

## **The life of an academic by Menzi Thango**

What a lonely life;

Men and women married to a special kind:

A book.

Reading, writing, and critiquing

Loneliness at its best

Living in one's own land.

Land full of pages.

Pages full of directions

Unending directions

Researching, researching and until research.

No-one stops,

But different stops;

No agreement,

But arguments;

Saying one thing

In a different word choice.

He is not a human.

He is an object.

Working tirelessly like a machine.

A machine without fuel;

A human without blood.

Working tirelessly

Through sleepless nights,

An article is required.

Publications are required.

Supervision of postgrads is required.

Lecturing is required.

Setting question papers is required.

Marks are required.

Energy is required.

Everything is required of one person.

But no earthly reward after all.

Do academics relate to real life?

Do they believe in family values?

What kind of a family?

Western family?

African family?

Oh no! Westernised family of course,

No African ethos in academia,

Either Western or no life,

This is the life we see today.

What is an academic actually?

A human being or a robot?

Does he have feelings?

Does he have emotions?

Does he feel pain?

Does he live?

Where does he live?

In his own land?

Or shared land with humans?

I wonder.