

CultureTalk South Africa Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>  
**How the Bride Price is Calculated**

**Xhosa Transcript:**

L: Hayi ke niti nawufika endlini, senibekwe pha endaweni yenu yodwa okanye nihleli apha, mhlawumbhi nibabini okanye nibathathu. Xa nihleli kuzawubakho kengoku umntu ozawukutshutshisa iintetha zabantu balefemeli eziza kuni. Madoda njengoko nisuka eNgqamakwe nize apha eDutywa nithi ke nibone intombhi yalapha *so* ngoku ke kanenzeni ukubonakalisa uba lentombhi lomfana uyibonile nyani na. Kani kupheni isazimzi.

M: Isazimzi? Yintoni kengoku isazimzi?

L: Isazimzi yibhotile yebranti. Andithi nihambhe niwuba, nahambha niwuba nade nawukonjiswa nawazi ngoku uba ngulo. Kukutshwe lebhotile yebranti ngoku, ithi yawukutshwa kukutshwe kengoku imali uba kuthwe qhubekane kengoku zibonakaliseni uba nizekanjani na. Kuqhubekeke ke zibekwe, zibekwe, zibekwe imali mhlawumbhi ibeyi *ten thousand* lemali izawubekwa apha. Kuthwe okeyi, kule *ten thousand* kengoku nithi ke Matolo ezinkomo zingaphi? Sithi ke thina ezinkomo sibonile uba zisibhozo.

M: Kwí *ten thousand*?

L: Ewe.

M: Iinkomo zisibhozo?

L: Ewe.

M: Niyibona kanjani kengoku lonto?

L: Sesiyakhile mhlawumbi inkomo imali siyenze mhlawumbhi *itwo thousand*, ndenza umzekelo, *two thousand, two thousand, two thousand* enye siyenze *ione thousand five hundred*. Sesizahlule.

M: iLobola ibalwa ngenkomo?

L: Ewe ibalwa ngenkomo noba *yitwenty thousand* awuvele uthi ndifuna utshata, yiyo. Kucakacwa iinkomo zicakacwe uba inkomo eyobuso bentombhi *iyithree thousand five hundred*.

M: Ubuso bentombhi yintoni kengoku?

L: Ubuso bentombhi kunguwe njengoko uba umfana ekubonile. Wakukhetha ke kwezinye iintombhi kuba ekubonile. Obabuso bakho kengoku kunomehloku kwezinye iinkomo. Ayilingani imali yobuso bentombhi neye lobola.

M: Ayonto enye kanti?

L: Yinto iyihani kodwa ubuso bentombhi abufani neye lobola. Eye lobola iyayenza *itwo thousand five hundred*. Kanti eyobuso bentombhi iyihani iyayenza *ifour thousand*. Iyodwa, iyihani iyayenza *ifour thousand*.

M: Inkomo?

L: Ewe. Zibekwe ke zibekwe, zibekwe, zibekwe kuthwe ugqitywa kwazo ubekwa kengoku kuthwezingaphi? Sithi zisibhozo. Kuthwe ke kanenzeni umqokeleli wabantu. Andithi kengoku sithe sawufika, kwabizwa abantu? Sawuphinda sikhuphe ibhotile yebranti yesibini.

M: Kubizwa abantu belali?

L: Ewe, abefemeli into ezinjalo. Ya, nomelwane. Simkhuphe ke umqokeleli abe lapha. Yeyesibini kengoku. Kuphindwe kuthwe kengoku masikhuphe iswazi eli beliqhuba ezinkomo, kodwa bezisempkokotini, intonayo sithi isiXhosa umthetho kuphani iswazi lokuqhube noba bezise mpokothini. Sikhuphe kengoku lobothile yebranti iliswazi. Ewe, eyesithathu. Eyokugqibela ibeyihambhidlani, uba benihambhe nisitya ntoni na. Niyikhuphe kengoku enye ibhotile, gximfi. Zitsho zibene. Ewe, bathi bawugqiba baphume.

### **English Translation:**

L: When you [the man's representatives] go inside the house [of the woman's family], you sit on one side of the room. There will probably be two or three of you. There will be a person from the other family [the woman's family] who will question all the things that you are saying. They will say, "Men, you came all the way from Ngqamakwe to here in Idutywa<sup>1</sup>, and you claim that you have seen a wife in our daughter, so show us how serious you are about this." And then they ask you to take out *isazimzi*<sup>2</sup>.

M: *iSazimzi*? What is *isazimzi*?

L: *iSazimzi* is a bottle of brandy. You see, the thing is, you [the man's representatives] have gone around asking people where this home [of the woman's family] is until someone points out to you that it is this one. So this bottle of brandy is taken out. After it

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<sup>1</sup> Ngqamakwe and Idutywa are both small towns in the former Transkei region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. They are about an hour and a half apart by car.

<sup>2</sup> *iSazimzi* is a bottle of brandy that symbolically represents how the man's representatives located the home of the woman.

is taken out, you [the man's representatives] then take out the money to show what you are here for. Let's say maybe the amount of money you put down is 10,000 rand<sup>3</sup>. They [the woman's family] will ask you how many cows are in this 10,000 rand. And then we'll maybe say there are eight cows.<sup>4</sup>

M: In 10,000 rand?

L: Yes.

M: There are eight cows?

L: Yes.

M: How do you calculate that?

L: We've probably decided beforehand that we will make certain cows 2,000 rand and other cows 1,500 rand maybe.

M: Is *lobola* calculated in terms of cows?

L: Yes, it is calculated in terms of cows. Even if you have 20,000 rand, you do not just put it down and say, "Here it is. I want to get married." You have to calculate how many cows are in that 20,000. You'll maybe decide that the *eyobuso bentombhi*<sup>5</sup> cow is 3,500 rand.

M: What is *ubuso bentombhi*?

L: *Ubuso bentombhi* is the cow that represents the wife-to-be. He [the husband-to-be] chose her out of many girls; therefore the cow that represents her is going to be different from the other cows. The *ubuso bentombhi* money is going to be a different amount from the *lobola* money.

M: Aren't *lobola* and *ubuso bentombhi* the same thing, though?

L: They are the same thing, but the monetary value of *ubuso bentombhi* and *lobola* is different. A *lobola* cow can be 2,000 rand, but a *buso bentombhi* cow alone can be 4,000 rand.

M: A cow?

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<sup>3</sup> Rand is the currency used in South Africa. R10,000 is approximately \$1,200 USD as of March 2013 but may vary due to currency fluctuations.

<sup>4</sup> The cows are symbolic. In this case, R10,000 does not represent the exact cost of eight cows, but in some cases the amount of cash may also equal the going rate of the number of cows it is symbolically supposed to represent.

<sup>5</sup> *Eyobuso bentombhi* is a cow that represents the wife-to-be. *Eyobuso*, *buso* and *ubuso* are used according to the sentence structure.

L: Yes. So we [the man's representatives] put the money down and say there are eight cows. Then they [the woman's family] say we need to now put down *umqokeleli*<sup>6</sup>. When we arrived, they called people, right? We then take out a second bottle of brandy.

M: Do they call people from the community?

L: Yes, extended family and such. They even call neighbors. So we [the man's representatives] take out this bottle of brandy. This is now the second one. Then they [the woman's family] say we should put down the bottle that represents the stick that was driving these cows; although the "cows" were technically in the pocket<sup>7</sup>, Xhosa law states that you have to have that bottle. This is now the third bottle. The last bottle they [the woman's family] ask for is the "what were you eating along the way" bottle. There are four bottles in total.<sup>8</sup> After this, they [the woman's family] leave.

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<sup>6</sup> *Umqokeleli* is a bottle of brandy that represents summoning people to the woman's home.

<sup>7</sup> The "cows in the pocket" refers to the money that has replaced the actual cows.

<sup>8</sup> There are four bottles of brandy exchanged during the *lobola* negotiations, namely *isazimzi*, *umqokeleli*, *iswazi*, and *ihambidlani*. *iSwazi* is the bottle of brandy that represents the stick used to drive the *lobola* cows to the woman's home. *iHambidlani* is the "what were you eating along the way" bottle.