

CONTENTS

	Page
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Summary	iv
CHAPTER 1 : Introduction	1
CHAPTER 2 : Theme and Structure of the Plot	19
CHAPTER 3 : Characterization	49
CHAPTER 4 : The Milieu and Relation to History	70
CHAPTER 5 : Language, Style and Technique	88
CHAPTER 6 : Conclusion	109
Bibliography	112

I declare that THE HISTORICAL NOVELS OF JESSIE JOYCE GWAYI is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and fully acknowledged by means of reference.

A C T MAYEKISO

May 1985

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To all those who have given a helping hand in the successful preparation of this dissertation, I wish to convey my heartfelt gratitude:

1. The following libraries and their staff deserve special mention:

University of Zululand  
Durban Municipality  
University of Natal (especially The Killie Campbell  
Africana)  
St Francis College, Mariannhill

2. The author of the three novels which are the subject of my work, must be specially thanked and complimented because although physically handicapped she always agreed to be interviewed. The several interviews supplied first hand information on some complicated issues.
3. Thanks to many friends, both Black and White, for lending me their books, some of which were already out of print. Among these were:

Gloria Scott  
Brian Reid  
George Purves  
Late Gabriel Recker

4. Special thanks to the members of my family and friends who were a constant source of inspiration.
5. My appreciation and thanks to Hilda Jocelyn who patiently typed this dissertation.
6. Last, but by no means least, I wish to acknowledge with sincere gratitude, the untiring guidance, encouragement, as well as constructive criticism, from my supervisor, PROFESSOR S D NGCONGWANE, without whom this work might have been abandoned.

## S U M M A R Y

In the first chapter we are given the biography of Joyce Jessie Gwayi, including a section on her domestic position, her present occupation and her state of health. It is her state of health that has made it impossible for her to undertake any further literary work. This has been the worst drawback to the budding Zulu historical novelist. Here also a few writers of various Zulu books are reviewed. Most of these books found their way into the classroom because there had been no Zulu literature except the Holy Bible. This was so chiefly because, for a long time, schools belonged to missionaries whose primary aim was to bring the Christian Gospel to the Black people.

Moses Ngcobo, Gwayi's husband, inspired her because, as a novelist, he had already written the historical work on the Xhosa National Suicide.

Gwayi wanted to write about Dingiswayo Mthethwa, her ancestor, after discovering through research that the names Gwayi and Mthethwa were synonymous, used in the Transkei and Natal respectively.

She discovered that Shaka Zulu grew up under the guidance of Dingiswayo Mthethwa and that after uniting the Zulu and the Mthethwa Tribes, he initiated a period of conquest. Gwayi seems to have been interested in this period which is known as "Difaqane" and thus used the Tlokoa Tribe, with its 'warrior queen', as the subject of her first novel Bafa Baphela. It was after the completion of this novel that she wrote Shumpu after which she wrote the third book Yekanini.

The theme, structure and plot in each novel conform to the pattern as has been diagrammatically represented in the dissertation. There is exhibited a very well developed sunrise, noontide and sunset trend in each novel.

/To

To achieve this the novel must have a variety of characters. We find Gwayi's heroes and heroines behaving realistically, especially in view of the fact that some of them are real historical people. Both her simple and complex characters behave very much like ourselves or our acquaintances. There are characters central to the plot and also those who are included simply to enrich the setting of the story. Gwayi even has characters who are ancestors of living people.

In Chapter Four, the milieu of Gwayi's books is discussed. Ancient people have a different culture from modern people so that as her characters lived prior to westernization, they conform to their environment. This aspect is obtained from traditional and oral history because Zulus were, up to then, illiterate. Attire, food and religion, however, remained largely unchanged for a long period of time. Ancestor worship, it is true, has been disturbed by the introduction of Christianity. On the military side it was Dingiswayo Mthethwa who regimented his warriors and Shaka Zulu who revolutionized the method of fighting by introducing a short spear (Iklwa).

It is the style, language and technique that disclose the fact that the novels have been written by two people. (Gwayi confirmed this fact to the author.) The language in the first two books leaves much to be desired. For example, some expressions are used in such a manner that a non-Zulu reader may be confused. This is regrettable since Gwayi cannot now do anything about it. The language of the third book is good. The structure could have been Gwayi's, but Ngcobo so deftly manipulated the language that this book proves to be the best of the three. Ngcobo ends the book so conveniently that the reader becomes anxious to know what happened to Zwide Ndwandwe and Shaka Zulu when Dingiswayo had gone. It leaves the reader with a wish to read his next book, which deals with the conflict between Zwide and Shaka.

It is unfortunate that Gwayi and Ngcobo do not revise and edit the books to the advantage of the future Zulu reader.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 WHO IS JESSIE JOYCE GWAYI?

Jessie Joyce Gwayi was born on the 20th December 1928 in the Cape Province in the region now called the Republic of the Transkei. She is the eighth child in a family of ten children and the youngest girl. Her father was Khobonqaba and her mother Adelaide. They were both Xhosas of the Fingo Clan. Both parents were Christians of the Presbyterian Denomination and taught at a local Presbyterian school.

Jessie was educated at Cape schools and after obtaining the Junior Certificate of the University of South Africa, she trained and qualified as a Registered Staff-Nurse (now known as a Registered Nursing Sister) at the Holy Cross Mission Hospital. Having thus equipped herself professionally, she proceeded to Natal in order to further her education. She attended the McCord Zulu Hospital of the American Board Missionaries to study for a midwifery course and it was there that she met, and associated with, Zulu girls as her classmates and as a result became interested in the Zulu language. As a Fingo she investigated her relationship to the Zulu tribe and to her great delight she discovered that "Gwayi" was, in fact, Nyambose and Nyambose was equivalent to Mthethwa. She was thrilled to realize that she was related to the great Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa tribe.

Upon completing her midwifery course she took up employment at the Mountain Rise Provincial Hospital in Pietermaritzburg. A few years later she left for King George V Hospital in Durban. It was at

/this

this time, in 1953, that she met and married Moses Ngcobo.

Moses Ngcobo, who was himself a novelist, somehow inspired Jessie when he published Inkungu Mazulu in 1956. This publication motivated her to want to know more about the Mthethwa tribe to which she was then convinced she rightfully belonged. She undertook research into the happenings and characters of prominent characters of the tribe. Moses was ever ready to help with the correction of her Zulu language and grammatical expressions. It was during this period of her research that she discovered, among other things, that there was interdependence amongst members of the tribes and amongst tribes in the neighbourhood, and also that the tribe became larger by means of conquest. In this process of expansion even women became involved; they played a very important role and were prepared even to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of their tribe.

At about this time of her literary inspiration she decided to take a course in Public Health. By obtaining this diploma she qualified for study leave overseas and she decided to go to England. On her return from this educational excursion, she found the state of her domestic affairs had changed. Her marriage had broken down and eventually ended in divorce. This whole upheaval so affected Jessie's health that she developed hypertension. In 1979 she suffered a mild stroke which impaired her health very badly.

Now she maintains that, because of her poor state of health, she is unable to undertake further literary works.

At present she is working at King Edward VIII Provincial Hospital in Durban, where she is in charge of a less busy department.

During a conversation the Writer had with Jessie, she further revealed that her first two novels, namely Bafa Baphela and Shumpu were written jointly by herself and Moses and that the first part of the last book, Yekanini, was produced jointly. However, Moses

/had

had to finish it alone because she had already instituted divorce proceedings against him. It is very sad that because of her physical indisposition and strain, Jessie decided not to dispute the ownership of the novels and by so doing she lost everything in the way of royalties to her former husband.

## 1.2 SURVEY OF EARLIER LITERATURE

The Writer feels it would not be quite correct to plunge into the review of Jessie Joyce Gwayi's books until a short survey of the Zulu historical literature prior to the publication of her books is given.

For a long time after the arrival of the missionaries in this country there were no written Zulu books by Zulu authors. This meant that all books used were written by missionaries. When the Africans started to write, their books meant a replacement of missionary orientated publications. It is for this reason that up to the early twenties the Holy Bible and religious pamphlets made up the greater percentage of school literature. One reason for this was that Black schools were owned and run by missionaries as either private or Government Aided schools. This lack, or absence of, Zulu books written by Zulus was due to the fact that the large majority of the aborigines were illiterate. The few who were literate could not undertake the task of writing for various reasons; some of which were that there were yet few schools and the absence of a reading public. It was mainly for this reason that the missionaries, whose goal was the spreading of the Christian gospel, introduced the Holy Bible as the text book in their schools.

Nyembezi (1961 : 1-2) affirms this when he says:

The first Bantu book appeared in 1624, the work of Jesuit .  
Fathers in Angola.....When Brownlee, Thomson, Bennie and  
Ross got together at Tyumie in about 1822, they made the  
translating of the Bible into Xhosa their paramount  
literary task.

In Natal schools the religious books were soon replaced by what may be called the "James Stuart books". They may be regarded as the

/foundation



foundation of fictitious as well as historical novels because they became the source of inspiration to later writers. They preserved good historical material which would otherwise have been lost to posterity. These books were prescribed by the then Natal Native Education Department on a special condition. At that time the writing of the Zulu language had not been standardized and so there was a controversy over the orthographic script. We therefore find Stuart contending the Education Department's system of writing. However, he had no choice because to have his books prescribed for school use, he had to surrender his method. Stuart (1942 : 2) says:

.....the author himself advocates the "disjunctive" system, but has courteously allowed the Publishers to issue the book in the script it appears in, so as to conform to the requirements of the Natal Education Department.

In his books which describe what happened in Natal and Zululand in olden times, a variety of fables, Kings' praises, names of trees and regiments and many incidents, which attracted him as a foreigner, appear. The following is an assorted list of Stuart's publications which the Education Department prescribed for different classes: they appeared for the first time during the early twenties and since then have had a series of impressions:

uHlangakhula  
uBaxoxele  
uKhulumethule  
uThulasizwe  
uKwesukela  
uYusezakithi  
uVulingqondo

These books seem to have played a very important role in Zulu literature, because successive writers either quoted from, or retold, some of the stories, customs and rules of traditional behaviour as written in them. Stuart's books became a storage of historical events which the White writers of the time mentioned in their works. He, therefore, preserved aspects of Zulu tradition and customs for posterity which might have otherwise been lost for ever. To refer to one incident which is popular amongst the Zulus, is how Shaka killed the lunatic who worried the whole Mthethwa tribe. History and tradition quote this and so does Stuart (1936 : 21-26):

UShaka noHlanya

UShaka noHlanya kwaMthethwa

".....ukhona umuntu oyedwa okungathiwa wahlulizwe na?  
Mina ngingambulala."

(Shaka with the Mthethwa giant -

".....As for one person - can it be said he defeats the  
whole tribe? I for one can kill him.")

To further illustrate the value of Stuart's books in Dhlomo's  
biographies, the same incident is retold slightly differently. Dhlomo  
(1976 : 16):

".....kodwa ubani nje ongangibulalelaloluhlanya?"  
Kabesabuza uShaka wathi - "Yimina".

("....but who can kill this lunatic for me?" Shaka without  
hesitating replied and said, "Its me".)

Again in Yekanini, one of Gwayi's books which deals with aspects of  
Shaka's life, the same story is found with the basic historical and  
traditional fact that Shaka did kill the lunatic during his stay at the  
Mthethwa tribe. The minor differences in the details are a proof  
that historians and novelists can present the same fact differently.

Gwayi (1976 : 98-103):

UShaka wayeneqiniso nokho lokuthi ulugwaze kahle, amandla  
alo azoya ephela kancane, kancane, kancane.

(Shaka had the assurance though, that he had fatally stabbed  
him and his strength would decrease more and more slowly.)

While using the lunatic story as related by the different writers, it  
is also very interesting to note how the presentation differs, in as  
much as the reader may be somewhat confused and start arguing as to  
which of them tells the correct version. The following two  
quotations will illustrate the above argument:

Gwayi (1976 : 103)

.....uDingiswayo wabona ukuthi izinkomo ebese kungezohlanya  
makube ngezikaShaka.

(Dingiswayo saw it fitting that the cattle which had belonged  
to the lunatic must be retained by Shaka.)

/Whilst

Whilst writing about the same incident Stuart (1936 : 25) says:

Pho-ke izinkomo zasezandile ngokuzalela ngeminyaka, kwathi lezonkomo ezingenamninizo, wathi uDingiswayo makube ngezika Shaka.

(And so the cattle, which had increased over the years and which could not be claimed by anybody, Dingiswayo said that they must be taken by Shaka.)

### 1.2.1 Historical Biographies and Fiction

#### 1.2.1.1 R R R Dhlomo

It can be safely said that Dhlomo began to write after having read the Stuart books. He was motivated by these books, more than by any other existing literary work, to write a series of what may be called THE BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ZULU KINGS, namely: Shaka (1935), Dingana (1936), Mpande (1938), Cetshwayo (1956) and Dinuzulu (1968).

Dhlomo's books, like Stuart's, had a number of impressions because of their great demand in the schools. They too were prescribed by the Education Department and, in a way, ultimately replaced some of the Stuart books which gradually disappeared from the market. To prove that Dhlomo was motivated by the Stuart books as well as by those of his predecessor, we find a variety of stories, descriptions of incidents and behaviour patterns, which are irrelevant to the life of the king. The following are taken at random from the biographies:

- UShaka:           Dhlomo (1975 : 76, 118, 129)  
                  Izindatshana ngoShaka (short stories about Shaka).  
                  Ukweshwama (eating the first fruits).  
                  Again in
- UCetshwayo:     Dhlomo (1943 : 56)  
                  Abafazi baka Sihayo (Sihayo's wives).  
                  Ukubuthwa (regimentation).

Dhlomo's biographies became very popular and thus readily replaced Stuart's books. One of the reasons may have been that the biographies were superior to the disjunctive ancient stories, the authenticity of which could not be proved, and the prejudice which might have been caused by the fact that the author was a foreigner.

/Dhlomo

Dhlomo wrote about popular kings who had actually lived, and so there were no controversial issues which could lead to unanswerable questions in his books. In these books there were current events, recent wars and the causes of some incidents that irritated the Zulu community. They inspired the readers to be more interested in the history of the tribe because, for instance, Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu have relatives who are still alive. There are characters in Cetshwayo whose grandchildren are still alive. For example, Mnyamana kaNgqengelele who was Cetshwayo's general, is the grandfather of the Chief Minister of KwaZulu (Chief M G Buthelezi).

#### 1.2.1.2 Violet Dube

Whilst Dhlomo's books were playing their important part, there were two writers who had written in a different tone. Violet Dube had written a small but unique book in the early thirties, namely - Woza Nazo (izindaba zikaPhoshozwayo) (1933). This book readily found its way into the classroom of infants to replace Stuart's Kwesukela, which had remained longer in the classroom on account of its Aesop fable type stories.

Although the larger portion of Dube's book has short descriptive and imaginative stories, such as:

uNtombinde, Amaphela (cockroaches); Ulwandle (the sea),  
as well as short poems:

Thina Zingane Zesikole (we school children), and uHeshane  
(the hawk), etc.,

the most thrilling story on the adventures of the hero, Phoshozwayo, is contained in a few chapters. For example:

Dube (1933) uPhoshozwayo, 1-1V and 1X.

This book was fittingly prescribed for infants because the stories are so unconvincing and so impossible that they become absurd. The excitement is short-lived and is thus best suited for young minds with no critical sense to repudiate the book as a fantastic production. However, its literary importance and value lies in the fact that Dube

/adopts

adopts a pagan hero, with a pagan name, and makes him behave heroically in a modern town, where one would expect him to be highly confused. With all the aforementioned minor defects it may not be wrong to mark this booklet as a genuine beginning or "cradle" of the Zulu fictitious novel.

In the absence of westernized society, Dube could not paddle her way as smoothly as was done by the author of Jack and the Beanstalk, and that may be why her story seems a bit exaggerated.

#### 1.2.1.3 John Dube

Another writer contemporary to Violet Dube was John Dube who wrote Insila Ka Shaka. John Dube had written several books of importance, but this one was prescribed by the Education Department to be used by the intermediate classes.

It is possible that after reading several English novels and drama, as well as Stuart's books, Dube decided to write a novel on Insila kaShaka (Shaka's bodyguard). For his novel he chose a fictitious name, Jeqe, because neither history nor tradition tells us exactly what happened to this very important person after the assassination of Shaka by his brothers at his Royal Kraal Dukuza (Stanger) in 1828. The hero's life revolves around Zulu tradition and customs. It eventually gives a possible and more acceptable reason why the Swazi King and his people could not accept Dingana after his defeat by the Boers in 1838, and Jeqe, the hero, behaves heroically throughout the story. Unfortunately, it seems Dube did not have enough material to write about Jeqe's experiences. He thus fell back into the inferior method of introducing chapters that are irrelevant to Jeqe's story. Such stories occur in Dube (1978 : 21-24, 75). Here we get the description of the first fruits and how iron and spears were made.

John Dube so ushered in the historical novel so that in the late thirties the historical novel boat was already afloat.

#### 1.2.1.4 B W Vilakazi

B W Vilakazi entered the literary scene and violently rocked the

/historical

historical novel boat with three novels, which have been reprinted several times, but the first issues were:

Noma Nini (1935)  
UDingiswayo ka Jobe (1939)  
Nje Nempela (1943)

Noma Nini is based on the flight of Mpande from the wrath of his brother Dingana, the then ruler of the Zulus. This great exodus of a large portion of the tribe across the Tugela River into Natal, seriously divided the nation because Mpande and his followers came under British rule in Natal. However, the book does not tell us what happened either to Mpande or to his followers after their arrival in Natal. The story proceeds with a love affair between Nomkhosi and Nsikana. Thus, this romantic story tends to convert the novel into a romance with a historical background. Of importance during the exodus was that a man called Makhwatha picked up an abandoned baby-girl along the way. On settling safely in Natal he named this child Nomkhosi (Mother of Upheavals). The main theme in the story seems to be the demonstration of the conflict that exists between pagan customs, traditional behaviour and the Christian western culture. This was much more pronounced among the converts who had settled at the Mission Stations. The love affair between Nomkhosi and Nsikana, who were both pagans, was normal but when Nomkhosi fell in love with Thomas, the Christian preacher at Reverend Grout's Mission, it reveals what the author desired the reader to see. As soon as Thomas realized that he was losing Nomkhosi to Nsikana he decided to consult a Durban witchdoctor, Sihlangusinye, to get love charms. On his arrival there, he shows how worried he was and believed that this man could help him regain his love with these words:

".....wo baba ngize kuwe, ngoba ngilahlekelwe yingoduso yami.....manje isifuna ukuthanda omunye".....uTomasi wayephuthuma, efuna ukuzizwela ngamafutha ephumalimi kuNomkhosi.

("Now father, I have come to you because my fiancée is now rejecting me for another man".....Thomas was in a hurry to get back so as to apply the love charm, which was White man's fat, to Nomkhosi.)

Ultimately, Nontula, the elder sister was annoyed by the unstable behaviour of her sister. She took it upon herself

/to

to force Nomkhosi to make her final choice in the Zulu traditional way, and so Nomkhosi picked Nsikana, who was a pagan like herself. In this novel we also find songs and praises:

Vilakazi (1965 : 20, 30, 70, 109). Songs.

Vilakazi (1965 : 21, 26, 32). Praises and fables.

In Dingiswayo kaJobe we find Dingiswayo, the son of Jobe the Mthethwa Chief. There is not much written about his early life but we are told that his real name was Godongwane who, with his brother Tana, had plotted against their ageing father Jobe. Jobe discovered the plot and ordered them to be killed. Godongwane escaped and fled the country, thus becoming a fugitive and wandered about until he reached the Hlubi Tribe near the Drakensberg Mountains. From there he escaped with a White man who, like him, was a fugitive. This White man owned a horse and a gun. The people called the horse a Nanabuke. On the way, Dingiswayo killed the White man and took his horse and gun and then rode home. The tribe did not recognize him at first, but after showing the scar of a spear on his back to prove how he was stabbed on the night Jobe wanted them killed, they then changed his name to Dingiswayo (the banished one). At this stage, Vilakazi failed to concentrate on Dingiswayo only throughout his book. He has included some of the songs we sing: Vilakazi (1939 : 170-171), and Vilakazi (1939 : 81).

His novel is less interesting than Dube's Insila kaShaka, but in spite of the shortcomings detected in this book, it does deserve to be called a historical novel.

Vilakazi's last novel was Nje Nempela and it deserves to be praised as a historical novel because most of its narration is a history with a romance. It is the best of the three although it has shortcomings. The hero is Malambule, a fictitious character. The author's aim seems to have been to write on, or to sing, praises of his namesake, Bhambatha Zondi, son of Mancinza who was the leader of the 1906 Zulu Rebellion (Impi kaBhambatha). Vilakazi was born in 1906 and his Zulu name was Bhambatha. Nyembezi concurs when he says

(1961 : 7):

(1961 : 6):

The third novel, Nje Nempela, is based on the Zulu Rebellion 1906.

We find the hero, Malambule, returning from Barberton gold mines and spending the night at Nkominophondo Nxumalo's kraal. He falls ill during the night and has to spend a few days resting whilst being nursed. On recovering, he falls in love with Nomcebo, one of Nxumalo's daughters. This girl asked him a question, which eventually became the title of the book.

Vilakazi (1966 : 43):

".....Wena ungubani?.....uthi ngoba ulapha kwethu sikutholile udlula ngendlela bese kuthi, ngoba ugozobalisiwe ukugula abadala bengekho wena - ke usuthola ithuba lokungeshela khona lapha kwethu? Wena ungubani NJE NEMPELA?"

(".....and who are you?.....and just because you are here in our house, while passing by on your way, and so because illness has gained control over you, just because the elders are absent, you think you have a chance to propose love to me right here in my mother's hut? In fact, as for you, WHO ARE YOU?)

At about this time there were reports around that the Government wanted to introduce poll tax. Most Zulus could not stomach this and so they organized skirmishes and assassinations, which climaxed in the 1906 Rebellion. Bhambatha was killed and the King, Dinuzulu, was captured and imprisoned for having been involved. Malambule and his father became Crown witnesses. After the court case, Malambule decided to take Nomcebo, his wife, with him and fled to Natal for protection.

Vilakazi has also introduced songs. Vilakazi (1966 : 28, 91, 97, 132, 148).

#### 1.2.1.5 Moses Hlela and Christopher Nkosi

For some time after Vilakazi, there seems to have been a gap because no historical novels were produced until two young men wrote one on the Battle of Ulundi and its results.

Imithi Ephundliwe (1974) is based on Cetshwayo's biography by Dhlomo. The theme of this book is the destruction of the Zulu Kingdom during

/Cetshwayo's



Cetshwayo's reign. The book tells of the skirmishes, the Battle of Isandlwana and finally that of Ulundi and the capture of Cetshwayo at Ngome Forest. The authors aimed at writing a novel and not a historical record, as they declare in the foreword:

Hlela & Nkosi:

.....Noma lencwajana ike yenze incikane nezomlando, kepha kayiwona umlando.

(Although this booklet at times relates to historical incidents, it is not a history book.)

#### 1.2.1.6 E E N T Mkhize

Mkhize wrote a novel similar to an incident during Cetshwayo's reign. His book received an award, Inhliziyo Ngu Go Wami. His theme is to point out the evil and uselessness of forcing girls to marry men who are chosen by their parents.

Mkhize seems to have had this incident in mind when he wrote his novel. But he did not refer to any historical incident himself.

In Mkhize's book, the heroine declares to her father that under no circumstances will she be forced to marry an old wealthy man in order to please and make her father wealthy too, by getting cattle for Lobolo (dowry). We find her father telling other men how disappointed he was by his daughter's words:

Mkhize (1966 : 120):

"Bakwethu", kwaqhubeka uKhumalo, "Yilapho-ke nami ngifike ngathola khona ubunzima obatholwa uHlamvana bhulumlilo, mhla edelelwa yizintombi zeNgcugce." Umtanami walisho kahle elakhe wathi: "Baba, kukho konke okushoyo kimina angize ngingakuphendula, ngiye ngimane ngikwenze lokho, kodwa ezindabeni zothando inhliziyo ingu go wami."

("My friends", continued Khumalo, "Its just there where I too met the same problem which confronted Hlamvana Bhulumlilo (Cetshwayo) when the girls of the Ngcugce Regiment defied him. My daughter unequivocally gave her word thus: "Father, whatever you command me to do I never object by giving an answer back,

/I just

I just comply, but in the affairs of love my heart is my adviser.")

#### 1.2.1.7 Moses Ngcobo

Ukufika Kosuku (1973) written by Moses Ngcobo, is the last historical novel to be summarized. This is done purposefully because the author is the former husband of Jessie Joyce Gwayi, whose novels are the subject of this work. This book must have been the immediate precursor of Gwayi's novels and may be regarded as her greatest motivator. This is seen as the reason why almost all female characters are influential and domineering in her books.

Ngcobo attributed mighty power and influence to Nongqawuse in the Xhosa national suicide. A brief summary of this book is essential for a further proof of Ngcobo's influence on the historical novels of Gwayi. The theme of the book was to show how a whole tribe was easily misled to commit national suicide through the prophecies of an immature woman. This happened because Xhosas had a strong belief in the mighty power of the spirits of their ancestors. This incident totally destroyed the power of the Xhosas as a viable nation. They were reduced to mere vassals of the British settlers. Two male chiefs planned this tragic incident, namely Khwintshi and Mhala. They may not have been Xhosa rulers at the time, but they do not minimize the value of the book with their strange behaviour. The author does not explain why these men plotted such a disaster and exploited Mhlakaza's daughter to be their prophetess. They made her imagine that she saw and spoke to the spirit of Mlanjeni, their great and powerful ancestor. They threatened and frightened her, promising to slaughter her like a goat if she did not tell the nation what the ancestors wanted. She was forced to tell the nation to slaughter all their domestic animals and burn down their crops so that on the arrival of the settlers they would be driven into the sea. After that the ancestors would replace all the dead animals and fill their huts with grain. Approximately 400 000 cattle were killed prior to the great day, February 27th 1856. About 37 000 Xhosas died from starvation, and Nongqawuse reported the two chiefs to the British Colonel McLean,

/who

who captured and imprisoned them.

The following quotation confirms the above allegation:

Ngcobo (1973 : 181):

uNongqawuse wamceba uKhwintshi ku Colonel McLean owayengomunye wamaNgisi ayephethe izindaba Zombuso ngalesisikhathi ekoloni .....wabanjwa uKhwintshi waboshwa....kwaba umcebile-ke noMhala ngoba naye wabanjwa waboshwa.

(Nongqawuse reported Khwintshi to Colonel McLean, one of the British, who was in charge of Government affairs at the Colony. Khwintshi was arrested and imprisoned....that meant Mhala was reported as well because he, too, was arrested and imprisoned.)

### 1.3 A SUMMARY OF GWAYI'S NOVELS

From here Gwayi picks up the thread by writing three historical novels in quick succession, nearly as Vilakazi did. Bafa Baphela (1973) is the first, the second Shumpu (1974) and the third Yekanini (1976).

#### 1.3.1 Bafa Baphela (1973)

In this first book the central figure is Mantatisi, the Tlokoa Queen who, after the death of her weak husband, seized the power in favour of her minor son, Sekonyela. She attacked and killed her brothers-in-law, Moloi and Molapo, and then began wandering about with the whole tribe in search of food more than conquest. Tribes were conquered in order to get food, and some joined her. At one time the Tlokoa attacked and defeated Moshoeshoe at the Battle of Amakhanzi (pots) near Butha Buthe. They took all the grain and cattle and left the tribe starving. This was a period of great upheaval and the Sotho called it "Difaqane", and Selby calls it "forced immigration".

Selby (1973 : 61)

This was Difaqane or "forced" immigration period, which fortuitously cleared much of the Highveld population.....

On her route, Mantatisi fought the Hlubis, Barolong, Tswana and finally Bathlaping. It was the Bathlaping chief with the help of Dr Moffat and Nicholas Waterboer, the Griqua, who drove the Tlokoa back to where they came from. As she travelled back towards the south-east,

/she

she encountered the mighty Moshesh at Thaba Bosio. After this disastrous defeat, Mantatisi lived for nearly three months and then died after formerly declaring her son, Sekonyela, the rightful heir to the Tlokoa throne.

### 1.3.2 Shumpu (1974)

The two very important characters in this book are Zwide and Dingiswayo, also Godongwane. Zwide, the chief of the Ndwandwe tribe, wanted to prove that he was mightier than Dingiswayo, chief of the Mthethwa tribe. He was determined to fight until he crushed Dingiswayo and make him his vassal or else kill him. Dingiswayo was a peaceful ruler, who wanted to live peacefully with his neighbours without oppressing them, even after defeating them.

Selby (1973 : 63) confirms that Dingiswayo was indeed a peace-loving character when he says:

Certainly he became an outstanding leader and built up an empire by taking neighbouring tribes under his protection and making himself their paramount. This he achieved by force, but more often by negotiation.

Dingiswayo did not enjoy the wanton killing of people for its own sake and thus he always released Zwide after defeating him. He, like westernized nations, demanded a ransom but his was always a herd of cattle, to be paid as soon as the culprit could get it. His aim was to teach Zwide a lesson on how to live in peace with other tribes. On the other hand, Zwide destroyed and subjugated smaller tribes around him, forcing other chiefs to join his forces to help him fight Dingiswayo, his arch-enemy. In spite of all this, Dingiswayo remained powerful. Zwide ultimately resorted to witchcraft, with his mother as the main witch. He provoked Dingiswayo by killing his relative, Malusi. It was by sheer accident that during this campaign, Zwide's sentinels caught and captured Dingiswayo and brought him to Zwide's kraal at Nongoma. Without hesitation, Zwide beheaded Dingiswayo and presented his head to Ntombazi, his mother, to store it in her special hut where all heads of vanquished chiefs were kept. The mere killing of Dingiswayo did not make Zwide chief over the Mthethwa and the Zulu /tribes.

tribes. He feared the rising power of Shaka, the young Zulu chief and this gave him days and nights of endless nightmares.

### 1.3.3 Yekanini (1976)

This last novel cannot be satisfactorily called Shaka's biography, because it begins by giving us aspects of his early boyhood and ends when he returns to his tribe to take over chieftainship in a bloodless revolt that may be compared with the modern "coup d'etat". With the help of Dingiswayo, Shaka got rid of his rival Sigujana, who had been installed after the death of Senzangakhona, their father. The bulk of the story tells us how Shaka as a young boy suffered insults at the various kraals where he and his mother stayed after expulsion by Senzangakhona from his royal kraal. Even though he was expelled, Gwayi proves beyond doubt that Shaka was indeed one of the sons of Senzangakhona, though he was illegitimate, and that some reconciliation of this was made is proved by Selby (1973 : 63):

Senzangakhona as a chief was already married and Nandi was taken as a junior wife. However, she soon lost favour and so was expelled with her child. Shaka's childhood was first spent among his mother's people. This was an unhappy period as there were recriminations because of the circumstances of his birth. Next they went to live with Mtetwa relatives on the coast, where Shaka worked happily as a boy and later joined the Mtetwa army.

The story gives more details of his stay at his uncle's place and how his mother fell in love with Gendeyana Khuzwayo, father to Ngwadi. It was this man who took and sheltered Nandi and her children when Mbengi expelled them at the time of the great famine, known in history as Madlantule (Indlala kaMadlantule). On this famine, Stuart has this to say:

Stuart (1936 : 49)

Indlala kaMadlantule abanye bathi Madlathule yavela uShaka esengumfana eLangeni engakayi ukuyokhonza kuDingiswayo kwaMtetwa.....Okokuthi yabangonyaka mhlawumbe abathi abelungu 1800.

(The famine of Madlantule, others call it Madlathule, occurred when Shaka was a young boy at Langeni, before he went to pay homage to Dingiswayo at the Mthethwa's - This means it occurred in the year 1800 according to western standards.)

/For

For protection against the wrath of Senzangakhona, who then wanted Shaka to join his army, Gendeyana sent him to Macingwane Mchunu's kraal. Macingwane refused the bribe offered by Senzangakhona to return Shaka. Because of Senzangakhona and Macingwane, Nandi thereupon took all her children to her relative Mbiya who lived near the coast under Dingiswayo. Shaka remained there until the death of Senzangakhona. Dingiswayo decided to make him the Zulu chief, because of his valour. He sent Ngomane, his general, together with a regiment to watch trouble-makers. This was very similar to a modern "coup", as Gwayi puts it:

Gwayi (1976 : 123):

Wonke amadoda ayelapho asukuma ethandayo nengathandi  
yakhuleka kanye namanye yathi: BAYETHE! BAYETHE!  
BAYETHE! UYIZULU!

(All men who were present stood up, the willing and the unwilling and simultaneously roared the royal salute:  
BAYETHE! BAYETHE! BAYETHE! You are the Heavens!)

#### 1.4 THE RESUME

1.4.1 Jessie Joyce Gwayi was born in the Cape, of teacher parents, on the 20th December 1928. She trained as a nurse and whilst studying further in Natal became interested in Zulu genealogy. Jessie married Moses Ngcobo, himself a novelist, and became interested in Zulu literature. They worked together on the three novels. After their divorce, although the novels were published under her name, she relinquished all rights to the royalties.

1.4.2 Zulu literature started with the reading of the Holy Bible as a text book. It was replaced by James Stuart's books, followed by Dhlomo's Zulu chiefs' biographies. Then appeared J L Dube's historical novel and Violet Dube's work introducing a fictitious hero character, B W Vilakazi's historical novels, Moses Hlela and Christopher Nkosi, E E N T Mkhize and Moses Ngcobo. At this time, in 1973, Gwayi's work entered the Zulu literature arena.

1.4.3 Gwayi's first book dealt with the life of the warrior queen, Mantatisi, and her part in the "Difaqane". Her second book dealt with Dingiswayo and the ruthless Zwide, culminating in the former's unfortunate death. Gwayi's third and final book is the reconstruction of Shaka's life from his boyhood up to his accession to the Zulu chieftainship.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEME AND STRUCTURE OF THE PLOT

#### 2.1 THE THEME

In this chapter we shall endeavour to find out Gwayi's theme and structure of the plot in her three novels. Before delving into these, however, it is imperative to look into and revise what is understood by "theme" in literary work. In his dictionary, Morris William (1973 Ed. : 1334) describes "theme" thus:

An idea, point of view, or perception embodied and expounded upon in a work of art.

We shall, therefore, find out how Gwayi's "ideas" and "point of view" are illustrated in her work of art. It is essential, and vital, to find this out in any work of art so that it may be graded and categorized, and also appreciated. Gwayi, therefore, must unequivocally exhibit and maintain this standard visibly throughout her work. She must perform this task in such a manner that the reader should never make a misinterpretation. Therefore, the theme must be constant under all circumstances, even after the addition of subsidiary themes. The importance of consistency of "theme" is pointed out also by Hugo and Harty (1977 : 1) thus:

Theme is the dominant idea or major point of a literary work.

This chapter will investigate whether Gwayi has the "dominant idea" in each of her books and whether she has added subsidiary themes purely to enhance this "dominant idea". These side themes are of importance only if they boost the main theme, otherwise if they are irrelevant they become a detriment to the art. We shall also find out how successfully she builds up, by gradual luring methods, this

/point



point of view right up to the climax, and finally winds to a possible conclusion. We may also find out whether she conforms to the following statement:

Hugo & Harty (1972 : 2):

A careful close consideration of the way in which ideas are established, developed and intensified.

Her work will be considered inadequate should we discover that it falls short of theme and structure of the plot, one of the important aspects of the novel.

## 2.2 THE PLOT

What is meant by "plot" in a novel? Let us explain this question by quoting from Forster (1974 : 87) before any further comment:

A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on the causality. The king died and then the queen died of grief; is the plot.....if it is a story we say: "and then". If it is a plot we ask "why?"

The above quotation, among other things, will compel us to find out whether Gwayi's narrative satisfies and answers the relevant questions associated with "plot". Without this question-answer system it is impossible to tell an intelligible story. It is a well-known fact that the story is rightly regarded as the most important aspect of the novel, and so the novel needs all the elements that make it a whole. Gwayi must prove that her books were written because there were questions that came into her mind and she had to get reasonable answers for all of them. We might go further and even to the extent of saying that she was convinced that she would get some of her answers from historical events, just as we have seen in the Introduction where she explains how she discovered her relationship with the Mthethwa Tribe.

She must, therefore, evolve a plot for each of her books so that each should run smoothly and logically to the end, conforming to what Forster (1974 : 95) says:

/The plot

The plot then is the novel in its logical and intellectual aspect.

Plot is also important because it is the means by which the author can put across to the public the theme of his art. If he succeeds in reaching his readers they will, in return, appreciate and enjoy his art. Although this is true, the plot should not be regarded as the novel but as an essential aspect thereof, as Ortega (1948 : 80 - 81) says:

The action or plot is not the substance of a novel, but its scaffolding, its mechanical prop.

### 2.3 THE STRUCTURE OR PATTERN

It is impossible to separate structure from plot, because plot depends on structure or pattern. If, for instance, we concur with the explanation that action or plot is the "scaffolding", then it is of great importance to erect such a scaffolding in a manner that it does not crumble under the builder, painter or artist. Some authors call structure, "Pattern", and this will mean how the plot is laid out. In dress-making where patterns are important, it is essential to place the pattern accurately on the material to be cut into an article, or else the garment will be spoiled and the material wasted. Therefore, to define structure apart from plot is impossible since the two elements are intertwined to agree in toto with Hugo and Harty (1977 : 71), when they say:

Hazardously then, perhaps we could say that the structure of a work of art depends upon the patterning of any relevant elements, which inform that work significantly.

After the above quotation it is beyond any doubt that structure and plot are inseparable, and it is for this reason that this chapter has had to consider it as a sub-topic or heading. Again we must note the difficulty of trying to define precisely what structure really is, especially when the definition is meant to describe it apart from plot. At this point it may be helpful to further refer to Lubbock (1973 : 11) and consider what he says on this topic:

Even if the critic's memory were infallible, as it can never be, still it would be impossible for him to give

a really scientific account of structure of the simplest book.

Having thus far introduced and stated the purpose of this chapter, we shall now proceed and look into the theme and structure of the plot in each of Gwayi's books, taking them consecutively:

### 2.3.1 Bafa Baphela (1973)

This is Gwayi's first novel, which has had a number of editions since the first one, thus showing its market demand.

To the reader its theme is TRIBALISM or NATIONAL UNITY. Gwayi is extolling the system and integrity of national unity as she finds it in the tribes of this era. The emphasis is on to what extent should the tribal customs and traditions be kept intact from age to age and generation to generation. In order to preserve the tribal dynasty, the hereditary system is paramount, and fair or foul means must be resorted to in order to maintain national might and pride. In this book, this formidable task falls and rests squarely on the shoulders of Mantatisi, the queen of the Tlokoa Tribe of the Southern Sotho group.

In order to prove her point of view, the author chooses and makes this the best of all the Sotho tribes. Therefore, she maintains that it is a great privilege and honour to belong to an important tribe. We get proof of this, because Mantatisi decided to identify herself with Tlokoa by all means even though she was actually of the SIA Tribe. We find she vehemently detested to be addressed by any other name than by that of the Tlokoa, as seen here:

Gwayi (1973 : 10):

UMantatisi ethe makubulawe lezozinduna, ezisuke zaba yimingquphane kangangokuba kazi yibonanga ingozi ngesikhathi zimkhulekela ngawo Molisa nawo Mosia, amakhosi angasekho aba Sia.

(Mantatisi ordered all those generals to be killed, since they were so stupid and were not aware of the danger when they addressed her with the names of old and deceased Sia chiefs, Molisa and Mosia.)

/We are

We are made to realize the importance of being a Tlokoa member. One of the main reasons why her brothers-in-law, Molapo and Moloi, could not accept her as regent was that she belonged to an inferior Sia Tribe and was not a Tlokoa like them. For this reason also they wanted to kill and remove her from the regency by any means. The following quotation clearly illustrates this point:

"Bekungangcono ukuba ubengowesizwe sethu sabaTlokoa manje ungumSia."

("It would be much better if she belonged to our Tlokoa Tribe, but now unfortunately she is of the Sia Tribe.")  
(p.7)

It was, therefore, quite obvious to Molapo and Moloi that Mantatise did not wish to return to her Sia Tribe after the death of her husband, Mokojo, the chief. She preferred to identify herself with the Tlokoas and preserve the position until her minor son could take over. This she was fully determined to do under any circumstances, as seen from the utterances of the brothers-in-law:

"Njengoba sikhuluma nje sekuke kwangifikela engqondweni ukuthi noma singamenzani okunye uMantatise akasoze aphindela kubo."

("Just as we are talking now, it has dawned in my mind that whatever we do to Mantatise, she will never return to her people.") (p.8)

By marrying Mokojo and bearing him a son, Sekonyela, she qualified according to her conviction, to be a genuine Tlokoa. Therefore, whatever she did after the death of Mokojo was for the preservation and guidance of the nation through all the hazards and tribulations, until Sekonyela could rightfully inherit the throne as the hereditary Tlokoa chief.

Figuratively, Mantatise became the base resting prop of the great national triangle, which was to be kept aloft and be preserved for the sake of national unity for generations to come. That is why both usurping uncles of Sekonyela were summarily destroyed. Another reason was that they were trying to divide the nation between the two of them to subscribe to the adage : divide and rule. Therefore, as soon as Mantatise's warriors captured them, they could not escape

/death.

death.

Wathi ezinsizweni zakhe mazibabulale bonke ngoba akafuni nokubabona kodwa lokhu.

(She said that her young men must kill them all because she did not want to even look at them.) (p.28)

We see, therefore, that her paramount duty was to preserve, build and strengthen the nation, even by adding smaller tribes that were weak and could not resist the mighty Tlokoas. To do this she always accompanied her warriors on their expeditions, in order to encourage and give them moral support. She did not forget to evoke assistance from the spirits of the ancestors by sacrificing, to appease their wrath and also thanked them for all favours bestowed on the tribe. This is a well-known and revered tribal religious custom:

"Bengibona ukuthi kuzomela ukuba kesibonge, ukuze baqhubeke nokusibheka sesikulelizwe esingalazi."

("I feel that we ought to thank our ancestors, so that they may continue protecting us in this strange land.") (p.54)

It was Mantatise's binding duty and responsibility to "mother" the tribe through trials, stresses and strains during the devastating period known among the Sotho tribes as "Difaqane", which western historians called "Forced Immigration", like Selby (1973 : 61) says:

The Sotho community on the plateau, which bore the brunt of the invasions, was the large Tlokoa chiefdom. This was ruled by MaNthatisi, the widow of the deceased chief pending the accession of her young son, Sekonyela.

From the word "Difaqane" and the above quotation, it may be concluded that plundering, more than conquest, was the language of the day, a state nearly similar to the 'law of the jungle'. As long as the Tlokoa Tribe was victorious their tribe became stronger and lived abundantly. An interesting point to be mentioned here is that these Tlokoas at one time defeated warriors of Moshesh at the Battle of the Pots (amakhanzi) near Butha-Buthe. The Tlokoas were starving at that time and after they defeated Moshesh they did not pursue his warriors but merely plundered and obtained food and cattle. Selby

(1973 : 69) mentions this incident thus:

News came of the approach of a marauding column set in motion in the Difaqane. What was worse, it seemed that Queen Mantatisi, accompanied by her son Sekonyela and 40 000 Tlokoas, was advancing towards Butha-Buthe.

In order to achieve all this, the Tlokoas believed that they obtained help from their ancestors, who helped them to defeat the mighty Moshesh and obtain grain from the hidden dens, as said here:

Gwayi (1973 : 65):

"Yibo futhi abasisizile ukuba siyibone yonke lemhume enokudla ukuze singalambi endleleni."

("Again it was our ancestors who have helped us to discover these dens full of corn, so that we may not starve and die along our journey.")

It is not a matter of exaggeration to say that Mantatisi virtually guided and was responsible for the tribe during this period when famine was so severe that some people resorted to cannibalism. Historians confirm this statement, as seen in this quotation from Selby (1973 : 61):

In certain areas, demoralized survivors wandered around singly or in small groups, striving to live on veld plants. Even cannibalism was widespread.

Mantatisi saw to it that her tribe remained well fed so that they could remain powerful above "other marauding columns". That is why her warriors were fit and strong enough to fight and defeat Moshesh, as seen from the following:

Gwayi (1973 : 64)

Kuleyompi eyaziwa ngokuthi eyamakhnzi kwafumaniseka ukuthi anamandla kakhulu amabutho kaMantatisi.

(At this battle, which was known as the Battle of Amakhanzi (pots battle) it was obvious that Mantatisi's warriors were more powerful.)

At this point in time it should be noted that all empires, no matter how powerful they may be, eventually come to an end. We find that Makaba, the Tswana Chief, dealt a resounding defeat on the powerful

/Tlokoas

Tlokoas and forced them to retreat hurriedly towards the unsafe region where they came from. Makaba's method of fighting was unique and thus the Tlokoas had no chance to fight at close range because they fell into the numerous pits. These had been dug and fitted with sharp piles so that whosoever fell into them was impaled on the stakes, as Gwayi indicates:

Bonke abakhalakathela bafa kabuhlungu behlatshwa yizinsimbi  
zingena ngapha ziphuma ngapha kwemizimba yabo.

(All who fell into the pits met a painful death as they were pierced through by the iron piles, which passed through their bodies.) (p.72)

On their retreat, the Tlokoas, who had been demoralized and decimated by Makaba, could not measure up against the powerful Bathlaping. This tribe wisely solicited help from the Griqua Chief, Nicholas Waterboer, who was in fact invited by Robert Moffat. This European was a London Missionary Society Minister of Religion, who had been preaching the Christian Gospel in the area. On this point, van der Merwe and Strydom (1975 : 113) have this to say:

Botswana was the next in line, but the old Chief Makaba of the Bangwaketsi Tribe checked the invasion. Then she moved southwards, attacking other Tswana tribes and eventually came to a halt at the Bathlaping Tribe where Robert Moffat was a missionary. Moffat called on the help of the Grikwas, who drove Mantatise back.

After this incident the power of the Tlokoas waned as they drifted down south until they arrived at Thaba Bosio, the new fortified abode of Moshesh. At this place the Tlokoas were terribly beaten and humiliated by Moshesh. He defeated them so badly that they never became a threat and a cause of fear again for any tribe in the area, as Gwayi (197 : 85) points out:

.....esebaleka abambalwa kakhulu, ngoba amanye amaningi  
afihlizeka esathi alalela indlovukazi yawo acela empunzini.

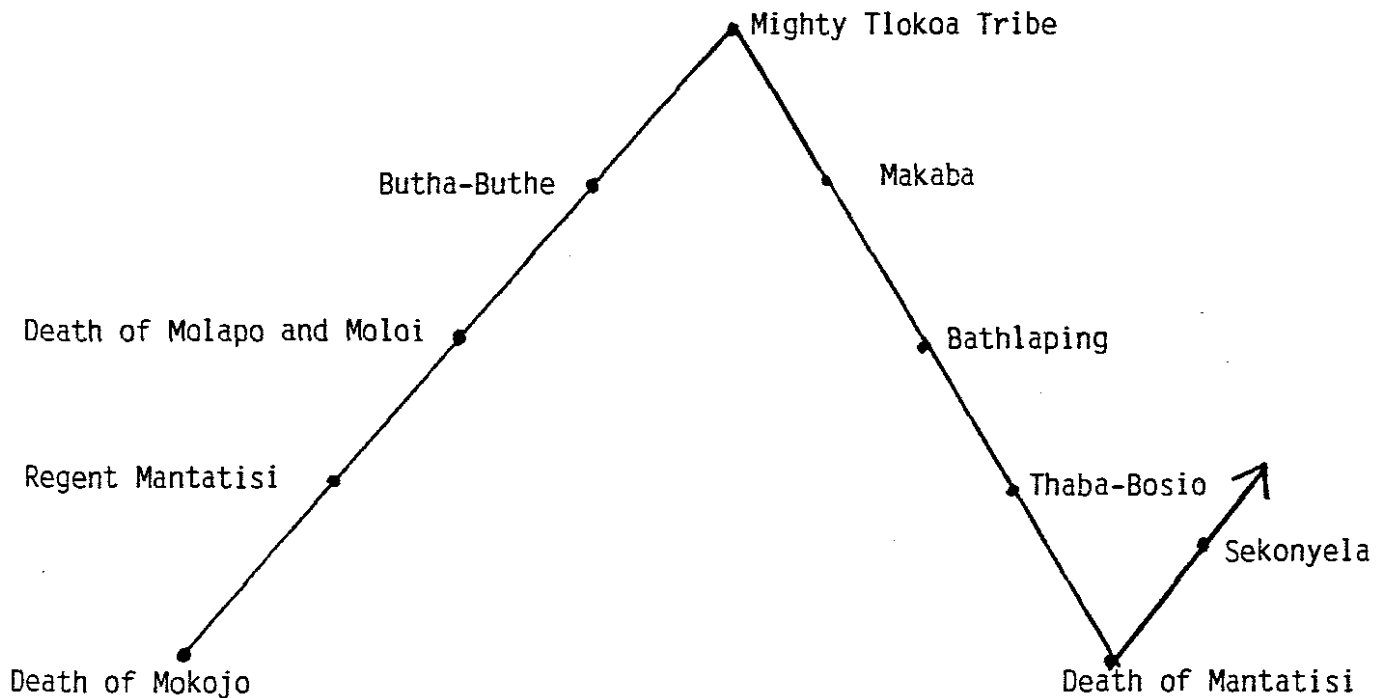
(When they were fleeing, they were very few because many had been crushed while obeying their Queen to take to their heels.)

The Tlokoas did lose their power, but they remained as a small tribe to be reckoned with under their young chief. After the death of the

/Queen

Queen Mother, which occurred soon after the Battle of Thaba Bosio, Sekonyela ascended the hereditary Tlokoa throne as was the wish of his mother, Mantatisi.

#### 2.3.1.1 A Graphic Representation of the Structure



The above is a graphic representation of Gwayi's structure in the novel Bafa Baphela. National/Tribal unity is shown when, after the death of Mokojo, like the Greek God Atlas who was supposed to carry the whole earth, Mantatisi keeps the tribe together by killing Molapo and Moloi. By conquest during "Difaqane" she grabbed food for her tribe at Butha-Buthe from Moshesh. The Tlokoa Tribe was superior and became feared by many tribes. Tlokoa power reached its climax during this time and it was Makaba who dealt the first blow towards its decline of power. The Bathlaping reduced them when, under gun fire from the Griquas, they drifted towards the south. Moshesh crushed them at Thaba Bosio. The hereditary Sekonyela took over and the Tlokoas remained a small tribe to be reckoned with.

From the diagram we may summarily conclude that the author was personally impressed by the heroic behaviour and bravery of Queen

/Mantatisi



Mantatisi (and she admits it). Gwayi admires the power of a warrior woman who, during "Difaqane" helped the tribe against odds, who were battling for survival. Again the author, as a female herself, paints a vivid picture of the queen so that the reader may join her in the admiration of the heroine. From her biography we find that she is fond of investigation and satisfied after discovering cause and effect in a situation. We may, in fairness to her ability to investigate, conclude that from the historical facts available to her she decided to write a novel. This novel was meant for the glorification of national unity/tribalism, with Mantatisi as the propagandist in the Tlokoa Tribe. We therefore look at Gwayi as an artist since novelists are, in fact, recognized artists and not historians as Lubbock (1963 : 40) also confirms:

The business of a novelist is to create life.

As a side issue, one may mention that it seems that Gwayi begrudged males for thinking that they were more superior intellectually than females. With this story of Mantatisi she has gone a long way to disprove this unfounded truth. So she wants this story to prove that females can maintain positions with full responsibility as well as, and sometimes better than, men when given a chance. From her great love of investigation, she discovered how, during the "Difaqane" period, her tribe was driven along the coast of Natal down to the Cape Province to beg for a place to stay as Fingos (Amamfengu).

### 2.3.2. Shumpu (1974)

#### 2.3.2.1 Rivalry for Power

To the reader, the theme in this, the second of Gwayi's historical novels, is rivalry for power between Dingiswayo Mthethwa and Zwide Ndwandwe with their tribes and the futility of witchcraft as a subsidiary one. A closer look at the sketch later will reveal that Gwayi, as an artist, picked on the wars between the two tribes and thus exposed the greed for power among tribes long before the period known as "Difaqane" (forced immigration) by historians.

From history it has been learned, and from the diagram it will be seen, that Dingiswayo was the more powerful and was a peace-loving chief. Dingiswayo would never provoke a chief to war as he wished to live peacefully with his neighbours. There was, at this time, no real need for quarrels because the tribes were small and scattered about. Not very much can be said about the history and life of the people in this era except from what is obtained from oral tradition and "izibongo zamakhosi" (Chief's praise poems). Selby (1973 : 105), as one of the historians, has this to say on the same issue:

Not much is known about Dingiswayo, the Chief of the Mtetwa. He is thought to have had contact with Europeans during a period of his exile and learnt much from studying their ways. Certainly he became an outstanding leader and built up an empire by taking neighbouring tribes under his protection and making himself their paramount chief. This he achieved partly by force but more often by negotiation.

Throughout the story, Gwayi wishes, and succeeds, to show that Dingiswayo had no greed for power and self aggrandizement, but wished to maintain peaceful co-existence with his neighbours. As a keen observer and student, he successfully applied what he had learned from other nations in order to boost his own and carefully preserved peaceful ties with his neighbours, as declared by these historians van der Merwe and Strydom (1975 : 105):

He fled to the Cape Colony where he admired and studied the military system of the Whites. He returned to his home..... He did not destroy the defeated tribes but he governed them in peace and friendship.

During their struggle for power, Dingiswayo was indeed more powerful than Zwide, since he always defeated him. The author begins the story after one such incident. Zwide is talking to his men, licking his wounds and counting losses sustained during this war. On the other hand, Dingiswayo and his men are joking and ridiculing the Ndwandwes for their cowardice. He was satisfied that he had repelled his enemy but did not pursue him so as to destroy his power once and for all. He was not angry with Zwide, but was amused at how his warriors fled, leaving him behind to be captured by his men, as Gwayi shows us (1977 : 12):

/Wayehleka

Wayehleka uma sezixoxa ngokuhlekisayo, obekwenziwa ngamabutho kaZwide esebaleka eshiya inkosi yawo ngemvu.

(He laughed when, during their conversation, they mentioned something amusing about what Zwide's warriors did when they fled leaving their chief behind.)

Gwayi cannot hide her great appreciation of Dingiswayo and his spirit of kindness and amicability towards his neighbours. She makes him point out the evil of being at loggerheads with neighbouring chiefs. Dingiswayo could find no good reason for a paramount chief to bully and persecute minor chiefs, as he declares below:

"Akufanele sithi sihlezi lapha inkosi ebusa lapha eceleni kwethu ibe inomoya, mhlawumbe ongezwani nowethu." (p.12)

("It is improper that while we are in power here, our neighbouring chief should perhaps be in disagreement with us.")

While still on the same issue of Dingiswayo's peaceful spirit, we find that more historians agree with Gwayi on this, as we quote from Ritter (1962 : 43):

Zwide had been previously subdued and captured and, as usual, magnanimously released.

But Zwide was proud and avaricious and after his defeat and release he wanted to avenge himself on a smaller tribe whose chief he believed he could easily defeat. Zwide was not impressed by Dingiswayo's good neighbourliness, but instead thought him to be stupid. So he looked around for one such minor chief and attacked him without any provocation. Ritter (1962 : 43):

Later a smaller chief was attacked by Zwide, who was avaricious, but again he was defeated.....the result was so disgraceful that Zwide himself was captured by the enemy. Zwangendaba magnanimously released him and had him escorted home accompanied by a present of cattle.

From the above quotation, it is obvious that Zwangendaba, the smaller and despised chief, was attacked by Zwide for spite. This chief had been strongly influenced by Dingiswayo's amicable behaviour. We see how, after the resounding defeat, Zwangendaba captured Zwide but again, like Dingiswayo "magnanimously" released him. Without demanding

/ransom,

ransom, Zwangendaba gave him a herd of cattle and ordered some of his warriors to accompany and help him drive the cattle to his royal kraal at Nongoma. Zwangendaba's behaviour so annoyed Zwide that he revenged himself by once more attacking Dingiswayo. The correct thing Zwide should have done was to pay Dingiswayo's ransom with the cattle which Zwangendaba gave him. Instead, he distributed these cattle among his commoners in great disgust. He once more vowed not to pay the ransom to Dingiswayo, as seen here:

Gwayi (1977 : 19)

"Mina kangizimisele neze ukugcina isithembiso engisenzile kuyena sokuthumela izinkomo kanye nezinsizwa lezo eziyibutho athe mangikhokhe ngabo."

("I am not prepared to keep the promise I made to him that I shall send cattle and a regiment of young men as ransom.")

During this campaign, Shaka was fighting as one of Dingiswayo's generals. Shaka had suggested to Dingiswayo that Zwide should, when defeated, be killed and his mother be burned inside her special hut as a witch.

Shaka's regiment, therefore, fought valiantly, fully determined to annihilate Zwide's army. They were, however, stopped by Dingiswayo who did not want to see too much bloodshed, as Gwayi (1977 : 65) proves:

Kade ayelibona ibutho lika Shaka lilwa, lisizungeza qede isitha lisibhuqe. Waphinda amazwi akhe aseke wawakhuluma nje. Abezile ukuzobulala lapha. Bazofundisa uZwide isifundo.

(For some time he had watched how Shaka's regiment fought by encircling and annihilating its enemy. He repeated what he always said before that, he had not come to kill, but to teach Zwide a lesson.)

At this battle Zwide was again defeated by Dingiswayo and was again "magnanimously" released. From this point in time Dingiswayo remained the most powerful chief of the era, and Zwide believed it. It was at this time and after these defeats, that Zwide came under his mother's influence and agreed to practise witchcraft against his /enemies.

enemies. Like Macbeth under the influence of his wife, Zwide committed one treacherous murder after another. He began with Zwangendaba, who captured but "magnanimously" released him. In his murderous campaigns Zwide carried out all sorts of hard luck reasons for killing his victims. At the back of his mind he killed all these weaker chiefs in order to defeat, capture and kill Dingiswayo. As proof of Zwide's madness, he attacked and killed a Zungu chief for being ugly. To a rational person, ugliness is not a good enough reason for killing, since creation is nobody's choice. The power of creating is God's alone. Gwayi (p.88) refers to the death of this unfortunate chief thus:

".....inkosi yabo seyinesiphosiso esikhulu. Owathi mayibe yimbi kangaka ngubani?"

(".....their chief is at fault. Who said he should be so ugly?")

Meanwhile, Ntombazi, Zwide's mother, had decided to build a special hut in which to store the heads of all defeated chiefs. This was a unique witchcraft method and Zwide, as we know, ultimately agreed with his mother because he felt it would help him to defeat Dingiswayo, his arch rival. He complied by killing Mlotha, Dludla and Malusi. We shall see later that after getting Dingiswayo's head, he was so much taken up by witchcraft practices that, without informing and consulting with his mother, he murdered his brother-in-law, Mashobana, Mzilikazi's father. As proof, Gwayi (p.140) says:

Ukuba impela lomkhuba wokunquma amakhosi wawusumsanganisile uZwide kuzobonakala nje ngoba kwasa ngelinye ilanga wahlasela uMashobana engamtshelanga lutho unina noMzilikazi. Wabuya nekhandla lomyeni wendodakazi yakhe ethandekayo wayolibophela yena luqobo endlini yamakhanda.

(To show that this habit of beheading chiefs had maddened Zwide is indicated when one day he attacked Mashobana without telling his mother and Mzilikazi. He returned with the head of her beloved daughter's husband and tied it up himself in the hut where that was done.)

It was only through the murderous campaigns that Zwide gradually rose in power, even though he was never more powerful than Dingiswayo.

As soon as Zwide felt that he had added enough members from the

/vanquished

vanquished tribes to enhance the might of his own, he began to think of ways and means of attacking Dingiswayo. One method he employed was to cunningly try to build up friendship with Dingiswayo. To do this he sent his sister, Ntombazana, to marry Dingiswayo so that he might not attack him. This act of Zwide compares favourably with modern-time diplomacy. Another reason for this marriage was that Ntombazana should obtain some article of Dingiswayo to be used in bewitching him and his army. Dingiswayo, on the other hand, was not impressed by all these escapades. Therefore, Zwide decided to provoke him to war by killing Malusi. It was during this war that Dingiswayo was captured and murdered. On the reason for killing Malusi, Gwayi (p.118) says:

".....phela uMalusi lona kasimbulaleli ikhanda lakhe siqonde ukususa uchuku nje ngaye."

(".....As things are we are not killing Malusi to get his head, but merely being provocative.")

In spite of the fact that all necessary precautions had been taken to bewitch the Mthethwa warriors, the charms did not produce the desired results. However, to provide an acceptable conclusion to the story, Gwayi, the artist, allows Dingiswayo to be mysteriously captured by Zwide's sentinels and whisked to Nongoma. He was killed and his head added to those strung up in Ntombazi's hut. The battle itself does not play an important part here due to the sudden disappearance of Dingiswayo. Although the end of Dingiswayo is artistically painted by the artist, it leaves the reader unconvinced in many ways. She proposes that the capture of Dingiswayo might have been the successful effect of witchcraft which stupified him and his bodyguard, who allowed the chief to stroll unescorted in the bushy region. To crown it all, the rest of the warriors did not worry themselves to follow up the trail or to look around until after a few days. The whole incident becomes incredible when Gwayi (p.123) says:

Kwathi uma kungasathi kwasha esikhotheni basuka ngamajubane bambamba uDingiswayo.

(When they saw that not a blade of grass moved, because of stillness, they ran at full speed and captured Dingiswayo.)

/Let

Let us look at how historians explain the end of Dingiswayo:

Cowley (1966 : 65) says:

While the Mthethwas were waiting, Dingiswayo had gone almost alone on reconnaissance and had been captured.

Selby (1973 : 66) has this to say:

In 1818 Dingiswayo was persuaded to visit Zwide's kraal almost unaccompanied, and was made prisoner and put to death.

Gwayi, as novelist and an artist, therefore had to end off her story artistically and allow historians to find their own conclusion to the life of the great Dingiswayo. History further tells us that it was common practice at this time that a chief could visit his neighbour and spend a few days at the kraal. To celebrate the occasion a great feast would be organized where dancing, eating and drinking would take place. On his return, the host would give his visitor a variety of presents. Dingiswayo, as we have been told by many authors, could have innocently visited Zwide and thus got killed. Therefore, we could disprove the successful effect of Ntombazi's witchcraft on Dingiswayo.

From the above, we may rightfully summarize that the author was convinced that Zwide was avaricious and treacherous throughout his life, while Dingiswayo remained brave and peaceful till death. It is important to note that Dingiswayo was never defeated by Zwide at war until he was treacherously murdered. We have mentioned already that Zwide behaved like a mad person later. After killing Dingiswayo, he was not satisfied and was rather angry since he could not regard himself as a ruler over the Mthethwa Tribe.

After the capture of Dingiswayo by Zwide's sentinels, Shaka was informed not to bring his Zulu army to help Dingiswayo any more. He received this warning from Ndoda Khumalo. This, therefore, meant there was no fully-fledged war between the two factions because the Mthethwas withdrew soon after realizing that their chief had been captured. Zwide expected to fight a pitched battle with Shaka's warriors, who would have come unaware of the withdrawal of the Mthethwas. This would

/have

have given him a chance to annihilate the Zulu warriors and kill their chief, who had given his warriors a resounding beating, while he was still serving under Dingiswayo.

Dingiswayo was a normal and kindly person who, even as early as this time, behaved more like a westernized ruler. He does not exhibit greed for power. Zwide is his direct opposite and his may be regarded as a tragic life. We see that in his later life one treacherous act led to another. Soon he began to appreciate the gruesome practice and action of his mother, who strung up and stored heads of dead chiefs in her special hut. It was sheer madness and anger that made Zwide hate the Khumalo clan. After killing Ndoda Khumalo he then killed his own son-in-law for being a Khumalo.

#### 2.3.2.2 The Futility of Witchcraft

From the story we have learned that Gwayi introduced Ntombazi, Zwide's mother, and her witchcraft as a subsidiary theme, indeed to enhance the "dominant" idea. At the beginning of the story Zwide, though having been badly defeated by Dingiswayo, refused vehemently to resort to witchcraft. He declared that he was prepared to fight and defeat his enemy by courageous fighting just as his fore-fathers had done. It was his defeat by Zwangendaba, the smaller chief, that made him begin to doubt the strength of his warriors. He soon became a convert to witchcraft, but seemingly his mentality also underwent a drastic change. It was his mother's own idea to string up the heads in her hut, as Gwayi (1977 : 41) confirms:

"Ngifuna ukwakha indlu yami lapho sizokuthi singayibulala inkosi ngemithi siyinqume ikhanda sizolibopha kahle kuyona. Ngizothanda ukugcizelela impela ukuthi ngelikaGodongwane engilifuna kunawo wonke."

("I want to build my hut in which we shall string up the heads of chiefs we will have killed by using medicine. I wish to emphasize, however, that it is Godongwane's head which I want above all others.")

Ntombazi had practised all kinds of witchcraft, but the most daring incident was when Zwide agreed to send his sister, Ntombazana, to

/marry



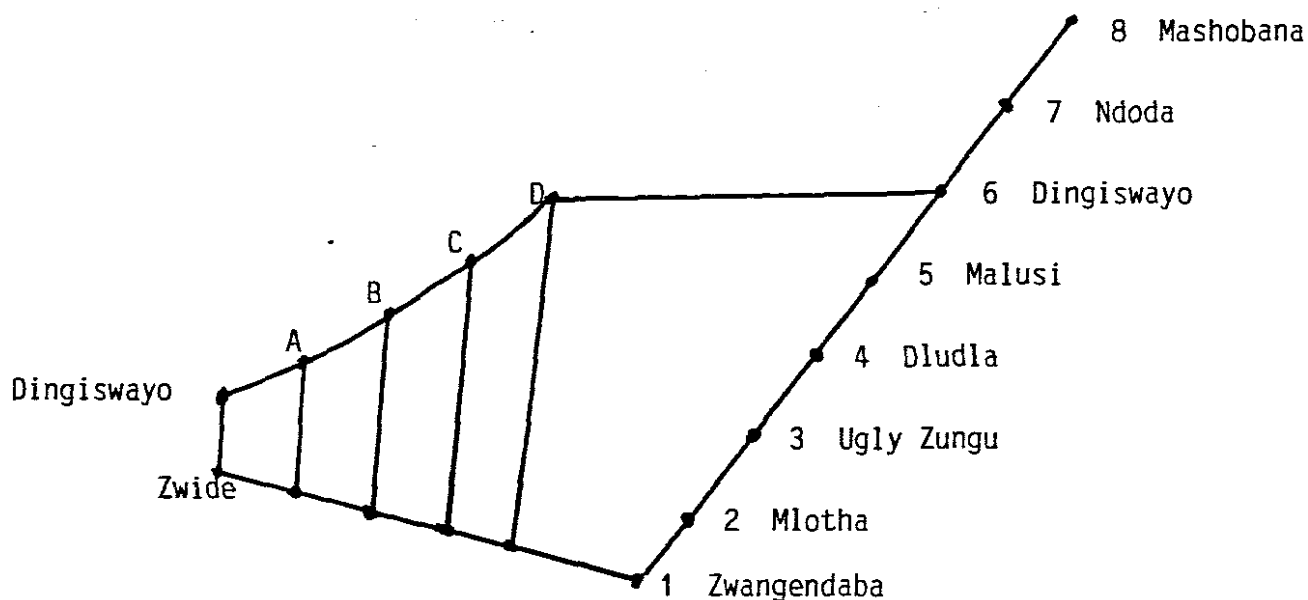
marry Dingiswayo. The grand idea behind this action was to make his sister get as close as possible to Dingiswayo and thus obtain any of Dingiswayo's belongings to be used for witchcraft. She failed to get anything substantial except mud made by dirty water from Dingiswayo's bath. She could not get a chance to come as near as she wanted to his articles because the chief's bodyguard (insila yenkosi) takes care of all these things and is always near the chief. This incident badly contradicts the ease with which Dingiswayo was captured later in the story.

However, the treasured mud was used as an ingredient in the required medicine, but the results were disastrous. The purpose of the bewitching medicine was to stop the approaching Mthethwa warriors. The medicine was sprinkled on the rivers so that the Mthethwa army would stop or drown when crossing. The Ndwandwes were, however, dumbfounded to see the whole Mthethwa army easily crossing all rivers without a single person drowning. To all the Ndwandwes, this incident proved beyond doubt the futility of witchcraft, as we find Ntombazi herself declaring Gwayi, (p.122):

Njengoba bengamukanga namanzi nje, noma, benzeke okunye emfuleni leyo futhi wabona uZwide noNtombazi ukuthi umuthi wabo kawusebenzanga nakancane.

(Since they were neither carried downstream by the water nor had something happened to them at those rivers, Zwide and Ntombazi realized that their medicine had not the slightest effect.)

### 2.3.2.3 The Graphic Diagram Representing Rivalry of Power and Futility of Witchcraft



Key:    A - D    Successful Dingiswayo over Zwide  
         1 - 8    Zwide rises by killing other chiefs  
         6        Dingiswayo is killed by Zwide

### 2.3.3 YEKANINI (1976)

In this book the author is pointing out that, although illegitimacy is so very much abhorred by the tribal people and their institutions, an illegitimate prince, after trials and tribulations, became accepted as the chief of his Zulu Tribe. His mother, who was a princess of the Langeni Tribe, in spite of her weak morals, was the undaunted sole supporter of her son until his ascendancy to the throne. In the first few chapters, the author has emphasized the fact that since an illegitimate child is always an unwanted child he will depend on his mother's love for moral support. Therefore, Shaka was such a child and that is why nearly all the women at Esiklebheni, Senzangakhona's kraal, hated and hurled insults at Shaka now and again. Even his name, Shaka, was not given to him by his parents but was the result of an insult originating from the state of his mother during pregnancy.

/According

According to custom at the time Nandi, his mother, should have been forced to marry another, or even an old man, because of her misconduct. However, this was waived since she was a princess and an unofficial, but acceptable, marriage was arranged, as Selby (1973 : 63) agrees:

At first it was suggested that Nandi's menstrual irregularity was caused by an ishaka, intestinal beetle. When the diagnosis was proved wrong and a child was born, he was called SHAKA. The union was regularized for though young, Senzangakhona as a chief was already married, and Nandi was taken as a junior wife. However, she soon lost favour and so was expelled with her child.

The expulsion from the royal kraal was another unjustifiable incident. Nandi was very angry and could not hide it. She was annoyed when the chief gave a wrong version of the story about his lost white goat. She had heard the whole story before from Shaka, who had severely punished Mudli's sons for compelling him to herd the calves instead of the goats. She could not accept the same story according to Mudli's sons, who had to prove Shaka guilty by any means. Shaka, who was listening to the story as related by the king, kept quiet throughout. His anger was intensified by the expulsion, yet he kept his peace. They were expelled from the kraal for the loss of Senzangakhona's favourite white goat, as Gwayi confirms:

Gwayi (1976 : 54)

Wayelalele inkosi ithi maliphume ilanga ngakusasa ekuseni  
ebe engasekho lapha esiklebheni nezingane zakhe makaphindele  
kubo bayomyalisisa.

(She listened to the chief when telling her that by sunrise the following morning she should be gone from Esiklebheni kraal together with her children. She should return to her people to receive thorough instructions.)

This proves that Shaka had a miserable life at his royal home (Esiklebheni) especially on the veld while they were herding goats. He had been brought to this kraal after some time at Langeni and the boys did not accept him. The fact that he was not born at the royal kraal was a stigma and aggravated the misery he felt during his stay there. It is chiefly due to this misery that he soon developed a revengeful attitude against all those who illtreated him. He became sensitive and revenged

/himself

himself on his brothers whenever they referred to himself and to his mother. Van der Merwe and Strydom (1975 :106) point this out as well:

He was never happy and hated the people. Later he would kill almost all of them.

Most writers emphasize the miserable conditions under which Shaka grew up because they maintained he received hell at almost all kraals at which he stayed as a child. At Langeni his mother's place where he was born, he remained an unwanted Zulu among the Langeni children, as Selby (1973 : 65) emphasizes thus:

Shaka's childhood was first spent among his mother's people. This was an unhappy period as there were recriminations because of the circumstances of his birth.

From these historical events, Gwayi has portrayed Shaka's childhood so well that the reader becomes convinced that under such circumstances Shaka had not the slightest chance of becoming accepted among Zulus, let alone become king. As such, he could never be recognized as the rightful heir of Senzangakhona. So when he arrived at Esiklebheni the women too picked him out for ill-treatment, especially Dingana's and Mhlangana's mothers. These two women seriously conditioned Shaka's behaviour towards other children because of constantly hurling insults at him. On one occasion when Shaka hit Dingana with a thorny stick, his angry mother failed to control her vicious temper and she was heard shouting, Gwayi (1976 : 10):

"Kuyohamba kuhambe kuze kufike usuku engiyokubamba ngalo ngikubaze kahle incegela kanye nesiphongo ukuze leliphanjana lakho liyeke ukumisi okwelikathekwane."

("By and by there will come a day when I shall catch you and chip off a piece from your occipital and frontal bones so that this small head of yours does no longer resemble that of the Hammerhead.")

While still engaged in Shaka's ill-treatment by all people at the royal home, it is worth noting that in spite of this when Shaka was king he did not revenge himself on his brothers. He did not kill a single one of them, except Sigujana, who was removed from the throne by Dingiswayo's agents in preparation for Shaka's arrival. From history we know that

it was these very brothers, Dingana and Mhlangana, with the help of Mbopha and his aunt, Mkabayi, who assassinated him.

After Shaka's expulsion from eSiklebheni, Nandi took her children to her Langeni home. Once more Shaka suffered unfair treatment and eventually they left for the Qwabe Tribe during the great famine, Madlantule. His mother had fallen in love with Gendeyana Qwabe and bore him a son, Ngwadi. Before leaving the Langeni's, Shaka had begrudged them and later, at the death of his mother, he killed almost all of them when they came for the mourning ceremony, but not Mbopha. He spared him in gratitude for having given him and his mother water to drink in early childhood. We find this incident well illustrated in Ntuli (1979 : 14):

"Kodwa wena ngoba ungiphuzisile amanzi ngiyokusindisa Mbopha wena wedwa kuphela....."

("But because you have given me water to drink, I shall spare you, Mbopha. Only you alone.....")

It is strange, however, that when the assassination occurred the self-same Mbopha participated and Shaka, like Julius Caesar, recognized Mbopha and might have said: "And you, Mbopha, son of Sithayi."

From the story, the author paints a vivid picture of how an unwanted child worked himself up against odds to the status of respectability and recognition. She makes us realize that Shaka must have been an exceptional person, who could overcome difficulties and emerge victorious from the fray. Wherever Shaka went, the stigma of his illegitimate birth followed him like a shadow.

Some historians maintain that Shaka left the Qwabe Tribe because he was ill-treated. They do not refer to the kindness he experienced at Gendeyana's kraal where he was loved and protected against Senzangakhona's wrath and jealousy. It was Gendeyana who came to Shaka's rescue at about this time. Gwayi so far paints a beautiful picture of this man towards Shaka, Nandi and her children. He exhibited a real fatherly love for Shaka when he sent him away to his relative who was Macingwane Mchunu's steward. He was sending him

/away

away because Senzangakhona wanted him back home, but Shaka refused to go. So Gendeyana took one of his own sons to accompany Shaka who was to be introduced to Macingwane at his kraal, Ngonyameni. The incident of Senzangakhona trying to bribe Macingwane for the return of Shaka is mentioned in Shaka's praise-poem (Izibongo). It was from this place that Shaka and his mother, sister and brother left for the coast to go to his mother's relative who lived among the Mthethwa Tribe. Kunene (1979 : XVII) confirms this statement of his going to the Mthethwas, thus:

Shaka, now a young man, found life intolerable.....Faced with continual frustration, Shaka decided to go to the Mthethwa court as a military recruit.

At the Mthethwa Tribe, Shaka stayed with his mother's uncle, Mbiya, who was Ngomane's steward. Therefore, Shaka soon came under the guidance and influence of Ngomane who was Dingiswayo's general. Here, nobody ever referred to Shaka's birth and gradually he became respected because of his outstanding bravery. For instance, he soon distinguished himself by killing the giant, who had become like the biblical Goliath, the fear of the whole tribe. Dingiswayo rewarded Shaka with a herd of cattle for his valiant act of rescuing the tribe from the giant. He again promoted him to be captain of the regiment (IziChwe) when the former captain retired in order to get married and settle down. This promotion enabled Shaka to introduce a new and unique method of fighting which was yet unknown among the tribes of that era. Shaka's position among the Mthethwas is further referred to by Selby (1973 : 63) when he confirms his being there, thus:

.....Next they went to live with Mtetwa relatives on the coast, where Shaka worked happily as a herdboys and later joined the Mtetwa army.

Dingiswayo was impressed by Shaka's bravery and wisdom and wished to have him rule the Zulus. He wished to convince his vassal, Senzangakhona, that he should make Shaka his rightful heir. Dingiswayo invited Senzangakhona to his kraal, Oyengweni, and organized a grand festival. During the dance Senzangakhona was impressed and taken up by the physique and the dancing of Shaka, whom he did not recognize. He

/accepted

accepted Dingiswayo's request when he realized who Shaka was but, unfortunately, he did not keep his promise and appointed Sigujana as heir. This greatly annoyed Dingiswayo who believed that such a weakling as Sigujana could be easily defeated by a stronger tribe, especially Zwide. That would mean the Zulu Tribe would join its conqueror and be a loss to the Mthethwa. Therefore, Dingiswayo's immediate reaction to the broken promise was to have Sigujana murdered and Shaka imposed upon the Zulus as their king. Selby (p.64) concurs with this thus:

About 1816 Shaka's father died and his appointed successor having been murdered with the help of Dingiswayo, Shaka became the Zulu Chief.

The coronation of such an imposed chief could not follow the traditional pattern. In her book, Gwayi had adopted almost word for word what Ritter, in his history book, believes to have taken place on the coronation day. This is what Ritter (1962 : 59) says:

"Children of Zulu! Today I present you Shaka, son of Senzangakhona, son of Jama descended from Zulu, as your lawful chief. Is there anyone here who contests the righteousness of this decision? If so, let him stand forth and speak now.....No one speaks", said Ngomane, "Then salute your chief."

On the same occasion Gwayi ends off her narration in this fashion, Gwayi (1976 : 122 - 123):

"Mazulu amahle, ngithunywe yisilo sakwaMthethwa ukuba ngizokwethula inkosi yenu.....Ukuqhubeka kwenu nokuthula ngiyakubonga.....kuzomele ukuba nonke-ke nikhuleke kuyona." Wonke amadoda ayelapho asukuma. Ethandayo nengathandi yakhuleka kanye namanye yathi,

Bayethe! Bayethe! Bayethe! Uyizulu!"

("Good Zulus, I am sent by the Mthethwa king to present your king on his behalf.....your continued silence, I thank you for it.....you must all stand and salute him." All men who were present stood up. The willing and the unwilling, all stood up and roared the royal salute thus:

"Hail King! Hail King! Hail King! You are the Heaven.")

These poor Zulu men had no choice because with Ngomane and Shaka had come the mighty Izichwe Regiment from the Mthethwa Tribe to put to

/death

death all those who objected to the coronation. As it is, theirs was to do or die.

The diagram that follows illustrates the structure of the plot of the book. This is a summary explanation of the diagram. Stage one is Esiklebheni Kraal from where Shaka and his mother were unceremoniously expelled to Stage two at Langeni. Here Makhedama, his cousin, made his life miserable. They were tolerated until expelled during the great famine known as Madlantule. During their stay at Langeni, Nandi had had a son, Ngwadi, by Gendeyana Qwabe. Although Nandi had not been officially married to him, she was forced by circumstances beyond human control to join him with her children at Stage three, and was readily accepted, even as Ritter (1962 : 18) says:

He treated Nandi and her son with a kindness which Shaka never forgot, and there in a real home 'surrounded' by sympathy, Shaka at last had come to rest.

Senzangakhona wanted his son Shaka back, but not his mother and sister. We are not told the reason, but we suspect that he was to join the army when grown enough. Gendeyana sent him to Stage four, Macingwane, for protection. At Ngonyameni, Macingwane refused to accept the bribe from Senzangakhona in order to force Shaka to go back home. Macingwane feared to be attacked by Senzangakhona for his refusal and so Shaka and his mother, brother and sister left for the Mthethwa Tribe, Stage Five.

In passing, we may mention that Nandi showed bravery and courage throughout all the stages. We are not told who accompanied them from kraal to kraal. At that time wild animals were teeming and roaming in the bushes and forests through which they travelled. There were no roads and bridges, as we see Gwayi pointing this out so brilliantly how hazardous these journeys must have been:

Manje indlela abasebehamba ngayo yayisiyimbingoba inamatshe  
.....kwamele ukuba baqaphelise ngoba kukhona ingozi yokuba  
omunye wabo ashelele awe. Gwayi (1976 : 85)

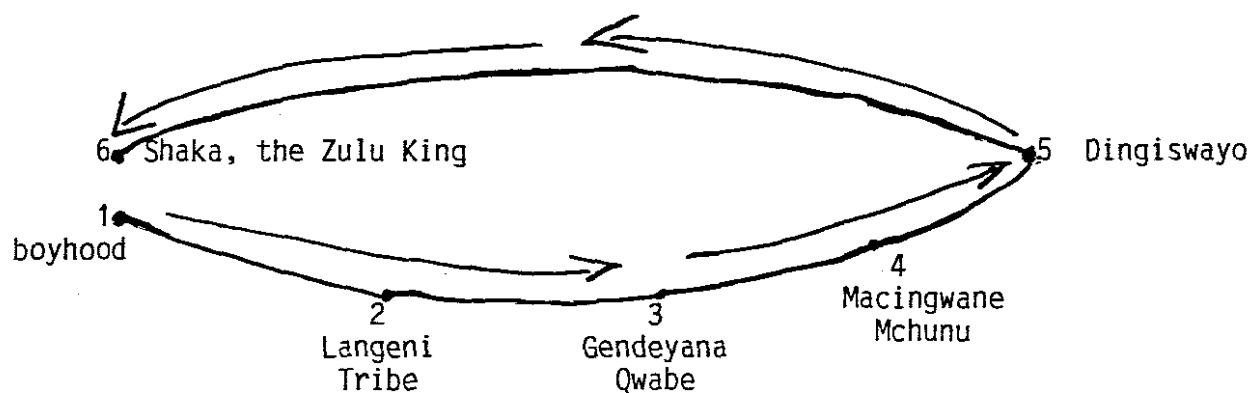
(Now the path they followed was dangerous because it was stoney.....they had to be very careful because there was the possibility that one of them could slip and fall.)

/The



The motherly love and fondness of one's children is very well revealed by the author. Nandi, the despised Langeni princess and rejected Zulu queen, suffered until Shaka achieved greatness when he became the Zulu King, from Stage five. With the help of Dingiswayo a bloodless coup was effected and Shaka became the mighty Zulu King, Stage six. This position brought an end to his mother's miserable life and converted her to the most respected Queen Mother of the Zulu Nation.

#### 2.3.3.1 Diagram Illustrating how Shaka Became the Zulu King



#### 2.4 GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF ALL THREE NOVELS

Having thus gone through theme and structure of the plot in each of Gwayi's historical novels, it will now be necessary to give a brief summary evaluation of them as a unit.

According to the information given in this chapter, Gwayi has successfully complied with the requirements of plot, structure and theme, the important aspects of the novel. She has, therefore, scored a high percentage on this since she is an immature novelist. She has succeeded to make readers of her novels know beyond doubt what she wants to put across in an artistic manner. Let us now endeavour to decide which of the three is the best and why we come to such a decision. Gwayi's books were written in close succession and she improved with each attempt, rising to the climax in the third book. She has developed like a seed from the seed-bed and has grown to be

a beautiful tree to admire. There is no mistake in thinking that she might have developed into one of the giant trees in the equatorial jungle of Zulu literature. The only handicap might have been the absence of the aid which she received from her husband. She might have collected good material but fail to process it correctly without him. It is a pity that they could not continue, even as platonic literary friends. One has no doubt that had they continued together they might have produced many more historical novels.

The first two novels help to show how Gwayi proceeded from one step to the next. They were a milestone on the road of progressive writing. Yekanini is the last and the best of the three. The reason may be due to the fact that her husband, Moses Ngcobo, made the finishing touches without having to refer to Gwayi. Ngcobo had written two books before, one of which was a historical novel. Ngcobo was an experienced writer already when he began helping Gwayi. One is inclined to think that Gwayi undertook research, proposed theme, structure and plot while Ngcobo supplied the vocabulary and part of his own style. The dedication of the first book, Bafa Baphela, throws light on the method she employed during her research. She consulted many people, such as fellow nurses, in addition to books she read.

#### 2.4.1 Bafa Baphela

The reading of Bafa Baphela is rendered heavy by the many tribes involved and references are not easy to remember. It is often necessary to revise the chapter in order to understand better what it is all about. Unless the reader is quite clear about geographical topography of the plateau, which was traversed by the Tlokoa Tribe, and the devastating effects of "Difaqane", it is not easy to understand the story. The tribal prejudice should not be ruled out, that is, the telling of a Sotho story in Zulu. To a Zulu, the intricacies of foreign customs and behaviour may not be of so much interest.

#### 2.4.2 Shumpu

The second book has people and places well-known in Zulu history to  
/captivate

captivate the reader. A number of incidents mentioned in the story occur in the Chiefs' praise poems (izibongo) to prove their authenticity. It is the subsidiary theme of Ntombazi's witchcraft which, although proving a very important point in detail, is not of a high quality. When the reader thinks of the hygiene of the time and the stored-up heads of dead chiefs, he cannot but be disgusted. The end of the book, with Zwide being worried by Shaka's growing power, forms a good link with and bridge to the next book, Yekanini. The death of Dingiswayo does not mean Zwide gains power over the Mthethwa Tribe. The nightmares he suffers at the end of this book are explained in Yekanini.

#### 2.4.3 Yekanini

The third book, Yekanini, is far superior to the first two because it is straightforward and does not need a subsidiary theme to boost its "dominant" aim. Its theme remains as portraying how an illegitimate child can suffer in the family, community and tribe for being illegitimate. The status of the parents of such a child does not immunize their child from the stigma and from being disliked as the black sheep of society. Shaka's life clearly proves this statement. In his case, however, the unusual pattern arose as he worked himself up to become a mighty chief. It was the ill-treatment metered against him that made him revengeful.

The book contains more recent historical incidents, with characters whose descendants are still alive and well-known to society. Many places mentioned have become historical monuments, like Stanger in Natal (Dukuza) where Shaka is buried. Even fictitious characters and places seem quite possible and thus are convincing. Shaka is the hero and a very important person in the history of the Zulus. Gwayi has succeeded in relating an otherwise complicated historical incident in an interesting convincing manner. She has succeeded in making her readers understand how such an illegitimate royal child became an accepted Zulu chief, who later built the Zulus into a formidable nation.

## 2.5 THE RESUME

The chapter opens with a brief summary of the explanation of theme and structure of the plot. It exposes the interdependence of these elements in the writing of any piece of art or the novel as an example.

The analysis of the three books is undertaken to show how true Gwayi has been to the rules of writing a novel. As seen in the first book, Bafa Baphela, she deals with the unity of the Tlokoa Tribe after the death of their chief. Mantatisi continues as Regent through the "Difaqane" and wanders about up to the Tswana territory. She suffered defeat from the Bathlaping and finally from Moshesh, and died soon after handing over to her son, Sekonyela.

In Shumpu, the rivalry for power between amicable Dingiswayo and avaracious Zwide is pointed out. Although Zwide did not at first believe in witchcraft, he ultimately became a convert because of the various defeats his armies suffered from Dingiswayo. He gained some power by wantonly killing smaller chiefs for various far-fetched reasons. By a stroke of luck he captured and killed Dingiswayo but remained scared of the rising power of Shaka, the young Zulu chief.

Yekanini portrays the boyhood of Shaka and his miserable life at the various kraals, simply because he was an illegitimate child. This story proves how Zulu society abhors illegitimacy, even of royal children. The treatment which Shaka received affected his personality and he became revengeful and hard-hearted. He became very much attached to his mother, who had suffered many insults and deprivations because of him. From Dingiswayo's kraal he learned to be, and became, a respected brave young man. He was finally promoted to become the Izichwe Regiment's general. With the help of Dingiswayo and his regiment, he returned to his home to grab the Zulu crown in a bloodless coup d'etat.

The brief assessment of the three books reveals how Gwayi progressed naturally step by step. Her last book is the best, and thus proves

/that

that she could have become one of the great Zulu historical novelists.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CHARACTERIZATION

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to look at the people or characters, who appear in all three novels of Gwayi. Since characterization is one of the important aspects of the novel it is, therefore, fundamental to look at how she portrays her fictitious people. We shall expect to find all types of characters to appear as is the case in real life. We expect, among others, protagonists, antagonists, simple, complex and stock characters.

It is the reader's duty to identity the different characters in order to successfully assess the author's success in characterization. We expect further to meet heroes and heroines, saints and villains as well as what some novel critics and analysts call 'round' and 'flat' characters. Novelists create or make a variety of characters, whose different behaviour they artistically blend in order to make their fictitiousness appear more like people in real life. We shall therefore look critically at characters found in Gwayi's novels so as to be able to make a fair assessment of the level of her artistic talent at characterization.

Characters who draw the attention of the reader most are those that set the book in motion and keep it running smoothly until the end of the narrative, which is another element in the discription of the novel.

The reader is bound to be attracted by characters who are relevant to, or possible in, real life, as Kenney (1966 : 27) suggests thus:

/A character

A character is relevant if there are a lot of people like him in the real world.

This is a very important and interesting fact, because some of these relevant characters are often like ourselves or some other people we know or might have either seen or heard of. We look forward to noticing and assessing these characters as they appear in the novels of our subject. At the same time we should not forget that the novelist herself is the product of God's wonderful creation and she, too, wants to create. In the novelist there is the immortal spirit which makes him resemble God, but what the novelist creates cannot have a spirit and freedom. Therefore, her characters will be limited and so remain directly under her control, doing and saying exactly what she likes. Thus, the novelist will artistically blend the temperaments of her characters in order to overcome her limited power of creation. If she successfully does this the product will be a very good novel.

While considering Gwayi's characters, we shall always bear in mind that even if she succeeds to blend her simple and complex characters, they will always remain fictitious and will never behave like real people, as Kenney (1966 : 31) confirms:

We need only remind ourselves once again that the fictitious character, however complex, is not a human being.

The Zulu novel is very young, while the historical novel is so young as not to have even reached the teething stages of development and growth. We cannot, therefore, compare what we find in the Zulu historical novel with that in the English novel, which has grown steadily through successive centuries according to Church (1961 : 1):

The English novel is a sturdy plant whose tap-root plunges deep through centuries.

In Gwayi's books we find a large variety of characters. Although we shall not consider them all, we shall take a cross-section through all three books by picking one or two characters at random. The following is a short list of names from which our choice will be

/made.

made:

BAFA BAPHELA : Mantatisi; Molapo; Moloi; Moshesh; Makaba  
SHUMPU : Zwide; Ntombazi; Dingiswayo; Shaka  
YEKANINI : Shaka; Nandi; Dingana; Mhlangana; Ngomane

### 3.2 MANTATISI

Mantatisi is the heroine of Bafa Baphela. She is as lifelike as any complex person under similar circumstances could be. At the beginning of the story we meet her as a simple loving nurse-wife of the sickly chief, while she represents him occasionally at very important tribal meetings. She thus gains experience of how tribal affairs are discussed and handled. She was aware of the fact that her heir-presumptive son, Sekonyela, was still a minor, and because she belonged to the Sia Tribe she would not qualify to act as Regent. She at once becomes suspicious of her brothers-in-law and becomes a protagonist. She immediately influences the whole tribe to accept her after the death of her husband. She made sure of getting rid of the would-be rival brothers-in-law. She was fully prepared to sacrifice her life for the tribe, which was the literal possession of her minor son. It is from this angle that we view her, like Atlas the Greek God, who was powerful enough to carry the world on his shoulders. Mantatisi figuratively did the same to the Tlokoa Tribe during the historical period known as "Difaqane". She is, indeed, a strong-willed person endowed with herculian bravery, because we know that the Tlokoa bore the brunt of the "Difaqane". She successfully protected and kept the tribe united until her son took over from her.

A very clever and far-sighted woman, with a keen sense of observation, she demonstrated this by frightening Bochabelo, the chief steward (Induna) at the beginning of the story, so that he would stay and serve her. The deflection of this most important and responsible steward to her side quickly convinced the whole tribe that Mantatisi was the rightful ruler and not the rival brothers-in-law, Molapo and Moloi. Her levelheadedness made her not put Moloi and Molapo on the alert so as to suspect her to be plotting against them, as Gwayi (1973 : 9) also assures us of this:

/.....Kwathi



.....Kwathi kanti ubekade engakushayimkhuba ukujwayelana kuka Sebata no Tsepo waqala manje ukungayethembi lenduna yakhe. Nokho wayesayiyekile ebuduneni, ngoba ebona ukuthi ukuyixosha kwakhe kuzobakhombisa noma kanjani ukuthi uyixosha nje ngoba ijwayelene noTsepo.

(.....Although at first she did not mind the friendship between Sebata and Tsepo, she now began to distrust her steward. Yet she left him in his stewardship because she realized that to dismiss him would definitely show the brothers of her late husband that she dismissed him because he was friendly to Tsepo.)

Mantatise was a selfless, devoted person, who was however very sensitive towards males who despised her; especially those who thought that she could not acquit herself responsibly in matters of national unity. She strongly believed in her powers to perform tasks which any male could undertake. That is why when Mpangazitha Hlubi attacked her steward, Phofolo, without provocation she felt that he was being spiteful and would not have attacked him if he had belonged to a chief. This is clearly pointed out here by Gwayi (1973 : 38):

Mhlawumbe sasingakezwa ukuthi ukuze umuntu ahlakaniphe akadingi ukuba yindoda.

(Perhaps they (Hlubis) had not heard that in order to be clever a person need not be a male.)

In passing, let us just note that according to African tradition and custom, females never occupied important and responsible positions. They were, and in some places are still, considered minors from birth to death. Strangely enough, even among westernized nations women are still discriminated against in places of employment, responsible positions and by disparity in remuneration.

The fact that Mantatise protected her son and tribe proves beyond doubt that she was an exceptional woman, and some authors call her a "Warrior Queen". First and foremost she believed in the two adages, namely - "blood is thicker than water" and "charity begins at home". Moreover, she did not forget her father, the chief of the Sias. She went to warn him to take precautions against the marauding

/powerful

powerful Hlubis. She told him in no uncertain terms about the Hlubis because she had had personal experience, since her steward Phofolo had been driven away by them. Again, her father demonstrated the view that men have of women. A typical anti-female chief that he was, Mosia repudiated his daughter to the extent that he felt that she was mentally deranged and needed immediate medical attention. He at once offered her his personal medicine man as he said:

.....kalisayikubuye limbone futhi ngoba ukusangana kwakhe  
kuzokuya kuqhubekela phambili, ahambe aduke nezwe. Gwayi  
(1973 : 49)

(.....he would never see her again, because her madness  
would become worse and make her to drift away and get lost  
in the wilderness.)

However, the story tells us that Mosia and his tribe became Mpangazitha's victims within a short while after Mantatise's departure.

We see her bravery demonstrated once again after the devastating defeat she received from Makaba's people, who decimated her warriors as they fell into the pits. She gathered the remaining people to fight and get enough food from the next tribe and thus fed her Tlokoas. The following quotation from Gwayi (1973 : 73) confirms this trust:

Nanxa ayeqala ukwehlulwa yinkosi yomSuthu uMantatise  
akaphelanga ithemba abesethi ngenhliziyo angeke esaphinda  
alwe.

(Although this was her first defeat by a Sotho chief,  
Mantatise did not despair and decided never to fight again.)

After the resounding defeat by the Bathlaping, who were aided by Nicholas Waterboer, the Griqua Chief, and the Missionary Robert Moffat, she did not abandon her people in despair. She went back to a safer area towards the south. Unfortunately, she arrived at Thaba Bosio, where her warriors received a final blow from Moshesh. Even after this, we find that on her death-bed she unhesitatingly installed her son, Sekonyela, as her rightful successor. At this point in time, we realize that the Tlokoas were still a tribe to be reckoned with because of Queen Mantatise's great heroic leadership.

### 3.3 MOSHESH

Moshesh had built himself a stronghold at Thaba Bosio after his defeat by Mantatisi at Butha-Buthe. He had learned from the hard, but expressive, teacher - experience. This chief used his bitter experience to fortify himself against the marauding tribes of the time and thus avoided the repetition of Butha-Buthe. He was highly lifelike and adaptive during the "Difaqane". Moshesh's tribe was not annihilated by Mantatisi at the Battle of the Pots because they soon fled and allowed her to get food and cattle. As Gwayi (1973 : 64) relates:

Amabutho kaMoshesh acela empunzini.

(Moshesh's warriors took to their heels like wild antelopes.)

For Moshesh it was "once beaten, twice shy", because when Mantatisi came the second time his warriors rolled down large boulders on her weary and hungry army as it tried to climb the mountain.

Moshesh was unselfish, as we see him warning other chiefs to get to higher and safer places in readiness for any eventuality, but they did not listen to his timely warning. Morapeli was one such stubborn chief, who suffered the consequences when Mantatisi came the second time. Gwayi (1973 : 84) confirms what actually took place, as Moshesh remarks:

.....Wanikina ikhanda umfo kaMokhachane.....lapho ecabanga ukuthi, ukuba lamakhosi ayemlalelile eweluleka ngabe akwenzeki kuwona esekwenzeka manje.

(Mokhachane's son shook his head when contemplating that if these chiefs had listened to his advice they would not have experienced what was happening to them.)

### 3.4 ZWIDE

The next complex character to be studied is Zwide, son of Langa Ndwandwe, whose royal kraal was Dlovunga in the Nongoma region. We find that his greed for power almost made him a lunatic. Gwayi's portrayal of him is in such a manner that the reader receives surprise

/after

after surprise. In the first place, she makes him so proud that he is not prepared to become Dingiswayo's vassal. He despised him as Godongwane, the avaricious son of Jobe who, together with his brothers, had plotted against their father. Again he maintained that Dingiswayo had usurped the power and throne from Mawewe. He was convinced that he was more powerful and was fully determined to prove this by murdering Dingiswayo as soon as he got the chance. After every defeat he made up his mind to get back to the battlefield as soon as his warriors were ready. He was diplomatic and readily made verbal agreements to pay the demanded ransom after each defeat, but he never paid any. For people who had no other code for treaties other than verbal agreements, we can say he was a liar because he never fulfilled his promises, and boldly declared to his stewards, Gwayi (1977 : 56):

Yazibona ihlakaniphile isibili ithi iyona ebifanele ibe ngaphezulu kuka Dingiswayo.

(He regarded himself as clever, saying that in fact he should be paramount over Dingiswayo.)

At one time he revealed his stubbornness after being defeated by a minor chief Zwangendaba. This chief had come under the amicable Dingiswayo's influence and he did not kill Zwide after capturing him. He further waived the ransom item and over and above gave Zwide a herd of cattle as a present. He allowed his medicine-man to accompany Zwide and treat him for apparent signs and symptoms of insanity, as he declared:

Gwayi (1977 : 39):

Uma uZwide esangana ephela endlelini seiyomelapha khona lapho ngaphambi kokuba kuqhubeke.

(If Zwide becomes really mad along the way we should treat him immediately before he becomes worse.)

Zwide's reaction to such generous treatment from Zwangendaba is most amazing. He was like a lunatic and was so annoyed that he took all the gift cattle and distributed them amongst his stewards. He felt insulted, as he put it, and soon attacked and killed Zwangendaba for it all. Zwide should, at this point in time, have concentrated on

/his

his arch-enemy and spared Zwangendaba. We feel that the story would have had another shape if Zwide had died at the hands of Zwangendaba.

By making Zwide so inconsistent, Gwayi succeeded to make him lifelike and indeed similar to some people we know. This trait is once again exhibited when he swears to his mother that he would never make use of witchcraft in warfare and would conquer his enemies by using the power of his mighty warriors as his forefathers had done before him. Gwayi (1977 : 17) makes him emphasize this, thus:

"Ubaba wasakha lesisizwe ngokusebenzisa izikhali."

(My father built this nation by using weapons.)

It was his constant defeat by Dingiswayo Mthethwa, as well as by Zwangendaba, which made him change his tactics. He soon believed, like his mother, that in order to destroy Dingiswayo they must bewitch him, as this quotation shows:

.....kubonga uNtombazi, ngoba ecabanga ukuthi uZwide uvuma ukuba uDingiswayo athakathwe. Gwayi (1977 : 41)

(Ntombazi was grateful, because she thought that Zwide agreed that Dingiswayo must be bewitched.)

His conversion to witchcraft completely changed his behaviour and lifestyle to become a tragedy, because the first step he took in favour of witchcraft led to many more tragic incidents. This unfortunate behaviour compares favourably with that of Macbeth after killing Duncan. To illustrate the above statement, four examples from the story will be given:

- (a) When Zwide sent his sister Ntombazana to marry Dingiswayo for a short while, so that she could procure some personal belongings of Dingiswayo in order to be used as an ingredient in the cauldron of Ntombazi's bewitching charms. Such a marriage has never been heard of in African society. It is a queer arrangement by a lunatic brother.
- (b) It is strange that after beheading a conquered chief he allowed his head to be strung and stored. Beheading was itself a unique practice while arranging such heads consecutively was both unhealthy and eccentric.

- (c) He developed an unwarranted hatred for the Khumalo Tribe. This is shown when he suddenly decided to kill his brother-in-law, Mashobana, without informing his mother.
- (d) Another example to prove Zwide's odd behaviour is when he ordered the murder of a minor chief because of his ugliness. This head was strung in his mother's hut, but he took special pleasure in viewing it from time to time to check on its ugliness.

He was anxiously awaiting and hoping to get Shaka's head but because he was not a chief at that time his head was to be given to children to play with. Gwayi (1977 : 78) points this out here:

".....naye esakhe isikhathi siyeza ikhanda lakhe ngilifuna lapha....."

(".....yet his time will come and I want his head here.")

Zwide's behaviour is very strange indeed because the reader expects him to be satisfied after murdering Dingiswayo and he had become paramount, but he was still unhappy. We find him worried and unhappy with the gradual rise of the Zulu chief. He had seen how brave and brutal Shaka was as he fought in Dingiswayo's army. Zwide's army was saved by Dingiswayo, who had stopped the war before the annihilation of his army, as Gwayi (1977 : 69) illustrates:

Watshela ibutho lika Shaka ukuba liyeke manje ukubulala abakwaNxumalo.

(He then told Shaka's regiment to stop killing the Nxumalo people.)

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that at the end of the story Zwide developed hallucinations and nightmares and often woke up shouting Shaka's name, as found here:

Waphaphama uZwide esejuluke esemanzi ekhala ethi: uShaka! uShaka! uShaka! Gwayi (1977 : 42).

(And when Zwide awoke he was wet with sweat, shouting: Shaka! Shaka! Shaka!)

### 3.5 NTOMBAZI

Ntombazi, Zwide's mother, is not so easy to classify as she has traits of simplicity and complexity. We shall concentrate on the complex trend, because she does not only surprise but shocks the reader out of his wits. She is a practical witch and she cunningly woos Zwide to use witchcraft in order to win as he kills his enemies. At the beginning of the story she is a typical shy and docile African female, who respects and honours the chief. She could hardly address her own son in order to introduce her witchcraft practices. The reader becomes shocked when she plans to build a special hut in which heads of murdered chiefs would be stored. Only chiefs' heads were to be honoured in that fashion. This was a gruesome practice which had never been heard of before and was never continued afterwards. In the first place there were no freezers and the idea of stringing these heads for storage becomes incomprehensible in terms of health for her, as well as the inmates at the kraal. We are not told what she actually did with them except just gaze at them.

As a witchdoctor it is not surprising to find that she was an ardent ancestor worshipper and that her hut had areas where she hardly ever walked for fear of disturbing the ancestors and thus annoying them. This is confirmed by Gwayi (1977 : 58) thus:

Babenenkolo yokuthi amadlozi abebhekile yilapho ehlala khona kuyindawo ehlonishwayo.

(They believed that the ancestors, who protected them, dwelt there and it was, therefore, a respected area.)

Ntombazi was a very persuasive character, as we see in the different tricks she used in order to win Zwide to her side. She even suggested that Dingiswayo's people would ultimately be added to the Ndwandwes, as we read from Gwayi (1977 : 63):

"Abantu bakhe bona bazokuba sebengabakho ngoba bengasena nkosi."

("His people would become yours as they will no longer have a chief.")

She was a good planner and suggested a number of campaigns to kill the  
/undesirables.

undesirables. We see how she once planned an expedition in order to attack Ndoda Khumalo. She wanted the Khumalos not to be suspicious of her plans but to innocently join in the hunting expedition. Gwayi (1977 : 139) points this out thus:

"Sizomcela ukuba sifike ezweni lakhe sizokuba nenqina yomsenge."

("We shall ask him to allow us to come to his country in order to have an innocent hunting expedition.")

### 3.6 SHAKA

In Yekanini, Shaka is the most important character and his mother comes next. Shaka is the hero and the most complex and lifelike character in the book. In fact, we may not be very wrong if we say he was an extraordinary character of any time. It may also not be wrong to add that the intricacies found in Shaka's life were carefully interwoven into the story by Gwayi's husband. Ngcobo had already written a few novels before. Among other things he might have already been preparing to write his novel on the conquest of Zwile by Shaka, (Qhude Manikiniki). He therefore ended the book neatly when the Zulus accepted Shaka as their king in the presence of Ngomane and Izichwe Regiment. They were sent by Dingiswayo to effect a bloodless installation of Shaka.

We notice that as a young child, Shaka was an infant prodigy and could clearly detect all those who hated him and his mother. He retaliated to the hatred metered against him by Mpikase and Mfudukazi, Dingana's and Mhlangana's mothers respectively, by bullying their sons at play. This bullying was, however, temporary because later, as king, Shaka was very kind to them. History tells us that Shaka never killed his brothers and so we cannot justify Dingana and Mhlangana for assassinating him later. As a young boy, his violent nature occasionally erupted. We see him throwing soil at the faces of his brothers because they stubbornly refused to get away at his command. As Gwayi (1976 : 23) tells us:

"Kanizwanga nginitshela ukuthi hambani?".....Wacaphuna umhlabathi.....wabathela ngawo ebusweni.

/(You



("You did not hear when I said get away?".....He picked up the soil.....and threw it at their faces.)

A child with such a violent character could not be expected to obey anybody, yet Shaka obeyed and loved his mother as normally as any child. He helped her look after his younger sister, Nomcoba, when Nandi had gone to settle a dispute with either Mkabi or Mkabayi, as it happened on this occasion, Gwayi (1976 : 39):

"Uzoke usale lapha noNomcoba, ngisaya laphaya kuMkabi, ngoba kukhona into engifuna ukuyikhuluma naye."

("You will remain here with Nomcoba, while I go to Mkabi, because there is something I want to discuss with her.")

When Shaka joined other herdboys he became more aggressive, because the older boys disliked him especially because of his birth. They kept referring to it and always picked on him for minor fights. One day they made him so angry that he could not help but beat Mudli's sons so much that they went home to report. The result of this incident was the expulsion of Shaka and his mother from the royal kraal. As they left, Shaka's heart was hardened because Mudli's sons had falsely reported to Senzangakhona. The chief did not bother to investigate the matter any further by enquiring from some of the herdboys to check on the veracity of Mudli's sons' report. It was such an incident which made Shaka hate Senzangakhona and his royal kraal. Shaka refused to return at his invitation from Gendeyana Khuzwayo's kraal and preferred to die in the wilderness. It was after this declaration that Gendeyana told Shaka to go to Macingwane's kraal. We find Gwayi (1976 : 78) pointing this out, as she says:

Wathi ngenhliziyo kungcono khona ukuba ayofela phakathi  
kwaMachunu kunokuba aphindele kuyise kwaZulu.

(In his heart he felt that it was much better for him to die among the Chunu than to go back to the Zulus.)

Shaka vowed to revenge himself on the Langeni people because his uncle sent them away from his kraal during the great famine, Madlantule. He wished to revenge himself on all who ill-treated him, but at the same time he was kind and grateful to those who treated him and his mother kindly. He regarded Chief Dingiswayo-Mthethwa as his father and was

/forever

forever grateful to him, and courageously fought in his campaigns. He avenged the treacherous murder of Dingiswayo by Zwide. We know that Shaka was installed as the Zulu chief by Dingiswayo who wanted to reward him for being a faithful warrior and valiant general of his Izichwe Regiment. Dingiswayo diplomatically wanted a strong Zulu chief who would help him against Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwes, who had become a thorn in his flesh. Shaka was lifelike and all he did was the result of the kind of treatment he received as a child. He was very kind and grateful to all who deserved it. Shaka's aim was to mould and unite his nation under his reign, and if he showed cruelty, he meant to be kind. This should not spring a surprise to anybody because the same, if not worse, occurred in other nations during the periods of conquest, e.g. Tyrants.

### 3.7 NANDI

Shaka's mother, Nandi, was brave and courageous but also very stubborn. She is lifelike and can be compared favourably to some of the aborigine girls who seem to have been confused by western civilization. They have replaced tradition and custom by fashions they do not quite understand and have lost their moral code. Nandi, as a princess of the Langeni Tribe, had no excuse to bear an illegitimate child - Shaka. However, she screwed up her courage to face the music associated with marriage contracted after her disgraceful behaviour. Her life at the royal kraal was a misery, because the other women ill-treated and abused her and gave her child hard times, calling him names, as the following quotation reveals:

"Ukuyekile engabe ukubambe ngalo ikhanjana leli elimise  
okwelikathekwane wakuminzisa eMkhumbane." Gwayi (1976 : 37).

("You should not have left it, but should have seized it by  
its Hammerhead-like head and drowned it in the Mkhumbane  
River.")

The fact that whenever they referred to Shaka the kraal women used the third person is, in itself, an insult and they compared his head to that of a Hammerhead bird. His mother's life at the kraal was a veritable purgatory and she felt that nobody wanted her there. Selby (1973 : 63) further confirms this statement thus:

/Nandi

Nandi was taken as a junior wife, however, she soon lost favour, and so was expelled with her child.

This unfair expulsion made her brave as she left the kraal with her children for her home. She was not afraid to walk through the wild animal-infested country unaccompanied. The suddenness of the expulsion command did not give her a chance to make provision for such a hazardous journey. Gwayi (1976 : 54) proves how determined Nandi was:

Ngalobobusuku uNandi axoshwa ngabo emzini kaSenzangakhona akakhalanga.

(On the night of her expulsion by Senzangakhona from his kraal, Nandi did not weep.)

Nandi had never lived apart from her children, but when Senzangakhona demanded that Shaka should return to his kraal, she courageously agreed that he should go to the Chunu instead. When Shaka once more refused to leave the Chunu for his home country, Nandi showed great motherly love and decided to escape with Shaka and her other children to her relative, Mbiya. This man lived along the coast in the Mthethwa country. Once more they were unaccompanied. One does indeed not wonder to hear how long Shaka mourned for her.

### 3.8 SUBSIDIARY CHARACTERS

We shall now have a look at a few flat or simple characters taken at random from the three books.

#### 3.8.1 Bochabelo

Bochabelo was Mokojo's steward and later remained a faithful servant of Mantatisi. He hardly ever gives his opinion on any action taken by the Queen. He was, however, clever and cunning enough to realize at once what pleased and displeased the Queen. He never addressed her as a Sia because that would have meant either his death or expulsion from service. As a successful steward he became a successful eavesdropper and told Mantatisi how Molapo and Moloi planned to kill her and usurp the throne. With this information he guaranteed his

/position

position in the service of the Queen. He served cringingly throughout the wanderings of the Tlokoa Tribe during the "Difaqane". He became a henchman rather than a proper general. The following quotation from Gwayi (1973 : 85) will prove Bochabelo's character:

"Bochabelo", kusho uMantatise ngelinye ilanga.  
"Thabang", kusabela uBochabelo.....  
"Awungibizele uNala futhi", kusho uMantatise.....  
"Khoali"  
"Ubize noNare"  
"Ngizoyenza intando yakho, Thabang".  
"Hamba-ke".

("Bochabelo", said Mantatise.  
"Thabang", responded Bochabelo.  
"Just call me Nala".  
"Khoali".  
"And call Nare as well".  
"I shall do your will, Thabang".  
"You may go".)

### 3.8.2 Bhekimpi

The steward Bhekimpi in Shumpu is also flat and his pattern of behaviour is more or less similar to that of Bochabelo in Bafa Baphela. Summarizing the behaviour and character of stewards, one may not be wrong to say they are as jelly-fish with no backbone in Black society.

### 3.8.3 Ntombazana

Ntombazana's behaviour is also unique and does not conform to traditional and customary behaviour of young girls. As an unmarried girl she behaves like a simpleton under the influence of her mother and brother. She agrees to go and marry Dingiswayo temporarily, hoping to return and be accepted by society as soon as she had fulfilled her mission. She did not realize how seriously this most unusual behaviour would jeopardize her chances of getting a suitable partner in marriage later. Her new status would be difficult to define as

/she

she would neither be a girl, a married woman, nor a widow. She should have realized this before attempting such a stupid action. She would have been a heroine had they decided to kill her for refusing. Perhaps the author wanted to illustrate that Dingiswayo, the Mthethwa Chief, though older than Ntombazana, was morally weak to acquiesce to such a marriage. However, we know that in African society, custom allows a man to take as many wives as he likes and can get married as long as he lives. Ntombazana's behaviour is far from lifelike in real African society but is disgraceful and is dragging down the status of women as a whole.

### 3.9 SIMPLE AND STOCK CHARACTERS IN YEKANINI

In Yekanini most simple characters are found at the beginning of the book and fall away somewhere in the middle when a new set is introduced and carries on until the end of the story.

To give an example, Mpikase and Mfudukazi, Dingana's and Mhlangana's mothers respectively, disappear from the story as soon as Nandi is expelled from the royal kraal. Ngomane enters as soon as Shaka and his mother arrive at Mthethwa country. He remains throughout, playing an important role as the chief general. He was more than a general, in fact one can compare him to our modern prime ministers. He became involved in Shaka's life until Dingiswayo commissioned him to instal Shaka as the Zulu Chief.

Mpande does not survive throughout the story but he is an interesting stock character. He was the youngest of the royal kraal boys. He was always present at play even though shy and withdrawn, but observant. We notice that he would never provoke Shaka and always made sure to get out of the way as soon as possible. He obeyed Shaka's commands immediately to save his skin, as shown here:

"Woza lapha Mpande uzobona izinkomo zami." Gwayi (1976 : 15).

("Come here Mpande, that you may see my cattle.")

His brothers easily deceived him and he never complained about it. He was always the first to notice when Shaka was angry and left the

/playground

playground quickly before Shaka beat them, as Gwayi (1976 : 22) shows us:

Nguye owabona kuqala ukuthi izinto kazisalungile neze  
.....washeshe walalela lapha ethi mabahambe.

(He was the first to realize that danger was imminent  
.....and quickly obeyed when he said they should get  
away.)

### 3.10 SPECIAL CHARACTERS

We are now going to look at a special set of characters, some of whom are nameless while others are silent. The nameless are heard talking and giving very important commands. Some of them go in groups and perform courageous feats in their undertakings, but their names are withheld.

Mpangazitha Hlubi had a nameless doctor who worked very hard to purify the hut which was to be used by his chief when Phofolo's people had fled. He assured Mpangazitha that the hut had been thoroughly purified and he would not be haunted by any evil Sotho spirit. Gwayi (1973 : 41) points this out thus:

"Noma ngabe bekukhonani lapha endlini inkosi ingeke  
isavelelwa yilutho. Isiqinile isiyitshe manje."

("Even if there was something evil in his hut, nothing  
will befall the chief now. He is now as hard as a  
stone.")

Again Mpangazitha's warriors who attacked Phofolo, are nameless. Their conversation is mainly about how Matiwane Ngwane attacked them prior to fleeing to where they met Phofolo. In the story they are referred to as the first, second and third young man, as shown by Gwayi (1973 : 42):

Insizwa yokuqala yaphetha lenkulumo ngokuthi....

(The first young man concluded the discussion by  
saying.....)

At the Langeni Kraal Shaka was often bullied by three nameless young  
/boys,

boys, who were older and thus more powerful than himself. They kept on teasing him until one day they compared his smooth face to that of his sister. Shaka was so furious that he thrashed them so severely that he would have killed them if the spectating boys had not come to their rescue.

Ukuba akusukanga lababafana ababukelayo babalamlela.....  
uShaka wayeyobabulala. Gwayi (1976 : 62-63).

(If the spectating boys had not come to the rescue.....  
Shaka would have killed them.)

Mantatisi too had sent three nameless families, at different times, to spy on her brothers-in-law. We are only told that they reported faithfully to her at different times.

### 3.11 SILENT CHARACTERS

The next set of characters is the silent ones. Some of them are very important by implication, but they do not talk.

- (a) Phofolo, who lived at what would be regarded as a border-post today, helped Mantatisi. He lived near the present-day Harrismith and was attacked by Mpangazitha Hlubi. He fled to Mantatisi leaving his possessions behind. The Hlubis helped themselves to them during this "Difaqane" period.
- (b) Again, the heir to the Tlokoa throne is silent throughout the story. He travelled up and down the country with his mother and tribe, but does not utter a single word. Early in the story, during his father's illness, his father sent him to stop Bochabelo from calling Nare. Sekonyela does not respond either by saying he would go or not. At the end of the story at his dying mother's side, he was specifically summoned to be officially installed as the rightful chief of the Tlokoa Tribe, but he never said anything. Silent characters are good, but Sekonyela's silence has a touch of unnaturalness. We expect signs of gratitude towards his mother, who had sacrificed so much on his behalf and the tribe's during "Difaqane". He has behaved so artificially that the reader

/begins

begins to wonder why the author converted such an important individual to nothing more than a silent character.

- (c) There is just one more very interesting, nameless and silent character worth mentioning here. This man, because of his ugliness, will be called Mr Ugliness for convenience, since the author calls him "Uhlwibi". He appears immediately before the warriors go to war. They were all assembled in the cattle kraal ready for the medicine-man to perform his task of giving them relevant medicine. They began to pray, praising themselves to show off their valiance. Thereupon, Mr Ugliness came forward for the sake of provoking and challenging anyone who would laugh at his ugliness and also to draw the attention of the chief to himself. Gwayi (1977 : 58) reports thus:

.....ngoba efuna ukubona ongase kube uyamhleka  
.....eqonde ukuzibonakalisa enkosini.

(.....because he wished to challenge anyone who would laugh at him.....aiming also at showing himself off to the chief.)

### 3.12 SUMMARY

To summarize this chapter on Characterization, it is of importance to note that Gwayi has done her best to comply with the artistic pattern of character creation. She has made her characters relevant and lifelike. Her success is visible in most of her complex people, because they surprised the reader throughout the books. A variety of them in their complexity often show traits of inconsistency, thus becoming more similar to real people.

Among her characters there are protagonists and antagonists, whose behaviour develops in a crescendo up to a crisis and with the story proceeds in the denouement to the peripeteia which often does not end the story in a catastrophe.

In all three books the end is gentle, and even though in Bafa Baphela Mantatisi, the heroine, dies she does so conveniently so that the heir to the throne could take over as the "Difaqane" had passed by.

/Even



Even though Zwide kills Dingiswayo treacherously, the story does not end there. She makes Zwide realize that his power would be short-lived as long as Shaka lived. She artistically makes him a victim of nightmares to avenge the murder of Dingiswayo her amicable ancestor. We accept and appreciate the value of silent and stock characters in a narrative, but there may be some who may not be desirable. It is, therefore, very important at this juncture to mention that it is indeed a great pity that Gwayi has become so physically handicapped that she cannot revise her books and prune them of the somewhat not-so-relevant appendages. Certainly, revised editions would give her a much better status among our young historical novelists. Her books will therefore repeat the same weaknesses ad infinitum.

### 3.13 THE RÉSUMÉ

This chapter began with a definition of types of characters that are likely to be found in a novel. Their value lies in the fact that they must be as lifelike as possible so as to draw the readers' attention and interest. The readers will appreciate and like or dislike characters after comparing them either to themselves or with other people they know or might have seen.

Characters in the three novels are either round or complex, flat or simple. A few examples have been chosen and discussed, revealing their role and importance in the stories.

In addition to the above important characters, we find those that are either nameless, silent or both, as well as what are known as stock characters. Even these characters play an important role in Gwayi's books, as already mentioned. To concentrate on less important people might disturb the attention of the reader. These people should help to make the story flow naturally. They make the reader believe that incidents really happened. The nameless people make the reader not to be bothered by a string of names to remember in the story. What is important is that they too behave like real people, while some make the story to become amusing by their queer behaviour and

/laughable

laughable utterances. Her stock characters are remarkable especially when we look at Sekonyela in Bafa Baphela.

There may be very few who would be omitted or substituted if the author were to revise her books.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MILIEU AND RELATION TO HISTORY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Our main task in this chapter is to look at the characters found in Gwayi's novels and determine whether their behaviour conforms to that of members of their societies at that time. At the same time we shall look into the historical incidents in order to find out the relation between the two. First of all, let us hear what the Oxford Dictionary says about the word "milieu" as found in Little & Fowler (1978 : 1323):

place, medium, environment, surrounding

It therefore stands to reason that Gwayi's characters will have to live and be surrounded by historical events of the time. Their life and behaviour patterns will have to show some aspects of the time and be bound by that. In order to understand their problems, it is essential to make a serious observation of the milieu so that we may be fair judges of what they did and why under the prevailing circumstances. We may be fair to imagine what we would have done under similar conditions.

#### 4.2 HISTORICAL ORAL TRADITION AND WRITTEN HISTORY

It may not be an error to believe that, in order to write the historical novels, the author depended entirely on what she read in the various historical books, diaries such as Fynn's, and other relevant records. Her books are not written on contemporary historical events. She could not write on characters well-known to her. She depended solely on books which were not autobiographies of her characters. Again, most of her references were written by historians who did not live contemporaneously with her characters, but they received the information

/from

from others.

Summarily, we can categorically say that she obtained her information from oral tradition. Most of her characters lived in what may be called pre-historic days of the Black people, who were then illiterate. They could not record anything for themselves until the literate White immigrants, who were missionaries, traders and adventurers, arrived.

True enough, the newcomers recorded what they personally found and saw, as well as what the illiterate aborigines told them. The results of the oral traditional stories were that the same story could be related differently by different people or even differently by the same person at different times. To this can be added that these foreigners did not understand the language of the people very well and often depended on interpreters. They had absolutely no idea about customs and cultural behaviour of the Black people. This alone could lead to all sorts of misinterpretations and misrepresentations. To make things worse for Gwayi, some of her important characters have no historical connection. We must, therefore, allow her to conjure what might have happened especially because, as a novelist, she is not by historical data, factual.

#### 4.2.1 Zwide

Let us take Zwide and look at his historical background. First of all we must remember that he did exist as a chief of one of the smaller, but progressing tribes. His kraal was called Dlovunga somewhere in the region known as Nongoma. The area is situated in Northern Zululand. Although his tribe was small he was very busy consolidating it as much as his contemporary, Dingiswayo Mthethwa, was doing at Oyengweni. The following quotation from Hull (1981 : 53) clearly shows this:

Two large military confederations were emerging at the same time. Ndwandwe under Zwide.....circumcision and ritual seclusion during initiation to manhood were abolished in order to keep men closer to home for defence.

We are not, however, told how he mobilized his warriors. His tribe's mode of life, religion and inter-relationships and trade with neighbouring tribes remain a closed book. We know that Zwide was the son of Langa (Zwide kaLanga) but nothing more, as there are no praise-poems good enough to tell us something about him and his tribe.

#### 4.2.2 Dingiswayo

Dingiswayo's biography is related by historians as far back as when he was still a young man. At that time he was called Godongwane who, with his brother Tana, planned to assassinate Jobe, their aged father. His wandering from tribe to tribe until his return to the Mthethwa Tribe to rule as the Amicable Dingiswayo of Oyengweni was recorded.

#### 4.2.3 Senzangakhona

Mkabi, Senzangakhona's wife, who survived him for many years, made a good record of her husband. She said hardly anything about her father-in-law, Jama.

#### 4.2.4 Shaka

Shaka's biography is related in Mkabi's story, as well as in many history books and records. There were some Englishmen who came as far as Bulawayo, one of Shaka's kraals. Fynn's version of Dingiswayo's death is so contradictory to the love, honour and admiration Shaka had for him, that some people get annoyed. This is what Roberts (1974 : 50) says:

Fynn, however, claims that Zulu and Mthethwa forces had already united, and that Shaka deliberately betrayed Dingiswayo "knowing the spot where Dingiswayo would post himself to observe the battle". Fynn says "Shaka secretly communicated this knowledge to the enemy, who sent a force and took him by surprise".

The above quotation becomes highly controversial and is a clear proof that even historians may not be objective when recording, but exhibit shades of the writer's temperament. Nobody is obliged to believe

/the

the above quotation, because it does not prove that Fynn was present during this campaign. Seemingly, Fynn arrived long after Dingiswayo's death when Shaka was already King of the Mthethwa and Zulu Tribes combined. The quotation therefore proves what critics say about historians:

.....I am tempted, as I sometimes am, to envy the extreme competence of colleagues engaged in writing ancient or mediaeval history. I find consolation in the reflection that they are so competent mainly because they are so ignorant of their subject.

Carr (1961 : 8-9)

The above quotation obviates the reason, therefore, why it is not easy to accept without prejudice early South African history. One is rather inclined to believe that the historians reported and stressed what they abhorred in the lives of the savage pagan races. Their records were not entirely objective and on this, Carr (1961 : 16) continues thus:

.....It follows that when we take up a work of history our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains, but with the historian who wrote it.

#### 4.3 ENVIRONMENT

Having thus far looked into the qualities and types of historical oral tradition, as well as written history, we may now proceed to look at the environment in which the characters of the novels found themselves. This will enable us to see why ancient people behaved as they did. Their warfare, medicine and religion will also be looked into.

##### 4.3.1 Mantatisi

According to priority we shall look at Mantatisi first, who is also called the female Napoleon, because of her valiant behaviour under the circumstances she found herself thrown into. The times were most trying to herself and the tribe of the Batlokoa (Tlokoa). She and her people lived on what is now called the Highveld, which can be very cold in winter and very hot in summer. She lived during the turmoil of Southern Africa which the Sotho called "Difaqane" (scattering) and "Imfecane" (crushing) by the Nguni, and White historians "forced immigration".

immigration".

We may say the tribes were observing the 'law of the jungle' because they were plundering and destroying. The Tlokoa Tribe felt the brunt of these events and Mantatisi had to do her best to protect and sustain the tribe. She did that in order that it could survive till the end of the era. She had to resort to all possible methods of survival. Halford (1949 : 48) shows what exactly happened:

Her forces were driven back leaving all their possessions in the hands of the Hlubis.....She retreated northwards .....on the banks of the Vaal she scattered the Bafokeng .....and crossing the river she burst into what are now Standerton and Heidelberg districts.

From the above quotation we understand that they could not stay in one place for a long time; but where they went they left marks of their civilization before being forced to go on in search of food and pastures for their cattle. It was from these remnants and relics that the western explorers and adventurers observed and defined the Tlokoa dwellings, as given by Halford (1949 : 49):

At numerous places, particularly around Heidelberg, we can still find the remains of their ringed, stone built kraals.

We are not told of their religious beliefs except that they all sacrificed to their ancestors. This was done occasionally to thank them for protection and guidance. How these ceremonies were solemnized we are not told. The reason could be because they were Sotho observations, while the book is written in Zulu. The explanation of these could have been given since it would not be a digression or make the book a bore. Again we are made aware of the presence of the medicine men or doctors, whose main task was to serve the royal family and the army. We find that all tribes, Sotho Ndwandwes, Mthethwas, Zulus, at this time kept and employed the services of a medicine man. For instance, Nare was Chief Mokojo's doctor, but he goes with the tribe through thick and thin. He was present at the deathbed of the Queen. We may rightly assume that Nare continued in the service of Sekonyela long after the death of his mother.

/We

We are made aware of the hunger of the tribe at this time of "Difaqane". At Butha-Buthe the Tlokoa fought and defeated Moshesh, but they did not pursue his fleeing warriors. Their sole aim was to get food. They merely plundered and pillaged the food dens and caves and finally drove all the cattle along. It was by mere luck that Moshesh's tribe was not annihilated during this Battle of the Pots (Amakhanzi). Moshesh decided to rebuild his kraal at Thaba Bosio and to fortify himself against future attacks. It was from here that he dismally beat the Tlokoas, when they came to attack him on their return from the land of the Tswanas.

It was the miserable situation in which the Tlokoas found themselves after the beating they received from Mpangazitha Hlubi that made them turn to cannibalism. We come across instances of cannibalism which confirm that there was a great famine at about this time. We find them first eating a strayed Hlubi man, as Gwayi (1973 : 58) says:

Wababuza ngalesisidumbu abasidlayo.....Ngempela kwakuyinsizwa yeHlubi.

(He questioned them about the corpse they ate.....and indeed it was that of a Hlubi young man.)

Again much later we find the Tlokoa eating a South Sotho man who was a relative of Moshesh. Gwayi (1973 : 62) has this to say:

Waligwaza kanye mayelana nenhliziyo.....sebembona uPeete esepaquza ngoba efa.....Bayosa imibengo yabo baqala ukuyidla.

(He stabbed him once near the heart.....They beheld Peete writhing kicking in death.....They roasted strips of his flesh and began to eat it.)

This is also confirmed by writers and historians, who wrote on conditions on the Highveld during what they called the "forced immigration". Flye & Murray (1980 : 39) have this to say:

.....a few even adopted cannibalism as a result of their destitution.

At times the superior method of fighting rendered the conquered tribe more desperate than they would have been. The first instance of

/cannibalism



cannibalism was caused by the defeat which the Tlokoas received from Mpangazitha Hlubi. Mpangazitha was from Natal and used Shaka's more superior method of fighting. He sent the Tlokoas of Phofolo flying in all directions, as confirmed by Gwayi (1973 : 54):

Sebelwa ngendlela entsha.....umuntu bamgwaza ngomkhonto  
owodwa bawukhiphe kuyena bayogwaza omunye njalo njalo.

(They are using a new method of fighting.....Now they  
use a single spear to stab one person, pull it out and  
stab the next, and so on.)

It was Chief Makaba of the Tswana Tribe who dealt a devastating blow to the Tlokoas and thus stopped them from proceeding further northwards. He caught them unawares with his strange methods and tactics in warfare. Most Tlokoas died as they fell into holes in which were sharp erect piles. They were forced to change their course, as is shown in the following lines from Halford (1949 : 49):

On reaching Bechuana territory they continued their march  
.....but met their first defeat when they were attacked  
.....This reverse forced them southwards.....Rendered  
desperate by lack of food Mantatisi ordered a march on  
Kuruman.

At Kuruman the missionaries under the leadership of Dr Robert Moffatt, obtained help from the Griquas of Nicholas Waterboer. Again these had superior weapons. With their guns they ultimately drove Mantatisi's hordes away as they could not meet the fire from the sophisticated strange weapons, namely the guns.

In passing, let us remark on the reports about Mantatisi at this time. One reckons that the missionaries at Kuruman understood the language spoken by the inhabitants. We believe that some of the incidents took place in their very presence. One would, therefore, expect a fairly objective description of what really took place at the time. On the other hand, and to our disappointment, we find a confusion in the description of who the Tlokoas, under their queen, Mantatisi, really were. They are referred to as the Mantatees as though they were a swarm of wild locusts or some stampeding wild animals, as may be deduced from the remarks of Halford (1949 : 53-54):

One of the fugitives, escaped from the Mantatees, declared that their intention was to plunder Lithako and Kuruman..... One of Mothibi's captains rushed in, the very picture of abject terror and dismay, calling out:

The Mantatees! The Mantatees!

#### 4.3.2 Zwide

We have seen in 4.2.1 how very difficult it was for Gwayi to get authentic information about who Zwide was. She had to conjure the biography of this cruel Ndwandwe chief, who ultimately killed the chief of her tribe. She realized that the tribes were at a clan stage and their chiefs aimed at augmenting them by hook or by crook. Zwide's aim was to be mightier than Dingiswayo Mthethwa and by killing him he antagonized Shaka, who was then chief of the small Zulu clan. Shaka had persistently told Dingiswayo to kill Zwide, but Dingiswayo kept saying that he wanted to teach Zwide how to live peacefully with his neighbours. Shaka, therefore, fought and killed Zwide and obliterated everything that could evoke his memory and his Ndwandwe Tribe.

Thompson (1969 : 14) confirms this statement when he says:

The Ndwandwe and Mthethwa states were short-lived.....if ever they were visited by literate observers, none of their accounts have been discovered, and after they were destroyed by Shaka, the institutions which would have been the instruments for preservation of their traditions were eliminated. We can only conjure about the extent to which commerce was a motive for political action with the Ndwandwe AND Mthethwa chiefs and councillors and about techniques for regulating trade.

Right through the book Zwide is fighting some foe in order to obtain cattle. He went to fight Ngwane for the same reason. He was annoyed to realize that he had already fled. Zwide thereupon revenged himself by brutally killing women and children, as Gwayi (1977 : 94) tells us:

Wakhombisa unya olukhulu kakhulu emaNngwaneni uZwide.....  
wabulala abesifazane nabesilisa abadala nabancane.

(To the Ngwanes Zwide showed extreme cruelty. He killed females and males, both young and old.)

Gwayi could not help but depend on oral tradition and whatever written

/record

record she came across for the lives and environment of her characters. She maintains that the cruelty traits found in Zwides character were hereditary. His mother, Ntombazi, is a veritable brute whenever she appears. She exerted her influence upon other women of the kraal who became interested in just looking at the various heads of chiefs in her hut. Let us look at how Roberts (1974 : 49) describes Zwide's character:

He is said to have been dominated by a hag-like mother who collected skulls of his enemies to decorate her hut.....  
Zwide himself had a reputation of treachery and cruelty.

The above quotation is contained in a book written, perhaps, after Shumpu. Roberts could have obtained this information from the same source as Gwayi.

From the behaviour pattern of Zwide, we may conclude that people living at the same time were basically cruel, warlike and selfish. The chiefs waged war after war and so people could not live a settled life. They had to fight wild animals that ferociously roamed about threatening their lives and that of their domestic animals. From time to time their grazing grounds became exhausted and the whole clan had to move on in search of better pastures. Within the tribe, people were suspicious of each other and some reported what they thought was untoward behaviour of their neighbours, but sometimes falsely accused them. The Isangoma (Diviner) very often smelled out wrong people and the chief could summarily put them all to death for being witches.

Life at this time was very unstable and chiefs could behave very curiously from time to time. For instance, Zwide killed a Zungu chief for being ugly. The same Zwide killed Zwangendaba who had once captured him but "magnanimously" released him. Zwide is made cruel and towards the end of the story he behaves like a lunatic to kill his own son-in-law, Mashobana Khumalo.

Gwayi so artistically painted Zwide's behaviour to conform to the information she obtained traditionally and otherwise. He maintains his avarice, cruelty and unsatiated ambition.

#### 4.3.3 Dingiswayo

Again when we pick up Dingiswayo from 4.2.2 we realize that he was a travelled man. Once, as a fugitive, he came into contact with other nationalities. Some historians say he went to the Hlubis while others say he came as far as the Cape Province and met White settlers. These people whom he met influenced his character. That is one reason why, perhaps, we find him less aggressive and more diplomatic than the other chiefs. He abhorred to see how Shaka's regiment, IziChwe butchered the Ndwandwes during one of his campaigns, and ordered Shaka to stop:

Walitshela ibutho likaShaka ukuba liyeke manje ukubulala abakwa Nxumalo. Gwayi (1977 : 69).

(He told Shaka's regiment to stop killing the Nxumalos.)

To him, this seemed unnecessary and cruel killing of a vanquished enemy. He had seen how the White people mobilized and drilled their regiments and on his return he regimented his warriors. He allowed Shaka to introduce his new method of using a short spear (Iklwa) to fight and kill the enemy at close range. The story proves Dingiswayo much superior to his neighbours and he remains admirable because of his diplomatic behaviour, as we find Roberts (1974 : 42) endorsing Gwayi's idea:

.....A mixture of war and diplomacy enabled Dingiswayo to achieve mastery over a wide area.

Historical records make us believe that Dingiswayo was indeed superior and amicable. We find that Senzangakhona's Zulu clan paid homage to the Mthethwa. Senzangakhona paid a visit to his master and a great festival was organized for him.

We are not directly told any details of the religion of the Mthethwas. So far the African people of this era believed in one God called Umvelinqangi. They worshipped the spirits of their ancestors (Amathongo). These were venerated and sacrifices were offered to them for various reasons. For example, they were invoked to protect the army during the war.

"Wena uzohamba manje uyoqoqa wonke amabutho azolala lapha oYengweni ukuze elashwe kahle." Gwayi (1977 : 120).

("You will go and summon all the warriors to assemble and spend the night at oYengweni kraal so that they may be properly medicated.")

By tradition and custom the chief kept girls at his kraal called Isigodlo (harem). This was done for various reasons, but the most important was that when the regiments retired from active warfare they were offered girls of their age-group to choose wives from. The chief had many wives, who bore many princes and princesses. Males could get married even at a very old age, especially if they had cattle with which to pay the Lobolo (dowry). In her book, however, Gwayi makes Dingiswayo rather highly sexed, so much so that his dignity becomes lowered. His love for girls is so exaggerated that he even takes them along to the battle. They became instrumental in his capture and ultimate death at Zwide's hands. One is inclined to think that the artist wanted to have a possible reason for Dingiswayo's capture by Zwide's scouts. This she does with impunity knowing full well that custom and tradition never allowed females anywhere near the army. It was an ill omen to have women appear where warriors were gathered in preparation for war, and there is no record or tradition that confirms this quotation:

Wazitshela-ke izintombi zakhe ukuba zisukume bathi ukuhambahamba .....kwathi uma kungathi hwashe nje esikhotheni basuka ngamajubane bambamba uDingiswayo. Gwayi (1977 : 122-123).

(He then asked his girl-friends to take a stroll with him..... and when they saw that not a blade of grass moved, they ran and captured Dingiswayo.)

At times, chiefs and prominent headmen, as well as wealthy commoners, could accept girls who were sent by their parents to marry them, but these girls remained permanently as wives. Gwayi allows Zwide to send his sister, Ntombazana, to marry Dingiswayo temporarily, which is an unusual incident:

"Ntombazana ushaye sengathi uyokwendela kuyena uGodongwane."  
Gwayi (1977 : 111)

/(Ntombazana

(Ntombazana you must pretend as though you were going to marry Godongwane.)

The author, however, should have been more cautious about this incident, because such marriages could be arranged by custom. Some writers indicate that there was such a marriage, but it was a permanent one. Some historians say it was not Ntombazana, Zwide's sister, who was sent in marriage. Roberts (1974 : 49) is an example:

It is said sometime earlier Zwide sent a beautiful Ndwandwe girl to procure a smear of Dingiswayo's semen.

The chiefs and prominent people had bodyguards, who were always males. It was impossible for any female to perform manual duties anywhere near the chief. Such a bodyguard (Insila) was always at hand and at the beck and call of his chief. He had to undergo special training before becoming officially employed.

#### 4.4 RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORY

Gwayi's last book, Yekanini, is much more representative of the time and place in which its characters lived. Most of them have a close relationship with the history and records of the time.

Many people who knew Shaka as a child and chief, knew the history of his illegitimate birth. They were alive at the arrival of the literate traders and adventurers. Mkabi, in 4.2.3, related the story of Shaka's life to more recent writers. However, even this story of Mkabi may not be free from prejudice, since she did not write it herself. Nobody knows the birthday of Shaka except by rough approximation. That is why later, Roberts (1974 : 33) wrote thus:

Much of Shaka's early life is like a fairytale. This, in a way, is understandable for the stories about his birth, his childhood and his early career depend almost entirely on oral tradition.

The White people who arrived and saw him at his kraal, Bulawayo, could but just guess his age.

The life and behaviour pattern of the Zulus does not seem to have

/differed

differed from that of the Mthethwas. One is inclined to believe that it was similar to that of the Mdwandwes because their languages were basically the same. The Zulus were a much more settled community when Mfecane/Difaqane was initiated by Shaka. Our study of Gwayi's books, however, ends off with the installation of Shaka as the Zulu chief.

His illegitimate birth introduced a new pattern of marriage as yet unknown in the clan. Senzangakhona stubbornly forced the elders to accept his marriage to Nandi, as Roberts (1974 : 34) says:

.....defying the prejudices of his elders, he unceremoniously installed her at his kraal as his third wife.....Nandi's position at the Zulu kraal was that of an inferior.

To people of Shaka's time it was impossible to accept him as a royal child. To prove the veracity of this state of affairs, Senzangakhona later expelled him several times from his kraal (Esiklebheni). In the book, the author has succeeded in giving Shaka's life the serious outlook it deserves. At present we may be tempted to think that because Nandi was a princess of the Langeni Tribe the stigma could have been waived. We may be tempted to believe that because of his mother's status he should have automatically qualified for the Zulu throne.

Shaka having therefore suffered recriminations because of his birth, made up his mind to take up the sceptre and revenge himself and his mother on all who had ill-treated them. His action introduced a yet unknown pattern of succession. He imposed himself on the tribe and we should get at the grass roots why he later on so drastically innovated all existing institutions. He had suffered very severely under traditional laws, as Roberts (1974 : 35) confirms:

Shaka was made to feel the full force of his humiliation.  
.....He grew up lonely and revengeful, ambitious, ruthless and determined to overcome all opposition.

History reveals that even as a young man Shaka was determined to perform herculian tasks, which many could not undertake even as a group.

We may not be wrong to say that he was set upon to revolutionize the

general contemporary behaviour pattern of his age. His stay as a recruit at Dingiswayo's kraal made him realize that he had a chance to put his plans into practice. He was very clever and could project results of situations which he considered important to him. For instance, on seeing the power of the White men's guns and ammunition, he decided to make friends with their Queen. His association with Dingiswayo helped him to be very diplomatic in his behaviour towards the strangers. About this astuteness, Roberts (1974 : 37) has this to add:

.....the marrying of Shaka's warlike properties and Dingiswayo's statesmanship gave birth to a mighty African nation.

#### 4.4.1 Food

Food eaten by Zulus during Shaka's time was not very much different from that of the Mthethwas. However, Shaka had to keep many cattle because he had to feed his warriors who lived at his regimental kraals. These men did not work but lived on what Shaka gave them because they had to be ready for any eventuality. These military kraals can be compared to present-day barracks. The warriors ate venison from game they killed during hunting expeditions. During these expeditions warriors practised, and also killed many carnivorous animals that worried the people and killed domesticated animals.

While dealing with the abundance of wild animals at this time, let us look at what Shaka did as a young man. We get two incidents in which Shaka killed ferocious and dangerous animals single handed. He killed a mamba snake that had killed the chief's bull, and again killed a lion which threatened the herd boys. When he was much older and when he was in the Mthethwa region, he killed a giant that had terrorized and become the fear of the whole tribe. He became the hero of the tribe when he showed that he could not tolerate the selfish act of one man.

During Shaka's stay with his mother at the Langeni Tribe there was enough food for them all until the great Madlantule famine which ranged. Shaka was once again expelled from Nguge kraal to seek shelter and food at Gendeyana Qwabe's kraal. The historians agree on this



period, but the real date is unknown. Some say it was in the year 1815. The recriminations, hunger and deprivations made Shaka very bitter against man but very much attached to his mother.

#### 4.4.2 Religion

Among the Zulus, religion centred around ancestor worship. The medicine men and diviners were all involved in the spiritual and physical care of the tribe.

There was a ceremony observed when the boys became adults, but it was not a circumcision type of initiation. The boy involved had to drive the kraal cattle, very early, to a far and hidden spot. The other boys had to search for the herd for nearly the whole day. On the return of the herd the boy's father would present his son with a loin-skin (Umutsha) to signify that he was accepting him as an adult. Shaka upset this practice by refusing to take his Umutsha from his father. It is said that he did this, firstly, to prove his bitterness against his father for the ill-treatment he and his mother had received from him earlier on. Others say he refused to wear it because it was a general belief among other boys that Shaka was sexually undeveloped and thus he wanted to remain exposed for a while. That is why he later accepted the loin-skin from his uncle at Langeni after Senzangakhona had expelled Shaka for his disobedience. Gwayi (1976 : 70) refers to this incident thus:

"Utshelwa yimi manje ukuba uthathe ibheshu lakho nesinene"  
.....uShaka wema emazwini awakhulume kubafowabo eMkhumbane  
.....Wamxosha uShaka Esiklebheni ngaso lesosikhathi.

("You are now instructed by me to accept your loin-skin"  
.....Shaka remained firm on the words he had said to his brothers at the river Mkhumbane.....Senzangakhona was furious and expelled Shaka immediately from Esiklebheni kraal.)

#### 4.4.3 Warfare

Prior to Shaka's time, warfare seems not to have been taken seriously. One may even be tempted to regard it as an exercise or a competition on throwing spears at each other. During this time any party that

so wished could decide to run away. The fleeing side was never pursued. In order to begin this kind of war the parties concerned usually hurled abusive and insulting expressions at each other.

When Shaka took over the Zulu throne, he decided to revolutionize the pattern. Already, as the general of the Izichwe Regiment at the Mthethwa area, he had introduced the short spear, called Iklwa. With this the enemy was killed at close range and so the warriors did not throw their spears at their enemies. That is why Dingiswayo's power in battle was superior to that of his enemies, especially Zwide. Dingiswayo had arranged his warriors into regiments and Shaka added his new ideas to improve their methods of attack, as Thompson (1969 : 43) tells us:

To Dingiswayo's military reforms he added some valuable innovations of his own.....a short broad-bladed stabbing spear which he called Iklwa.

It was during one of Shaka's war expeditions, as the general of the Izichwe Regiment, that Phungashe Buthelezi was attacked, for one reason or another. Sometime during the battle Bhakuza, Senzangakhona's heir presumptive, fought on the Buthelezi side. He was killed and his death created a vacancy. One would have expected Bhakuza's death to have made Shaka an acceptable successor to Senzangakhona, but it did not. That is why Shaka organized a coup on the Zulus and grabbed the throne with very little bloodshed; because Dingiswayo despatched Shaka with his Izichwe Regiment to be on standby during this unusual installation. The story finishes with this unique incident among the communities of the time. We see that everybody was forced to stand and shout the familiar royal salute as an unequivocal acceptance of the new king.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY

Up to this point we have seen that Gwayi has placed the characters of her novels in the correct environment and has made them behave appropriately. We should mention here also, that although her last book, Yenanini, does not enter into the reign of Shaka as the mighty Zulu King, it was his reign that introduced the Mfecane/Difaqane

period.

period. Prior to Shaka's reign the conquest incidents were not taken seriously. Up to then only the Ndwandwes and the Mthethwas had grown to be significant tribes. When Shaka took over from Sigujana, he demonstrated one of the mightiest conquests in the world. He incorporated the Mthethwas, but shattered the Ndwandes, Langenis, Buthelezis, Hlubis and many others. Many people fled for their lives in different directions. Zwile's sons fled to the north, Mzilikazi, son of Mashobane Khumalo, broke away later and went through the Orange Free State and ultimately settled in what was later called Matabeleland in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). We see that Mpangazitha Hlubi crossed the Drakensberg Mountains to attack the Tlokoa Tribe under Mantatise. She then moved with her tribe from place to place on the Highveld, as revealed by Hull (1981 : 54-55):

The early Zulu wars are enormously significant, because they initiated an era of Mfecane (in Nguni meaning "Crushing") that describes the wars, disturbances and disruptions that accompanied Zulu expansion in the 1820's and 1830's.....some fled southwards, but most moved northwards on the Highveld, and converted many people, particularly the Sotho, into starving refugees.....Their livestock, granaries and vegetable crops were destroyed. Many communities vanished.....a few resorted to cannibalism.

#### 4.6 THE RÉSUMÉ

The meaning of the word, Milieu, makes us understand the environment and places in which the characters of the novels lived and also the reason why they behaved as they did. In addition to this we observe the historical pattern of their era to find out whether the major events associated with them have any historical backing and references in order to make them sound possible.

- (a) Oral tradition does not give the author authentic source of information, thus she must depend on conjecture and artistic creation. All the main characters are historical figures. Some of the chiefs have their biographies reflected in their praise-poems (Izibongo). Although Shaka lived to meet White traders and adventurers, their records remain somewhat subjective as being the work of foreigners. The

/fact

fact remains that each historian will always write differently on the same incident.

- (b) Mantatisi was the victim of "Difaqane" and lived on the Highveld, the area which has a climate of extremes. She was forced to grab food and cattle to feed members of her tribe, some of whom were forced by the famine to resort to cannibalism. The new methods of fighting eventually overcame her warriors as seen, for example, with Mpangazitha, Makaba, Nicholas Waterboer and Moshesh at Thaba Bosio.
- (c) On Zwide there is hardly any reliable information available. On the other hand, Dingiswayo in exile had travelled widely to meet and observe the behaviour of foreigners he met. He was diplomatic and broadminded to allow Shaka to introduce his short-shafted spear to fight and kill the enemy at close range.
- (d) Shaka lived long enough to meet White traders at his kraal, but they did not know his early life on which Yekanini is based. In his praise-poems, Gwayi picked up the information on his life as well as from historical records. As a recruit under Dingiswayo, he was happy and made himself a prominent warrior who was ultimately promoted to be the valiant general of IziChwe Regiment.
- (e) The religion of the people was basically the veneration of the spirit of their ancestors. Even the Tlokoas appealed to and also thanked their ancestors for favours rendered. There were diviners who smelled out the evil-doers and witchdoctors who looked after the health of the communities. On the whole, food consisted of grain and meat which they obtained from hunting wild animals and from the domestic animals they reared.
- (f) Warfare was not taken seriously prior to Shaka's era. However, Dingiswayo allowed him to introduce his new method, which he refined later when he became the Zulu Chief. This completely revolutionized the fighting system and made Shaka introduce the Mfecane/Difaqane period to ultimately become the greatest king in Southern Africa.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### LANGUAGE, STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Before getting into detailed critical analysis of the contents of this chapter in relation to Gwayi's novels, a brief summary of Chapter One (or the Introduction to this work) will be given. This will remind the reader of the origin and nationality of the author and her contact with her Zulu speaking colleagues.

She ultimately married Ngcobo, the Zulu novelist, who motivated her to write a novel on her ancestor, Dingiswayo. She discovered this relationship after a good deal of research, which she undertook single-handed and independently, as she explains<sup>(1)</sup>. Although her first book was not on Dingiswayo, she maintains that the research discoveries caused her to digress, to take a greater interest in the chaos during the "Difaqane", which was caused by Shaka's military rule. It was the Mfecane which caused some of the Zulus to leave for the Cape Province and thus lose contact with their kith and kin. At about this time Mpangazitha Hlubi attacked Phofolo, Mantatisi's outpost guard. This attack set Mantatisi and her Tlokoa Tribe to go about plundering ("Difaqane"). Seemingly, Gwayi began to write Mantatisi's story before that of Dingiswayo and Zwide, because of her contact with Sotho-speaking nurses at Clairwood Provincial Hospital, as she declared in the dedication of the book Bafa Baphela, her first historical novel. It becomes very clear that Gwayi would have met with unsurmountable difficulties when writing her three novels in a foreign language. These will possibly remain unresolved because she has now become so handicapped that it is very difficult to extract much relevant information from her failing memory.

/5.2

---

(1) Interview with the author.

## 5.2 THE LANGUAGE

She married Moses Ngcobo, the Zulu historical novelist, who wrote Ukufika Kosuku and Qhude Manikiniki. However, Ngcobo himself spent some time at the Xhosa Bethal Training College and was directly, or indirectly, influenced by the Xhosa language. To prove his interest in the Xhosa language and culture, his first historical novel Ukufika Kosuku is based on the Xhosa national suicide. Summarily it can be said that, although Ngcobo helped Gwayi, as she admits, in her writing of the novels, it will not be easy in this work to state precisely who of the two is directly responsible for the language, style and technique.

These three elements are so interdependent and interwoven that it is not easy to treat them as separate entities. When, for instance, one considers the style in which the novel is written, language at once becomes involved as the means of expressing the style. On this point Kenney (1966 : 60) says:

By style we mean the verbal texture of literature.....

Once you talk of words and their correct usage and meaning, language becomes involved. Therefore, one soon comes to consider such terms as diction, denotation and connotation as well as syntax. Bearing these terms in mind one has to carefully scrutinize them in the language in which the author chooses to present her books. The success of the presentation greatly depends on the artistic manipulation of the language by the novelist. To confirm this statement, Kenney (1966 : 67) further states:

In analysing the writer's syntax, we concern ourselves with such matters as the characteristic length of his sentences, the proportion of simple to complex sentences, and so on. These matters are by now means so trivial as they may at first appear.

It becomes abundantly clear, therefore, that Gwayi will find herself in a predicament since her knowledge of the Zulu language leaves much to be desired. She will depend more on the denotation than on the connotation usage of the language. Although both

/Zulu

Zulu and Xhosa are Nguni languages she will land in difficulties when it comes to the Zulu syntax. This similarity could lead her to believe that she has used the word correctly in connotation while, in fact, she is wrong. Before going any further, let us not forget that it happens sometimes that when a non-Zulu speaking person uses a word, and the people spoken to understand him, he may think that he used a Zulu word. But the use of imported words, when genuine Zulu words exist, cannot be encouraged. It is a good practice for an author to guard against using words that are known by people living in a particular area or district.

#### 5.2.1 Shumpu

While thinking on the above points, let us now look at the word "Shumpu", which is the title of Gwayi's second novel.

According to the Zulu usage the book title is adequate. However, it is interesting to point out a few findings, relevant to this word, during the research. When Gwayi was asked the meaning of the word she gave its appropriate Zulu meaning but maintained that it was a typical Xhosa word. Some Xhosas, however, contradicted her and did not know the word at all. From the research undertaken by Gwayi, it is obvious that the Mthethwa people who went down to the Cape Province during the Mfecane to become the "Amamfengu" Fingoes continued using this Zulu word. This is why Gwayi could appropriately use "Shumpu" as the title of her novel to indicate Ntombazi's crude method of killing the Ndwandwe Tribe's enemies. Before passing on, mention should be made of the fact that in some areas the more popular word now is "Shuphula", to which the authorities give the same meaning as "Shumpu".

#### 5.2.2 Bafa Baphela

The title of the first book Bafa Baphela means "They all perished". It is quite true that many people died during the "Difaqane" period. Some were even killed to be eaten by

/cannibals,

cannibals, because of the devastating famine, but they did not ALL PERISH as the title states. It is important to bear in mind that during the "Difaqane", people killed for food and not just indiscriminately. True enough, some people died in the process, but these were victims of circumstances. No tribe was totally destroyed, except by being forced to join the more powerful one so that its members could survive.

### 5.2.3 Yekanini

The third book Yekanini - "Just Fancy" is "a surprise". To anyone who has read this novel it seems that Moses Ngcobo was involved in choosing it. As an expression of surprise, Ngcobo's influence on the choice of the title is obvious because Shaka's ascendancy to the Zulu throne was indeed a surprise to everybody. The complete Zulu expression of this type of surprise is:

yekanini imihlola

This same expression may imply a derogatory attitude towards someone who thinks highly of himself. In this context the expression will mean:

Who do you think you are? fancy!

Remembering Shaka's position in the eyes of the Zulu community, they could be justified in saying this of him. However, it should not be forgotten that Shaka was Senzangakhona's son and that his mother, Nandi, was a Langeni princess. Shaka had royal blood running through his veins and so he too could direct this expression to his tribe:

Who do you think you are to deprive me of my hereditary throne?

Also to all those who ill-treated him in his early childhood, he could return the spite.

Again, Gwayi herself has confirmed that this book was polished and finished by Ngcobo as they parted after she had worked up to Nandi's expulsion from Esiklebheni Royal Kraal and her stay with

/her



her Langeni people. Towards the end of the story Ngcobo has artistically led the reader to the point of the relation between Shaka and Zwide after the death of Dingiswayo. Ngcobo then immediately published his historical novel called Qhude Manikiniki, (The Conflict).

In this book, Shaka and Zwide struggled continuously until Shaka succeeded in destroying everything connected with the Ndwandwes. He integrated the rest of the population into the Zulu Tribe. After this, Shaka continued with his campaign of conquest, which introduced the "Difaqane" era. Shaka's reign of terror moulded the Zulus into a mighty nation in the southern tip of Africa; and the "Difaqane" made a great impact on the history of South Africa, especially with regards to the Great Trek, by largely depopulating the Highveld of Blacks.

With reference to paragraph 5.2, an examination of the language used in the three novels will determine its appropriateness. The author's manipulation of the language determines the style, which will be considered later in this analysis. To illustrate meanings, selective and representative quotations from all three books will be used, including examples of the wrongly-used, misspelt or non-Zulu expressions. Later, some good appropriately-used expressions such as proverbs, idioms, similes, etc., will also be examined. There are one or two redundant expressions which occur in all three books, while correct expressions are not common to all the works. The relevant expressions will be quoted, then corrected if wrong, and the correct contextual meaning will be stated. Kenney's (1966 : 59) point of view is relevant:

The writer must on no account use more words than are necessary.

#### 5.2.4 Common Expressions Used

There is one outstanding expression which appears in all three books, the meaning of which has become ambiguous and highly

/confused

confused:

UKUNIKINA IKHANDA : (Shaking one's head)

Shaking one's head is a normal sign of DISAPPROVAL, but here Gwayi uses it to mean agreement, pleasure as well as displeasure, surprise, etc., thus creating confusion.

(a) Bafa Baphela : 1973

p. 8 : kusho uMoloi ethi ukunikina ikhanda.....  
(thus spoke Moloi shaking his head.....)

p. 48 : Lanikina ikhanda inxa libuza lombuzo.  
(He shook his head as he was asking the question.)

p. 84 : Wanikina ikhanda umfo kaMokhachane.  
(Mokhachane's son shook his head.)

(b) Shumpu : 1977

p. 9 : Amadoda aze anikina amakhanda  
(until the men shook their heads)

p. 54 : Babuye bathula futhi benikina amakhanda.  
(Once again they kept quiet shaking their heads.)

p. 138 : Wanikina ikhanda kancane ngoba ecabanga.....  
(He shook his head a little, because he was thinking.)

(c) Yekanini : 1976

p. 8 : Wanikina ikhanjana lakhe.  
(He shook his small head.)

p. 75 : uNandi ethi ukunikina ikhanda lakhe emamatheka.  
(Nandi shook her head as she smiled.)

p. 116 : "Woo o", kusho uSenzangakhona, ethi ukunikina ikhanda lakhe.  
(*"Hello"*, said Senzangakhona, as he shook his head.)

From the above quotations it will be realized that the reader will not understand what the author really means.

### 5.2.5 Unacceptable Expressions Used

The following is a summary of a few unacceptable expressions as they appear in each novel:

#### (a) Bafa Baphela : 1973

- p. 30 : Ibhayilayo elihle eyayingavamisile ukulembatha lenziwe ngesikhumba senkonyane enkone.

(Her wrapper-cloth, which she rarely wore, was made of a black and white spotted calf-skin.)

This item should not have been referred to as a "CLOTH" in the first place because it was a "CALF-SKIN" and remained thus. In Zulu it should have been referred to as:

"ISIPHUKU" - (the skin) not "IBHAYI" - (wrapper-cloth)

- p. 72 : Amabutho kaMantatise ayengangesihlabathi sehlane.

(Mantatise's warriors were as many as desert sand.)

In Zulu, it is:

.....ngangezihlabathi zolwandle.

(.....as the seasand.)

- p. 81 : Engesiwona ugwayi obola uboshiwe.

(He was not a bunch of tied-up rotting tobacco leaves.)

This is a non-Zulu expression and should not have been used. However, in the context, Gwayi means that this particular person was not a fool. The correct Zulu proverbial expression for this idea is:

Isilima esathunywa ugwayi sabuya neboza.

(A fool who was sent to fetch snuff, but returned with a flu-herb instead.)

#### (b) Shumpu : 1977

- p. 10 : Amakhosi sekuwahlezi embonjeni ukuhlupheka.

(Worry held the chiefs with their nose bridges.)

/In the

In the context it means great worry, but there is no such Zulu expression. The nearest Zulu proverb to express such great worry would be:

Amakhosi esezalelwe yinja endlini.

(When the bitch had littered in the chief's house.)

p. 57 : Baze basonta amakhanda abo.

(Until they twisted their heads.)

Nobody can twist his head, it is the neck. This happened as somebody was dancing in the kraal, and to have a better view they twisted their necks.

p. 111 : "Ubengewubone kodwa kungalele lutho yini lapha ekhanda kuye."

("Could he not see it? Was there nothing in his head?")

This is not a Zulu idiomatic expression, but in the context Gwayi means:

He could see it because he was not a dunce.

There are many more such confusing expressions which make the book heavy to read and unwittingly complicated. Often the reader has to make his own interpretation of terms in the context or by using historical reference. Shumpu is Gwayi's second historical novel, but its standard is much lower than in her first book, Bafa Baphela. One is inclined to think that Ngcobo gave very little guidance in the syntax of this book for reasons Gwayi could not divulge.

It is possible that Gwayi might have been handicapped by the absence of historical records on some of the important people, such as Zwide Ndwandwe. She could not treat such characters as she would do with those of her creation. The absence of reliable records is proved by the controversial capture of Dingiswayo by Zwide. The historians gave different and rather unreliable versions on this topic.

(c) Yekanini : 1976

It has been mentioned previously that this book was Ngcobo's production, with Gwayi's name as author. The reader notices that there are few errors in it. Some of them are grammatical, involving palatalization, incorrect formation of adverbs from irregular nouns.

p. 11 : Wayihlalisa phansi esicephini.....

(She let him sit down on a small mat.....)

"Esicephini" should have been "Esiceshini"

p. 14 : (i) Ngosuku olulandela lolu....

(On the day that followed.....)

This should have been "Ngakusasa" - next day/on the following day.

(ii) Wavuka ocansini abekade elele kulo.....

(He rose from the mat on which he had been sleeping.....)

It would have been sufficient to say "Wavuka ocansini" - rose from the mat (because there are two types of mats in Zulu, namely:

ucansi - mat for sleeping

isicephu - mat for sitting

p. 122 : Ilanga selimi ngomutsha wendoda.

(The sun stopping at the man's loin-skin.)

The correct expression is:

Ilanga seliya ngomutsha wendoda.

(When the sun is approaching the height of the man's loin-skin.)

The real meaning is - At sunset.

5.2.6 Meritorious Expressions Used

There is, however, much in the novels of a high standard. Kenney (1969 : 60) reminds us that language and style are inseparable:

/By

By style we mean the verbal texture of literature, the author's way of using language. In short, we mean everything the author does with words, including his way of arranging words into such larger units and sentences.

To illustrate such good language usage, a few examples from the novels will suffice:

(a) Bafa Baphela : 1973

- p. 31 : (i) "Ukwanda kwaliwa umthakathi"  
("Thank you very much")  
  
(ii) Ikhotha eyikhothayo  
(One good turn deserves another)
- p. 78 : Athi ayamciba ngemikhonto yahlaba ngapha nangapha.  
(While trying to stab him spears fell beside him.)
- p. 83 : Amehlo akhe athathekiswa yisiyaluyalu asibona emzini kaMorapeli.  
(His eyes were drawn to the chaotic movements of people at Morapeli's kraal.)

(b) Shumpu : 1977

- p. 17 : Itshe laseligaya ngomunye umhlathi.  
(Things had drastically changed.)
- p. 77 : "Nguye nje lomfana kaSenzangakhona osuke wabaqothuqothula ngomkhonto."  
("It is, however, this boy of Senzangakhona who has so wantonly stabbed them.)
- p. 106 : Injalo iphuma edunjini.  
(Like begets like/like father like son.)

(c) Yekanini : 1976

- p. 31 : "Sengaze ngangangabasemehlweni".....kusho uNandi.  
("I have become terribly emaciated".....said Nandi.)

- p. 74 : .....balala besuthi esentwala sengathi  
kusakhonjwa ngophakathi.  
(.....they were well satisfied before going  
to bed as was the case during the times of  
plenty.)
- p. 106 : Kwabe uyinyathele emsileni kuShaka.  
(It was as though he had stepped on Shaka's  
corns.)

### 5.3 STYLE

An examination of style is now necessary. From the above explanation it is clear that style cannot be put into a watertight compartment. It is more convenient to compare style with a person's gait, because each writer has his own style. Style, like the gait of a person, will differ to conform to what Kenney (1966 : 58) says:

We are more concerned with individual style, the single writer's way of using language.....the writer's characteristic way of using language.

The above quotation, therefore, confirms that a writer's style will not be like that of another. It will have to be judged on its own merit and not in comparison with others. It will be fair to judge Gwayi's style from the first two books, which she can claim to be her responsibility.

If this is the case, it will be very difficult to pass a fair judgment on a Xhosa-speaking author who decides to write fiction through a foreign medium. It must be appreciated that although she had not lived long enough among Zulus, she did not hesitate to write in their language. Perhaps she was encouraged by the fact that as a Fingo she claimed to be a Zulu by origin. It is clear how she endeavoured to put across to the Zulu reader all her findings, thought and vision in her novels. By so doing, she conformed to principles as accepted by Kenney (1966 : 59), who maintains that:

A writer's style can reveal to us his way of perceiving experience and organizing his experience.

Her first two books are clear illustrations of the above quotation

as shall be seen when examining how she looked at the situation in which Mantatisi found herself, Gwayi (1973 : 11):

"Mabangathi abaTlokoa uma beswela inkosi kusasa ngoba uSekonyela sebambulala kanye nami besekusala kungcola igama lami."

("Let the Tlokoa Tribe not scandalize my name at a later date, when they find themselves without a chief, because they killed Sekonyela and me.)

In this quotation one realizes that Gwayi makes the reader clearly understand why Mantatisi is so anxious about the future welfare of the tribe. Mantatisi and Sekonyela could have easily been murdered by Molapo and Moloi, or even by other chiefs, during their exodus and plundering. The quotation shows how Gwayi viewed the whole situation in her own style.

Again, Gwayi (1977 : 55) visualizes the final preparation of the army before going to war, and says:

Yonke imininingwane eyayenziwa uma kwelashwa impi yayisiyenziwe, sekusele nje ukuba amabutho achelwe ngezintelezi ezithile.

(All details relevant to the medication of the army before going to war had been accomplished and all that remained was the administering of particular sprinkling medicine.)

An informed Zulu reader knows exactly what happens before the army goes to war. Gwayi assumes that the reader is well aware of these activities during the medicating process, culminating in the sprinkling. She lets the reader use his imagination as she merely says:

Izintelezi ezithile

(Certain or particular sprinkling drugs)

Thus she allows her reader to use his imagination to visualize the medicating process from beginning to end.

By writing these historical novels, Gwayi has added to the very short list of Zulu historical novels. Although she has been encumbered

/with



with a series of problems in her research and language, it can be said with confidence that her readers fully understand the stories and are able to appreciate her experiences as well as the results of her research into the history of her subjects. She has not exaggerated her ideas, but has related the story in a straightforward style, to make the reader able to follow it from beginning to end. She has succeeded in revealing herself to the reader. This revelation is an important aspect in the art of novel writing, as emphasized by Ngcongwane (1974 : 4):

The book is nothing but the expression of the man: the book is nothing but the man trying to impart to you some of his feelings.....If a book is a real literary work of art, it transmits to you distinguished emotion.

In the last book, we would expect to find Gwayi's style prevalent, but this is not so. Although authorship is attributed to her, Ngcobo actually wrote the book and his style is obvious throughout. The complications of Shaka's birth, growth and ascendancy to the Zulu throne was better handled by the more experienced Ngcobo.

For instance, the expulsion of Shaka and his mother, Nandi, from the Zulu royal kraal, is an illustration. The act was unfair and cruel and their reception at Langeni kraal was cold. Shaka had once more to bear cruelty and insults from his cousins. Indeed, their arrival at this kraal was scandalous to the community because Nandi, the princess, had proved to be a complete failure in marriage. Ngcobo makes Gendeyana Qwabe her new suitor, who overlooks all her supposed failures when he says:

"Akukhondaba ende engiyizwile, Nandi, ngaphandle kokuthi wabuya ngoba nasuke kanaze nezwana nenkosi uSenzangakhona."

("There is no detailed story that I have heard, Nandi, except that you have returned because of the misunderstanding between you and Chief Senzangakhona.")

After the expulsion of Nandi and her children from Isiklebleni royal kraal, she returned to her people in shame. Gendeyana came to her rescue.

Ngcobo has a different style of description from that of Gwayi.

/Looking

Looking at his description of Mpikase, Dingana's mother, the reader gets a very clear picture of a huge out-of-shape monster with small feet. He makes her look more like a gigantic female elephant than a human being. This description is superior to Gwayi's description of Mantatisi. The following is what Ngcobo says, Gwayi (1976 : 7-8):

Wayemnyama ebusweni emafehlefehle izitho zakhe zingaka  
nje ubukhulu, ethi uma eshaya unyawo lwakhe emhlabathini,  
njengoba emile nje zibonakale zinyakaza. Izinyawo zakhe  
laphaya phansi zazizincane.....

(She was dark in complexion and was obese, her legs were huge and when she stamped the soil with her foot, her legs shook. Her feet were very small.)

Ngcobo continued the complicated biography of Shaka fictitiously. It is, however, noticeable that he depended and relied upon other books written about Shaka, and even made a direct translation from them. Taking as an example, the speech at the installation of Shaka as the Zulu chief, Ngcobo makes Ngomane, who was sent by Dingiswayo to solemnize this ceremony, use similar words found in Shaka Zulu, Ritter's book.

Gwayi (1976 : 122):

"Ukuqhubeka kwenu nokuthula ngiyakubonga....."

("I thank you for your continued silence.....")

The above style may be taken as a proof that the book, Yekanini, was not Ngcobo's brainchild, but was adopted for convenience. He thus had a problem in employing his style to complete someone else's book. It is not certain whether Gwayi would have ended the book in a similar manner. However, the explanation has already been given why Ngcobo ended the book as he did.

#### 5.4 TECHNIQUE

The technique in which the books are presented to the reader will now be looked into. What is to be considered is the way or method of telling the story. Technique is another very important element

/of

of the aspects of a novel because it enhances the acceptability of the whole novel by the reading public. It goes a long way towards enticing, arousing and maintaining the reader's attention and anxiety throughout the book. In order to achieve this, the author makes use of a number of devices. The types of techniques will be looked into and even some which Gwayi could not use will be mentioned and also the reason why she omitted them.

(a) Epistolary Technique

There is what critics call the "Epistolary Technique". In this method the novel is made up of a series of correspondences. This is a cumbersome method to the novelist as he has to cope with the effective correspondence while the reader's attention may be attracted by the addresses, salutation and conclusion of the respective letters before concentrating on the contents of each letter. For these, and other reasons, this technique lost favour even among the literate communities, as we read from Allot (1959 : 256):

I am of the opinion that the epistolary form is an antiquated affair.

Gwayi's characters could neither read nor write and so she could not attempt the epistolary technique in her books. However, it is worth mentioning that at about this time it was customary that a chief could send a messenger to his enemy to tell him that if he failed to comply with certain demands, war would be declared on him. Such a foe could reply, accepting the challenge, using either the same messenger or by sending his own. Before the actual engagement in the war, one party could insult the foe, which retaliated by hurling worse insults at its provoking enemy, as shown by Gwayi (1973 : 34):

Aqala-ke amaNdwandwe ukwethukana nazo lapho  
esebona ukuthi angezwana. Babizana ngezici nje  
bade besondelana.

(The Ndwandwe's began insulting them as soon as

/they

they realized that they could be heard. They came closer to each other while still insulting.)

Even before Gwayi began writing her novels, some writers had begun discrediting the epistolary technique, thus making it obsolete, as is seen by

Thompkins (1969 : 334):

The epistolary form in the library novel is either empty of meaning or ridiculous.

(b) Autobiographical Technique

Another method used in storytelling is known as the first person or autobiographical. Looking critically at this technique it is obvious that the author uses one character to tell the story. Here the reader is brought into contact with a special kind of narration. "Narration" as a technique will be handled later. In the autobiographical technique, the narrator must be highly skilled and be a veritable virtuoso, to exhibit objectively. However, he often fails to keep to this high standard because many problems and hazards occur and overtake him. The difficulty which the character encounters in this method is effectively expressed by two authors, writing at different times. They emphasize one important danger of the author indulging in a display of ability. On this, Allott (1959 : 256) says:

The reader is unconsciously taught to feel that the writer is glorifying himself and rebels against self-praise.

Graham (1965 : 130) repeats Allott's quotation ad verbatim to prove how hazardous the autobiographical technique is.

Moreover, in a novel there are a number of characters and to use the first person method may overtax the one character. His failure to perform this Herculean task may greatly undermine a would-be-successful novel. It cannot be rated as a useless technique because it has a number of good points which are very useful when used in conjunction with others. One very important

/merit

merit is that when one person tells a story, there is a unity of the whole story from beginning to end, as Graham (1965 : 121) confirms:

To place the story in the mouth of one important character.....gives the book a dramatic centre and unity.....

Gwayi has made use of this to a great extent. She has not written any one book throughout in this method, but she has conveniently merged it with other techniques. It results from her blending art that her characters narrate the story to a certain extent and then a change of technique is effected. For doing this, she is backed by Graham (1965 : 136) who says:

.....much more mature is to arrange the characters and events as in real life and change the point of view from one figure to another.

#### (c) Narrative Technique

What must be kept in mind all the time is that the novelist is telling a story. To do this he is bound to use some form of narration, as pointed out above. When looking at Traditional Literature, it is true that the basic form of transmitting the story was by narration. It may not be wrong to go to the extent of saying that the Bushman paintings were a form of narrating emotions of the artist concerned. He leaves his paintings to the eye of the observer and recedes to oblivion.

On the Narration Technique, Graham (1965 : 121) has this to say:

.....the narrative method, that of the omniscient author, who writes predominantly in the third person, perhaps with some first person commentary of his own  
.....at any time that suits him, the author can cast off his invisible cloak and show himself.....

From the above quotation one deduces that in the narrative technique it is the character created by the author who tells the story as a third person. However, the author may reveal himself by making the narrator his proxy as he says what would have been said by himself.

In her novels, Gwayi speaks through her heroines Mantatisi and Nandi. She makes them utter such intelligent statements, so as to prove that she does not entertain the ridiculous belief that only the male sex is endowed with intelligence. She does not forget to place a rude character in her true perspective. For instance, a character of some rude and vulgar nature, such as Mpikase, Dingana's mother, is given her rightful place. She was very harsh to Shaka and often insulted him with vulgar language. Thus she kept true to what was later confirmed by Doubtfire (1978 : 26):

It is perfectly in order to use ungrammatical speech for a character, who would normally speak that way.

The Narrative Technique may be subdivided into the scenic, the panoramic and the dialogue sub-sections. There is not precise distinction between the scenic and panoramic methods. However, in the scenic technique the author is aiming at focussing the attention of the reader at a definite mental picture. He makes a brief, precise description, which at once draws the attention of the reader. Newspaper distributors attract the public by numerous posters, headlines, and even go further than that, as Burack (1973 : 34) briefly tell us thus:

A typical story about crime begins with a fascinating dramatic lead.....and then goes back to describe events immediately proceeding the crime.

There are instances in Gwayi's novels to prove the effectiveness of relying on the above quotation. The character may use an exclamation, a rude call or an insult, just as Mpikase began by shouting angrily at Shaka, and only later does the reader learn of the cause of the eruption of this vulgar outburst.

Gwayi (1976 : 1):

"We Shaka!" kumemeza owesifazane ngokufutheka.

("I say Shaka!" shouted a furious female.)

The above expression makes the reader realize how angry Mpikase was when she saw her son crying after having been hit by Shaka

/with

with a thorny stick. It is not surprising when later her fury rose in a crescendo until she insulted and threatened Shaka.

The panoramic method may be explained as a summary. When people go out driving in the countryside, sweeping observation of the scenery is involved. In the novel Bafa Baphela (Gwayi, 1973 : 44-45), the description of how Mantatisi decided to leave the Namahali region after her defeat by Mpangazitha Hlubi illustrates this technique. This is not a critical issue but an historical description of a situation in which the Tlokoa Tribe found itself. A combination of scenic and panoramic narration will enhance the artist's ability, just as Kenney (1966 : 80) points out:

.....monotony is something to be avoided, and the change of pace effected by the shift from scenic to panoramic is one good way of avoiding it.

(d) Dialogue Technique

Lastly, a summary of the Dialogue Technique is to be given. Here the author presents the reader with characters conversing with each other. A debate, a discussion, a conversation is very interesting to listen to. The reader, therefore, is entertained by partaking in the arguments, reprimands, praises, etc. of various sorts. Because all these are concrete and much more convincing, the reader understands the characters better. The truthful and dishonest can be easily analysed through the words they utter, as seen in the conversation between Nandi and Mfudukazi at the fountain:

Gwayi (1976 : 30):

"Mina kangikho phakathi kwalabo obabalayo." "Ngempela kawukho", kuvuma uNandi.

("I am not one of those you enumerate." "Indeed you are not", replied Nandi.)

This woman was in fact among those who disliked and ill-treated Nandi at Isiklebheni kraal, but worse still, she had come to Nandi pretending to be her friend. She later retold the whole conversation to Mpikase, adding a lot of things that had not been

/said.

said. Gwayi's novels have many characters as depicted already under "Characterization". Most of them speak in a dialogue-form to each other. These are the chiefs to their stewards, warriors, parents and children, wives and friends. Gwayi has used dialogue to show how some of the stewards agreed with their chiefs even when they should have differed. They did this for various reasons as already explained, but at times they showed nothing more than mere cringing.

Dialogue narration helps the reader to see the emotional side of the characters. For instance, in the dialogue between Dingiswayo and Shaka, the reader realizes that Shaka was very much emotionally upset by the constant refusal of Dingiswayo to have Zwide killed right away after defeating him. The idea of teaching Zwide a lesson of how to live peacefully with his neighbours, as suggested by Dingiswayo, greatly upset Shaka. However, he had to control himself because of the great respect he had for Dingiswayo.

It is indeed by the dialogue technique that Gwayi succeeds to make the reader understand the general behaviour, environment and milieu of her characters, thus confirming what is said by Kenney (1966 : 86):

Dialogue in fiction should be natural to the world the author creates, not necessarily to the world in which the author and reader live.

## 5. THE RÉSUMÉ

In this chapter, language, style and technique have been examined. It has been found that Gwayi is a Xhosa who has written Zulu novels. The title of her first book, Bafa Baphela, is not quite appropriate and she has given a Zulu title to her second book, Shumpu, but maintains that it is a Xhosa expression, while the third novel has a typical Zulu title. This is attributed to Ngcobo, her Zulu husband, who had attended a Xhosa Teacher Training Institution. Ngcobo could not do much to influence Gwayi as is seen in some common expressions which

/are



are not very good. Some are even misinterpreted as has been shown in the discussion.

- (a) Gwayi has her own style. This can be seen by her not describing known customs, but allowing the reader to fill in the blank spaces. Her style is straightforward and, in the last book, Ngcobo added his more mature style in characterization.
- (b) Her technique could not have been epistolary, for obvious reasons. She made use of the first person technique very rarely, but well. She made her characters natural in order to exchange views appropriately.
- (c) On the Narrative Technique, she used the third person, scenic, panoramic and dialogue. For critical situations she took the scenic approach and for the description of historical incidents the panoramic method was used. She did not leave out the dialogue in order to show her characters talking to each other in the world she created for them. Their conduct, the time and the environment in which they lived can be deduced from what they say and how they say it.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

What has been given in this work is a summary of Jessie Joyce Gwayi's biography and the contribution she has made to Zulu literature. It is regrettable that she began to write when there were still very few historical novels written by Black novelists. Owing to this disadvantage she had to overcome a number of pitfalls because of the scarcity of references. As a Xhosa author writing in a strange Zulu language, she nevertheless succeeded to add three historical novels to the growing tree of Zulu literature.

She has artistically created fictitious characters to be true representatives of the cringing royal kraal stewards. Her stewards become life-like to the reader, because they depict our modern-time stooges and yes-men.

In the theme and structure of plot, the arrangement produces the expected crescendo that becomes a fortissimo that ends in a diminuendo as in a beautiful piece of music. Briefly, this is what writers call the sunrise, noon and sunset in a novel, which is a good narrative, as Church (1961 : 6) says:

.....the interpretation of human life by means of narrative prose.

Gwayi had her personal reasons perhaps for the chronological order of publishing her books. According to history, Shaka's military rule contributed to the period called Difaqane/Mfecane. The important rulers prior to Shaka's era were Zwide and Dingiswayo. To the historian, the order of books should have been:

- (a) Shumpu (Dingiswayo and Zwide)
- (b) Yekanini (Shaka's biography up to his installation)

/(c)

(c) Bafa Baphela (Mantatisi/The Tlokoa Tribe)

The dependence of the author on information from traditional literature gave her some problems. The "Izibongo" (praise poems) contain some history of the tribe such as its defeats and conquests, famine and religion. When a chief has no praise poems it becomes very difficult to rely entirely on later reports by foreigners. Let us take the reports given about the death of Dingiswayo as an example. Cowley (1966 : 45) says:

.....it was this sister who was later used to lure Dingiswayo to his death.

This is not explained further and, therefore, the same author later gives another version.

Cowley (1966 : 45)

.....While Mtetwas were waiting for him, Dingiswayo had gone out almost alone on reconnaissance and had been captured.

On the same incident, Selby (1973 : 66) says:

In 1818 Dingiswayo was persuaded to visit Zwide's kraal almost unaccompanied and was made prisoner and put to death.

Gwayi, like other novelists, has manipulated her fictitious characters as she pleased; but historical characters are real people and so do not always behave like created characters. A few examples follow to illustrate this point:

Zwide was a 'tragic' figure, while Dingiswayo remained 'magnanimous' till death.

Mantatisi was the 'warrior Queen' and Shaka was the 'National-Builder Tyrant' of his time.

The language, style and technique as found in the novels make the reader realize beyond doubt that the books were not written by one person, as Gwayi admitted. The obvious conclusion is that the two (Gwayi and Ngcobo) should have made some compromise

/whereby

whereby the books could be revised and pruned of obvious mistakes. This arrangement has become more necessary now that Gwayi has become so incapacitated.

Finally, Jessie Joyce Gwayi deserves praise and admiration for writing three novels in such quick succession. So far, she is the first Black female to write Zulu historical novels and has courageously stood up to accept the challenge from Mayekiso (1965 : 37) who said:

Have our women decided to remain dormant, or have they succumbed to the conservative pattern of remaining minor and inferior? They should make a start, remembering that so far no psychologist has proved them to be mentally inferior to men.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

- Allott, Miriam (1959) Novelists on the Novel. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, London, E.C.4.
- Burack, A.S. (1973) Technique of Novel Writing. The Writer Inc., Boston, USA
- Carr, E.H. (1961) What is History? McMillan & Co. Ltd., London.
- Church, Richard (1961) The Growth of the English Novel. University Paperbacks, Methuen, London.
- Cowley, C. (1966) KwaZulu (Queen Mkabi's Story). The Rustic Press (Pty) Ltd., Wynberg, Cape Town.
- Dhlomo, R.R.R. (1935) uShaka. Shuter and Shooter, Pmb.  
(1936) uDingana. Shuter and Shooter, Pmb.  
(1938) uMpande. Shuter and Shooter, Pmb.  
(1956) uCetshwayo. Shuter and Shooter, Pmb.  
(1961) uDinuzulu. Shuter and Shooter, Pmb.
- Doubtfire, Dianne (1978) The Craft of Novel Writing. Allison & Busy, 6A Noel Street, London.
- Dube, J.L. (1933) Insila kaShaka. Mariannhill Mission Press.
- Dube, Violent (1933) Wozanazo Izindaba zika Phoshozwayo. Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg.
- Flye, William and Murray, Colin (1980) Transformations on the Highveld, The Tswana and Southern Sotho. Hirt & Carter (Pty) Ltd., Cape Town.
- Forster, E.M. (1974) Aspects of the Novel. Hazel Watson & Viney Ltd., Aylesbury, Bucks.
- Graham, Kenneth (1965) English Criticism of the Novel (1865-1900). Clarendon Press, Oxford.

- Gwayi, Jessie Joyce (1973) Bafa Baphela. J L van Schaick Ltd., Pretoria.  
(1974, Shumpu. J L van Schaick Ltd., Pretoria.  
2nd Ed. 1977)  
(1976) Yekanini. J L van Schaick Ltd., Pretoria.
- Halford, Samuel J. (1949) The Griquas of Griqualand. Juta's & Co. Ltd., Cape Town.
- Hlela, Moses and (1974) Imithi Ephundliwe. Shuter and Shooter, Nkosi, Christopher Pietermaritzburg.
- Hugo, L.H. and (1977) Unisa English II & III, Guide I. Harty, E.R. University Press.
- Hull, Richard W. (1981) Southern Afrika Civilization in a Turmoil. New York University Press, New York.
- Kenney, William (1966) How to Analyse Fiction. Monarch Press, New York.
- Kunene, Mazizi (1979) Emperor Shaka the Great. Cox & Wyman Ltd., London.
- Little, William and (1978) The Short Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. II. Fowler, H.W. Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford.
- Lubbock, Percy (1963) The Craft of Fiction. Jonathan Cape, 30 Bedford Square, London.
- Mayekiso, A.C.T. (1965) The Growth of the Zulu Novel. University of Natal. (Unpublished article)
- Mkhize, E.E.N.T. (1966) Inhliziyo ngu Go Wami. Via Afrika Publishers, Cape Town.
- Morris, William (1973) The Heritage Illustrated Dictionary of the English Language. American Publishing Co. Inc.
- Ngcobo, Moses (1973) Ukufika koSuku. Shuter and Shooter, Pumb.
- Ngcongwane, S.D. (1979) Introduction to the Study of Literature. Lecture notes, University of Zululand.

- Ntuli, F.L. (1979) uMbuso kaShaka. Mariannhill Mission Press.
- Nyembezi, C.L.S. (1961) A Review of Zulu Literature. University of Natal Press.
- Ortega, Y.Gasset José (1948) The Dehumanization of Art and Other Writings on Art and Culture. Doubleday Company Inc., Garden City, N.Y.
- Ritter, A.E. (1962) Shaka Zulu. Longman Green Ltd., 48 Grosvenor Street, London.
- Roberts, Brian (1974) The Zulu Kings. Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 90 Gt.Russell Street, London, W.C.1.
- Selby, John (1973) A Short History of South Africa. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London.
- Stuart, James (1924) uBaxoxele. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 (1924) uHlangakhula. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 (1925) uKulumethule. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 (1938) uVusezakithi. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 New Ed.)  
 (1935) Kwesukela. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 New Ed.)  
 (1942) uVulingqondo. Longmans Green & Co., London.  
 New Ed.)
- Thompkins, J.M.S. (1969) The Popular Novel in English (1170-1800). Mathuen & Co.Ltd., 11 New Fetter Lane, London, E.C.4.
- Thompson, Leonard (1969) African Societies in Southern Africa. Heineman Educational Books, 48 Charles Street, London.
- van der Merwe, W. & Strydom, J.L.C. (1975) The New History Form III. Thanda Press, King Williams Town.
- Vilakazi, B.W. (1935) Noma Nini. Mariannhill Mission Press.  
 (1939) uDingiswayo kaJobe. The Sheldon Press, Northumberland Avenue, London.  
 (1943) Nje Nempela. Mariannhill Mission Press.