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# Praise poem... in praise of an accountant

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in praise of  
an accountant

**1207**

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A very long time ago, in the dreamtime  
of the world,  
before the before [...]  
there were already some  
men and women  
who, from their first years,  
could see  
what had really happened;  
what had not happened at all;  
what might never happen;  
what would definitely happen  
and what should definitely happen:  
these were the accountants.  
Even earlier than the lost civilisation of  
the Etruscans,  
someone had collected, counted and curated  
the spoils of war  
and the profits of peace,  
holding those less ethical, to account –  
by adding,  
subtracting and  
sharing the bounty or the blame.  
In Africa, the praise singer lauds  
kings, chiefs, in company with headmen, judges and seers,  
the counter of currency,  
the keeper of records,  
the settler of debts,  
the recorder of figures;  
who will tell the story of the accountant  
in my country?  
The imbongi will,



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32,4

**1208**

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He will sing of such wonders as  
the clan's name, the fathers' name,  
and the accountant's own name;  
the birth country, the region and village,  
town or city's names;  
the status and titles of forefathers, and,  
above all,  
the ancestors, much revered;  
the places of learning,  
the land protected;  
the importance of the title [...]  
accountant.  
The imbongi will present both  
the private and the professional faces of  
this follower of rules,  
the observer of process,  
the protector of numbers,  
the prudent thinker.  
Salve, domine numerarum.

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