian zealots conquered the world with violence, and burned people who practiced what they considered dark and devilish.

Part of the Quranic message of conquering the world is through a book to point the way, and the sword. So somewhere, these religions intersect and express themselves differently. It is a matter of how fundamentalist they are and what constitutes the cannon fodder of their anger and frustration at any given point.

The main difference, therefore, is the level of fundamentalism. Christians have over the years become less fundamentalist and more secular, whereas Muslims by virtue of the Islamic orthodoxy of surrender, have less room for secularism and, therefore, remain more fundamentalist, more committed to their faith and when "provoked" can take drastic measures individually, collectively or even internationally to 'defend the faith'.

Even better to die in defense of the faith! Very few Christians are willing to kill, never mind die, for their faith today.

Interestingly, recent scholarship suggests that different cultures in the world today have developed different reactions to globalisation in its current form and the effects of globalisation that affect them negatively.

They say that the Asians become more and more creative and expand themselves in the new world. The Arabs become increasingly reactive in their response as they attempt to assert themselves. Alas, the Afrikans remain passive, blame the past and continue to ask for handouts from those they blame for the past ills.

It would appear that in the new world conflict, the Afrikans will, in their passiveness, most likely side with the one who helps best with making them become more dependent. Afrikan leaders went to Paris to march against the violence there and would not do so in Nigeria, where thousands of women and children have been killed.

We saw recently when India convened an India-Africa Forum Summit on October 26-30 that the Afrikan Heads of State (with the exception of Zimbabwe's Mugabe) were persuaded to, in their collective, wear Indian skirts as an expression of who knows what!

Afrika as a continent and Namibia as a country ought to think about how to prepare for the uncertain times to come for these acts of violence and terrorism that know no borders, but thrive on the hard peace and stability that countries have worked towards.

This calls for a clear separation between church/religion and state. Inasmuch as we must allow freedom of worship and conscience, the domain of the state must be protected from religious dogmas of any sort, because we are a secular state.

It is the self-righteousness of religious dogmas that lead to intolerance and eventual armed conflict. Our religious convictions, however strong, must NOT be imposed onto the functions and responsibilities of the state, or onto those who do not share them.

When we work in the government, anywhere, we follow the rules of the state under the Constitution of the Republic, not our denominational doctrines and precepts. This is so, because if allowance is made for one group not to do certain things because of religion, it puts others at a disadvantage.

Before we know it, one would be feeling that their faith is under attack and the rest is history. A Republic is a house wherein all feel the same and equal, to paraphrase President Geingob's metaphor of the Namibian House.

### **Namibia: Diescho's Dictum - Wisdom of African Proverbs On Love**

#### **OPINION**

Love, which is almost impossible to define or explain, is the tissue of the thread that binds and weaves human interactions and mutual living.

In the debate about which of the ancient four cardinal virtues (Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance) was more important than the others, the Apostle Paul concluded by his additional three Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. He sealed the conversation with these words: 'And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love' (1 Cor: 13.13)

Love can happen to anyone at any time, and it is often completely unexpected. Often, it takes turns that can turn things and indeed life upside down. Since human life began, most important decisions have been made because of and for love.

Since human life began in Afrika, human wisdom about this difficult subject evolved out of and from experiences on this continent. What we know have been passed on through ages - the advice passed from mother to daughter and father to son has been the most valuable source of support, comfort and re-assurance in any family, organisation, community or nation.

Here is a glimpse of what Afrika taught about love:

It is better to be loved than feared.

Where there is love there is no darkness.

Dogs don't love people; they love the place where they are fed.

The way to the beloved isn't thorny.

One doesn't love another, if one doesn't accept anything from that person.

Love doesn't listen to rumours.

Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly.

If a woman doesn't love you, she calls you brother.

Love put the eaglet out of its nest.

People who love one another do not dwell on each other's mistakes.

To be smiled at isn't to be loved.

The house of a person we love is never far.

A letter from the heart can be read on the face.

Love has to be shown by deeds not words.

Love doesn't rely on physical features.

He, who loves you, loves you with your dirt.

The one who loves an unsightly person is the one who makes him beautiful.

To love someone who does not love you is like shaking a tree to make the dewdrops fall.

He who doesn't like chattering women must stay a bachelor.

A young wife tends to cook too much at first.

The way you got married isn't the way you'll get divorced.

A bird can be guarded, a wife can't.

A man without a wife is like a vase without flowers.

It is the habit that a child forms at home, that follows them to their marriage.

If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes and the monkey remains as is.

Having beauty doesn't mean understanding the perseverance of marriage.

If you do not travel, you will marry your own sister.

A man that does not lie shall never marry.

One who plants grapes by the roadside, and one who marries a pretty woman, share the same problem.

Marriage is like a groundnut: you have to crack them to see what is inside.

The buttocks are like a married couple; though there is constant friction between them they will still love and live together.

How gently glides the married life away, when she who rules still seems but to obey.

He who marries a beauty marries trouble.

A woman who has not been twice married cannot know what a perfect marriage is.

A good wife is easy to find, but suitable in-laws are rare.

It is better to be married to an old lady than to remain unmarried.

A woman who is not successful in her own marriage has no advice to give to her younger generations.

A married couple is neither enemies nor friends.

If money were to be found up in the trees, most people would be married to monkeys.

The man may be the head of the home, but the wife is the heart.

If there is cause to hate someone, the cause to love has just begun.

The man that won't marry a woman with other admirers won't marry a woman at all.

Talking with one another is loving one another.

One who loves you, warns you.

The most dangerous thing a man needs is a woman.

When one is in love, a cliff becomes a meadow.

Marriage is not a tight knot, but a slipknot.

Love, like rain, does not choose the grass on which it falls.

Apart from the inexplicable feelings of elation, there are physical changes in the body that love brings about.

A letter from the heart can be read on the face.

When in love, a cliff becomes a meadow.

When you fall in love nothing seems too much trouble and difficulties become almost trivial.

The best part of happiness lies in the secret heart of a lover.

The people around you (and the person you love) seem to become more beautiful, no matter what they look like or how they dress.

The one who loves an unsightly person is the one who makes them beautiful.

He who loves the vase loves also what is inside.

For those not blessed with beauty: If you are ugly you must either learn to dance or make love.

When we fall in love, we want to be protected; we want to feel someone is making us their priority.

A woman is a flower in a garden, her husband is the fence around it.

And as a garden needs to be nurtured and appreciated, so does love. It can be hard work to make love a success.

Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly.

So many little things make a man love a woman in a big way.

If a young woman says no to marriage just wait until her breasts sag.

Love of course needs to be at the centre of this decision to marry.

If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes and the monkey remains as is.

Married life has its ups and downs.

But a word of advice to all who fall in love: Don't be so much in love that you can't tell when it's raining.

The only cure for love is marriage.

You know who you love but you can't know who loves you.

If anyone makes you laugh, it is not always because they love you.

If love is a sickness, patience is the remedy.

Love doesn't rely on physical features.

Love is a despot who spares no one.

Don't try to make someone hate the person he loves, for he will go on loving, but he will hate you.

The quarrel of lovers is the renewal of love.

Let your love be like the misty rain, coming softly but flooding the river.

Love for something makes a man blind and deaf.

If the full moon loves you, why worry about the stars?

One who marries for love alone will have bad days, but good nights.

Do not treat your loved one like a swinging door: you are fond of it but you push it back and forth.

Don't be so in love that you can't tell when it's raining.

Love is a painkiller.

Do not marry a woman you met on the dance floor, for she will run with the drummer.

When you marry a widow, ask how her husband died.

Our world today is without love. Our world is without virtues. We, in Afrika, have lost even the great humanity we once were known for, Ubuntu, which is the human practice of treating others like human beings no matter the circumstance.

Our world, our Afrika, our Namibia is a banal place wherein power, glory and wealth loom larger than this human tissue of love, that spirit that necessitates caring for one another. It is important and necessary that we learn to hear our inner voices - if we have them - to pause and ponder over the net result of true love as human beings, all created in the image of God. Not just love for oneself, for power, success or importance. It is that love for others, without whom and without whose happiness our life is meaningless, in the final analysis. In all religions and traditions this is what is captured by the Golden Rule that Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and all the Greats lived by: Treat others as you wish to be treated by them.

### **Diescho's Dictum: If the world was a village of just 100 inhabitantsMy**

January 15th, 2016 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

The earth is old. According to Hebrew orthodoxy this year is 5776 after the earth was created. Christian Scientists hold it is over 4.5 billion years old. Followers of Islam would say it Rabi Al-Akbar 1437. Geological scientists suggest the earth is 5.5 billion years old. Some book claims that Namibia started to appear some 2500 million years ago.

Africans would say the earth is older than their known kings. The world is big. As we get to know about this world wherein we live it gets either bigger or smaller, depending on our knowledge about it, our role and significance in it. Or who we think we are. Yet it gets bigger, wider, greater, more dangerous, more bizarre, and certainly more interesting. With so much technological innovations this world gets safer and more fascinating. It gets more and more unsafe as we realize that we are no longer as private as we used to be when we could hide in caves and no one would dare to get too close to the mouth of the cave because they were too scared of the dark which protected the cave's tenants.

Now there is light to banish the dark and leave us all bare and unsafe. Information, good and bad, travels faster than our fear. All the time. At the same time. Information gets more and more – yet poorer and poorer in every respect. And as information becomes more it gets more unhelpful to help us negotiate our human existence. Our world shrinks all the time, not in size, but in power to intimidate us. We intimidate it, do we?

The world is safely unsafe

The world is ours

The world is itself

A world of contradictions: There are more people and fewer relationships

There are more educated people but fewer solutions

More information yet less understanding

More knowledge yet less wisdom

More stories yet more ignorance

More medicines yet less wellness  
 More food yet more hungry people  
 Safer to go to the moon yet unsafe to cross the road to visit neighbours  
 More expensive weddings yet more costly divorces  
 More safety weapons yet more rage and aggression  
 More love songs yet more family-based violence  
 More music yet less melody  
 Wider streets yet narrower viewpoints  
 More beauty yet less elegance  
 More healthy diets yet more illnesses  
 Taller buildings yet shorter temperaments  
 Bigger homes yet smaller families  
 High expectations yet low tolerance  
 More politicians yet fewer leaders  
 Parents make fewer children who make more children as children  
 More curiosity yet less generosity  
 More goods yet less God  
 Powerful people are more insecure  
 Those who produce more eat less  
 Those who eat more produce less  
 The weak protect the powerful  
 There is more politics yet less politeness  
 More courts of law yet less courtesy to love  
 More people to trample on and fewer to count on  
 Sleep is to escape the day's memories than to rest from good labour  
 The powerful fear the weak  
 We speak more yet hear less  
 Greed informs our steps and monitors our stops.  
 World statistics challenge us to imagine that the world is a village of only 100 inhabitants.  
 How and who would they be, and how would they carry themselves? This is how they would  
 be and interact:  
 52 females  
 48 males

13 Africans  
61 Asians  
12 Europeans  
14 Americans (North and South)  
75 Non-White  
25 Whites  
33 Christians  
22 Muslims  
14 Hindus  
7 Buddhists  
16 cannot read and write  
50 do not have enough food  
1 is near death due to starvation  
1 is a university graduate  
89 are heterosexual 11 are homosexual  
1 is HIV positive  
21 are overweight  
87 have access to safe drinking water  
1 of 2 children live in poverty  
51 live in towns  
49 are rural dwellers  
8 with no access to internet  
39 have access to sanitation  
24 have electricity  
6 of them control  
32% of the village wealth and all  
6 are American citizens  
26 are under  
14 years of age  
66 are between 15 and 64 8 are 65 and older  
12 speak Chinese  
5 speak Spanish  
5 speak English

3 speak Arabic

3 speak Portuguese

3 speak Hindi

3 speak Bengali

2 speak Russian

2 speak Japanese

62 speak other languages, including Oshiwambo and Namlish.

If we take the top 11 most populated Afrikan countries as the only ones in the group, out of the 13 Africans 6 would be Nigerians; 2 Ethiopians; 2 Egyptians, 1 Congolese, 1 South African and maybe 1 Tanzanian. No wonder we have such inequalities.

Where are we? What do we eat? What do we wear? What do we speak? It's time to learn to speak OshiAfrika! To Find Our Place In This Village

### **Diescho's Dictum: A Letter to the Namibian Child**

January 29th, 2016 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

My dear child

Our child

Their child

Child of the desert so old, child of the land so vast and of contrasts

Child of an old land

Ageless Land

The land God made in anger

Child of strange parents

Yes, your parents

Who brought you into this world without knowing you

And who sought not your approval

Yet uninvited you came

Semi-anticipated you arrived

And persisted in imposing your presence as part of them

Part of us

Joyously you were received

Uncertainly you were raised

Passionately you were protected

Cautiously you were bred

You are us

We are you

Only to let you go

You are a human child

You bear the desert in you

Many bloods fill your veins

Black, brown, white, even the rain's colours are in you

That are not in the rainbow  
 So remote a dream you were  
 As neither black nor white is in the rainbow  
 Your colours are of the earth  
 The earth itself under your foot  
 Welcoming its own, different, from place to place  
 Uniting one to another  
 You are neither green nor orange  
 Yet needing both colours to grow into ripeness

You are not ripe yet  
 You are yet to be and become  
 Yourself.  
 You come from your parents but you are not them  
 Like the prophet said  
 You are not your parents' child  
 You are the seed of life's own longing for itself  
 You only came through us  
 Not from us  
 You are with us  
 But you are not our belonging  
 We can give you our love  
 But avoid, yes, escape our thoughts  
 For you have your own which we as parents cannot access  
 We can only visit  
 And when we do, keep us outside to appreciate you as you go and grow  
 And be yourself

Oh my child, our child, their child  
 Child of the rivers  
 Child of the orange sunset  
 Child of innocence  
 Child of genocide  
 Child of conflict  
 Child of ignorance  
 Child of indifference  
 Child of rebellion  
 Child of endless search for meaning  
 Child of the dunes  
 Child of omuramba  
 Child of the mean warrior  
 Child of freedom yet to come

You have the San and the Sun in you  
 You have the bush and men in you  
 You are from the women of substance  
 Who toiled the soil with their souls  
 Your nails are of copper  
 Your teeth gold-filled  
 Your skin, your hands are soaked with the morning dew of the friendly season  
 Year in and year out

Your voice chimes the melody of the better days not yet seen  
 Cease not to pray  
 For the future's sake

Sit under and around the baobab tree  
 And hear the rhythm of the birds in the sky  
 Above this ancient land  
 This land does not belong to you  
 Not even to your own children  
 It belongs to the past you have abandoned  
 It belongs to the future unknown to you  
 You are mere caretaker like your parents are of you  
 Eat what you need and leave the rest to the past  
 Invite the future to sleep with you  
 where you might gain insights for tomorrow  
 Sing not too loud so the birds can be curious  
 And let them eat too  
 Do not despise those in the twilight of their life  
 They are your compass going forth  
 Do not diminish those at the dawn of their life  
 They are like you were just yesterday  
 Let them be ready to chew the food for you, come next time

You are a black child  
 A white child  
 A brown child  
 The rest, you are that too  
 You are not the colour they told you  
 You are not the sound you are known by  
 You are a human child  
 An Afrikan child  
 The child of the soil  
 This soil  
 Walk on it gently for it is here to carry you  
 To sustain you  
 Feel it  
 Hear it  
 Touch it  
 Smell it  
 Be it

Choose your friends discerning  
 Do not follow them, for they may not lead  
 Do not lead them, for they may not follow  
 Do not fear them, for they may not hurt  
 Do not scare them for they may not fear you  
 Do not hurt them, for they too, cry  
 Walk with them and get somewhere  
 Walk besides them and be their friend

Oh my child of the truth  
 Know yourself

Know your name and say it wherever you are,  
 Without apology, without fear  
 Shout your name to complete the symphony  
 And the meaning of the anthem  
 None will know you  
 If you do not state your presence  
 And your warmth to those around you.

You, the Namibian child  
 Are part of us, and we of you  
 No matter where you came from  
 No matter how small your feet  
 Rise and walk  
 No matter how short your hair  
 Look up to the skies that know you better  
 No matter how complex your complexion  
 Your blood is divine

Now as you exit your age  
 And abandon your experience  
 Do not exit your bones  
 They give you strength  
 Let them carry you across the road  
 And across the ages.  
 Across judgments and prejudice  
 May your own kingdom come  
 Your dreams be respected  
 As it was in the days when ours were  
 May your own days as a parent be longer

Manage tears and pain as you grow beyond innocence  
 May your spirit be that of the bee  
 That gathers and builds  
 A honeycomb of power and grace to endure time!  
 Weep not child  
 Just be, and become  
 Remember there is no issue stronger than the tissue of love  
 No cause more sacred than the human palm outstretched in the run of generosity  
 Weep not child  
 You are many in one  
 Male and female combined  
 Just be  
 Become  
 In Namibia, in Afrika, in the World  
 Just Be  
 Become  
 And Please Do!

**Diescho's Dictum: When the centre does not hold, things fall apart**

September 11th, 2015 | by [New Era Staff Reporter](#)

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Shortly after the Second World War, the Irish poet, William Butler Yeats immortalised his work through, amongst other writings, his poem ‘Second Coming’, wherein he opined:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold  
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...

Throughout human civilisation, people have been motivated by either beliefs, or fear of failure, or death. In all their pursuits, there is a value system that guides as a compass into tomorrow, either to avoid past failures and bad experiences, or improve on what already exists.

We as human beings thus invented political systems as contracts to help us navigate our very complex relationships in our families, our friendships, our organisations, our societies and now our countries or states. We as human beings are the only species that admits that we are not perfect, yet want to be. That is why we remain in the perpetual state of being.

Animals and plants are what they are, but we are still becoming, constantly trying to get to be better than yesterday. Yeats reminds us of our imperfectness and the importance of having a centre to which we always return to rediscover, re-define, re-affirm, and redirect ourselves in the context of our human condition of uncertainty, vulnerability and decay.

The one vital area of our human life where the centre is needed is in government systems. In post-colonial Afrika we are constantly deprived of that centre, which beckons all of us to return to the ideal relationships that we either once had before we were brutalised by slavery and colonisation, or which we desired to create with our struggles for freedom.

Before these human calamities of slavery and colonisation befell us, the Afrikan mind had a cultural value system that informed the way in which power was acquired, utilised and even lost. In the main it was by associational agreements of the elders, who based their determination on long-held values and deeply held customs. These values and customs were monitored by a hierarchy of do’s and don’ts.

The centre to hold people together is very important for any situation to be sustained. For instance, during the independence struggle, the centre was around the sacrifice and commitment to be part of the noble goal of freedom and the human act of self-rule.

Many of our heroes and heroines were motivated by this spirit, such that they would sacrifice their youth, their education and commit to the struggle for what we enjoy today. Their personal safety and gain were immaterial, as the commitment to the goal of contributing to create a Namibia that is better for all was too powerful and empowering.

Come political independence, the Afrikan is left without a centre, without a common value system to oversee the manner in which power is acquired, used and abused. We have seen in a few clear examples that when the centre was lost, everything was possible, including the end of all kinds of freedoms.

The centre can also be created by leadership, or a leader, who sees a better future and enunciates such a desired ‘future common good state’ for others to follow and aspire to. Political leaders, such as Moses in the Old Testament, Abraham Lincoln in America, Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia, Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, Murtalla Muhammed in Nigeria and Nelson Mandela in South Africa, stand the test of history, because they created a value system as centres of being better servants of their people.

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Moses spoke of the Promised Land, Lincoln went and fought against his own system and managed to issue the emancipation proclamation to end slavery in America. Kaunda set the tone for One Zambia One Nation and in spite of his shortcomings, managed to constitute a society with the emotional wherewithal to commit their country's resources to our struggle in South Africa and Namibia. Nyerere gave us the dictum of how to work with foreign systems, but with a human face. Muhammed preached the value of a corrupt-free Nigeria/Afrika and paid with his life for it. Mandela restored the dignity and honour, not only upon South African blacks, but upon the black race the world over. Mandela caused the human spirit to triumph.

The importance of these legendary mortal beings is that they remain the reference points of what could and ought to be better in all of us. When people remember them, tears swell up in the eyes because the world which they painted through words and sometimes small acts are so fulfilling to the rest of us.

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Their words and deeds remain so omnipresent that people who never met them miss them, and cause people even to say that had these persons been alive, life would be better. In other words these individuals were driven by higher and noble ideals than what they could get out of the situations themselves. Their ideals become the centres of what motivates and inspires others to strive towards something bigger and better: a better world wherein we can all hear one another.

Borrowing from Yeats, the tower of Afrikan literature, Chinua Achebe wrote a novel, *Things Fall Apart*, in 1958 wherein he depicted a story about African society, where the culture was extinguished by missionaries who introduced a different lifestyle.

Although Achebe was in favour of the defunct Afrikan culture of the pre-western society, he also lamented the weaknesses within and self-destructiveness of Afrikan native structures of power relationships. Later, in 1984, Achebe authored another seminal book, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, wherein he issued an unreserved indictment of the Nigerian leadership as the main source of that nation's woes where everything else is plentiful.

Most Afrikan countries slide into the troubles they have today due to the absence of a centre to hold things together. Leaders are without a centre. They are only about themselves and their Amen-sayers. When the original centre of our national being – namely to end colonial rule – ended, we were left with nothing solid to keep us moving forward together.

Leaders have become self-centred and self-congratulatory, and excessively intolerant to different viewpoints. In the post-Cold-War world, greed takes over and we all want to become super-rich yesterday! In the absence of something bigger to go after, we chase after wealth and earthly acquisitions, which can never become the centre as these things are the source of inequality and thus the fuel of conflict where nothing else exists to measure ourselves against.

In the end we end up with leaders with no centring and who cannot lead because they themselves do not know what leadership is all about. John Maxwell is right when he teaches that the foundation of successful leadership is the leader's knowledge and understanding why he or she is there and what purpose he or she is to fulfill for other people.

The leader's passion must come from a particular centre and this centre is what fuels the leader's passion and gives the energy to continue to reach higher and higher. Knowing one's purpose also centres one to be the best one can be, instead of imitating others who did/do their best from their own centres.

We in Afrika are more about yesterday than the future. Our glories celebrate the past, not the future. We continue to over-exaggerate the past and our roles in it, while we underestimate today and jeopardise the future with our so-called past successes.

In Afrika yesterday's success is the reason for tomorrow's failure or disaster. As much as we must cherish the days gone by, we shall do better if those days are mere lessons of what we must not repeat. This is so because if our best days are yesterday, we are in trouble. Is this not where we are in Namibia, where we celebrate the past at the expense of the possibilities of tomorrow?

Is this not where our challenges with the youth are as we continue to preach to them how well we did in the struggle, even though and even when we know we are not telling the truth. How do we expect the youth to sthe struggle against white domination when they face their own challenges today? A false centre is more dangerous than no centre at all. Our experiences of yesterday, important though they might be, are not good enough until they are evaluated correctly.

Where is our centre as a nation? It would appear as though we must continue to redefine our understanding of what a nation is. With a good definition of what a nation is we move towards a comprehension of who we are, how we are constituted and what we have and do not have to get where we want to go.

The stories of the liberation struggle, most of them grossly embellished, are of limited value. We cannot even tell these stories in an inspirational manner to our youth today, as we alienate them when we tell lies about what we did and where we were and erase others out of the stories. The trouble is that others know better, or will find out, and once we are caught lying, they lose even more than we lost during the oppressive days. The centre disappears and the youth is left rudderless.

We need to find our centre. Once we find it, we name it and respect it in different ways. Then we coalesce around it with a new openness and a new passion. This centre cannot be individuals, and it matters not how powerful they are or what they say 'when they died' for our country.

Democracy cannot grow and flourish without democrats. The future cannot be well without the youth that mortgage it and prepare it! And the youth cannot on its own know about the future if they do not hear about the past. The past and the future must come together somewhere. We need a joined-up way of thinking. This way is neither only about the past, nor only about the future, but in the middle... in the here and now.

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