

SOME STRUCTURAL AND CONTEXTUAL
ASPECTS OF W.M.B. MKHIZE'S
SHORT STORIES

by

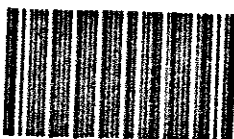
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D E C L A R A T I O N

I hereby declare that SOME STRUCTURAL AND CONTEXTUAL ASPECTS OF W.M.B. MKHIZE'S SHORT STORIES is my own work in conception and execution. I declare that all the sources used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I also declare that I, alone, am responsible for the opinions expressed and conclusions reached at in this work.

Signed: *TmKhath* at KWA-DLANGEZWA on this *31*.....
day of *JANUARY* 1991.

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Last but not least, I am especially grateful to the Almighty for "leading me besides quiet waters".

D E D I C A T I O N

This work is dedicated to my mother, Emmelina Nokuthula (MaZuke) who single-handedly brought us up after the early passing away of our father, and thus fulfilled my late father's desire.

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SUMMARY

In this study an attempt is made to expose the importance and the place of Mkhize's short stories. So far there isn't much scientific material on this subject although the writing of short stories appears to be gaining momentum.

We are also tackling the structural aspects of Mkhize's short stories. Mkhize is one of the prolific authors of short stories. He has written the following anthologies of short stories:

Ezomhlaba Kazipheli	(1972)
Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu	(1977)
Ngiyeke Ngezomhlaba	(1980)
Uyothi Wabonan' Emhlabeni	(1981)
Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni	(1981)

Indications are that many more stories are still going to appear. (Bard Publishers Price List and Catalog: September 1989.)

In chapters two, three, and four we are looking at the structural aspects i.e. plot structure in Mkhize's short stories, characterisation and setting.

In chapter five we are dealing with Mkhize's style where we look at his titles, language and narrative techniques.

In chapter six we are dealing with the contextual aspects of short stories. The contextual aspects go with the textual aspects. Under the contextual aspects we have themes.

We feel convinced that Mkhize's short stories deserve a place in our literature.

IQOQO

Kulo msebenzi sizama ukweneka obala ukubaluleka kwemibhalo eyizindaba ezimfishane, ikakhulu ezibhalwe u-W.M.B. Mkhize. Kulezi zikhathi zokushesha lapho isikhathi sibalulekile kangaka sibona sengathi ukufunda izindaba ezimfishane kungasebenza kakhulu. Sikusho lokhu ngoba sibona abantu bakithi abathi xhinti esikoleni sebebuya bephenduka "izimpumputhe" ngokungajwayeli ukufunda imibhalo.

Inkinga esiyibonayo ukuthi akukho ochwephesha abaningi asebezamile ukubhala ngobuchwephesha beZindaba Ezimfishane. Kulo msebenzi wethu sizama ukuxazulula le nkinga ngokuba senze umsebenzi wobuchwephesha bezindaba ezimfishane ngokucubungula amabhuku ka-W.M.B. Mkhize.

Phela okaKhabazela wabhala la mabhuku aqukethe izindaba ezimfishane:

Ezomhlaba Kazipheli	(1972)
Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu	(1977)
Ngiyeke Ngezomhlaba	(1980)
Uyothi Wabonan' Emhlabeni	(1981)
Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni	(1981)

Kubuye kwathi ngo - 1985 u-D.B.Z. Ntuli ebhukwini elithi Ngamafuphi asihlelela lona wazifaka ezimbili. Sisethemba ukuthi zisazoqhamuka, ezinye kwamanye amabhuku uma sicosha emithonjeni ethembekile. (Ikhathalogi yakwa-Bard ephume ngo-Septhemba 1989 iveze ukuthi ibhuku elisicilelayo elithi: Ziyenzeka Emhlabeni liqukethe izindatshana ezimfushane zikaMkhize.)

Sizamile-ke futhi esahlukweni sokuqala ukuveza amabhuku asekhona Ezindaba Ezimfishane. Sithole ithemba lokuthi le mibhalo yezindaba ezimfishane iyanda.

Kusahluko sesibili sizamile ukubheka izinto ezibalulekile ekubhalweni nasekufundweni nokucubungula le mibhalo. Lapha siqonde uhlaka.

Esahlukweni sesithathu sibhekane nabalingiswa. Esahlukweni sesine sibhekane nesizinda. Isahluko sesihlanu sibhekane nolimi kanti kwesesithupha isahluko sicubungula izindikimba.

Siphethe ngokuthi sisho impela singananazi ukuthi uMkhize uyibekile induku ebandla ngale misebenzi yakhe.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION OF STUDY

Short stories are a new genre in Zulu literature. The first volume was produced by Muntu Xulu in 1959 and was entitled Izigemegeme Zodwa. Prior to the appearance of this volume, the magazines Wamba, Umgane Wezingane and Bona used to carry short stories written by people like Muntu Xulu and Maghawe Mkhize as they were popularly known at that time. In our study they are J.M. Xulu and W.M.B. Mkhize respectively.

W.M.B. Mkhize has contributed greatly towards the growth and development of this genre in Zulu. We may, in actual fact, regard him as one of the pioneers of the short stories in Zulu. His first book, Ezomhlaba Kazipheli, which appeared in 1972, is listed as number 7* amongst the volumes of this genre. Further, of the 26 anthologies on this genre, Mkhize has produced 5. This, mathematically, constitutes more than 19% of the total of anthologies at the present moment (January 1991).

* See appendix 1

Wiseman Maghawe Bishop Mkhize, was born at Kenterton and received his teacher-training at Indaleni. He taught at a number of schools, worked for Radio Zulu and also served as a reporter for Ilanga Newspaper.

In his life-time, besides being an author of short stories, he was a poet (a number of his poems are published in "Imisebe yelanga 2"), a novelist (Uzenzil' akakhalelwa), a radio play-wright (Wakhetha Iphela emasini), a translator (UPhum'phele, Inja Yezidumo) and a translator of folktales (Zimnandi Ngokuphindwa and Izinganekwane Zasemhlabeni jikelele). He was once also a T.V. comedy co-actor in "UGin noTonic".

He passed away in 1987 holding amongst others a position of secretary of USIBA Writers Guild.

More than thirty years have elapsed since the publication of the first volume, but there are still at the present moment (January 1991), about twenty six (26) volumes of short stories in Zulu.

The above short paragraph about the numbers, i.e. number of years elapsing and the number of books published, reveals the rate at which these books (short story books) are published - which cannot be comfortably matched to one year one book - and is incomparable to other genres.

Our main concern is the lack of theoretical material on the short story. There are very few critics who have undertaken a study on this subject in Zulu. We need a body of knowledge on every subject.

We need to remember that literature is art, and so short stories are art. Our contribution is indirectly aiming at the increase in the volume of art for the public. Lategan (1956:5) cites Somerset Maugham in Tellers of Tales when he says the following about art:

To the layman art offers solace and relaxation and an escape from the reality of life; and sometimes it enlarges his soul, presents new ideas to his spirit and heartens him to cope with business of living.

The author in this study is trying to attend to this demanding situation (short stories as literary art) which in Zulu is still somehow lagging behind with no due attention.

Further, these books of short stories are annually prescribed to students in our schools.

It is astonishing that most teachers in these schools lack knowledge of theory of literary appreciation.

We are going to restrict our study to the theory of short stories - not 'method of teaching'. It is, however, envisaged that even teachers of literature will benefit from this study.

1.2 FIELD OF RESEARCH

In this study we are tackling some structural and contextual aspects of the short story. We are basing our study of the theory of short stories on the work, in this field, published by W.M.B. Mkhize. We have decided to choose Mkhize's stories because we are convinced that he has produced a sufficient quantity on which to base a study. Mkhize wrote five books in this genre. Two of his stories have been published in an anthology entitled Ngamafuphi which appeared in 1985.

The five books were produced within a period of nine years. The first book appeared in 1972 and the last one was published in 1981. Each book contains about nine stories.

Mkhize has written the following books of short stories;

<u>Ezomhlaba Kazipheli</u>	(1972)
<u>Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu</u>	(1977)
<u>Ngiyeke 'Ngezomhlaba</u>	(1980)

Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni (1981)

Uyothi Wabonani Emhlabeni (1981)

We would like to stress our point that we did not choose Mkhize's work because it is the best in Zulu in the field of short stories. We would like to explain that Mkhize's short stories have been chosen because they are unique. They are humorous and contextual, their style is typically his own and the diction is sound.

1.3 AIM OF STUDY

This study attempts to give attention to the theory applicable in the evaluation of short stories. This topic has been designed with students of literature in mind.

When we refer to students of literature, we have these people in mind: students at school (who acquire knowledge); teachers of literature; prospective authors in search of theory, and those who read short stories for pleasure. All this readership does need a body of knowledge in order to understand and appreciate fully this new genre.

We are also somehow aiming at assessing the importance of Mkhize's short stories as a contributory factor towards the

development of Zulu literature in particular and African literature, in general.

We are quite aware of the fact that research may involve venturing into areas about which very little is known or it may involve filling in gaps in existing knowledge. This is just what this study is aiming at.

In these times of modern technology there is a great need for scientific knowledge. Scholars of literature need to advance their knowledge of literature in order to unlock the literary treasures. They need to know exactly what a short story is and what it is not.

Scholars of literature need to know the techniques involved or employed in short stories. We are quite aware of the fact that there is no rigidity in the rules which govern the writing of various literary items such as short stories. However, there are principles that should be followed in writing short stories. Short stories have their unique characteristics. In order to read, to write and appreciate short stories, we need to acquire this theory.

We are, further, not undermining the statement that a work of art may be great although the artist may seem to have broken some principles formulated by earlier critics and theorists.

We think and hope that if proper knowledge of short stories can be made to be readily available, then some more interest in the subject can flourish, leading to more volumes being produced and in turn leading to the upgrading and upliftment of literary work in Zulu and in our society.

We subscribe to the school of thought expressed by Grace in Lategan (1956:44) that 'Literature is our mirror because in a deep sense, we are looking in literature for ourselves'.

Finally, we may say that through the reading of literature one's cultural heritage is enriched.

1.4 RESEARCH

Literature study

An intensive study of secondary material relevant to short stories has been undertaken.

Unstructured interviews

Some informal interviews in the form of discussions with colleagues who are knowledgeable on the subject in our language and in other languages were held.

Sampling

We have forty seven short stories written by Mkhize which served as our target population and in our argument we made a simple random sampling. A critical analysis of some of these short stories is given. The five published books contains a total of forty five stories. Nqamafuphi contains two (2) stories by Mkhize.

1.4.1 Method of reference

The following system of reference to short story books has been adopted:

Ezomhlaba Kazipheli is referred to as Ezomhlaba.

Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu is referred to as Emhlabeni.

Ngiyeke Ngezomhlaba is referred to as Ngiyeke.

Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni is referred to as Kunjalo-ke.

Uyothi Wabonani Emhlabeni is referred to as Uyothi.

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

In chapter one, we make a sketchy outline of the development and growth of this genre, in general, with of course a complete data of published anthologies to-date.

Broadly speaking, the gist of this study attempts to cover the following:

Our chapters two, three and four deal with the structural aspects of Mkhize's short stories. We look at the plot structures i.e. constituents of plot and types of plot. We also attend to characterisation. We tackle approaches to characterisation and setting (elements and functions of setting).

We make an investigation of his (Mkhize's) contextual and textual aspects in chapters five and six. We also make a study of his style, language and narrative techniques. Finally we treat his themes.

Chapter seven is a summary of the main findings regarding his (Mkhize's) short stories.

1.6. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.6.1 Short Story

De Villiers (1979:3) gives the following explanation 'A short story is a piece of fiction that is brief enough to be read at one sitting'.

Webster's Comprehensive Reference Dictionary and Encyclopedia (1954:480) defines a short story in this way: 'A short prose story usually presenting the crisis of a single problem'.

Pretorius & Swart (1982:11-12) elucidate on this concept in this manner:

The short story as a literary genre is not the short story that we know as 'the children's story'. In stories for children the story-teller has a story to tell, something that will fascinate, amaze, fill with wonder or awe is permissible. Therefore, it is quite natural to find animals, witches and other fascinating creatures that behave like humans and the things they do or experience are sometimes quite extra-ordinary. The purpose is to arouse the interest or curiosity of children and sometimes to teach them indirectly, a lesson about life.

On the other hand, the short story as a literary genre is intended for adults and, therefore must, of necessity be related to actual and real life situations. The characters around whom the short story is constructed are people like ourselves.

Odendaal et. al. (1979:609) put it in this way:

'n Kortverhaal is 'n verhaal van geringe omvang waarin gewoonlik een enkele hoofgedagte uitgewerk word, waarin in gekonsentreerde vorm 'n blissende moment, krisis van 'n hele lewe saamgetrek is'.

So, in Afrikaans a short story is called 'n kortverhaal' and it must be dominated by concentration or intensity or compression.

In Zulu we have two terms, i.e. indatshana and indaba emfishane. The first one indatshana is unfavourable because it is a derogatory diminutive term for indaba. So the use of the term indatshana - is confusing because we are made to think of a minor or an insignificant story.

Then we have the second term indaba emfishane or emfushane which also tends to include any story that can be told within a relatively short time. We need to be aware that this is a special type of story that differs from any other story. The second term is more appropriate and acceptable.

We, therefore, come to the conclusion that a short story is neither an ordinary story that lacks length nor a chapter in a novel or novelle. We would rather think of a short

story as a "modern short story" because it has its own characteristics such as economy of characters, events or even words. It has a single situation and severe limitations of time, etc.

1.6.2 Structure

According to Fowler & Fowler (1969:1143) the term structure is defined as the

'manner in which a building or organism or other complete whole is constructed, supporting framework, or whole of the essential parts of something, make, construction'.

Cuddon (1984:662) seems to concur with the above dictionary when he says the following about the term: 'Structure is the sum of the relationship of the parts to each other, thus, the whole'. He goes further and says 'we can speak of the structure of a word, a sentence, a paragraph, a chapter, a book, and so forth'.

'Structural' is an adjective from the noun 'structure'..

From the study of the above definitions we have gathered that structure may be said to be the overall principle of organisation in a work of literature as we are concerned

with short stories in this study.

Literature such as short stories may be 'organised' or 'shaped' by many elements like titles, development, climax, to name just a few. It is obvious that structure involves craftsmanship.

To express this in simple language we are interested in identifying the components that have been employed to construct these short stories that we are studying.

1.6.3 Context

Scott (1965:63) starts by giving us the Latin meaning of the word context 'contextus' from 'contexere'. The literal meaning is 'to weave together.'

Further, in the same dictionary we get the following definition:

... those parts of a work of literature which precede and follow a given word, phrase or passage. Such words or phrases, to be properly understood or judged, should be read in their context.

Perhaps we may also add Websters' Comprehensive Reference

Dictionary and Encyclopedia's (1954: 121) definition of the concept:

'The parts in a book or discourse immediately adjoining a word, phrase, or sentence quoted, or under consideration'.

The Afrikaans word for context is 'samehang' meaning - it goes together or it should be viewed in the same light.

This means that words interanimate one another. They are qualified by the whole context in which they figure, and they bring to that context powers derived from other contexts in which they have figured in the past.

This simply means that the parts immediately before or after a chosen passage in a literary work, i.e. the words and ideas which surround a statement, give it its particular meaning.

1.7 A SHORT SURVEY OF THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE SHORT STORY AS A GENRE WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON ZULU

At this juncture we feel it is equally fitting to give a brief outline of the origin and growth of this genre. It should be noted that the short story did not emerge with this name (short story) as we know it today, but it changed names as it also underwent some 'metamorphic' process. It

had had names such as short fiction, novelle, sketch, tale, entertainments, etc.

The short story, although it is a young genre in modern African literature, in a sense it is the oldest. We make this statement bearing in mind what we find in the Bible, for instance, the first three chapters of Genesis where we are given the story of creation and the unbecoming behaviour of Eve and Adam in the garden of Eden which led to their being chased away. In the same vein we look at the story of Abel and Cain or in the New Testament, as an example, we cite the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32.

These Biblical stories are classified as prehistoric lores with, of course, unliterary purpose. They do have stylistic economy and psychological interest, yet they are not offered as fiction. They purport to be historically veracious and to justify the ways of God to men. They are not conceived as literary inventions nor are they shaped as contributions to the craft of fiction.

On the other hand, we know of many tales, myths and legends. We also do tell stories about our daily experiences.

What we have enumerated above are indeed stories which are short, but they are not short stories in the sense of the

modern short story. In contrast to oral literature which include myths, legends, etc., we may say a short story is a distinct literary form which must be produced in writing so that it may be possible for artists to make modern scientific analysis of it.

We need, however, to make it clear that the feelings that make the modern short story writer are probably, at heart, not different from those of the ancient story-teller. The short story writer would like to be a myth-maker, and often is, but his problem is vastly complicated. Early stories spoke for a whole community whereas a modern short story is the work of the individual called author.

Myths record a completed vision of something 'true' whereas a short story often represents, for the author and for the reader, a crisis of belief and a groping for certainty. The short story writer does not receive his worldview, but he discovers it. He does not, like the ancient myth-maker, inherit his rituals, he invents them. But, (and this appears to be a vital point) - though he may not give voice to universal truths, he is nevertheless making a statement about values.

The modern short story, as we would like it also to be referred to, is composed of certain mutually interdependent elements. These elements mark the short story as clearly different from other forms of prose fiction, that make it a

genre. We are now proceeding to make just mention of some names that appear in the history of shaping and refining this genre to what it is today.

Leading the list is an Italian named Giovanni Boccaccio (1513-1375) - this name is associated also with the movement of the Renaissance. He is regarded as the greatest figure and pioneer of this genre as his work entitled Decameron contains 100 stories. In these stories he mastered superbly the elements: theme and characterisation. The Decameron is said to have inspired many authors and this resulted in the genre being spread to other countries. Many writers are said to have imitated it.

Event as an element of the modern short story was highlighted by a German known as Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) who according to John Drinkwater (1940: 505) emphasized that the story should be realistic i.e. events should be something that had actually happened or could happen.

Another German, Johann Ludwig Tieck stressed intensity as an important element. This appears in the preface to his collection which was published in 1829.

Another giant figure is Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) whom Drinkwater (1940: 724) describes as "an outstanding American theorist and practitioner of the genre, short

story". He is the one who developed, popularized and introduced some serviceable general precepts on the short story, by which he meant a prose narrative requiring anything from half an hour to one or two hours in its perusal, a story that concentrates on a unique or single effect and one in which the totality of effect is the main objective.

The New Universal Encyclopedia Vol. 13 (1984: 7535) puts it in this manner:

It was an American writer, Edgar Allan Poe, who first developed the short story as a conscious art, by making it concentrate on a single direct effect and studiously eliminating any paragraph or epithet that did not contribute to that effect.

It becomes clear that, as a result of the influence of these and many other scholars, short stories as a genre spread to almost all the European countries even to Russia where we have people like Gogol contributing to it. The innovations continued, as it is still happening, because we have scholars like Katherine Mansfield (1883-1923) who highlighted the language and structure in her stories.

The appeal of the short story continued to grow even

amongst South Africans where it started with English then followed Afrikaans. In Afrikaans Lategan made a valuable contribution under the title: "Die kortverhaal en sy ontwikkeling in Afrikaans" which was published in 1956. Some South African languages spoken by Blacks are already at it. We would like to mention a historic contribution of three pages by R. Sh. Dau under the heading: The Short story in Venda. This article is contained in Limi (1968: 82-84) and deals briefly with elements of the short story in Venda. Later on Dlamini also published an article in Limi Vol. 3 (1975: 62-70) entitled: The Differences between an essay and a short story. There is also an unpublished M.A. dissertation by Mtuze entitled: A Critical appraisal of Siwisa's short stories (1986).

1.7.1 Short stories in Zulu

As we have mentioned earlier on in our discussion, there are now a handful of volumes containing short stories in Zulu, but on the theory part or scientific study only a few works have appeared. We can name the following major ones:

- (1) STRACHAN, A (1988): "Uthingo Iwenkosazana" van DBZ. Ntuli, 'n Narratologiese Onderzoek.
- (ii) MABUZA, JKN (1988): The Short Story in Zulu.

In concluding this chapter we wish to present these volumes.

The first author to write a book containing short stories was M.J. Xulu in 1959. The title of his book is 'Izigeme-geme Zodwa'. This was his first and is the last, so far, of his publications in this genre. What is remarkable about this book is that it also contains some notes on short stories in its preface.

In 1963 followed S.T.Z. Khwela and O.E.H. Nxumalo with their Emhlabeni Nezinye Izindaba. This second book, in this genre, was followed by another one by the same authors Amanqampungampu which was published in 1966. Nxumalo has lately appeared as a co-author again but this time with P.N. Buthelezi. The title of their book is Amagwabab' Echobana which appeared in 1985. Later Nxumalo's contribution appeared in an anthology which was edited by D.B.Z. Ntuli under the title Ngamafuphi (1985). His recent book Benza Ngani? was published in 1990.

D.B.Z. Ntuli entered this scene of short story writing in 1969 with his book entitled Izikhwili. The following year (1970) saw him publishing Imicibisholo. The award-winning volume entitled Uthingo Lwenkosazana was published in 1971. In Amawisa (1982) and Izizenze (1986) he appears as a co-author with his elder brother C.S.Z. Ntuli who concentrates on essays.

Ntuli has also done a wonderful thing for this genre. He has produced two anthologies of short stories in Zulu and

edited them under the titles Ngamafuphi (1985) and Isicamelo (1990).

We may also remark about the titles of Ntuli's short story books. Izikhwili, Imicibisholo, Amawisa and Izizenze are all Zulu traditional fighting weapons. We are tempted to say that he is engaged in fighting illiteracy amongst the Zulu readers. 'Uthingo Lwenkosazana' means the rainbow which is usually seen after rain. It indicates that the rain is over - there is going to be sunshine again.

W.M.B. Mkhize entered this field in 1972 when his Ezomhlaba Kazipheli was published. His next book in this genre Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu was published in 1977. It was followed by Nqiyeke Ngezomhlaba in 1980. His last volumes are Uyothi Wabonani Emhlabeni and Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni and were published in 1981. There are two of his short stories in Ngamafuphi.

Mkhize also appears to be somehow fascinated by the word Mhlaba (earth) as all the titles of his short story books contain it.

Some more authors have made their marks on this 'young' genre. They are: R.S. Ndlovu who wrote Umbani in 1980; N.P. Khumalo with Iziga and Amandiki in 1980 and 1986 respectively; N.F. Mbhele wrote Amayezi Namathunzi in 1987; L. Molefe published Zihlekana Iziphongo in 1986; N.G. Sibiba's Ikusasa Eliqhakazile appeared in 1988; G.S. Zulu

produced Izipho Zenhliziyo in 1989; and finally C.T. Msimang has edited an anthology entitled Ithungelwa Ebandla (January 1991).

There is a great hope for this genre in Zulu. Our statistics reveal this growing trend.

- 1 Book of short stories in 1950's.
- 3 Books of short stories in 1960's.
- 4 Books of short stories in 1970's.
- 17 Books of short stories between 1980-1990.
- 1 Book of short stories in January 1991.

1.8 CONCLUSION

We are tempted to subscribe to the idea that this genre of short stories is a product of our modern haste and as such it is well suited to fill idle moments in buses, trains or even in aeroplanes. Some stories take thirty minutes to read.

We would like to note that many pioneers of this genre are also poets. We may mention, to substantiate this observation, Boccaccio himself, Edgar Allan Poe, Uys Krige (in Afrikaans) D.B.Z. Ntuli and W.M.B. Mkhize (in Zulu). Although short stories do not need the language of poets, poets excel in selecting words.

CHAPTER 2

PLOT STRUCTURE IN MKHIZE'S SHORT STORIES

2.0 INTRODUCTION

A Plot is called uhlaka in Zulu. Some scholars tend to confuse plot with theme which is called indikimba in Zulu.

Dietrich and Sundell (1983:127) give the following definition of the term 'plot': 'An arrangement of events in a story'.

Dubé, et. al. (1983:1334) seem to concur with Dietrich and Sundell when they give the following definition of plot 'The sequence of interrelated actions and events that make up a story'.

Albright (1931:48) also agrees with the above authorities when he says:

'it is the management of the continuous line of action underlying the whole progress of the story. It concerns the sequence of events'.

Stone, et. al. (1983:15) simply say of plot that 'it is a writer's arrangement of events that will express his

attitude toward the human condition'.

So we come to the conclusion that plot, in the study of literature, refers to the arrangement of events to achieve the intended or desired effect. In other words, plot is a plan or scheme to accomplish a purpose. A plot is a series of carefully devised and interrelated actions that progress through a struggle of opposing forces to a climax and denouement.

We are now embarking on the discussion of the constituents of plot, then we shall attend to the phases of plot and finally to the various types of plot.

2.1 CONSTITUENTS OF PLOT

A story is made up of the plot which consists of:

2.1.1 Events

Some scholars call these elements "incidents". When we tell a story, we narrate about events or happenings that have occurred. A story is made up of a number of related events which are narrated. The narration of past events involves description in the case of a story or dramatisation in the case of drama.

A story consists of a number of events and actions, to start with, or we may say the story is a narrative of events.

Let us consider Mkhize describing an event in Ngiyeke (1980:24):

UMzingelwa ekutholeni kwakhe lemali, wake wahlala izinyanga ezine ekhaya esahlola isimo sezinto eMakhuluseni. Akuthathanga sikhathi eside wase ezibonela ngamehlo lento eyabe ishiwo uMajuba "Insimba Yesulela Ngengqushumba"

[Mzingelwa, on receipt of this money, remained at home for four months still assessing the situation here at Makhuluseni. It did not take him a long time before he saw with his eyes this thing which he had been told by Majuba].

A brief study of events in the above given paragraph reveals that they end up in action. Action is a result of a number of events with unity and significance. We may analyse this paragraph in this manner:

- (i) ... receipt of money ...
- (ii) ... assessing the situation ...
- (iii) ... he saw with his eyes this thing he had been told ...

The above series of events can be viewed as moving through three logical stages:

- (i) the beginning,
- (ii) the middle and
- (iii) the end.

The beginning of an action always presents us with a situation in which there is some element of instability, some conflict or contrast i.e.

... the receipt of money ...

The middle of an action exhibits the development of conflict and the readjustment of forces as they struggle to settle into a new kind of stability i.e.

... assessing the situation ...

The end of an action shows that some point of stability has been reached; the conflicts among forces that have been brought into play have been resolved i.e.

... he saw with his eyes this thing he had been
told ...

This takes us to the discussion of another constituent of plot called 'conflict'.

2.1.2 Conflict

According to Madden and Scott (1984:3) the term conflict means:

that a story brings together two opposing forces [characters], which we call a protagonist [one who struggles for] and an antagonist [one who struggles against], and then develops and resolves the struggle between these two forces.

Abrams (1971:128) gives us this explanation of the term conflict:

Many, but far from all, plots deal with conflict. In addition to the conflict between individuals, there may be the conflict of a protagonist against fate, or against the circumstances that stand between him and a goal he has set himself; and in some works, the conflict is between opposing desires or values in a character's own mind.

Dubé et. al. (1983:1330) simply define conflict as 'a clash between opposing forces resulting in opposition to the desires of the protagonist'.

In fact conflict of whatever form makes a basic ingredient in a story. If conflict is not there, then the story cannot develop. Conflict in a story must heighten as the story develops. In other words, it must complicate a situation which is difficult to resolve. This element of fiction provides the reader with an unsolved problem which gives an exercise to his mind.

Mkhize in his short stories gives us, mainly, straightforward external conflict. We may cite as our example the story "Imnandi Ipholile" in Ezomhlaba (1972:1-10).

The conflict between two neighbours - Siphiwe Khumalo and Mdelwa Zondo is an external straightforward conflict as we find the tension in the situation between them. Although Khumalo and Zondo do not engage in a fight literally they do fight through their deeds.

The story in Uyothi (1981: 114-135) entitled "IKhubalo lenhlanhla" does give an internal conflict. We speak of internal conflict when there is conflict between man i.e. character and his soul or conscience, a conflict between man and society or a conflict between man and nature, and so on.

In this story we get our main character, Mndayiza, who becomes a powerful witch-doctor through "ukuthwala"

(it is a supernatural acquisition of wealth through spilling of blood - in most cases that of one's next of kin) in order to continue with this job he needs to sacrifice blood of a close relative. At one stage we find Mndayiza fighting with his thoughts like this:

Lezozinyangana ezazisasele zaba wunyaka
kuMndayiza. Manje usabulala yini bona ubuthongo?
Kuze kuse ecabanga, ebamba eyeka ezama ukuhlaziya
ukuthi konje wubani ozalweni okufanele ukuba
amhlabise ikhubalo lakhe leli lenhlanhla yomcebo.

Cha, kulukhuni manje; kumnyama phambili kanti
nasemuva sekukude... Sekukhona nokuzisola ...
(p 129).

[Those few months which were still remaining were like a year to Mndayiza. He could not even sleep. He would think until the next morning trying to decide who should be a sacrifice for his luck medicine.

No, it was difficult; he was in the middle of the tunnel ... He was feeling sorry for himself...]

We find Mndayiza in a problematic situation. He is blaming himself. He cannot ask other people to help him - it is "eating him".

2.1.3 Suspense

Cuddon (1984:669) gives this definition of the term suspense '[it is] a state of uncertainty, anticipation and curiosity as to the outcome of a story'.

Dubé et. al. (1983:1336) agree with Cuddon when they define suspense as 'the quality of a literary work that keeps the reader uncertain yet eagerly expectant concerning the outcome of the plot'.

We must look at suspense as a technique of keeping the reader in a state of anxious uncertainty by delaying to tell him what he is eager to know in the story. The fact is that suspense induces curiosity.

Suspense is vital to make a plot entertaining. Mkhize is expected to make us (his readers) to want to know what is going to happen, and be surprised by new incidents, yet be satisfied that they grow logically out of what we already know.

Mkhize achieves this by causing his narrator to ask challenging questions. In the story entitled "Isalakutshelwa Sibona Ngomopho" we find questions and statements like this:

Pho, uZakhe angaphuthelwa yisekisi elinjalo phezu
kokuba selizilethe kuye ezinyaweni uqobo?
Ezomhlaba (1972:40)

[Do you think Zakhe could miss a circus like that
even when it had brought itself to his feet?]

This question will cause the reader to read further so that
he can know exactly what happened to Zakhe.

Further, we get this excerpt:

Pho uZakhe wake wakhuzwa wezwa? Ningasho
abanye; UZakhe, qha'.
Ezomhlaba (1972:41).

[Do you think Zakhe was ever warned and listened?
You can mean others not Zakhe, No.]

The answer "no" given here will make the reader to be more
anxious to know the end.

This element can also be achieved by the mere use of good
everyday language. The reader feels being part of the
story - Mkhize, has done this beautifully.

Emhlabeni (1977: 90) in the story entitled "Bhala Mabhalane" we find this:

Zimbalwa izinsizwa zamaZulu ezisebenza eGoli ezingalazi ibhilidi elithiwa yiProgress City Centre kuJeppe. Lokhu kubangelwa wukuthi kulelibhilidi, kusukela phansi emagalaji, kuye kushaye phezulu emahovisi, bonke abantu abasebenza lapha, bangamaZulu.

[There are a few young Zulu men who work in Johannesburg who do not know this building called Progress City Centre in Jeppe Street. The reason is that in this building, right down from the garage up to the offices, all the people who work there are Zulus.]

This is our everyday language; but what is striking is that we are given some hints about the building (Progress City Centre) and the people who work there (the Zulus). We know the behaviour and problems of the Zulus who work in cities.

2.2 PHASES OF PLOT

Having discussed constituents of plot we now look at the phases of plot. We shall briefly tackle opening paragraphs, development, climax and endings.

2.2.1 The opening paragraph(s)

In most genres, for instance, in novels, this aspect is referred to as an introductory paragraph or simply introduction. We do not refer to it as introduction or introductory paragraph, because in short stories it doesn't play the role of introducing the story.

In most cases, short stories do not have introductions. The initial or, rather, opening paragraph 'starts' the story. We find this paragraph (opening paragraph) playing the role of 'gripping the reader's attention' as Dlamini (1975: 66) puts it, or we may say it is presenting a point of view that reflects the critical intelligence and wisdom of the author.

Ntuli (n:d) in his unpublished paper entitled "The Short Story" offers this explanation:

The introduction or beginning of every story is of paramount importance. It is the section of the story which advertises the story or sells it. If a reader is not captured by this introduction he will easily throw the story away and do something else ...

In most cases, the first sentence has either the main character or exposes the problem.

Mkhize applies a number of techniques to 'grip the reader's attention'. Let us examine him applying some of his techniques.

In Ngiyeke (1980:23) we find him employing the technique of beginning with a necessary historical information:

UMzingelwa ukuza kwakhe eGoli kwabangelwa wukuba
abazali bakhe bashona engozini yebhasi elapho-
nseka nabantu emfuleni uMdloti kuleminyakana
eyedlule. "Insimba yasulela ngegqumusha"

[The coming of Mzingelwa to Johannesburg was caused by the death of his parents in a bus accident in which the bus plunged with people into Umdloti river a few years ago.]

A brief study of this opening paragraph reveals that the readers have been provided, in the very first sentence, with the main character (Mzingelwa), setting (Johannesburg) and major problem (living).

In other instances, he opens by presenting a question which seeks to capture the reader's attention. Let us consider

the story in Ezomhlaba (1972:28) where we come across the following opening paragraph:

"Wo, Nkosi yami! Kodwa amashwa lawa angilandele nani nje kodwa kulezizinsuku?" kwazikhalela uThandi ezilahla phansi esihlalweni lapho eqeda ukufunda lolucingo aqeda ukuluthola lulethwe ngumfana webhayisikili waseposini.

"Kungcon' ukwethemba Itshe"

["Oh, My Lord! But why is bad luck following me these days?" bemoaned Thandi, throwing herself on the chair after reading the telegram which had been delivered by a post-boy riding a bicycle.]

It is interesting to note that he has used two punctuation marks i.e. an exclamation mark which is a sign of surprise and a question mark. These create some expectations in the reader. } NB

We also find Mkhize, in some other instances using a dialogue involving his main characters. This dialogue may be dramatic, serving to enhance his readers' interest.

In Ngiyeke (1980:38) we find this dialogue between a husband and a wife, i.e. Thulani and Bathoko.

"Selokhu kusile nje namhla Bathoko, isandla sami siyaluma. Kungabe ngizotholani nje bandla?" kwasho uThulani ...

"Musa wena ukungihlekisa emini libalele. Usho ukuthi ...?" Asho aphubuke ahleke uMaZwane - yena belu uBathoko. "Icala Leqiw 'endleleni"

["Since early this morning, Bathoko, my hand is itching. What am I going to receive, dear people?" asked Thulani ...

"Don't make me laugh in broad day-light. Do you mean ...?" MaZwane laughed - we mean Bathoko.]

We note some sort of dialogue in the above discussion which may cause the reader to be interested in the conclusion of the story. In other words this dialogue has helped to advance the plot. Thulani believes that the itching of the hand foretells the receipt of something. Is this belief true or not?

We may not be able to unearth or rather to distinguish all the techniques that Mkhize applies in his initial paragraphs. At this juncture, however, for the interest of our study, we feel tempted to explore some techniques that have been applied by other authors of short stories.

Ntuli, who may be regarded as an authority at the present moment in short story writing, employed some other techniques of presenting his initial paragraphs.

In Uthingo Lwenkosazana (1971:1) we find this striking initial paragraph:

"Tibi! Ngofo! Yinyoka!" Agxume agelekeqeke
uMpiyakhe, umkhonto uwele laphaya, kusale ihawana
kuphela. "Uthingo Iwenkosazana"

["Tibi! Ngofo! It's a snake!" He [Mpiyakhe]
jumps to an open space, the assegai falls at a
distance, only a small shield remains.]

We feel tempted to describe this type of opening paragraph as giving a dramatic scene in the mind of the reader.

Ntuli, also, attempted in Izikhwili (1969:76) to present his story in a letter form. The wife, Bellinah, writes to her husband, Mshengu, who works in Johannesburg, about the behaviour of a somewhat mentally disturbed nurse who came to their home.

We hope these examples do prove that the author is free to use his 'critical intelligence' with the aim of 'gripping' the reader's attention. We are also convinced that in most

of his stories, Mkhize has successfully presented the main character(s) and the problem of the story in his opening paragraph.

2.2.2 Development or rising action

This may be defined as a moment of complication when occurrences make the conflict more difficult to resolve. We may also call this element complication.

Mtuzze (1986: 83) has this to say about this element:

Rising action encompasses that part of the story from the first event to the climax. Here the author will indicate the development of his basic situation, suggest any important conflict and develop his characters. (Underlining ours)

Unlike in other genres such as novels and dramas where a lot of space or even the whole chapter may be devoted to this element, in short stories this takes place swiftly hence we prefer to call it rising action.

It is in this rising action of the short story that the author cannot afford to employ the luxuries of fiction such as comic reliefs and digression. The author deals with events.

2.2.3 Climax

This term is derived from the Greek word 'Klimax' which means a ladder. In the study of short stories or fiction, we regard climax as the final and most important of a series of events.

Mtuzé (1986: 83) defines climax as

The highest point toward which the chain of events in the rising action has been moving.

Kenny (1966: 18) puts it this way:

The climax is reached when the complication attains its highest point of intensity, from which point the outcome of the story is inevitable.

Our study of Mkhize's short stories reveals that he arranged his events in an ascending order of their importance, culminating in the point of no return.

The exact position of the climax in the story is variable, and must be determined by the nature of the story at hand. However, its natural place is as near the end as possible. The author, as Mkhize has done, should keep the element of

suspense rising continually to the very instant of the climax. In fact, the climax is the turning point in suspense. In "Icala Leqiw' Endleleni" we find a story which can be summarized as follows:

The story starts happily with Thulani receiving an invitation. He attends this august occasion and meets Mary-Jane and other old friends. They have fun time with Mary-Jane and have drinks. During the night Mary-Jane dies with Thulani around. This leaves Thulani in turmoil or in a desperate situation from all angles as he is unknown in this place. His wife at home has seen their nude picture in the newspaper. Thulani, after all this, returns home to find his wife has abandoned their home.

We feel that the following extract is the climax.

Indaba seyize isuke ekuseni ngenkathi uMaMngadi lona ohlalisa izingane lezi zika MaMtshali esethi ulethela umame womuzi inkomishi kakhokho yasekuseni njengasemihleni, athi uyamvusa, uyamnyakazisa kube inkathi ebonayo ukuthi uselele umlalawafuthi.

Ngiyeke (1980:51-52)

[The story started in the morning when this MaMngadi who stays with the kids of MaMtshali, brought a morning cup of cocoa as usual, when she

tried to wake her up, shaking her - it was then that she became aware that she was sleeping forever.]

The above paragraph brings the major change in the whole story. The climax of the short story brings the hero to a most critical phase in his life. From the above quoted story, our main character, Thulani, is in great trouble.

If we attempt to analyse this story, we find from the beginning a recurrence of happy events - forming the exposition and development. Then there is a turning point and an unhappy ending.

We may once more cite the story entitled "Isalakutshelwa Sibona Ngomopho" where we find this paragraph giving us a climax:

Kwathi kusemnandi kunjalo kuZakhe esacabanga ngabangane bakhe ... Omunye umlisa wathi ezihambela edlula kusona isibaya leso sezilwane, ezidlela inyama yengulube engazelele lutho, ngenkathi edlula ngasehokweni lebhusesi, ingonyama nayo yathi ingalihogela iphunga lenyama yengulube yadlubulundela yavukwa iqungo seyifohla khona lapha ehokweni layo.

[While it was still so enjoyable to Zakhe, as he was thinking about his friends ... One man walking around the cage of animals eating pork unaware of anything, then in the cage the lion got the smell of pork and fought its way out.]

This Zakhe is a student at St. Nevard. After heavy warnings from his teachers not to go to this circus he decided to go. The lions break loose and spectators are injured including Zakhe.

It is clear now that there is going to be trouble for the circus spectators. The climax is the supreme moment - it is also known as the Grand Crisis that comes when suspense will no longer stand the strain, and interest no longer hangs on the progression of the story, but on its pause and possible retrogression.

2.2.4 Endings

We prefer, in this study, to speak of endings as against conclusion. Ending in short stories includes falling action and a resolution which is also known as epiphany or denouement.

A good device is that of having a surprise ending. Some scholars for example, Dlamini (1975: 68), say: "an ending

MaKunene is left in a problematic situation and we are not told how the situation ended.

Kunjalo-ke (1980: 107) contains a questionable ending because it has this sentence:

"Ngelinye ilanga iyodla yena umniniyo lemvubu!"
Esho eyoyibeka emgibeni kanye nezinduku zakhe
elawini. "Imvubu kaShedi".

["One day this sjambok will hit its owner!" she said, taking it to some of his other fighting sticks in his hut.]

The story is about Vusi who is in love with Khanyo. Khanyo has a brother, Shedi, who attacks Vusi when he visits his girl friend.

We fail to regard the above as an ending because there is still a score to settle.

In concluding this subsection we, however, cannot overlook a point raised by Mabuza (1988: 10) who argues that

... because of the title of the short story which is an idiom (in fact a proverb), the reader gets a solution which he anticipated. He may not feel quite so much surprised.

This is true of the stories which have proverbs as their titles. We may take as our example the story entitled: "Isalakutshelwa Sibona Ngomopho" in Ezomhlaba (1972: 38-45) where we find a stubborn and obstinate schoolboy (Zakhe) ending in humiliation because of failing to obey the teacher's instructions at school.

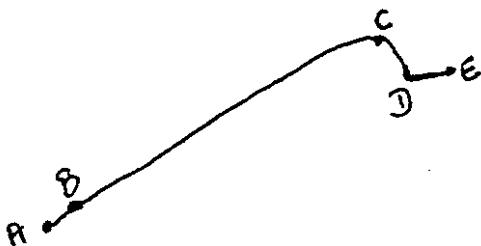
2.3 TYPES OF PLOT

Our brief study of Mkhize's short stories reveals that he has employed more than one type of plot.

2.3.1 Conventional plot

Here the author follows the usual way - he starts with the exposition, rising action, climax, denouement and ending. This could be represented figuratively as follows:

FIGURE 1:



- A - Exposition
- B - Development
- C - Climax
- D - Denouement
- E - Ending

This is a very popular type of plot and Mkhize seems to have applied it in most of his short stories. Let us analyse this plot in one of Mkhize's short stories.

Our example is the story entitled "Amathe Abuyela Kwasifuba" in Ngiyeke (1980:1).

- A. Exposition - An argument between two main characters - Mpiyonke Shange and Mafa Nxumalo - is presented. The clash or conflict is about the selling rights on the farm.
- B. Development - Some co-workers on the farm take sides in this clash, thus heightening the conflict. Mpiyonke realises that he cannot match Mafa in fighting as he (Mafa) has been described as:

insizwa ekhulile yakoNxumalo, wuMkhatshwa
ongabuzwa (1980:1)

[The well built young man of Nxumalo is a true Mkhatshwa.]

So, Mpiyonke thinks of a plan to deal with Mafa. He causes havoc where Mafa works with the intention of having him dismissed from work or even sentenced.

- C. Climax - The climax is reached when havoc is caused

and discovered. Mahlafuna, the farm-owner, discovered that his business had been burgled and started investigating.

D. Denouement - There is a search for the culprit - something that Mpiyonke did not envisage. This upsets Mpiyonke again.

E. Ending - In the end something we readers did not expect to happen happens. Mpiyonke is discovered to be the culprit and he is the one who is discharged from work.

In most cases we are able to demarcate between exposition, development, climax, denouement and ending.

2.3.2 Double-edged Plan/Plot

In this plot we start with exposition and move to development. It then rolls down to exposition point again and then starts rising through development to climax, denouement and then finally to ending. This type of a plot is also found in Novels - we may think of a novel entitled Nqiyoze Nqimthole (1970) written by Ntuli.

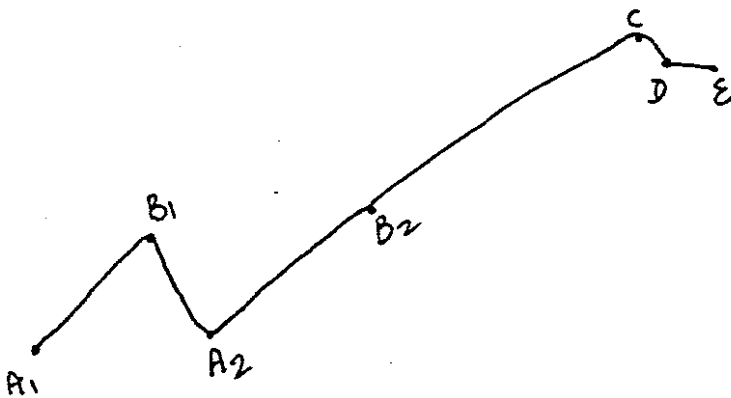
Writing in the South African Journal of African languages (1984:126) Groenewald mentions 'two stories hinging on one another both more or less characterised by discreteness and

completion'.

We agree with the above statement when we analyse some of Mkhize's short stories. The above named plot may also be called a double-edged plot or an extended plot structure.

Diagrammatically it gives us something like this:

FIGURE 2:



- | | | |
|----------------|---|-------------|
| A ₁ | - | Exposition |
| A ₂ | - | Exposition |
| B ₁ | - | Development |
| B ₂ | - | Development |
| C | - | Climax |
| D | - | Denouement |
| E | - | Ending |

Let us analyse the plot in the story: "Zifa Ngamvunye" in Uyothi (1981:87-113). This story is twenty-six pages long. In fact we may not be wrong in saying that there are

two stories here because, normally, a short story which may be read in one sitting is supposed to be anything between 8 to 12 pages. The first section may not be easy to follow, as we find in this story:

A₁ Exposition One - The opening sentence starts with a conjunctive Ngoba (because) indicating that there is a sentence which has been omitted. This sentence has been omitted so that you may read the story in order to discover, for yourself, what has been left out. The story is about the life led by Mabhunu and his wife MaMcethe. The story is about a quarrelsome life at Shandu's home. MaMcethe finally decides to quit. She sends her brother to make her avenge.

B₁ Development One - There is quarreling and fighting in this family. The man, Mabhunu, is consuming too much liquor and then starts trouble. Finally, of course after a severe clash, the wife decides to abandon him. Then the wife's relatives want revenge.

A₂ Exposition Two - This is on page 100 where we get the following paragraph:

Yaphela inyanga golokoqo engezwakali
nangalukhalo uMaMcethe lapho ashona ngakhona.

[A whole month elapsed with the whereabouts of MaMcethe unknown.]

- B₂ Development Two - Mabhunu starts a new life. He doesn't drink anymore. He meets the relatives of his ex-wife, MaMcethe, who had earlier sought to kill him with the aim of avenging their sister's ill-treatment.
- C Climax - Mabhunu arranges revenge against Baldwin, MaMcethe's brother. He causes a bitter clash between Baldwin and his wife.
- D Denouement - After the fighting in MaMcethe's brother's place they (MaMcethe's relatives) are injured and rushed to hospital.
- E Ending - Mabhunu ends up happy because he has achieved his revenge.

It seems that this type of plot is unsuitable for short stories as short stories require a single effect. This plot allows the story to be rather too long for a short story.

2.3.3 Reversal plot

This is another type of plot where the author starts by

narrating what happened in the past and then "connects" his story. We are aware of Ntuli engaging this plot in the story entitled: "Ngephasika" in his anthology: Uthingo Lwenkosazana (1971:88-100).

Mkhize has given us a good example of a reversal plot in Ngiyeke (1980: 121-141). The title of the story is: "Uwena UZondi, Iphoyisa?"

We come across this dialogue in the form of a request by the character.

"Shono kambe Ntombi, njengoba nakhu ukhuluma indaba kaMatshane lona okufanele ulalele eMgungundlovu bese ubuya naye kusasa, ake ungichazele kahle udaba lwakhe lonke lokuboshwa njengoba uyokhumbula ukuthi angikwazanga nokuya ecaleni lakhe Ngichazele kahle Mbomvu wami ngoba uyihlo wasimze nje washampuza kantike nawe uyamazi ukuthi akakwazi ukuchazela umuntu uma ethukuthele yena ngokwakhe."

"Washo entshweni-ke lapho mama ngikwendlalele ngisho nesisusa sendaba ngisho nemidati yalo icala uqobo lwalo njengoba ngisakhumbula.

["Tell me, by the way, Ntombi, as you are

mentioning the story of Matshana as you are supposed to sleep at Pietermaritzburg so that you may come back with him tomorrow, just explain the whole story of his arrest because you still remember that I was unable to attend the courtcase Just explain to me my Mbomvu because your father simply mumbled as you know he fails to explain to someone when he is angry."

"You have hit the nail on the head my mother. I'll give you even the details of the cause of the case because I still remember."]

The character, Zamabomvu, then starts to relate the story. This first narration goes on from page 121 to 126 with, of course, some narrative pauses. This first story-telling is brought to an end by the arrival of Ngubane who insists that Zamabomvu should leave for Pietermaritzburg.

The uniqueness of this story becomes obvious when Matshana sees the policeman, Zondi, who plotted his arrest. Matshana has been in prison for seven years. He relates to his family how Zondi plotted his arrest. Zondi is now a family friend and a prominent local businessman.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Plot is one of the key aspects of a story, more especially the short story. It forms the basic organisation or arrangement of the content of the story. In short, the success or failure of the story rests upon the plot.

Mkhize's approach to events, conflicts and even suspense resembles that of folktales. He appears not to have adopted the concept of economy in as far as these elements are concerned. He also appears to have included many, even unnecessary, details. At some stages he appears to be 'marking time'. We also find fault with his choice, in most of his stories, of external conflict, conventional and even double-edged plots.

It is, however, interesting to study his opening paragraphs and endings. His opening paragraphs do not lack their ingredients i.e. main characters being confronted by problems. His endings, too, do have a 'twist'.

CHAPTER 3

CHARACTERISATION

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This is another very important and also interesting aspect in the study of fiction. Some scholars describe it as the heart of fiction. Characters are the elements that make and give life to the story.

Dietrich and Sundell (1983:75) have this to say about characters:

Our first involvement with a story usually occurs when characters engage our interest, sympathy or empathy.

Mkhize, like most authors, uses a number of methods of characterisation. A closer scrutiny of these methods of characterisation will reveal that characters may be 'presented' to the readers in two ways. The first approach is called direct description where the author prefers to introduce his character(s) in a formal way. The other approach is dramatic approach, where readers are made 'to see the character' through behaviour, appearance,

conversation, etc.

Another remarkable point about characters is that they should be few.

3.1 APPROACHES TO CHARACTERISATION

3.1.1 Direct Description

In this instance we find Mkhize describing his characters directly. He enumerates their qualities. This is a simple and economical way.

This approach may also be called the expository method, while others prefer to call it the discursive method. It is the most common and looks like the easier method of depicting characters in literature.

In most cases we find Mkhize applying this approach efficiently, because he creates the kind of character appropriate to the story's purpose. In his description, in other words, he describes those features which are important for the story. This is done through the narrator's voice.

Let us view him describing his character, Jeksini, in Nqiyake (1980:83-84):

"Sekusho lombhemu wakwabo nemoto eyicima ukuduma. Abese esivula isicabha esingakuye ehlele phansi. Isudi leli aligqokile lifana nayo lemoto kanti ufake isigqoko sakhe esibomvu.

Yinde lensizwa yakwabo; ngokwebala ingamunwe. Lapha ebusweni, isikhumba sayo sibusheshelezi sengathi sake salolongwa ngembokodwe yomfula.

Uma nje ihleka, kuvela uthotho lwamazinyo ayo alingana sengathi ayehlelwe ngumuntu ngesihlabo ewalolonga." "Ukuhamba Kuzala Induna"

(Then comes this fellow and switches off his car's engine. Then he opens the driver's door and alights from the car. He is wearing a suite with the colour of his car and is wearing a red hat.

This fellow is tall with a dark facial complexion. Here in his face the skin is so smooth as if somebody used a grinding stone to smoothen it.

When he laughs you see a row of teeth as if somebody had been busy filing them with a file.)

This gives a fine physical description of a gentleman who was on a courting outing.

Another fitting description is in "Lapho Izivunguvungu" where we get these paragraphs:

"Umfundisi Mbuyisa lona ophethe ibandla lase Swidi, eMpaphala, unesiphiwo saphezulu sokushumayela nokuphendula abantu. Uma eyichaza imibhalo engcwele, uyichaza indaba uze ubone ngokusobala ngamehlo enhliziyo. Angisaphathi-ke uma esezibiza laphaya esiguqweni emsamo, isifazane sesinyathelana.

Yakhiwe lensizwa kanti nesikhundla lesi sobufundisi ungathi yayidalelwe sona isesenimbeni kunina, uMaKubheka. Iwushiyile umhlabathi lensizwa, yasho ngamehlo ayo amakhulukazi. Ezakhe izibuko ezimnyama sengathi ngezelanga."

Uyothi (1981:61)

(This Reverend Mbuyisa who is in charge of the Sweden Church at Mpaphala has a gift in preaching and converting people. When he explains the holy scriptures, he explains in such a way that you get a clear picture of what he says. Let alone when he prays in front with women.

He is well built and even for this position of preaching you can think he was meant for it from his mother, MaKubheka's womb. He is tall with big eyes. He has dark spectacles like sunglasses.)

In the above description we are not just given the physical description, but how Reverend Mbuyisa is gifted in preaching.

The method of direct presentation has the advantage of being clear and economical, but it can never be used alone. The direct method, we may remark, if it is not supported by an indirect one, does not become emotionally convincing.

3.1.2 Dramatic Approach

In this approach characters are made to talk. The author creates characters who are going to reveal themselves to the readers. Mkhize does this in a number of ways. Let us consider them:

3.1.2.1 Self-introduction

In this case we get a character, in a conversation, introducing himself/herself to another character. Let us see him doing this in "Idili Likakhisisimuzi":

"Kanti-ke ungethuki, dadewethu, mina ngingu-MaNgubane oshadele kwaNkosi. Ngihamba ngithengisa izimpahla zikaKhisimusi. Ngikuyalelwe nguSister Makhoba wathi wazikhalela kabi ngenkathi ubona izitsha zakhe zedina azithenga lapha kimina". Kusho lomame engasaphumulanga. "Uyamazi uSister Makhoba?"

"Nami, dadewethu, angingakulibazisi. Njengoba ngishilo ekuqaleni, mina owami umsebenzi yikhona ukuthengisa amaChristmas Hampers." Kusho yena uMaNgubane edonsa itasi lakhe, elibeka emathangeni, elivula."

Uyothi (1981:18)

["Oh, don't be alarmed, my sister, I am MaNgubane and I got married to Nkosi. I am going about selling articles for Christmas. I have been directed to you by Sister Makhoba who said you got interested in a dinner set when you saw hers which she bought from me," said this woman without giving herself a rest. "Do you know Sister Makhoba?"

"Even I, my sister, am not going to delay you. As I said at the beginning, my work is to sell Christmas Hampers", said MaNgubane, pulling her

suitcase and putting it on her thighs and opening it.]

We find this technique of presenting characters very interesting. It totally exposes the character when he/she introduces himself/herself. This is true of people who are fast in talking. They do not give time to their audience for questioning - which led to Mrs Ndumo not knowing the exact truth about her order of pots. She was misled to believe that they come with meat.

3.1.2.2 Introduction Through Action

In this instance characters may be created and revealed through their actions.

In the story "Bhala Mabhalane" in Emhlabeni (1977:90-105) the character Mevana Shange appears as a man of action. He writes letters for his illiterate compound co-workers, he is sent to buy articles for his co-workers. They even pay him for these duties. All his actions show cleverness. This is the reason why he uses this cleverness and tries to 'kidnap' MaNtuli Mabaso.

We would like to emphasise that action is a more effective way of showing character. It is primarily through what he does that we who observe him know what he is. We say this,

bearing in mind another example in the character Shedi, in Kunjalo -ke (1981:93-108). The title of the story is "Imvubu kaShedi". It is obvious to all of Mkhize's readers that Shedi is insane.

In the first instance we are surprised to see Shedi flogging Vusumuzi (p.100). Vusumuzi is his sister's boy-friend and there is absolutely no reason for him, i.e. Vusumuzi to be beaten in that manner.

Shedi's insanity is finally exposed by the letter (p.101) that he writes courting Nokukhanya Msomi, who is Vusumuzi's sister. The envelope bears a poor drawing of the house, a child and cattle. The hand-writing is horrible and full of spelling mistakes, e.g. Msomi is Musomi. The message contained in the letter is naive.

The display of these actions show beyond doubt that this character, Shedi, is mentally handicapped.

3.1.2.3 Introduction Through Dialogue/Conversation

In one of his stories, Mkhize uses a telephonic conversation to reveal his characters. In the story "Eyomndeni Ayingenwa" in Emhlabeni (1977:27-31) two characters, Mthunzi and Zaban-guni, are introduced indirectly through the conversation that they hold over the telephone.

We get the following:

"Wo, mntakababa, lendaba eseyenziwa ngumalume muvanje mina seyithanda ukungehlula. Bheka ngoba izinkomo ... enye ibize yena eyesibili kube ngeyami," kwasho uMthunzi exoxa nodadewabo ngocingo.

["Wo, my sister, what our uncle is doing, of late, is confusing me. Behold, because cattle ... one must be in his name and the second should be mine," said Mthunzi talking to his sister on the telephone.]

We know that many people nowadays use the telephone as a means of communication. It is a fact that some people use telephone even when there are no urgent messages - as we discover in this discussion. In this conversation we have been made to know about our characters, the setting and even the conflict.

3.1.3 The Naming Method

Neethling (1985:88) says the following concerning this technique:

One of the most obvious categories and the one in which characterisation through naming is well

manifested, is the category Alvarez-Altman calls the diactinic family or attributive names. She chose the term because these names are capable of transmitting intellectual actinic rays of light upon the characters and their attributes.

When the author uses this technique, we may say he is doing what some scholars like Mtuze call 'pre-stabilization of characters'.

Mkhize uses this technique in several stories in various ways:

3.1.3.1 Behaviour

Some of Mkhize's characters are named according to the manner in which they behave themselves. Emhlabeni (1977: 42-56) contains a story entitled "UNtozakhe Nezakhe" where our main character is Ntozakhe (His own things). Even the narrator gives this:

UNtozakhe, njengoba negama lakhe lisho, wabe engumuntu weziga, izigigaba nezigameko, ezingapheliyo.

(Ntozakhe, just as his name suggests, was a person of numerous incidents and events.)

There are many shocking events of this character which lead to him being gaoled.

We may take another example in Nqiyake (1980:142-164) where we have a story entitled: "Zayikhingam Emthumeni" with Maqiyana Jakobe Khumalo, who behaves and lives through tricks up to the end.

3.1.3.2 Appearance

Mkhize names some of his characters according to their appearance or what they are wearing.

An example of a character who is named according to her appearance is Ndilinga. Others are named according to their attire, e.g. Kapisi. The above character, Ndilinga, is from the story "Ulibuka Uyaligcina" in Emhlabeni (1977: 121-135) while Kapisi is in the story "Onakho Uyaphiwa Kuvame" in Uyothi (1981:25-36).

We feel Mkhize has done something remarkable in this character, Kapisi, who wears a cap. The word 'Kapisi' means cap. Clothing in our society plays a very important role in as far as identification is concerned. Church women, for instance, wear certain dresses (uniform) with certain colours to identify themselves. Even tsotsis or people who want to be recognised as tsotsis do have special

clothes. The cap, in most cases, is not worn by dignified men. So it does not surprise us when we see this Kapisi being caught by police.

3.1.5 Special Character

We note how Mkhize has developed his regular character Gatsheni/Ndlovu who is depicted as a husband who is harrassed by his wife, MaMthethwa.

We would like, however, to refer to this special character, Gatsheni, as a caricature. According to Cuddon (1984:101-102) a caricature is:

"a portrait which ridicules a person by exaggerating and distorting his most prominent features and characteristics".

We find Gatsheni in "Ungayingeni Eyomndeni" in the anthology Uyothi (1980:1-15) being somewhat this type of a character. There are events which force readers to laugh. The laughter evoked can rather be described as being genial than being derisive, for example when he is being hit by his neighbour, Shabangu (p 10).

Kunjalo-ke (1980: 38-54) also does contain such a story. The title of the story is "UGatsheni, idimoni lebandla!"

The 'amusing' episode starts when Gatsheni pesters the security man to let him enter the compound until he is attacked by the bull (pp 51-53).

It is interesting to note that the sense of creativity in Mkhize has enabled him to vary his techniques to this extent. We also find his characters being relevant to us and our experiences because they behave like people that we know.

3.1.5 Nameless Characters

Like most authors, Mkhize in some of his stories uses nameless characters. His short stories appear to have been influenced by folktales - nameless characters are typical of folktales. However, in modern literature, nameless characters are a technique of minimizing the number of characters, more especially in short stories.

Let us examine Mkhize doing it in Emhlabeni (1977:26):

Babesuka-ke namadoda omuzi sebegonde khona
endlini yakhe umfundisi. "Unyawo Alunampumulo"

[They then moved with the men of the kraal going
to the house of the minister.]

He does not name the men of the kraal (amadoda omuzi).

In Uyothi (1981:27) we also come across a sentence like this one displaying a nameless character:

Nangu futhi lomnumzane osuka emathikithini
noshintshi ehamba emxosha ngawo
"Lembul' ingubo lingene"

(Here is again this gentleman from the ticket office with change chasing him.)

This technique of using nameless characters has contributed in reducing the number of characters in the story.

3.1.6 Flat characters and round characters

At this juncture we need to define what a flat character is. According to Dubé et. al. (1983:1332) a flat character "... is a character drawn with only surface facts and details", while Newton (1988:132) describes flat characters in the following manner:

In their purest form, they are constructed round a single idea or quality; when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards the round.

The factors mentioned in the above definition are five,

viz. actions, speech, thoughts, physical appearance and what other characters say or think of the character. As we have stated earlier on, we are given the physical description and actions of Jekseni (our first character). What we have been given about Jekseni does not make him a round character, which is in line with short stories as a genre. In short stories an author cannot afford to give unnecessary information because economy of words and a single effect are the principles.

We must be reminded that we have another type of character called a round character. According to Cuddon (1976:271-2) a round character is described thus: "a 'round' one develops and thus alters".

Forster (1954:53) offers this elaborated definition of this concept:

A round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity; thus he is as difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and like most people he is capable of surprising us.

In short we may say a round character is the one who displays all sides of his life - both the good and bad qualities. In other words, he should be fully described as

we are dealing with literary work. We, however, do not deny the fact that the characters, even in short stories, do alter and develop or even play different roles. But the main question is to what extent? Our difficulty in answering this question forces us to deny, in the strictest sense of the definition, the existence of roundness of characters in Mkhize's short stories particularly. To conclude this argument we may take this statement from Kenny (1966:104) "... characters seldom develop in the short story".

3.1.7 Conclusion

It is interesting to note that in the various techniques that Mkhize employed he gives characters that are predictable i.e. names that will make readers predict what is going to be the outcome, e.g. Maqiyana is a diminutive word used as a derogative and so we are not surprised when his mission fails.

We are, however, not happy with the number of characters in some of his stories. They are rather many, because in a short story compression, in all aspects, is stressed.

Ntuli (n.d.) puts it this way:

"We have said repeatedly that the short story is

compressed. This means that it cannot accommodate many characters like the novel does. It is often said that in the short story there should be only about three or four characters."

The story entitled: "Ungayingeni Eyomndeni" in Uyothi (1981:1-15) has seven characters. They are MaMthethwa, MaGumede, Gatsheni, Sibisi, Shabanza, Msomi and Sibiya. This number of characters i.e. seven (7) is rather too much for a short story.

CHAPTER 4

SETTING

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Abrams (1971:172) defines setting as follows:

The setting of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs; the setting of an episode or scene within a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place.

Cuddon (1984:620) gives this brief definition of the concept: "The where and when of a story or play; the locale"; while Kenney (1966:38) offers this definition:

"The term 'setting' refers to the point in time and space at which the events of the plot occur";

and finally Dubé et. al. (1983:1335) simply say: "Setting is the element of time and space".

Some scholars may refer to this element as surroundings or environments or even scenes. The latter is used mainly by dramatists. This element is concerned with the place and time where action is taking place. We should bear in mind that action takes place somewhere. In other words as Kenney (1966:38) puts it in his introduction of this subject: "Everything that happens happens somewhere at some time".

This element of setting becomes more important because the entire action of a story is frequently determined by the locale in which it is set. Let us think of a character in a story - we must know where he is acting (it cannot just be in the vacuum) and when he is acting. Sherrill and Rorbetson-Rose put it this way in Mabuza (1988:109):

"Setting is an essential element in a short story; in neither life nor story can man exist independant of his environment".

We take interest in this aspect because we entertain the idea that where action takes place helps to focus the reader's expectations. In other words, setting helps to bring about events and to establish their meaning.

4.1 ELEMENTS OF SETTING

In our definition of the concept 'setting' it became obvious that it embraces both physical and non-physical factors. Let us now consider them in turn:

4.1.1 Physical factors

Under the above sub-topic we may include the actual geographical location. We find Mkhize using both rural and urban settings in his short stories.

4.1.1.1 Urban settings

Here we get the names of modern towns and cities e.g. "Ucisho Akadlelwa" is a story found in Ezomhlaba (1972:19). Consider, for instance, the following passage taken from this story:

"Umcelo kaSibindi Nxumalo nentokazi yaseMtata, uNombulelo Fani waba yindaba egudwini neyayixoxwa kabanzi kulolonke iTheku namaphethelo ikakhulukazi eLamontville eNylon kuye kuyoshaya kwaMakhutha imbala."

[The proposal of marriage of Sibindi Nxumalo to a lady from Umtata, Nombulelo Fani, became the talk which was circulating in the whole of Durban and its surroundings more especially at Lamontville at Nylon up to Makhutha township.]

We may also take another example of this nature found in Emhlabeni (1977:15). The title of the story is "Unyawo Alunampumulo":

"Endlini lapha balala noBheki. Umsakazo uzwakala ukhuze phezulu kanti nesitofu sakhe lesi esifuthwayo, naso sibelesele ngowaso umsindo kangangoba naye uDumisani akezwanga ukuthi kukhona ongqongqozayo esicabheni ngenkathi yena esasula lezicathulo zakhe zomdanso, ezesulwa ngobisi. Phela ntambama wayezolandwa yimoto imyise eThawini lapho wayezoba yimpelesi yomngane wakhe ababefunda naye owayeshada."

[Here in the house they sleep with Bheki. The radio is blaring while the primus stove is making its own noise to such an extent that Dumisani does not hear that there is somebody knocking at the door while he is busy polishing his dance shoes with milk. That afternoon he was going to be fetched by car to Pietermaritzburg where he was going to be the best-man for his ex-school-mate.]

We may note here the names of popular townships: Lamontville, Makhutha and Nylon. Even the name Thawini for Pietermaritzburg is very striking. Most of the readers have been to these towns and cities and so when they read about the events taking place in them they feel being part of the story.

4.1.1.2 Rural settings

This gives elements such as path with thorns and the climbing of mountains as Mkhize describes in "Ngiyeke" (1980:145). The title of the story is "ZayikHINGA Emthumeni":

"Baqhubeke belibashuza ngezinyawo. Phela onkabi bahamba kancane nje ngoba nezicathulo nazi bazetshethe emhlane bezilengise ngezintambo. Baze bazikhumule nje, kade zibawisa beshelela engongonini yasebusika yomile nanokwenza kanti -ke ...

... boyiwela nini iNdonyane? Basazoguduza ehlanzeni, bewela imifula nemifudlana bengakafinyeleli enkangala emathafeni lawa ezimoba zabelungu."

[They continued walking on foot. These two guys were walking slowly, with shoes hanging on their backs by shoe-laces. They had taken them off because they (shoes) were causing them to slip in the dry grass of the winter ...

.... when were they going to cross Ndonyane River? They were still going pass through a

forest, then cross the rivers and rivulets before they reached the flat lands with the sugar-cane fields of the whites.]

The physical factors refer to the description of objects that can be seen, touched or viewed; and these are typically of a rural setting.

4.1.1.3 Mixed settings

When one makes a survey of the use of the physical settings of Mkhize one realises that in some cases he moves his characters from one environment to another. We see some characters moving from rural to urban areas. It is in this change of environment that we realise them as "real human beings" because human beings do change places. During the time of writing of these stories our cities were still exercising influx control. When people settle in towns they also change their patterns of living.

A good example is that of Mzingelwa in "Insimba Yasulela Ngegqumusha" in Nqiyeye (1980:23-37). Mzingelwa goes to Johannesburg because he has lost his parents. He looks for work and is employed at a hotel as a chef. He prospers and ends up being rich.

In concluding this sub-section we may remark about an interesting observation in his employment of heterogeneous backgrounds as each alternative story is generally situated

in a different setting. This wide spectrum covers almost the large geographical areas where Zulu is spoken. We find Sibusiso in "Umvundla Ziwunqanda Phambili" in Ezomhlaba (1972:76-89) travelling as far as Kimberley, Galeshewe Township, where only a few people understand Zulu.

We, however, cannot fail to point out that Mkhize seems to have exercised this technique of "moving his characters" excessively. The story "Zifa Ngamvunye" in Uyothi (1981: 87-113), for instance, has many settings: MaBhunu's house in Steadville, MaMchunu's house (a neighbour), a house rented by teachers Mntambo and Sibisi, and in Clermont a house rented by MaCele, etc.

We feel Mkhize could have avoided this "movement of the story" by employing techniques like foreshadowing, etc. We regard this as a flaw, as he fails to move with all his characters to a new setting. So in a new setting he adds more characters.

4.1.2 Non-physical factors

Here we mean those that can be comprehended with the mind or through one of the senses. We may have examples of a religious situation.

Let us consider the story entitled: "Unyawo Alunampumulo" in Emhlabeni (1977:24-25):

"Kwaduma indlu yonke lapho beliphindaphinda
lelivesi sebekhala izinyembezi. Umfundisi waze
wabathulisa ngokuphakamisa izandla.

Nalo-ke ithuba lakho mhlobo wami lokuba usivume
isono sakho wehlukane naso unomphela."

[The whole church-building echoed while they
repeated this verse even crying. The minister
stopped them by raising his hands.

Here is your opportunity my friend to confess
your sins and part with them forever.]

This brief description of setting serves a very vital
purpose - it gives a clear picture of the place where
action was to take place. We are impressed by the given
setting.

Further, in Ngamafuphi (1985: 106-116) we find a story
entitled: "Umngcwabo kaSathane". The first line presents
the main character, Mbongiseni. The third line presents us
with the time factor in which the action takes place. Then
there is geographical location. So now we have been
"armed" with facts which make us to be in a position to
guess what is going to happen: some sort of hooliganism;
use of transport, etc.

4.1.3 Neutral setting

In this case we find that the author in his story has given more attention to the plot and characterisation aspects. According to Kenney (1966:38):

... he (the author) sketches in only enough of the setting to lend the requisite verisimilitude to the action.

Ezomhlaba (1972:28-37) has the story entitled "Kungcon'ukwe-themba itshe." The study of this story does not reveal the geographical locality of the action. We are given time, which is Thursday (yesterday - izolo). The name of the business is given but Mkhize in most of his stories does give the name of the place which is well-known to his readership. We do not regard Vukani as sufficient geographical location because there are so many businesses known as Vukani.

4.1.4 Dynamic setting

What is implied here is that setting does not need the mere description but it must contribute to the growth and development of the story.

We may cite as our example the story: "Ukuhamba kuzal'

induna" in the anthology entitled Ngiyeke (1980:83-101). The setting of this story is Johannesburg where people from different countries are found. The main character is a gentleman called Jeksini, popularly known as Black Scotchman from Blantyre in Malawi. Generally, the following characteristics are attributed to the Malawians:

- (i) extravagancy (spending money on ladies to lure them)
- (ii) queer language (Thatha krisimusi wakho ngerosi yami, prizi dari)
- (iii) magic performances (imigilingwane)

The unfolding of these actions causes the choice setting to be dynamic. Our main character, Jeksini, speaks a queer language, gives a lot of money to Thembisile, the lady he is courting. When Thembisile and Steve run away with the money he uses magic.

4.2 FUNCTION OF SETTING

In concluding our discussion about this element we would like to mention how setting may also function.

4.2.1 Atmosphere

Here we are concerned with the creation of atmosphere.

Seasoned authors use certain things to indicate that something is going to happen. An author may tell about a stormy night indicating that there is going to be trouble, amongst the characters, in his story. He may give the description of a sunny morning indicating that things will be alright for his main character. We would like to liken this to what in actual life we call premonition.

Mkhize does use winter and cold associating it with unpleasantness and suffering. In Ezomhlaba (1972:59) we find this:

"Lokhu ngalelolanga nezulu lalithanda ukuba
makhazana liguqubele, kodwa uZodwa wajuluka
wabamanzi, kwaba sengathi ubexoshwa ngegovu lenja
..." "Buchitheka Bugayiwe"

[Even though on that day the weather was chilly,
but Zodwa was perspiring; she became wet as if
she had been chased by a big dog ...]

In the same breath we may also cite as our example this opening paragraph in "Usuku lokuzalwa" Ngamafuphi (1985:70).

"Kusebusika impela. Lapha emzini wase Wembezi,
ngaseMtshezi, amakhaza ashubisa umnkantsha
endodeni. Ikakhulu ngezikhathi zasekuseni."

[It is right in winter. Here in the township of Wembezi near Estcourt, the cold is smelting the marrow in the man. More especially during the morning.]

This story is about a family which goes through hardship - it is a poor family with the father who spends some time in jail. At the end they get a lot of money and become happy.

We are impressed by the use of this element (setting) by Mkhize. He "puts" his action where it belongs, e.g. "Ucisho Akadlelwa" in Ezomhlaba (1972: 19) where a township girl, Nombulelo, is a drunkard, as is the case, mostly, in our townships.

Our last example: "Usuku lokuzalwa" takes place in Estcourt - in winter. This place is known for its cold winters.

4.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we may remark that Mkhize appears to have varied his settings in some stories. He, however, appears to have a weakness of "moving" his stories excessively, i.e. we find one story moving to a number of places/ settings. It is suggested that a short story should take place in a limited area.

CHAPTER 5

STYLE

5.0 INTRODUCTION

We are now embarking on the discussion of style in Mkhize's short stories. We are going to restrict our treatment to titles, language, some narrative techniques and time.

5.1 TITLES

In this section we are concerned with titles of stories as found in anthologies. Let us start by defining the word 'titles'.

Fowler & Fowler (1969:1216) define title as 'Contents of title-page of book, short essential part of these used in reference', while Webster (1954:544) looks at titles as 'an inscription over, or at the beginning of something, serving to designate it'.

From the above definitions it becomes obvious that a title is something found in a book at two places, i.e. on the

title page (where we usually find the topic 'contents'), and at the beginning of each story serving as a caption.

A title sometimes gives a clue as to the theme of the story. In other words there must be a relationship between the title and content or matter. The title, in some works, may be the theme of the story.

Titles, particularly in short stories, are very important as far as readers are concerned. Here we are going to divide our readers into two categories:

In the first place there is a group of readers who read for the examination. This group reads what has been prescribed for them by their departments. We are not interested in this group in this discussion.

Secondly, there is another group that reads for pleasure. This group reads what pleases them or what appeals to them. If they decide to read short stories they usually do not read stories as they follow or appear in the book. Readers in this group will pick up the book and select the title that will appeal to, attract or 'hook' their desires. This leads us to saying that the function of the title is to attract the reading public's attention by the promise of an interesting story.

At this juncture we need to point out clearly that choosing titles in short stories requires craftsmanship - hence we find authors employing some techniques.

Dlamini in Limi (1978:63) puts it this way: 'The title of a short story should "arrest" the reader's attention and compel his momentary interest'.

The reader is usually 'arrested' by the title of the story or the topic that arouses many questions. The reader would like to have all questions answered. Questions will make him curious.

Let us explain why we read and learn. We do so because we want to know. We are aiming at freeing ourselves from the slavery of ignorance.

On the other hand, we see the author as somebody whose aim is 'to sell' his story. He must entice his readers by using an attractive title. The title should appear as a sort of a 'window' to the story.

Our study of Mkhize's titles reveals that he has used mostly proverbs. He also uses idioms and statements.

Let us examine these categories:

5.1.1 Proverbs used as Titles

We may define proverbs as traditional or old sayings - often taken from existing stories or folktales - that sum up situations. To substantiate this explanation let us take a few examples from Mkhize's stories.

In Ngiyeke (1980:23-37) we get a short story entitled: "Insimba Yesulela Ngegqumusha" (The genet shifts the blame onto the bush-shrike). There are many questions which may be aroused by this proverb, e.g. What type of blame? What happened to that bush-shrike?, etc.

The proverb arises from the folktale of a genet that went against the law of the time. At that time animals were living together. The genet went to steal at night while other animals were asleep. There was one way of catching culprits - they were seen by dew on their skins and tails. This genet had a trick. It went out to steal at night and on its return, at dawn, it removed all the dew from its skin and pasted it on the skin and tail of the bush-shrike which was still asleep. In the morning the bush-shrike was accused of stealing. After some time the truth became known and this proverb came into existence.

The aim of telling a folktale is to warn the young ones - for whom the folktales were meant - of the dangers ahead. So even this folktale is there to warn the children about the experiences of the genet so that they may not do as it did.

This proverb Insimba Yesulela Ngegqumusha and all the other proverbs used by Mkhize as titles serve as warnings. These stories are a warning or serve didactive purposes. The titles are quite fitting to the stories given to them.

There are also other proverbs which have been used twice by Mkhize - "Eyomndeni Kayingenwa" (The family feud is not interfered with), in Emhlabeni (1977:27). In another instance, in Uyothi (1981:1) it has been used as a warning "Ungayingeni Eyomndeni" (You must not interfere in a family feud). "Umlungisi uzithela isisila" (The one who puts things right brings ill-luck upon himself) is also used twice. We find it in Ezomhlaba (1972:38) and in Kunjalo-ke (1980:25).

It must be pointed out that Mkhize, according to our survey, is the only author who has extensively used proverbs as titles of his short stories.

Mkhize's technique of using proverbs as his titles is remarkable, because proverbs are frequently used by older people to educate the young. This reminds us of a Biblical

book entitled 'Proverbs' which is very educative and popular. This gives Mkhize's short stories credit. It makes them not just glossy stories whose sole aim is to entertain.

Proverbs are full of wisdom and as such they may recommend a course of action for the future. Let us look at this example in Ezomhlaba (1972:28) "Kungcono Ukuthemba Itshe" (It is better to trust a stone). The full proverb goes like this: "Kunokuthemba umuntu kungcono ukuthemba itshe" (Rather than to trust a person it is better to trust a stone).

The language found in proverbs is poetic, which also ranks Mkhize high amongst short story writers. Allen (1981:8) gives this remark concerning poetry and short stories 'The modern short story writer is a lyric poet in prose'.

In most proverbs used by Mkhize we notice elision of words, e.g. "Buchitheka Bugayiwe" (It gets spilled after being prepared) found in Ezomhlaba (1972:46) and "Eyomndeni Kayingenwa" (The family is not interfered with) in Emhlabeni (1977:27). Words which have been elided are Utshwala (Beer) and Impi (Feud) respectively. This feature of word saving or word elision gives some form of rhythm. Further, the deleted words are nouns functioning as subjects and are represented by subjectival concords.

Proverbs may also be figurative. We have cases of assonance

e.g. "Amathe Abuyela Kwasifuba" (Saliva returned to the chest) in Ngiyeke (1980:1).

Our study of Amathe abuyela kwasifuba reveals that the sentence is dominated by the vowel a as it occurs twice in each word.

There are also cases of personification e.g. "Ukuhamba kuzala Induna" (Travelling gives birth to a headman) in Ngiyeke (1980:83). Giving birth is the gift of human beings and some animals (animate things only) - not actions, such as walking.

5.1.2 Idioms Used As Titles

Nyembezi (1954:202) cites Doke defining an idiom as:

a structural form or a form of expression peculiar to a particular language, and one which reflects the genius of the language and psychological working of the speakers of such language.

Fletcher and Scealess (1980:16) define an idiom as:

an expression peculiar to a language which if construed literally may be meaningless or at

least not have the meaning that the words convey.

Cuddon (1984:321) gives the following definition of the term, idiom

It is a form of expression, construction or phrase peculiar to a language and often possessing a meaning other than its grammatical or logical one.

This brings us to the conclusion that an idiom is any expression which is popular and somewhat peculiar to a language - it conveys a distinct meaning. The generally accepted grammatical rules do not always play an important role in an idiom.

In Zulu, idioms are referred to as Izisho (sayings or old popular sayings). In most cases when someone uses an idiom, he will indicate in a style like this - 'the saying says ...'

In Kunjalo-ke (1980:55-72) Mkhize uses the following idiom as his title: "Umsinsi Wokuzimilela" (The indigenous lucky bean tree). This phrase is an idiom because it has two meanings. There is a surface meaning and a deep meaning. For instance, this idiom is not referring to a tree but to a person.

The story is about Velaphi Ndlovu who works as a shop-assistant in Mr McAllister's store. This shop is situated in Velaphi's home area. At one stage the shop-owner, Mr. McAllister, becomes dissatisfied with Velaphi and demotes him. He (Mr McAllister) employs a newcomer in the area, Muzi Mhlongo, as a supervisor to Velaphi.

This incident annoys Velaphi as we get the following extract:

Ugoduka-ke nje uVelaphi, inhliziyo yakhe ihlezi njalo igaya izibozu selokhu ifikile lensizwa ezothatha isikhundla sakhe ekhona ephila edla anhlamvana. Kodwa khona esedelela uMazambane, angaletha umuntu ozophatha yena engumsinsi wokuzimilela." (pp 58-59)

[On his way home, Velaphi was very angry because of the arrival of this fellow who has come to take his position while he is there (Velaphi). Even if Mazambane (Mr McAllister) was very insolent, he could not bring somebody to supervise him while he (Velaphi) is an indigenous lucky bean tree.]

Another idiom in Emhlabeni (1977:75-89) is "Waqala Ngokwen-

dlala" (He started by making bed). In this story, too, we are not referring to a bed as such, but to a deed.

The story is about Mzikayifani Shezi who spent or destroyed everything he had - he even bought some articles on credit because he had won a jackpot. It happened that in the process of destruction he inadvertently destroyed the ticket with which he was to be paid. He ended up not only poorer but in debt.

While Mkhize is saluted for his use of proverbs and idioms as titles we cannot fail, however, in concluding this subsection, to point out the effect that they (proverbs and idioms) may have on suspense as an element of the story. When the study of proverbs and idioms is done, it is realised that most of them warn about experiences derived from past happenings. This may tend to discourage readers because they have been given a clue that the story ends in a certain way. We may cite the story entitled: "Umvundla Zawunqanda Phambili" in Emhlabeni (1977:1-13) where the main character, Nkanyezi, ends up in humiliation as the title suggests.

5.1.3 Statements and phrases as titles

We find a couple of a variety of statements used as titles in Mkhize's short stories. Such statements do 'arrest' the reader's attention.

In Ngamafuphi (1985:106-116) we get the title "Umngcwabo kaSathane" (The burial of Satan). Many questions may be aroused by this phrase. Who is this Satan? Who buried Satan? What happened? When did it happened? etc.

Another example is found in Kunjalo-ke (1980:1), viz "Ngiyazisa ngomntanami!" (I am sorry about my child). This statement may also arouse many questions. Who is this child? What happened to the child?, and many more questions. This is a mourning statement accompanied by an exclamation mark which makes it more effective.

Some of Mkhize's titles are of religious origin e.g. "Lapho Izivunguvungu" (when the gales) in Wabonani (1981:61).

* This is also the title of a hymn. Where Mkhize has used a title with a religious connotation he makes a point that the story has something to do with christians.

In concluding this subsection we may generally say that Mkhize has made a fair attempt in giving his stories significant titles.

5.2 DIALOGUE

Dialogue brings in dramatisation to a story and dramatisation in turn gives life to a story. It has more effect over

* See appendix 2.

narration because it removes the narrator from the scene - leaving the reader and the characters only. The reader perceives not the characters but what the characters perceive. The reader is locked into the reality of the character.

A study of Mkhize's short stories reveals that about 70% of his narration is made up of dialogue.

Let us look at Mkhize displaying this:

"Sanibona, Nkosikazi. Nathi silethwe yikhona ukuhlupheka kwalomhlaba. Kodwa nisavuka, mame?" kusho uSiqwayi.

"Siyavuka lokho okuncane. Asingene endlini, Baba, uma kukhona ohamba ngakho", sekusho uMaSithole.

"Qha, Nkosikazi, ngoba nakhu sengikhulumile nomfundisi, asisekho isidingo sokuba ngize ngingene endlini ngoba nelanga lishonile", kusho uMkhwanazi.

"Yebo, nginibonile nami ngenkathi nixoxa noyise kaNomathamsanqa. Khuluma, Nkwali, ngingakulibazisi", kusho umame.

["Hallo, Madam. I have been brought by the problems of this world. How are you, Madam?" said Siqwayi.

"We are still fine. Let us get into the house, Sir, so that I can help you" said MaSithole.

"No, Madam, because I've spoken to the minister, there is no need for me to get into the house and it is getting late" said Mkhwanazi.

"Yes, I did see you speaking to Nomathamsanqa's father. Speak, Nkwali, so that I do not waste your time" said the woman.]

The reader is 'compelled' to be in this scene, psychologically, and move his attentive 'eyes' from character to character as they speak.

We may further point out that dialogue, in short stories, reveals the influence of folktales because we may find the narrator getting to the stage of imitating or dramatizing some of his characters. We refer to folktales because we classify folktales under traditional drama. Mkhize does this by describing the speech of his characters, e.g.

"Pho, ikhuluma ngesineke kanti nezinhlamvu iziphi-
misela ngokucacile ngephimbo layo elisasihosho."

"Mina Nkosazana ungasho wena inombolo nomgwaqo
ngikuthathe ngiye ngikubeke lapho uya khona ..."

Emhlabeni (1977:121)

[Yo, he speaks slowly and carefully while
pronouncing syllables clearly with his hoarse
voice.

"To me, Lady, you can just give the number and
the street, I'll take you there".]

The reader may find himself automatically reading "slowly
and carefully" as he imitates the character.

5.2.1 Telephone conversation as dialogue

Mkhize's characters also hold dialogue over the telephone.
A good example is in the story "Ayingenwa Eyomdeni" in
Emhlabeni (1981:27-31) where about one third of the story
is in the form of conversation over the telephone. Another
example is also found in Emhlabeni (1981:111-112), the
title of the story being "Isipho Sakho Sikakhisimusi",
where we get a conversation between two lovers, Jabu and
Steven.

"Nguwe lowo Steven?" kubuza yena uJabu ocingweni emva kokuba kade eyishayela lenombolo kodwa ingangeni. Avume uSteve kulokhu kokugcina naye esedelile. "Kodwa kunini kade ngizama ukuba ngixhumane nawe kodwa ucingo lungavumi?" ...

"Hawu, kanti nguwe lowo Jabu, Mduduzi wenhliziyo yami? ..."

["Is that you, Steven?" asked Jabu on the phone after trying for a long time. Steve answered the phone at last. "But I have been trying to contact you in vain."

"Ah, is it you Jabu, the comforter of my heart? ..."]

There are many instances where Mkhize displays this technique. It is another way of advancing plot while satisfying the reader's demand for concreteness.

5.3 MONOLOGUE

There is also monologue in Ezomhlaba (1972:12) where the character, Mandla speaks to himself:

Behla bonke emotweni wase esala yedwa uMandla naye imphethe eyakhe imizindlo ngalendaba.

"Uthi uma ngingase ngimvuse uSibindi ngalendaba kaNombulelo, angeyiyeke phansi ..."

Azibuze aziphendule impela uMandla kubonakale ukuthi itshe limi ngothi uqobo.

"Ucisho akadlelwa lutho"

[They all alighted from the car and he remained alone (Mandla). He was worried about this matter.

"Do you think if I can alert Sibindi about this issue of Nombulelo, he won't leave her ..."

He questioned and answered himself, indicating that things were bad.]

In Emhlabeni (1977:6) we also find this sentence about Elsie after speaking to herself for a long time.

Usekhuluma yedwa njengohlanya umntaka Zondi nalendaba angeke ayixoxa namuntu.

"Umvundla Zawunqanda Phambili"

[She was speaking alone like a madman, the child of Zondi, while she cannot tell other people this story.]

We may sum up these subsections by laying emphasis on the fact that these elements (dialogue and monologue) are important because they create a sense of verisimilitude and immediacy in a story. This is confirmed by Albright (1931:128) when she cites Bates on Talks on Writing English who defines dialogue as a:

Composition which produces the effect of human talk - as nearly as possible the effect of conversation which is overheard.

5.4 MKHIZE'S LANGUAGE

Dietrich and Sundell (1983:221) offer this lengthy explanation on language and style:

Language is the medium of fiction, the raw material from which writers fashion their art. With the infinite variety of language in mind, writers select their words precisely, arrange their sentences carefully, and, for each story, create a unique and appropriate verbal texture.

The term widely used to describe this texture is style; among its most important components are diction, image and symbol.

In the study of literature, we speak of 'literary' language as against 'ordinary' language.

By 'ordinary' language we refer to such things as newspaper reports, letter-writing, etc. where the emphasis is on conveying information. In literature, however, the language is used in an emotive way - that is, in a skilful manner to arouse an emotional response by the reader.

Further, when we use the term "style" or "style of literature", we have concepts such as embellishment and representation.

Embellishment means that writing is automatically made beautiful through the addition of certain standardised linguistic ornaments. These ornaments are, as has been mentioned above: diction, image and symbol.

Diction refers to the choice of words, while an image may be defined as a word which creates a picture in the reader's mind or stimulates a sensory response. A symbol

is an artificial referent that the mind makes on the basis of association and resemblance.

Representation means the use of language to a high degree with the intention of reflecting and reinforcing the content of a text. Jefferson & Robey (eds.), (1982:63) go to the extent of giving o and u as dark vowels which suggest gloom or obscurity.

In our study we have observed the following literary ornaments in the style of Mkhize's text.

5.4.1 Izithakazelo

We find Mkhize having the tendency of employing izithakazelo (clan-praises). He handles this technique marvellously.

In Ngiyeke (1980:43) we hear of Mkhize as Gubhela, Gcwabe. While in Emhlabeni (1977:1) Zondi is called Nondaba; Ndlovu is Gatsheni, Boya benyathi, Nkomo zadle khaya ngokuswela abelusi and Cele is addressed as Khumbuza, Nkomo-eyasengwa-ilele.

In Uyothi (1981:37 ff) Ngcobo is addressed as Fuze, Mapholoba Mashiy'amahle. In Ezomhlaba (1972:46) Luthuli is addressed as Madlanduna, Mazibuko as Nzima and Mthombeni as Lwandle lona luwelwa zinkonjane zindiza phezulu.

The use of izithakazelo by Zulu-speakers is a sign of respect (hlonipha). The knowledge of izithakazelo shows that one is a typical Zulu. It is very normal and typical of the Zulu to use izithakazelo in their conversation. It gives more dignity to the conversation. We would like to take as our example the case of a wife praising her husband in the story entitled: "Isipho sakho sika Khisimuzi" in Emhlabeni (1981:108).

... Siyakubongela nathi Mnguni sithi
sengathi izinhlanhla zingalokhu
zakulandela wena wako Phakathwayo.

[We join you in rejoicing and we wish
you more luck.]

This woman is praising her husband, Gumede, thus displaying respect by using clan praise names like Mnguni and Phakathwayo.

5.4.2 Ideophones

Although Mkhize does not use many ideophones in his stories, he does occasionally use ideophones, for instance xinti, heqe, qhakla, shazi, etc. In Uyothi (1981:40) the story entitled "Lembul' ingubo Lingene" has this sentence:

Bathi bangangena indlu yathula cwaka."

[When they entered the house they became
dead silent.]

Ideophones help to economise words, which is very important in short stories. They are an asset to the short story writer because he needs to say what he wants to say in a few words.

5.4.3 Hlonipha Language

Doke and Vilakazi (1964:335) describes hlonipha language as:

Avoiding in conversation the use of the words which contain the radical of the names of certain persons to whom such respect is due; substitute a fresh term for a word avoided due to respect according to Native custom.

We find Mkhize also employing the Hlonipha language in some instances. In Ezomhlaba (1972:49) we come across this proverb 'Kuhle okwamahabulo umuntu esemvuka esiswini' (As good as when somebody is being overcome by liquor). The word amahabulo which has been substituted for utshwala. Another example is in Uyothi (1981:40) where we find the following:

Kwathi lapho seliya ngomtsha wenjeza baqala ...

[When the sun was about to set they started ...]

The word indoda has been substituted by injeza. These examples serve as proof that Mkhize does display the use of hlonipha language in Zulu. This illustrates the social use or function of language in literature.

5.5 FIGURES OF SPEECH

Mkhize's language is rich in figures of speech, proverbs and idioms. He doesn't just employ images but he actually formulates his own.

Authors often use the language figuratively with the intention of drawing the attention and giving clarity to that particular passage or phrase. We will briefly highlight some.

5.5.1 Simile

Fowler & Fowler (1969:772) define this figure of speech as:

"Writer's or speaker's introduction of an object or scene or action with which the one in hand is compared for the purpose of illustration or ornament, passage effecting this."

In Ezomhlaba (1972:59) we get this simile '...wawungibekele amanzi njengenkukhu ...'. [... you boiled water as if you thought I were a chicken whose feathers needed removing ...]. It is a known practice that in our society when you intend slaughtering a chicken you start by boiling water. Lancelot was complaining to Zodwa because she was a drunkard and yet she wanted him to marry her.

In Emhlabeni (1977:1) we come across this simile '... kwakuwumthetho wendoda ukuba idle bese yesula umlomo kuhle okwenkukhu ...'. [it was a habit for men to eat and wipe their mouths like chicken]. In our society women do know that some of their husbands do have other lovers - they do not regard this seriously, they overlook such cases and in most cases it ends there.

Further in Kunjalo-ke (1980:130) in the story entitled "Indlu yegagu iyanetha" we come across this simile

Ngiyasola, kodwa ukuthi usabuya khona lapha
ophuzweni njengesipoki!

[But I suspect that some time ago, he was a
liquor addict.]

In these examples, Mkhize's similes are apt and appropriate. He uses easy and common examples which clearly add meaning to the stories.

Mkhize also employs this technique of exaggerating in his short stories. In Ezomhlaba (1972:50) we find this hyperbolic description of the character's joy:

Ngaphakathi, inhliziyo kaZodwa ayisagxumi sekuthi mayiphume ngomlomo wukujabula...

[Inside, Zodwa's heart was jumping to an extent of getting out through the mouth with joy...]

The idea here is also to highlight the extent of joy.

Mkhize has beautified his language by the use of these ornaments.

5.5.4 Proverbs and Idioms

Mkhize appears to have employed proverbs and idioms excessively not only in his titles, but also in his narration. We are tempted to think that the idea is to bring home his meaning or message more effectively.

At some stages Mkhize employs more than one proverb in a single sentence. Here is an example from Ezomhlaba (1972:19).

Kanti-ke, njengoba basho abadala babeqinisile uma bethi ukhuni luzala umlotha futhi bangagcini

lapho ngoba baqhubeka bathi ngisho ithanga lizala inkovu.

[Well, as old people truthfully say, even the wood produces ash and they further say, also the pumpkin produces pumpkinwater.]

The love of Mkhize for proverbs and idioms becomes clear when he goes to the extent of translating English ones. In Ezomhlaba (1972:59) we get this expression which is foreign '... amehlo lawa asebhukuda esizibeni sezinyembezi' - ... [her eyes were swimming in the pool of tears].

In Emhlabeni (1977:5) the title of the story is "Umvundla zawunqanda Phambili" we get this expression:: '...injongo yakhe bekuwukuchitha lesisidlekana sothando uNkanyezi...' (...her intention was to destroy this love-nest, that is Nkanyezi...).

There are also proverbs, idioms and coined words exposing Mkhize's sense of creative power.

In Ngiyeke (1980:55) he gives this idiom of his creation '... isiphukuphuku esancela unina efile' - [... a fool who sucked the breast of his dead mother].

We also note expressions like 'Ungumuntu wesikhathi ecashazini' [He keeps a point - meaning an appointment time], Uyothi (1981:37).

Still in Uyothi (1981:47) we get this example of coinage of expression:

"Kwethuka uNgcobo sengathi bamhlabe ngenalithi".

[Ngcobo got startled as if he had been pricked with a needle.]

There are also words like:

- isiqeda-phunga > body spray or perfume (Emhlabeni -
Umvundla Zawunqanda phambili, 1977:3)
- isidleke sothando > love-nest (Emhlabeni - Umvundla Zawun-
qanda phambili, 1977:5)
- onjikamazwi > puzzles (Ngiyeke - icala liqiw' endle-
leni, 1980:46)
- izincathazo > drinks (Ezomhlaba - Buchitheka Buga-
yiwe, 1972:54)

which are neologisms. There are also words whose meanings are unknown to us, e.g. imalasi, iphunganhloli. Both these words are found in Uyothi. The title of the story is "Lembul' ingubo lingene" (1981:50 and 37 respectively). While we applaud Mkhize for his creativity, we cannot allow him to have "his own language".

Mkhize has also blended and employed some expressions which are capable of tickling the inner feelings of his readers. The following poetic expressions can be seen from his short stories

'Asimthethisanga, asimqalekisinga, asimsongelanga,
thula wena! Uyothi (1981:10)

[We scolded him, cursed him, swore at him in the
manner you've never heard.]

and

'Sesiyobonana kusihlwa uma sesisibhidlizile
lesisidleke sikathekwane' Uyothi (1981:49)

[We shall meet tonight when we have destroyed this
hamerkop's nest.]

We are impressed by these expressions. We see alliteration
in them.

Here is another one 'UGatsheni akasaqhubeki futhi
akasabuyeli emuva' Uyothi (1981:10) (Gatsheni does not go
forward nor does he go backward). This is contrast and it
sounds beautiful. He is playing with words. He displays the
command of the language.

5.5.5 Symbol

Although most of our authors still shun this device, it is
one of the very interesting devices of style.

Dietrich and Sundell (1983:226) offer this definition of
the concept:

Symbol is an image that serves not only as an important part of a description, but also as a sign or suggestion of something larger.

Further, Dubé et. al. (1983:1336) give a more vivid and detailed definition when they say the following:

A person, place, action, or object which holds a multitude of possible meanings. Symbols are artificial referents that the mind makes on the basis of associations and resemblances, either drawn from common personal experiences or based on established literary conventions. A river is like time; a lion acts like a king; a flower is fragile and beautiful like youth and love. Every symbolic statement employs metaphor and relies heavily on the connotative quality of words.

From the above definitions and explanations we may draw the conclusion that in its simplest form a symbol is something that stands for something else. An example may be that of a bare skull on an electrical line which symbolises danger or even death.

Ngamafuphi (1985:70) has the story entitled: "Usuku lokuzalwa" with this opening paragraph:

'Kusebusika bempela. Lapha emzini waseWembezi, ngase Mtshezi, amakhaza ashubisa umnkantsha endodeni. Ikakhulu ngezikhathi zasekuseni.'

[It is right in winter. Here at the location of Wembezi near Estcourt, it is as cold as ice. It is very cold in the morning.]

Let us focus our attention on the following words:

winter - loneliness p 70
cold - misery, poverty p 70
morning - beginning of the story p 70

These words describe the situation and time at the beginning of the story. At the end of the story we find the following:

"Sengibuyile-ke nkosikazi futhi ngihambe kahle kakhulu ngoba nali ikhulu lamarandi engilisebenze kulamahora ambalwa ngihambile lapha" sekusho yena uNtumba enikeza unina kaQhude imali.

"Usuku lokuzalwa" (1985:80)

["I am back my wife and I had a successful journey because here is one hundred rand (R100,00) that I earned in these few hours of my absence" said Ntumbu handing money to Qhude's mother.]

When the day came to its end, there was warmth partly because the family was gathered together and partly because, Ntumbu came back home with the much needed money. This is a suitable end which comes late in the evening.

The story ends on a warm happier note even though it had started on an unpleasant cold one. If we compare the opening paragraph i.e. on p 112 with the following paragraph:

"WeMaZuma, awusheshe!" Usephelelwa umoya. Imali iphume emacaleni omabili eBhayibheli. Izinkulu--ngwane ezimbili namakhulu ayisithupha.

"Usuku lokuzalwa" (1985:80)

["MaZuma, come here quickly!" he said, running short of breath. Bank notes were dropping from either side of the Bible leaves. It was a sum of two thousand and six hundred rand (R2,600).]

It is interesting to note that Mkhize begins his story by using symbolic language ... a cold wintry setting at Wembezi near Estcourt. He ends the story by referring to a contrasting situation of wealth. This warm setting comes late in the afternoon. Mkhize lets his characters act in this last part in the warmth of the house, late in the afternoon.

In concluding this section, we would like to remark that

Mkhize's language and style is varied and fresh. He appears to have a sound knowledge of the language.

5.6 SOME NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

Narration involves more than a mere reporting of events in literary works. In the first place, to narrate means to tell and narration is an act of telling. We tell or narrate by means of spoken words or by written words as Mkhize has done in his short stories. In order to tell in an interesting or fascinating manner, some techniques need to be employed.

In this subsection we intend highlighting some techniques that Mkhize has used. We are going to treat the following: point of view, order, dialogue and time.

5.6.1 Point of view

This is a problematic expression because it has several meanings. For instance, it may mean 'a general attitude'. In this study, we are, however, referring to what in Afrikaans is called 'vertelhoek', i.e. the relationship between the story-teller, the story itself and the reader. In short, the vantage point from which Mkhize has selected to relate his stories.

Madden and Scott (1984:65) have this to say on the matter:

In every story, the reader responds to a voice of authority as the source of everything presented in the story. The writer creates that voice: sometimes the voice is the writer's own voice; sometimes he lets a character tell the story in the first person; sometimes he filters the story through the mind of a character using the third person.

The third person's point of view detaches the writer from personal relationship with his material.

Our study of Mkhize's short stories reveals that he has used, mainly, the third person, also known as an omniscient's point of view. Let us view this passage:

Itiye alibonge uThulani athi yena useshay
esentwala lapha enyameni. Empeleni, usejahe yona
lencwadi yesimemo esinkhumbuze ezadlulayo.

Nqiyeke (1980:44)

[Thulani thanked tea and said that his stomach was full of meat. In fact, he was rushing to read this invitation letter which reminded him of the past days.]

The storyteller (narrator) knows the truth inside the character's mind, i.e. Thulani; this character (Thulani) deceives his wife. Our key clarifying word is: empeleni (in

fact).

Another example to illustrate this is:

Selokhu ebuyile-ke uMabhunu edolobheni ulokhu eququda lamaswidi anamakha ukuze athi noma efika umakoti angaze ezwa ukuthi useke waphuza.

Wabonani (1981:89)

[Since Mabhunu returned from town he is busy chewing these aromatic sweets so that his wife may not realise that he has already been drinking.]

The narrator is aware of the plans in another character's mind i.e. Mabhunu, who is trying to hide the fact that he has been drinking.

We may remark that in the third person's point of view stories there is that ever-present narrating voice which stands between the reader and the story's characters, creating the impression of great distance, especially when the narrator not only tells but also comments on it as well, e.g.

Kodwa thina bothina, laba esiyifunda ivaliwe, akukho ukungabaza ukuthi wabona khona ukuthi ngeke zahlalelana izinkunzi sibayeni sinye.

Ezomhlaba (1972:54)

[But we, people who can read it sealed [people who can read between the lines], saw that there is no doubt that two bulls cannot live in one kraal].

A closer scrutiny of the above passage reveals that the narrator (who is not Mkhize now) not only relates external events, but also, with godlike power, reveals the inner experiences of characters, - people who can read between the lines - their thoughts, feelings and motives. This narrator is equipped with limitless knowledge which seems to range widely.

In concluding this sub-section we note that although Mkhize appears to have mainly used the omniscient point of view he does also use other types of narrators. We may take as our example: "Umvundla Ziwunqanda Phambili" in Ezomhlaba (1972:76-77) where he writes:

Ngisho nanamuhla uma singaya nawe endlini
yemibungazo khona eGqumeni esibhedlela igama
likaThozì Nxumalo uyozi bonela lona libhalwe
ngamagama egolide ukuthi ngo 1960 nguye owazuza
umklomelo we "Livingstone Memorial Prize".

[Even today if you can go with me to the
entertainment house at Gqumeni Hospital, you'll
see Thozì Nxumalo's name written with golden
letters that she obtained the Livingstone

Memorial Prize in 1960.]

This appears to be the first person narrator, i.e. the story is told from inside i.e. we find a story being told by one of the participants or characters in the story.

5.6.2 Order

This refers to the chronological sequence of events in a story. This is another interesting aspect of narrating in a story. Its main function is to arouse suspense. In the first place we may find the author relating events exactly as they happened in time. The author may also exercise what is known as displacement in handling a narration i.e. he displaces some segments of his story.

There are two types of displacement in the study of narrative techniques. In the first place we get prospective displacement, and then there is retrospective displacement. They are opposites of each other. Some scholars prefer to call prospective displacement prolepsis and we are going to do likewise in this study.

5.6.2.1 Prolepsis

Ngcongwane (n.d.1:4) describes prolepsis as follows:

The narrative privileges certain facts and brings them out in the sequence before their actual turn.

Cuddon (1984:533) defines it as:

a figurative device by which a future event is presumed to have happened.

This leads us to the conclusion that prolepsis may mean representation of an event before it actually happens in narration. We are tempted to associate prospective displacement or prolepsis with foreshadowing although it is not exactly the same.

Dietrich and Sundell (1983:129) give this explanation concerning foreshadowing:

The device of foreshadowing adds meaning to present events or details by making them indicators of the future.

In Mkhize's short stories we may take this extract as our example:

Njengoba leli sekuyisonto lesibili eqalile uSeptemba, useqalile ukuba nexhala ukuthi kazi ngalo Septemba uzokwehlelwa yini.

Uyothi (1980:1)

[As it is the second week of September, he is now worried as to what is to befall him this September.]

This element of foreshadowing is found, in most instances, in the opening paragraphs of the story because it suggests the conflict to follow. Mkhize has intensified his suspense by employing dilemma - 'what is to befall' his main character, Gatsheni. The character, Gatsheni, is worried as to what is going to happen to him. There is some expectation in him. This makes the reader to expect an event that is going to happen to Gatsheni.

5.6.2.2 Analepsis

This may be viewed as retrospective displacement because it is the opposite of prolepsis. In this case there is a going back to what has happened. This, in most cases, takes place in the form of thoughts. Some scholars prefer to call it flashback.

Mkhize displays this in one of his latest stories:

Ufanele phela naye umntakaZuma ukuba nexhala ngo-
Ntumba. Engani nangamhla eboshwa eMgungundlou
eminyakeni emine eyedlule, wabe ephume lapha
ekhaya ethe uhamba neqembu lebhola lase Masonite
wabatshela ukuthi balibhekise eS'tulwana (Emmaus)
lapho bazobe bedlala namaWinter Shooting Stars,
kanti wedusa umkhondo. Akayile nakuya ebholeni
lapho - uziyele eMgungundlovu bayogqekeza

nabangane bakhe. Kulapho baboshwa khona
bobathathu. Ngamafuphi (1985:71)

[There was a reason for the daughter of Zuma to be worried. Even on the day of his arrest in Pietermaritzburg about four years ago, he had told them that he was accompanying his soccer club, Masonite, which was going to play at Emmaus against Winterton Shooting Stars, which was misinformation. He had not gone to soccer - but had gone to Pietermaritzburg to burgle with his friends. That is where the three of them were arrested.]

The narrator flashes back to an upsetting incident - when the character was jailed. This remembrance is needed to move the story to its climax. As Dubé et. al. (1983:1331) say 'It is a literary device that interrupts the narrative to relate events that occurred in the past'.

Ngcongwane (n.d.1:38) also has this interesting comment about displacements i.e. both prolepsis and analepsis:

The effect of these displacements is usually enormous: the decoding of the narrative by the reader is facilitated by an analepsis and the level of expectation is pushed up by prolepsis.

The attempt by Mkhize to exercise this technique of order has contributed in making his stories more significant and concrete.

5.7 Time

This is another very interesting feature of fiction. We are going to attend briefly to ellipsis and duration. We need to point out right at the onset, that our research failed to unearth some of the essential elements relating to this feature in Mkhize's short stories.

5.7.1 Ellipsis

Cuddon (1984:216-217) defines the term ellipsis as 'a figurative device where a word is left out in order to achieve more compact expression'. Ngcongwane (n.d.1:39) has this to say about ellipsis: '(it) is where something that has happened in actual life is omitted or not reflected in the narrative'.

This, in most fiction, is reflected by a sentence which is given in the form of a question which is left unanswered. Mkhize applied this element, for instance, in Wabonani (1981:86) where we get this sentence:

Indaba yevolovolo nalomsakazo owambambisa
ayizange isaphathwa nokuphathwa.

"Zibanjwa Kweziwudlayo"

[The matter of the revolver and that radio which
caused him to be caught was never discussed
again.]

We know that there is a story about the revolver and the
radio but our narrator leaves it - perhaps because it is
irrelevant to our story or for other reasons.

5.7.2 Duration

We are concerned here with time duration of events
measurable in hours, days and years. This is a very
important aspect in as far as short stories are concerned.
Experience has taught us that the shorter the timespan is,
the better the story becomes.

Our study of Mkhize's short stories reveals that he did not
give much respect to this element and this contributed to
some of his stories becoming rather too long for a short
story. We have stories stretching from birth to death e.g.
Mndayiza in Wabonani (1981:114-135).

Another example is the story "Insimba Yasulela Ngegqumusha"

in Ngiyeke (1980:23-37) where we meet Mzingelwa as young a man after the death of his parents and the story ends when he is a rich married middle-aged man.

We are, however, impressed by the story in Kunjalo-ke (1980:93-107). The title of the story is: "Imvubu ka Shedi" (Shedi's Sjambok). This story starts in the afternoon when Nokukhanya receives a letter from Shadrack Khumalo. Shadrack is proposing love to her. Then we find what we call analepsis when Vusi Msomi (Nokukhanya's brother) narrates the incident when he was belaboured by Shadrack while visiting his girl-friend, Sibongile Khumalo (Shadrack's sister).

Another story in which Mkhize manages this element well is found in Ngamafuphi (1985:106-116).

The title of this story is "Umngcwabo kaSathana". The story is about Siphosenkosi Msane and Mbongiseni Makhanya, ex-school mates of Loram. The story is a flashback to Mbongiseni who is now in gaol. In fact it is not even the cause of his arrest as we learn from this last sentence:

"Kodwa okwenza ukuba simthole esendlini eyisikutu namhlanje uMbongiseni ukuthi ithi ingadla ithambo yejwayele, kanti elinye lizoze liyime emphinjeni."

["But the reason for Mbongiseni to be behind bars today is that a criminal always returns to the scene of the crime and is therefore finally caught."]

Duration is not the length of the story in the book but the length of the actual story in hours, days, months, etc. In the above story we are told about the incident that led to him being gaoled, but we are told about one incident probably out of many.

The length of this story is about $9\frac{1}{2}$ pages - the shortest in Mkhize's short stories. It is one of his last stories.

5.8 MKHIZE AND HUMOUR

We feel we cannot undermine Mkhize's ability to amuse his readers. However, we dare not classify Mkhize's short stories as just lousy humorous entertainment. We would rather classify them as escape literature of some sort.

We find some incidents in Mkhize's short stories which have been designed to arouse amusement and even laughter in the readers. We may illustrate this by considering Kunjalo-ke (1980:93-107). The title of the story is "Imvubu kaShedi".

We are forced to laugh at the letter written by Shadrack courting Nokukhanya. Nokukhanya is a highly educated lady - a double qualified nurse and her suitor, Shadrack, writes her a very primitive letter. The letter bears some stupid drawings and is addressed wrongly, with spelling mistakes. The content of the letter leaves much to be desired, with the author failing even to spell his own name correctly. Shadrack, however, shows some seriousness when he uses writing pads of a high quality and includes even a stamp for the reply.

The receiver, Nokukhanya, makes this comment:

Hhabe, kanti Bhuti, uthule nje lencwadi yami
ibhalwe kanje? Uxamu lo uze wakha ngisho nendlu,
nezinganyana lapha ngaphandle emvilaphini!
Sona-ke nje isandla bodade! Ungathi bekucwiliswe
impukane kuyinki yase ihamba lapha emvilaphini!
(p 101)

[Well, Brother, how dare you keep my letter which
is written like this. This "monitor lizard" even
drew pictures of a house and small children
outside on the envelope. As for his handwriting!
You can think a fly was dipped in ink and let to
walk on the envelope.]

Another relevant episode is found in Uyothi (1981:50) where we hear of the flogging that gentleman, Mr. N.N.N. (Mainline) Ngcobo, received from his wife, MaMbhele and MaThusini. Even the words force one to laugh, e.g.

Awusishayi usiyekeleni lesisingcoli sendoda?

(p 50)

[Why don't you thrash this corrupt man? Why do you let him go?]

The story continues and we hear that Thembalihle

... wambiza ngenkulu inhlamba enephungana ...

(p 50)

[... insulted him with a big smelling insult ...]

In fact Mkhize has his own varied unique style of narrating. We find his sense of humour to be pleasant. He even tries to entertain his readers with the use of Fanakalo e.g. Kunjalo-ke (1980:37). The story is "Umlungisi uzithel Isisila" where Madevu says this to Nkofi

Wena BukaNkofi, mina kade tshelile maningi
sikhathi, wena ayikhona lomvume kalothatha
lobantu yena ayisebenza lapha duze kamina.

Losebenzi kawena yena phelile ... lethu
loshikhiye kalomoto.

[You Nkofi, I've told you many times that you
have no permission to give a lift to people who
do not work for me. I am discharging you, bring
my car keys back.]

5.9 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we may, however, remark that Mkhize displayed
some of the above techniques at the expense of the economy
and brevity of his stories and thus failed to keep his
stories short. We cannot, however, fail to appreciate
Mkhize's language and his sense of humour.

CHAPTER 6

THEMES

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Kenny (1966:91) defines the term theme as follows:

Theme is the meaning the story releases; it may be the meaning the story discovers.

He goes on to liken or equate theme in fiction with the normal human impulse or the necessary implication of the whole story.

Cuddon (1984:695) has this to say about theme:

Properly speaking, the theme of a work is not its subject, but rather its central idea which may be stated directly or indirectly.

We find Madden and Scott (1984:11) elaborating on this concept in this manner:

Theme can be defined as the generalization, stated or implied, that lies behind the narration of a specific situation involving specific individuals; and theme exists in fiction because human beings live in the same world, share similar emotions, react in similar ways to similar stimuli, and face common problems.

The theme of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is the unifying generalisation about life stated or implied by the story. In concluding this subsection we observe that theme is not the moral of the story nor should it be confused with a story's subject. Concerning morality of the story we can only point out that stories are not there to "preach" but to interpret and reveal life.

6.1 DISTRIBUTION OF MKHIZE'S THEMES

Our study of Mkhize's short stories has revealed the categories of themes outlined below for his stories. We would like, however, to point out that some stories appear to be somewhat thematically double-edged, thus reducing the degree of water-tight compartments. We attribute this to

the fact that some of his stories have more than one main event. Here follows our distribution.

6.1.1 Crime/Fraud i.e. stealing and robbery

This theme appears to be dominating. According to our judgement there are eleven (11) stories with this theme, which is the highest number. We cannot deny the fact that our modern era is dominated by crime-related events. Even Mkhize in "Zibanjwa Emthin'eziwudlayo" (1972:69) does express this through one of his characters, Sergeant Zulu.

"Kanti injani nalendawo yaseMandlalathi lokhu thina sivele ubudlova nobugebengu kuyinto yasemadolobheni kodwa manje nakhu sekudlange lapha ezabelweni koBantu, pho siyophephelaphi uma sekunje?"

["But how is this place of Mandlalathi, because when we were born unruliness and robberies were still things of the cities but now they are on the increase here in the homelands, where shall we end up when things are like this?"]

In his first book of short stories published in 1972 under the title Ezomhlaba, Mkhize deals with this theme of fraud in three of his ten stories. All these three (3) stories

depict unfaithful employees squandering money (in two stories) and properties of their employers. Mkhize, in these stories, appears to be saying crime does not pay but leads to retribution.

In "Kungcon' ukwethemba itshe" (28-37), Thandi ends up in hospital having not gained even a cent of the stolen money from Msomi's shop where she is employed as a shop-assistant. In "Lake Lazikhotha Emhlane" (61-67), too, Ndlovu, an employee of the late Sibisi is caught, thrashed and gaoled. The two culprits have employed unusual tricks of getting money. Thandi requested Dan Cele to molest her and "rob" her of Msomi's money. They will share the money later. But Dan overreacted and disappeared with all the money. On the otherhand, Ndlovu posed as Sibisi's ghost and demanded money from the widow, MaNtuli. MaNtuli, one evening, invites her fellow-congregants to spend the night in vigil. Ndlovu is caught, thrashed and gaoled.

By the same token, in the third story entitled "Zibanjwa Emthini Eziwudlayo" (68-76) Sergeant Zulu is awarded a medal for his clever strategies of arresting employees stealing their employer's properties.

The second anthology, too, Emhlabeni, which appeared in 1977, contains three (3) stories with the theme on crime.

The stories are "Eyomndeni Ayingenwa" (27-41); "Waqala Ngokwendlala" (75-89) and "Bhala Mabhalane" (90-104).

"Eyomndeni Ayingenwa" shows an uncle, Chiliza, trying to rob his nephew and niece of their cattle, but he does not succeed. "Waqala Ngokwendlala" shows Mzikayifani getting into heavy debts when he lost a ticket which had won him R4 000 in a race-course. Mevana Shange in "Bhala Mabhalane" pretends to be Diliza Mabaso and invites MaNtuli to come to Johannesburg.

The third anthology, Ngiyeke, which appeared in 1980, contains three (3) stories on crime. The stories are: "Insimba Yesulela Ngegqumusha" (23-37); "Ukuhamba Kuzal' Induna" (83-101) and "Uwena, Uzondi, Iphoyisa" (121-141).

The stories "Insimba Yesulela Ngegqumusha" and "Ukuhamba Kuzal' Induna", are about ladies who are trying to rob their male lovers. In "Insimba Yesulela Ngegqumusha", Mzingelwa is tricked by Mbhekiseni and Duduzile. He is gaoled. On his release he learns that Mbhekiseni is dead but succeeds in organizing revenge. In "Ukuhamba Kuzal' Induna", Thembisile and Steve cause Jeksini, Thembisile's suitor, to pay lobola to Thembisile's husband, Steve. When Thembisile and Steve try to run away with the money Jeksini performs his magic and they come back and apologise.

In "Uwena UZondi iphoyisa?" Matshana is gaoled by Zondi for no reason. On his release Matshana puts the record straight and Zondi pays heavily. In this anthology, too, we see that crime does not pay.

The fourth anthology Uyothi which was published in 1981 contains one crime-related story entitled: "Onakho Uyaphiwa Kuvame" (25-36). Kapisi, who is on the run from police, gives a rich man, Ngema, a lot of money. On receiving this, Ngema gives the money to the police. This costs him his wife, Nelisiwe.

Kunjalo-ke published in 1981, too, has one crime story. The title of the story is "Umsinsi Wokuzimilela" (55-71). Velaphi Ndlovu becomes jealous of his co-worker, Muzi, to the extent of plotting to poison him. The plan fails and it is Velaphi who takes poison. Velaphi is demoted for stealing his employer's money.

In Ngamafuphi (1985) Mkhize has an interesting story entitled "Umngcwabo kaSathane" (106-116) where Siphosenkosi tricks Mbongiseni into transporting dagga, thinking that he is transporting a corpse.

In his first three anthologies, containing nine (9) stories on this theme Mkhize appears to have maintained that evil,

of whatever nature, cannot reign; he makes stealing to be punishable, etc. He uses sergeants to fight robberies, e.g. Sergeant Zulu in "Zibanjwa Emthin' Eziwudlayo" (1972:68-76) is awarded a medal for catching employees who burgled their employer's property. Mkhize employs squads of police to man roadblocks in "Umngcwabo kaSathane" (1985:106-116). Some culprits are jailed, e.g. Ndlovu in "Lake Lazikhotha Emhlane" (61-67).

"Uwena UZondi, Iphoyisa" in Ngiyeke (1980:121-141) is unique in that it is a policeman who is the culprit.

However, quite surprisingly, in his two stories we observe him giving evil a leeway. This leads us to say that Mkhize, with the passing of time, seems to relax his stance, and is yielding to the contemporary society's behaviour. In the story "Onakho Uyaphiwa Kuvame" in Uyothi (1981:25- 36), Nelisiwe gets away with an amount of R1 500 belonging to her husband, Ngema. In his last published story, so far, "Umngcwabo kaSathane" appearing in Ngamafuphi (1985: 106-116) he allows dagga smugglers to get away easily with it.

We may further remark that all the culprits in these stories are mature people while in some cases we find even old men.

6.1.2 Disrespect

This is another popular theme with Mkhize, as eight (8) of his short stories fall under this category.

Ezomhlaba (1972) contains two stories with boys showing disrespect. The one story is "Umlungisi uzithela isisila" (19-27) where Mdedelwa appears to be wayward. UMaZuma, the mother of Mdedelwa, contributes to this misbehaviour of her son because she sides with him. Mdedelwa ends in gaol serving a sentence of a fifteen (15) years.

The other story is "Isalakutshelwa sibona ngomopho" (38-46) where Zakhe does not obey the boarding school's rules at St. Nevard. He goes to a circus without a permission slip. He is hurt and dismissed from school.

Emhlabeni (1977) contains one story with the theme of disrespect - the title of the story is "UNtozakhe nezakhe" and here too, the boy is receiving the backing of her mother, MaSithole. The story ends in tragedy as the father, Cele, is injured by his son, Zakhe, and is admitted to hospital. Zakhe, himself, is gaoled. In all the above cases there is retribution.

We find Ngiyeke (1977) having a similar theme in "AKabuzanga Elangeni" (102-120). Mawisa shows disrespect

to his parents. He drinks, smokes and ends up having injured his father. Mawisa, too, lost his arm. In this case, however, there is repentance from Mawisa.

Uyothi (1980) carries a story of Gatsheni who behaves like a child. The title of the story is "Ungayingeni Eyomndeni" (1-15). This disrespect cost him a fortune as he, being unaware, exercised it to his wife's uncle, Zeblon, who was coming to give them a lot of wealth.

Kunjalo-ke (1981) has two stories with this theme of disrespect. They are "Umlungisi Uzithela Isisila" (25-37) and "UGatsheni, idimoni lebandla" (38-54). In "Umlungisi uzithela isisila" we find an employee not respecting his employer's orders. UNqomfi, who works for Madevu as a driver, is not allowed to give lifts to people, but one day he is tempted and a disaster occurs as his passengers get injured in an accident. In "UGatsheni, idimoni lebandla", Gatsheni does not listen to the warning of the watchman about a dangerous bull. It ends up having injured him, too.

Mkhize, who was a teacher himself, maintains that authority should be respected at all times. He enforces authority with punishment to culprits. In four instances it is young schoolboys who become wayward. These young men are Mdedelwa and Zakhe who feature in Ezomhlaba (1972:19-27 and 38-46) respectively. The others are Ntozakhe in Emhlabeni

secret lover. His wife, Thembisile, discovers this love affair. Thembisile, together with Elsie (Nkanyezi's secret lover) make a plan to teach Nkanyezi a lesson. They all meet in the hotel where Nkanyezi has an appointment with Elsie. He had, in fact, lied to his wife, saying that he was going to Cape Town.

Nqiyeka (1980) has one story with this theme. The title of the story is "Icala leqiw' endleleni" (38-56). Here Thulani lands into trouble when his ex-girlfriend dies in his company. This mysterious incident brings an end to his marriage.

In Uyothi there are three (3) stories exploiting this theme, with two of them involving professional people, viz a teacher and a minister of religion.

The story "Lembul' Ingubo lingene" (36-60) gives an account of an ex-teacher, Nimrod Nhlanhla Ngcobo, who falls in love with a school girl, Thembalihle Mqadi. In the end they are caught by Nimrod's wife MaMbhele and Thembalihle's mother, MaThusini. They are given a good hiding and this brings an end to Nimrod's marriage.

"Lapho Izivunguvungu" (61-77) contains the story of a minister of religion, Rev. Mbuyisa, who falls in love with Mrs Veronica Mkhwanazi, Siqwayi's wife. They, too, are

caught and the Minister is fined R300.00. Rev. Mbuyisa's marriage dissolves and he loses his job, too.

"Zibanjwa Kweziwudlayo" (77-86) features MaMthembu, Bhékifa's wife, who is tempted to have a secret lover, Ngcobo. They are caught, Ngcobo gets a good hiding, pays a fine and also loses his job.

Mkhize reveals the seriousness of this subject when some female characters even take their own lives. An extra-marital relationship is sinful, but we find it being committed even by highly respected people such as ministers of religion and teachers. Even, here, culprits suffer in the end of it all. Besides, suicide committed by MaGule in Ezomhlaba "Sengikhetha Ukufa" (1972:89-97) we find culprits being fined, people losing their jobs and marriages being dissolved. These punishments display clearly how Mkhize condemns extra-marital relationships.

6.1.4 Unfaithfulness in love

This theme is closely related to the above one, i.e. extra-marital relationships, but these stories expose characters who are still unmarried. There are four of such stories.

In Ezomhlaba (1972) we get two stories. The first story is

entitled: "Ucisho Akadlelwa" (11-18), where Sibindi Nxumalo rejects his girl-friend, Nombulelo Fani, because she is a drunkard. The second story in the same anthology is "Buchitheka Bugayiwe" (46-60) where a lady, again, loses marriage because of drinking and double-crossing her lover, Lancelot. Miss Zodwa Luthuli writes letters to her two boy-friends. She makes the mistake of confusing them and in that way she is caught.

Emhlabeni (1977) has "Usuku lwesithembiso" (57-74) where Tholumuzi Msimanga nearly marries the younger sister of his girl-friend, Zodwa Thabethe. He has a child, Mbuso, with Thembisile. This is discovered very late but Tholumuzi ends engaging Thembisile.

Kunjalo-ke (1981) has a story entitled: "Ithemba Kalibulali" (108-122) where Mbuso Sylvester Ndelu is double-crossed by Nozipho Mngadi with Johnson Ntuli. Nozipho dies and Mbuso discovers this situation. Johnson is charged for the death of Nozipho and sentenced to fifteen (15) years' imprisonment.

We think Mkhize is right in highlighting this theme of unfaithfulness in love involving ladies as they are, according to our judgement, the main victims in our society. This observation leads us to say that most

unmarried ladies of these day have been forced by such circumstances to go through these ordeals. We may mention social gatherings where our ladies find themselves tempted to drink and yet their male counterparts do not want to marry drinking women. There is just untrustworthiness from both sides.

6.1.5 Revenge and counter-revenge

Planning revenge appears to be the order of the day in our society. Forgiveness and tolerance are only there in theory but are no longer practised. Mkhize has used this theme in six (6) of his stories.

We find Mkhize to have manipulated this theme magnificently. We find, in the first instance, neighbours quarrelling over a pet monkey kept by a lawyer, Mdelwa Zondo. The title of the story is "Imnand' ipholile" in Ezomhlaba (1972:1-11). One of the neighbours is Dr. Simphiwe Khumalo, who goes about influencing other township residents to harass his neighbour, Mdelwa, for keeping this monkey.

There is another story in Nqiyake (1980) entitled: "Amathe abuyela Kwasifuba" where two labourers quarrel about the selling rights for their relatives in the farm. Mpiyonke is an induna on a farm while Mafa Nxumalo is an ordinary

labourer. Mafa is physically fit and Mpiyonke cannot match him in a fair fight. Mpiyonke works out a plan to have Mafa dismissed from work. He causes havoc where Mafa works. Their employer, unfortunately for Mpiyonke, discovers that it is Mpiyonke who caused this havoc and he is the one who is dismissed. This shows that evil deeds do not always reign.

In the other two stories we get brothers avenging their sisters to ex-lovers. Emhlabeni (1980) has "Unyawo Alunampumulo" (14-26) where Bhekithemba Yeni avenges his sister, Thembeni. Dumisani Shangase impregnates Thembeni and disappears. They meet late in life. Dumisani is now a minister of religion and Bhekithemba is a Station Commander. Dumisani is ordered to pay a fine of R500.

The other story is "Imvubu kaShedi" in Kunjalo-ke (1981: 93-107) where Shedi, who appears to be somewhat mentally-handicapped, flogs Vusumuzi, his sister's boyfriend, with a sjambok. Shedi was prompted by jealousy.

Uyothi (1981) has a story entitled "Zifa Ngamvunye" (87-11) where Mabhunu ill-treats his wife, MaMcethe. This leads to their marriage breaking up. MaMcethe's brother, Baldwin, wants to avenge and Mabhunu flees. At the end Mabhunu attacks Baldwin's family.

We have yet another story falling under this theme entitled "Isikhuni Sabuya Nomkhwezeli". It is contained in Uyothi (1981:52-60) where the teacher, Mr. Lushaba, applies corporal punishment heavily to his school boys. His affair with school girls is exposed. In fact, Mr. Lushaba punishes these boys heavily because they are his rivals. When it is discovered that Mr. Lushaba is in love with school girls, he is discharged from his service.

Mkhize here appears to be revealing how brothers feel about the ill-treatment inflicted upon their relatives, more especially sisters. We may also say that blood is thicker than water.

6.1.6 Errant behaviour leads to retribution

There are four (4) stories falling under this theme. The first is "Umvundla Zawunqanda Phambili" in Ezomhlaba (1972: 76-88) where Sibusiso applies all sorts of dirty tricks to force Thozì to love him. He, however, dies in a car accident.

The second story is "Izinhlanhla Zika Sibusiso" in Nqiyeke (1980:57-82) where Sibusiso does not listen to his mother, MaMsomi. He also does not honour a concert appointment with Mr. Mhlongo. He decides very late to hitch-hike to his girl-friend's at Mazibu. He meets transport problems but still persists. He travels at night in a strange country.

He meets a ghost. He starts to blame himself.

Another story is "Zayikhingam Emthumeni" in Nqiyeye (1980: 142-164). Maqiyana and Dazini go to spend money in town. They spend all their money and remain penniless. They have a problem of getting back home. They have to cross rivers, climb mountains, etc. They blame themselves.

The last story under this theme is "Ngiyazisa Ngomntanami" contained in Kunjalo-ke (1981:1-24) where MaNkosi spoils her daughter. At the end she lands in trouble and this worries MaNkosi.

These stories show that errant behaviour leads to retribution. Retribution, although to Sibusiso in Ezomhlaba (1972:76-88) "Umvundla Zawunqanda phambili" nearly cost him his life, is received by young men.

6.1.7 Witch-craft

Like most authors of Zulu literature, Mkhize does not give much scope to this theme as we find only three (3) stories in his five (5) anthologies.

"Ikhubalo Lenhlanhla" in Uyothi (1981:114-135) is about ukuthwala and it does not succeed as he ends up dying.

Mndayiza is the only character in Mkhize's short stories who practices witch-craft.

In the other two stories it is non-Zulus. Emhlabeni (1977:121-135) in "Ulibuka Uyaligcina" has Ndilinga as the character who performs what may be regarded as magic and which kills Cijimpi. In "Ulibuka Uyaligcina" (1977:123) she introduces herself like this:

"Mina ngingowakwaManyike isibongo - uAgnes igama.
Ngokudabuka ngazalelwa eSibasa kwaSoshangane."

["My surname is Manyike - Agnes is my name. I was
born at Sibasa in Mozambique."]

The last story under this theme is "Ukuhamba Kuzala Induna" in Ngiyeke (1980:83-101). Here again Jeksini, who practices magic, is a non-Zulu. He is described in "Ukuhamba Kuzala Induna" (1980:84) like this:

Akungabazeki nakancane ukuthi akusiyena umZulu
futhi kuyezwakala nalapha olimini lwayo ukuthi
ivela kulamazwe asenhla naleli laseNingizimu
Afrika.

[There is not even a slightest doubt that he is a

non-Zulu and you could hear even in his language that he is from these countries north of South Africa.]

We note that authors of Zulu literature do not give much scope to this theme. According to our judgement, they avoid this theme because the Zulu society does not believe that much in witch-craft. We note that ukuthwala still leaves many Zulu people in doubt. It doesn't, therefore, surprise us to see Mndayiza dying so painfully. We conclude that Mkhize is against this practice.

However, the Zulus do believe that other nationalities have power to cast magic, as depicted in Jeksini and Ndilinga. These two characters live in Johannesburg where there are many immigrants.

Jeksini, through casting his magic, forces his tricksters, Steven and Thembisile, to return the money he paid as a lobola.

We find that these magicians, who are non-Zulus, are successful in their dealings but Mndayiza, a Zulu, fails because he dies painfully, having not enjoyed his "training".

6.1.8 Miscellaneous

We find that some stories are not easy to classify because of their nature. We would rather group them under entertainment. According to Cuddon (1984:223):

"Entertainment is a term used by Graham Greene to distinguish his serious novels from his more light hearted ones".

A study of the following short stories reveals that Mkhize intended to entertain his readers. The stories are as follows:

- (i) Laphum 'iqhin' embizeni (Ngiyeke)
- (ii) Idili likaKhisimuzi (Uyothi)
- (iii) Usuku lokuzalwa (Ngomafuphi)
- (iv) Indlu yegagu iyanetha (Kunjalo-ke)

We observe that Mkhize avoids political themes probably due to the situation in the country during his period of writing. Otherwise, he distributes his themes well. Many stories are drawn from themes in which society encounters destabilizing problems such as: illicit love affairs; broken homes; unmarriageable spinsters and criminality of all sorts. In short, we can say Mkhize has chosen themes

which include problems encountered by society at large and those which are experienced in real life. On the other hand we find these stories to be of educational value because the writer does not always allow evil to reign. He builds up a situation where right triumphs over wrong. Finally we may point out that we find these stories to be interesting because the author does not moralize but lets the reader deduce from inferences. His technique leads the reader to discover the themes through the confrontation of characters and ideas. Mkhize has also used titles to reveal his themes in such cases as in "Buchitheka Bugayiwe".

6.2 UNITY IN MKHIZE'S THEMES

In this section we intend looking at the relation between theme and other elements such as setting, characters and plot. There should be unity amongst these elements with the theme forming the central core. We will treat one story to illustrate this.

6.2.1 "Isalakutshelwa Sibona Ngomopho"

- (a) The Theme of this story is disrespect. We find Zakhe disobeying the boarding school rules. He goes to a

circus show without permission. He gets injured in the show and is admitted to hospital. In the end he is expelled from school.

(b) Setting. Here we expect that there should be relation between the setting and theme. This story takes place in a rural area outside Eshowe town. It is true that the circus seldom comes to these areas. Nobody, in these areas, can afford to miss such an event. We are told that it was towards examinations. Teachers want their students to pass and so they cannot allow them to go to the circus.

(c) Character. The main character, especially, should fit in the story. In this story the main character is a school boy, Zakhe, who is a boarder. Some boys are sent to boarding schools in the rural areas because their parents fail to control them in day schools situated in their townships. The boys from the townships are interested in films, soccer matches, boxing tournaments, music festivals and circuses. When these occasions happen to be staged in rural areas. School boys are usually tempted to attend secretly as we find in the story.

(d) Plot. This conventional type of a plot is suitable

for this theme of disrespect as we see our character, Zakhe, breaking school rules. He is shown to be stubborn and obstinate (foolhardy). He, however, ends in humiliation which is an anticlimax. The climax is experienced when Zakhe gets hurt during that commotion caused by loose lions.

6.3 CONCLUSION

We would like to clarify that what we have been dealing with from the beginning of this chapter is the contextual aspect.

We may remark that our observation is that Mkhize's short stories seem to evolve around worldly human failures and mostly in family context. We remarked earlier that the titles of all his four anthologies carry the noun stem "mhlaba" (world). The recurrence of this noun stem leads us to think of it as a motif.

CHAPTER 7

7.0 SUMMARY AND GENERAL CONCLUSION

On the whole Mkhize has made a worthwhile contribution to this genre. If prominence can be given to this genre, it can help to eradicate illiteracy amongst many of our early school-leavers. One way of increasing books in this genre is to follow Ntuli's example of collecting stories from different authors and compiling anthologies. We believe that some writers fail to produce enough stories to make a book. This results in a number of stories being lost.

The semi-literate people need to be exposed to some short interesting literature, otherwise they forget what they have learnt and end up being illiterate again.

Some newspapers published in Zulu, for example, Ilanga and UmAfrika, play an important role in alleviating this situation. There is need to consider, however, that some people are not interested in the content of newspapers.

We wish to concede that although Mkhize appears to follow the Western format of writing short stories as a broad

base, there are some of his own.

The educative value is not a characteristic of short stories, but Mkhize appears to have made it dominate his stories. He appears to have been highly influenced by folktales. It is known that one of the aims of telling folktales to children is to moralise. The lesson in a folktale should always be clear. We find Mkhize having done exactly what folktale tellers do. The lessons of his stories are also reflected in the titles of his short stories, where we find proverbs and idioms dominating.

While one does not commend Mkhize for moralising, one notes that the influence of his short stories is not discredited by this feature. However, it needs to be stressed that in short stories the language employed is very important. The short story requires intensity, compression and concentration, as already stated earlier.

The lessons found in Mkhize's stories vary. We consider the following:

- (i) Consequences on disrespect by young people e.g. in "Isalakutshelwa Sibona Ngomopho."
- (ii) Revenge to neighbours who squabble and plot against each other, e.g. in "Imnand 'ipholile."

- (iii) Teachers who fall in love with school girls could lose their jobs e.g. in "Isikhuni Sabuya Nomkhwezeli."
- (iv) Shop-assistants who are unfaithful to their masters e.g. in "Kunqcono Ukwethemba Itshe."
- (v) Lessons learnt by ministers of religion who are tempted by female congregants e.g. in "Lapho Izivunguvungu."
- (vi) Farm indunas who exploit co-labourers e.g. in "Amathe Abuyela Kwasifuba."
- (vii) Practising witchcraft may lead to death e.g. in "Ikhubalo Lenhlanhla."
- (viii) Husbands who drink and ill-treat their wives also suffer in the end e.g. in "Zifa Ngamvunye."

A study of his titles reveals that they encapsulate the main idea of the story e.g. "Isalakutshelwa sibona Ngomopho" which runs through the story.

✓ The main character and the problem of the story are exposed, sometimes in the opening paragraph or even in the first line, thus eliminating the scope for this to be mistaken for an introduction.

Let us study the opening paragraph in Wabonani (1980:1) to support this assertion:

UGatsheni ngisho naye uqobo lwakhe uyazazela ukuthi lenyanga kaSeptemba ayikaze imlethele lutho oluthokozisayo nolunesibusiso kuye selokhu bashada no MaMthethwa, umkakhe.

"Ungayingeni Eyomndeni"

[Even Gatsheni himself knows that this month of September has never brought him something which makes him happy or blessings since he married MaMthethwa, his wife.]

The very first word is the name of the main character. The problem of the story is a series of 'bad luck' that befalls Gatsheni during the month of September every year. As the story unfolds we find a string of misfortunes befalling the main character. These misfortunes give rising action or development to the story.

For instance the following events in the story "Ungayingeni Eyomndeni" form the rising action:

the misfortune of not having the keys in his possession to enter his house;

- the injuries he sustains from the attack by his neighbour;
- admission to hospital;
- the clash in the bus between him and an old man;
- the second clash with the old man in Gatsheni's house.

The story is dominated by conflict among characters, thus creating suspense. The series of events develop progressively to a climax; the end which happens to be a twist also contains a lesson.

The characters and setting seem to advance the plot. The expression used by Mpanza (1988:72) is also fitting to describe Mkhize's characters when he says 'the characters are so plausible that they seem drawn from the family living next door'.

Mkhize's stories appear to be real because he uses places and events associated with the Zulus i.e. common background material. The setting and events are well intertwined. Consider, for example "Ikhubalo Lenhlanhla" where we find Mndayiza going to thwasa in Pondoland. Pondoland is popular, amongst other things, for people who are experts in practicing herbs, e.g. Khotso, Mama waseCancela and many others.

Mkhize seems to have been successful in embedding his message in his stories although his flaw remains obviously, that of adding a lot of undeveloping material. This has contributed to his stories becoming more functional than artistic.

Although these stories were written during the apartheid era (1972-1985), we find that Mkhize avoided stories with political inclinations. During the apartheid era people could be detained even for using names of Black politicians let alone discussing "sensitive" political topics. Apparently Mkhize, just like most authors of the era, did not want to land himself or his readers in trouble.

Our final remark about Mkhize's short stories is that they have a special place in our literature, particularly when we consider that they were written at an early stage in the development of this genre in Zulu. Mkhize should therefore be regarded as one of the pioneers of this genre.

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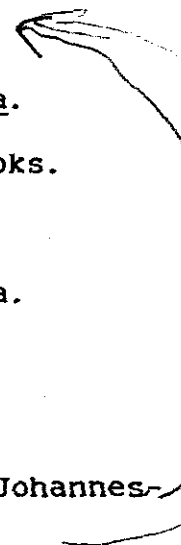
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APPENDIX 1

ANTHOLOGIES OF SHORT STORIES IN ISIZULU

NO.	AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHERS	YEAR
1.	Xulu, Muntu, J.	Izigemegeme Zodwa	Educum	1959
2.	Khwela, S.T.Z. & Nxumalo, O.E.H.	Emhlabeni Nezinye Izindaba	Shuter & Shooter	1963
3.	Khwela, S.T.Z. & Nxumalo, O.E.H.	Amaqampunqampu	Shuter & Shooter	1966
4.	Ntuli, D.B.Z.	Izikhwili	Van Schaik	1969
5.	Ntuli, D.B.Z.	Imicibisholo	Shuter & Shooter	1970
6.	Ntuli, D.B.Z.	Uthingo Lwenkosazana	Varia Books	1971
7.	Mkhize, W.M.B.	Ezomhlaba Kazipheli	Van Schaik	1972
8.	Mkhize, W.M.B.	Emhlabeni Mntanomuntu	Van Schaik	1977
9.	Mkhize, W.M.B.	Ngiyeke Ngezomhlaba	Van Schaik	1980
10.	Ndlovu, R.S.	Umbani	Van Schaik	1980
11.	Khumalo, N.A.P.	Iziga	Educum	1980
12.	Mkhize, W.M.B.	Uyothi Wabonani Emhlabeni	Van Schaik	1981
13.	Mkhize, W.M.B.	Kunjalo-ke Emhlabeni	Via Afrika	1981
14.	Mngadi, M.J.	Kusemhlabeni lapha	KwaZulu Book Sellers	1981
15.	Ntuli, D.B.Z. & Ntuli, C.S.Z.	Amawisa	Shuter & Shooter	1982
16.	Ntuli, D.B.Z. (Editor)	Ngamafuphi	De Jager-Haum	1985
17.	Buthlezi, P.M. & Nxumalo, O.E.H.	Amagwabab' Echobana	Hodder & Stoughton	1985
18.	Molefe, L.	Zihlekana iziphongo	Via Afrika	1986
19.	Khumalo, N.A.P.	Amandiki	De Jager-Haum	1986
20.	Ntuli, D.B.Z. & Ntuli, C.S.Z.	Izizenze	Shuter & Shooter	1986
21.	Mbhele, N.F.	Amayezi Namathunzi	KwaZulu Booksellers	1987
22.	Sibiya, N.G.	Ikusasa Eliqhakazile	L.S.Z. Publishers	1988
23.	Zulu, G.S.	Izipho Zenhliziyo	Juta & Co.	1990
24.	Nxumalo O.E.H.M.	Benza Ngani	Hodder & Stoughton	1990
25.	Ntuli, D.B.Z. (ed.)	Isicamelo	Reach Out Publishers	1990
26.	Msimang, C.T. (ed.)	Ithungelwa ebandla	L.Z. Sikwane	1991

Appendix 2

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Laph' Izivunguvungu
Remember Me, O Mighty One

LAPH' izivunguvungu
Zifus' impilo yami,
Nobubi budlangile,
Umlingi esenqoba,

Refrain:

Ungikhumbule, Nkosi yam',
Ungikhumbule, Nkosi yam'.

2 Lapho ngiwel' ulwandle,
Lukhuz' ulaka lwalo,
Laph' izingozi zalo
Zisong' ukungigwinya.

— Refrain

3 Lapho izono zami
Zinzim' emphefumlweni,
Zisuse, wena Baba;
Nqothula ngomsa wakho.

— Refrain

4 Lapho imihla yami
Incipha emhlabeni,
Mangikubone, Nkosi.
Ngikhuphukele kuwe. — Refrain

Taken from:

AMAGAMA OKUHABELELA
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