

PLOT AND CHARACTER IN VILAKAZI'S NOVELS

J.S.M. Khumalo

In the course of preparing this article I consulted the following books and publications:

Miller, E.A. The Anatomy of the English Novel. H.F. & C. Fisher (London), 1957.

Garner, D., Barbara Pym and Piers F. An Introduction to Literature. Duffell, Brown & Co. (Cambridge), 1961.

Bickson, E. and Clark, J. A Reader's Guide to Literary Terms. Harper & Row (London), 1961.

Crane, H.S. Writing and Criticism. Univ. of Chicago, 1962.

Moore, W.S. The Development of the English Novel. Duckworth (London), 1963.

Quinlan, J. The English Novel. Univ. of Chicago, 1969.

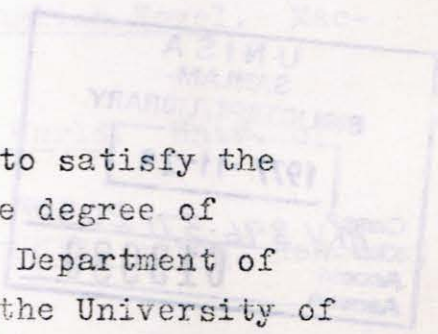
David, E. (1) The English Novel. Duckworth (London), 1964.

David, E. (2) The English Novel. Duckworth (London), 1964.

Benbow, H.P. The English Novel. Cornell Univ. (New York), 1966.

(Article submitted to satisfy the requirements for the degree of Honours B.A. of the Department of Bantu Languages at the University of South Africa.)

January 1972



UNISA
SAMLAM-
BIBLIOTEK/LIBRARY

1977-11-28

Class
Klas
Access
Akses
AKV 896.37120307
613980

Vilakazi

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Professor D. Ziervoegel and Professor J. Louw for advice and encouragement generously offered during my study of Bantu Languages at UNISA.

I also wish to thank Mrs B.A. Cowap and Mrs E.A. Skoulding who kindly typed the first draft as well as the final draft of this article. For the typing of the second draft I am indebted to my younger sister Mrs B. Matuoase.

Bibliography

In the course of preparing this article I consulted the following books and publications:

- Baker E.A. The History of the English Novel. H.F. & G. Witherby (London), 1937.
- Barnet S., Berman M., and Burto W. An Introduction to Literature. Little, Brown & Co. (Canada), 1961.
- Beckson K. and Ganz A. A Reader's Guide to Literary Terms. Thames & Hudson (London), 1961.
- Crane R.S. Critics and Criticism. Univ. of Chicago, 1952.
- Cross W.L. The Development of the English Novel. Macmillan (London), 1937.
- Daiches D. The Novel and the Modern World. Univ. of Chicago, 1939.
- Davis E. (1) The Novel in General. UNISA notes, Honours, English.
- Davis E. (2) Readings in Modern Fiction. Simondium (Cape Town), 1964.
- Donovan R.A. The Shaping Vision. Cornell Univ. (New York), 1966.

Bibliography (continued)

Kettle A. An Introduction to the English Novel.

Hutchinson's Univ. (London), 1951.

Stang R. The Theory of the Novel in England. Routledge &

Kegan Paul (London), 1959.

PLOT AND CHARACTER IN VILAKAZI'S NOVELS

Introduction

B. Wallet Vilakazi wrote three novels, viz. Noma Nini (1935), UDingiswayo KaJobe (1939), and Nje-Nempela (1943).

Although there is no general agreement on the names and number of the elements of a novel, most critics of fiction include plot, character, and diction among these elements. It is with the first two of these elements that I am concerned in this article.

Character (or characterization, as some critics prefer to call it) in novels is generally accepted to refer to the portrayal of "the personalities of characters in fiction". (Daiches, p. 18). On 'plot' however, there is very little agreement among the critics, and for this reason I am choosing a definition that suits my present purpose: plot is action, "action being the logical working out of a certain initial situation and springing from the nature of the characters" (Stang, p. 129).

Plot and character are strictly related and it is difficult to discuss one to the exclusion of the other. This is demonstrated in Cross's discussion of the plot of Tom Jones: "In 'Tom Jones' Fielding.....approached the highest ideal of a novel, in which the plot takes its coloring from the characters themselves, as if both plot and characters were of simultaneous birth in the imagination" (Cross, p. 52). Davis urges his students to "use the principle of tel arbre, tel fruit in any discussion of character. As the tree, so the fruit: the plot either

determines the characters or the characters the plot" (Davis (1), pp. 7-8). The English novelist, George Eliot, wrote that "her stories grew from the 'psychological conception of the dramatis personae'" (Stang, p. 130). More forthright was Henry James, the English novelist, when he asked the rhetorical question, "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?" (Barnet, p. 15). It is this close relationship that has persuaded me to discuss plot together with character in this article.

I propose to discuss plot and character in each novel first, thereafter to comment generally on plot and character in the three novels, winding up with my conclusions.

Plot and character in Noma Nini

Defects in the plot

There are two main defects in the plot of this novel. The first is an artistic fault and the second is a defect in construction.

1. The dragging exposition

The "stream of consciousness" technique is not employed in any Zulu novel written so far, thus all the plots still have the traditional structure:

- "(i) exposition (setting forth of the beginning);
- (ii) conflict (a complication that moves to a climax);
- (iii) denouement (literally, 'unknotting', the outcome of the conflict; the resolution)" (Barnet, pp. 13-14).

It is of artistic importance in a plot of this nature that the exposition should not drag too long. At the very beginning of the criticism of prose fiction a plot which "follows the method of history, in that it attempts a continuous narrative of the life of its central character from birth to marriage" (Stang, p. 112) was considered poor in unity and structure. Noma Nini opens with the finding of the abandoned infant (Nomkhosi) and we meet the hero (Nsikana) while he is still at school. It takes a long time before we reach the conflict, viz. the love triangle of Nsikana, Tomasi and Nomkhosi. This reduces the concentration and vividness in the plot.

2. The inclusion of extraneous material

According to G.H. Lewes, "the object of construction is to free the story from all superfluity. Whatever is superfluous -- whatever lies outside the real feeling and purpose of the work either in incident, dialogue, description, or character -- whatever may be omitted without in any degree lessening the effect -- is a defect in construction."

(Stang, p. 120). There are too many matters (historical, anthropological and folk-loristic) in Vilakazi's novels (especially in Nje-Nempela) whose omission would greatly improve the plots. In Noma Nini the opening account of the rivalry for the Zulu throne between Dingane and Mpande (pp. 13-22); the anecdotes of Nsikana's employers (pp. 34-38) and the account of the First Anglo-Boer War (pp. 35-44); the excellent anthropological treatise on a traditional Zulu wedding (pp. 54-57) are all matters for omission.

The Main Characters

Having disposed of these two major defects in the plot of this novel, I now wish to discuss plot together with character in this novel.

Nomkhosi

Very early in the novel there are signs in Nomkhosi's character that point to the choice that she will make in the denouement. Although she is still too young to know it, Nomkhosi is very much in love with Nsikana. After her promise to Nsikana we are told, "Kwaqala ukungena uvalo oluncane kuNomkhosi, uvalo olungazange lube lusamyeka. Waqala ukubona izifanekiso zikaNsikana emqondweni wakhe, waqala ukuba uNsikana aphume athi phengqengqe emicabangweni yakhe, nasemaphusheni akhe athuke uNsikana efika..... uNkondlwane (her dog) uqobo lwakhe wayesebika uNsikana, nezinkomo zemboza uMakhwatha zasezibhecwe uNsikana" (p. 28).

When Tomasi starts courting her he draws her attention to birds which fly in pairs, but she starts wondering if they can reach Durban and see Nsikana. She tells Tomasi that when she gets a baby she will part the child's hair like Rev. Grout's children, and she tells him that she would like her future husband to have a distinctive path on his head. In the next chapter we learn that Nsikana's employers in Durban had already taught him how to make a distinctive path on his head every time he combed his hair.

Two considerations finally lead Nomkhosi into agreeing to marry Tomasi. First, Tomasi employs a very dirty trick: he lies and tells her that he overheard the Grouts saying

that all the Zulus working for Whites in Durban had been killed in the First Anglo-Boer War. He knows that Nomkhosi will understand this to mean that "her" Nsikana is dead. Secondly, Nomkhosi is very devoted to Rev. and Mrs Grout, and she knows that their dearest wish is that she should be wife to their favourite boy, Tomasi.

Nsikana

Nsikana's character also points to his being the better suited to marry Nomkhosi. She is his first and only love: when one of his employers in Durban asks him whether he has a girl friend he says, "Angazi noma ngiyathandwa yini ngoba ngashiya ekhaya ngithe intombazana elitshitshi nje, endekazi, mayongilindela ingathandi muntu" (p. 38). On his return from Durban, when his sister, Nokuthela asks him to court her friend, Smonqo's sister, he answers, "Awukahle dadewethu, ngisabuka ngalentombazana ehlala kwaMfundisi, inhliziyo yami igxilile kuyo" (p. 77).

When Nokuthela suggests that he could take Smonqo's sister as a second wife if he succeeds in winning Nomkhosi also, Nsikana reveals another important aspect of his character: he, like Nomkhosi has sincerely accepted the new Christian teaching because this is how he answers his sister, "Awuboni yini Nokuthela ukuthi mina nginjengekholwa umthetho kawungivumeli ngithathe isithembu na?" (pp. 78-79). When Nsikana's friend, Nkomeni, suggests that as a last resort they should go to the famous witchdoctor, Sihlangu-sinye, to procure a love potion for conquering Nomkhosi, Nsikana's answer would have brought a tear-stained "Amen!" to the lips of a dying missionary: "Ukudlala-ke lckho

wethu, ngoba ngafunga ngathi mhla ngibekwa amanzi ebunzini lami (referring to his baptism), ngingeke ngikholwe amalutha, nokuthi imisebenzi yobumnyama ngiyoyilahla phansi" (p. 130).

Ndosi, Rev. Grout's wagon-driver, who has in common with all other male servants of Rev. Grout, an intense hatred of Tomasi, their "boss-boy" (because of Tomasi's callous treatment of them all) decides to assist Nsikana by informing him that Tomasi is almost invincible as a rival because he has the strongest love potion, viz. human fat from the body of a white person ("amafutha ephumalimi") obtained from Sihlangusinye. (Ndosi's aim, of course, is that Nsikana should visit Sihlangusinye or someone better — if that's the right word). Nsikana's answer is typical: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil" (p. 157). What better husband for Nomkhosi could rev. Grout wish for? But he did not know; he was bent on Tomasi, whom he did not know.

Tomasi

Tomasi is a lay preacher who assists Rev. Grout. To Rev. Grout, he is so righteous that "engekho amantombazana eMvoti ayefanele yena emehlweni oMfundisi (p. 31). Tomasi is well-educated and proud ("ezazi"), but on his own admission ("Nomkhosi kukhona into engifisa ngikutshele yona selokhu sajoyelana, kodwa ngishaywa uvalo" (p. 32) he is a coward. When he learns that a certain boy (Nsikana) once made overtures to Nomkhosi he confronts her with the knowledge and tells her in as many words that he (Tomasi) is the only one fit to marry her. Sensing the inefficacy of

this ruse Tomasi, coward that he is, begins a vicious smear campaign on his rival. First, he suggests that Nsikana may already be married (to a woman of loose morals for that matter). To this Nomkhosi's answer is, "Qhabo, uyaphosisa Qwabe." Next he conjures up a picture of Nsikana, the libertine, enjoying the good life of the city. Nomkhosi says, "Qhabo akuyena lowo, uyaphosisa." Then Tomasi's libertine comes home, penniless. Nomkhosi answers (her intuition telling her of Nsikana's impending disaster) "Uma engayiphethe, kobe kukhona okukhona, wehlakelwe ishwa." (p. 51). In desperation he tells her the lie, earlier mentioned, to make her believe that Nsikana is dead.

Tomasi is a very callous man. When he hears the wagon-drivers tell of how they picked up a man fallen upon by thieves and brutally assaulted, he warns them never to do so again as they may be charged for having robbed and assaulted such a man. The result of this warning was, "Kusuka ngalelo langa bonakala abantu; ababuyanga bacoshe muntu endleleni uma bembona ehluphekile, (p. 63). If he had half-suspected that this injured man was Nsikana he would, I am sure, have assaulted these wagon-drivers.

Tomasi functions as a perfect foil to Nsikana. When Nsikana will have nothing to do with witchcraft and love potions, the lay preacher visits Sihlangusinye for a love potion. When Nsikana will not court Smonqo's sister because the new Christian teaching frowns even on contemplated bigamy, Tomasi secretly courts Ntombinjani, Nomkhosi's own half sister, fooling her into believing that he no longer loves Nomkhosi. This is Tomasi, Rev. Grout's "most upright

young man" who is too good for the girls of the area.

The Minor Characters

Rev. Grout

This leads me to Rev. Grout himself. It is not only over Tomasi that Rev. Grout shows his lack of judgement, but during one traditional Zulu wedding one Mhuhulu loses his head, chases his enemy right into Rev. Grout's bedroom and stabs him to death under the very reverend gentleman's bed! Rev. Grout, that wisest of all judges ascribes this aberration to the ululating of the women, the dancing of the crowd, and the lavish beer-drinking at the marriage feast. And he comes up with a neat solution: no ululating, no dancing, and no beer-drinking in future Christian weddings in Zululand! Subsequent Zulu weddings are not far different from decent funerals, till one woman defies him and ululates at her son's wedding. In great relief, the rest of the women join her. What could Rev. Grout do?

It is evident that Rev. Grout is easy meat for any man with a head on his shoulders. Nsikana, in the most brilliant chapter in the book (chapter 8) has a go at him. Accompanied by Nokuthela, his younger sister, he visits Rev. Grout and asks for advice on his love problems. First he asks Rev. Grout whether one is forced to keep a promise made in youth. Rev. Grout says that it is so, on condition it was not an evil promise. Nsikana then solicits Rev. Grout's assistance as he wishes to marry according to Christian rites. Thinking that the girl accompanying him is his fiancée, Rev. Grout readily agrees to help him. Then the bombshell comes: Nsikana informs Rev. Grout that Nomkhosi, betrothed to

Tomasi his favourite boy, had promised in her youth to wait for him (Nsikana) and she was the girl he wanted to marry!

Mrs Grout

Mrs Grout is portrayed as a righteous woman who does not like to interfere in other people's affairs. Every night before going to bed she checks that Nomkhosi and all her children are comfortably in bed and then says a prayer on each of them. This is how she comes to suspect Nomkhosi's love problems because on that Christmas day when Nomkhosi received a present accompanied by the "Noma Nini" message, she had gone to Nomkhosi's room as usual, before going to bed, seen this expensive gift with the strange message, seen Nomkhosi outside battling with her thoughts. It must have been the manner in which she described her discovery that prompted Rev. Grout to advise that they adopt a "wait and see" attitude - (or had he learned a lesson from his "neat solutions"?).

When Rev. Grout is left by Nsikana and Nokuthela in a dilemma, it is Mrs Grout who comes to his assistance by advising that according to Zulu culture, it is the girl's elder sisters who are responsible for sorting out the girl's love problems. It is with great relief that Rev. Grout hands over Nomkhosi's problems to her family. So, Mrs Grout is also a very wise counsellor to her husband.

Nontula

Now that Nomkhosi's love problems have to be solved according to Zulu custom it is proper that it should be Nontula, Nomkhosi's eldest half-sister who should play the leading role in the denouement. Nontula still clings to custom and will have nothing to do with Christianity,

Education and all the rest: "Unontula wayengakuthandi ukufunda, ezondana nayo yonke inkambiso yamakholwa". (p. 24). She advises Nomkhosi on the merits and demerits of the two rivals, gives her a walking stick to decorate with beads and makes an appointment for the following Wednesday. When they meet, Tomasi and later, Nsikana also arrive. Nontula then asks Nomkhosi to whom she should give the decorated walking stick (meaning "I love you too"). Nomkhosi chooses Nsikana.

Conclusion

This plot is not very interesting because it lacks tension. A good plot should have a succession of complications which lead to the moment of greatest tension, called the climax. It is these complications which one discusses (as will be seen in the discussion of plot and character in UDingiswayo KaJobe) in order to illustrate character. In Noma Nini there are hardly any such complications (the whole conflict is really just Nomkhosi's love triangle) and the result is that a discussion of plot and character in this novel is much more a discussion of character than of plot.

Plot and Character in Udingiswayo KaJobe

The main characters in this novel are Godongwane (later Dingiswayo), Nobantwana, Zenzile, Zwide and Jevuza. The minor characters are Malusi, Jobe, Dingiwe, Tana, Maguduza, Mawewe and Vukani. (I pay no attention to Shaka, Senzangakhona etc. because the incidents in which they are involved should not be part of the plot of this novel). The characters involved in this plot will only appear as I discuss the main incidents in the novel. I will first dispose of the

defects in the plot of this novel and then discuss plot and character as I deal with the main incidents in the novel.

Defects in the plot

The inclusion of Chapter 7 in this novel is a defect in plot-construction. There is no connection between character and incident in this chapter. It is, however, a very valuable chapter to students of anthropology, Zulu history and folklore and it should be in their books, not in this novel. It is all about the formation, training and education of young regiments during Dingiswayo's reign; the rise of Shaka; and there is a narration of one of the most beautiful of Zulu folk-tales, viz. Inganekwane kaNcazane. The rise of Shaka; the arrival of Chief Senzangakhona and his stay at eBalungwini; the whole of the last chapter in this book (this chapter deals with Shaka's taking of the Zulu crown, and the war he waged against Zwide to avenge Dingiswayo etc.) are all matters for omission. It says much for the quality of this novel that in comparison to the other two there is so little which is better omitted.

The Massacre at Oyengweni

In the first chapter Vilakazi gives us the initial situation in the Mthethwa tribe. From his portrayal of the characters it is logical that their personalities set in motion the events that follow and which end so tragically in the denouement

Jobe

The killing of Tana and Godongwane's close shave can be clearly read in Jobe's character. Jobe, a chronic and sometimes murderous somnambulist (he kills Mbangayiya while

sleep-walking) lives in constant fear of his life: "UJobe wayehlomphekile, ehlala kodwa ngokwenqena bonke abasondelelene naye sengathi bengamenza kabi". (p. 3). After Nqola's death he fears that he is next, and he decides to "do the other man before he does you".

Jevuza and Dingiwe

It is a logical sequence of events that it should be Jevuza and Dingiwe who save Godongwane's life as they are both dedicated to him. Jevuza tells Godongwane in an earlier speech, "Ngofa lapho ufa khona, ngivuke nawe uma uvuka, ngilale nawe nasendle ezinkangala; uma ulele uhonqa mina ngiyobe ngiqwashile kuze kuse". (p. 11). After the massacre at oYengweni, Dingiwe is very sad and we are told "wehla waya emfuleni ukuyokh'amanzi, ehamb'ehlabelela ngosizi lokushiywa, ngumfowabo". (p. 20, she thought he had been killed).

Godongwane becomes chief of the Mthethwa tribe

Tana and Godongwane

It is evident from the characters of Tana and Godongwane (later Dingiswayo) that, should they survive their father's wrath, it will be Godongwane, the younger brother, and not Tana, who will take over the chieftainship of the Mthethwa tribe. Tana, the elder brother is described as follows: "-- uTana kungumuntu owayebukeka enganake lutho ngezindaba zemibuso. Into owayeyithanda uTana kwakungukuzingela, noku-zixoxela izindaba zokuntela". (p. 7). Godongwane on the other hand was very interested in the political life of the Mthethwa tribe, as it is said, "Nabantu oYengweni izindaba zemibuso babezixoxa kuGodongwane yena owayenamehlo

ngazo ezithanda futhi". (p. 11). Godongwane considers himself the leader of the Mthethwas at oYengweni. Nodunga reports to Jobe that, "-- uGodongwane usezenze indlondlobela waba ngaphezu komnwewabo omkhulu uTana phakathi oYengweni". (p. 7). When Jevuza, Godongwane's witch-doctor tells him to flee because his father wants to kill him, Godongwane asks, "Bathini bona abantu laba? Bathini bona uma bebona kubaleka umholi wabo kuqala? Bangethi ngibashiya emgebeni ingozi bengivele ngiyazi kodwa bona angabatshela? (p. 11). Even Jobe had a premonition that Godongwane would be the next Mthethwa chief because, on his deathbed we are told, "--- uJobe wabiza ibandla wavalelisa, wabeka umbheki wombuso wakwaMthethwa wathi kuyoba nguMawewe inkosi, owayezalwa ngomunye wamakhosikazi amancane okuthiwa amabibi. Akakho-hlwanga uJobe ukulayeza ngokuthi uyabona ukuthi uMawewe akanakubusa ngokukhululeka ngoba uGodongwane akafanga, nokuthi kuyodingeka ukuba aqashelwa angaqambi inhlakanhlaka ngokwahlukanisa isizwe sakwaMthethwa, uma esebuya ekubhungukeni, uma eyoze wabuya". (p. 19). Godongwane does return and with Jevuza's assistance takes over the Mthethwa crown after killing Mawewe, and assumes the name Dingiswayo.

The Ndwandwe-Mthethwa War

The makings of the war in which Godongwane (now Dingiswayo) finally dies can all be read in the personalities of the characters involved in this war. The main cause of this war was Dingiswayo's preference for Zenzile above Nobantwana, his childhood sweetheart who had become his chief-wife. Zenzile, whom Dingiswayo also took as wife

was Nobantwana's half-sister and bridesmaid. Nobantwana was Zwide's (chief of the Ndwandwes) sister and Zenzile was Malusi's (half-brother to Zwide) sister. Dingiswayo's preference for Zenzile caused Zwide to hate Malusi. This ended in Zwide's sending an army to wipe off Malusi's kraal. Dingiswayo then declares war against Zwide to avenge Malusi's death.

Now let us look a little closer into the characters of these five people to see if this war was not inevitable. We are told that, "UGodongwane (now Dingiswayo) kwakuyisoka phakathi kwezinsizwa zenkosi, aziwa kakhulu". (p. 10). From this description he couldn't possibly have let slip the proffered opportunity of marrying the beautiful bridesmaid, Zenzile, about whom we are told, "UZenzile lona, naye wayenobuhle bakwabo ethatha, noNobantwana engezi lutho". (p. 98). It was Dingiswayo's fate, not his fault, that he loved Zenzile more than Nobantwana.

Zenzile

According to Zulu custom there was nothing wrong with Dingiswayo's taking Zenzile as another wife. Only Zenzile had to remember that she was subordinate in status to Nobantwana, the chief wife. Which woman would let slip the proffered opportunity of becoming the queen in a royal household? And Zenzile was as sly as they come; on arrival at Dingiswayo's home we are told that Dingiswayo loved her "ngokuzithoba kwakhe nangendlela yokubuka kwamehlo akhe". (p. 99). Her humility was a guise to pave the way to Dingiswayo's heart. She shed it quickly enough when she became Dingiswayo's favourite. When her brother, Malusi was killed

we learn,

"UZenzile kuthiwa wakhala lonke isonto ezivalele kwakhe, engafuni ukubonana namuntu ngisho inkosi ugobo lwayo. Mhla ifika ingena ngenkani....." (p. 101). Where is her humility now?

In her confrontation with Nobantwana she says, "Kanti lapha kulomuzi ubani ofanele ukushayela imithetho isifazane sonke silalele yena?" And it is she who finally betrays Dingiswayo: She steals and hands over to Siqongo a bead necklace belonging to Dingiswayo which Siqongo and Maguduza use in casting a spell on Dingiswayo during the war.

It is Dingiwe (Dingiswayo's sister), that sober judge of character, who sums up Zenzile's character when she says, "Ehhe, uZenzile uliqhalaghalala uyimbongi yokwakhe, uzikhothe'emhlane, sonke akasazi ukuba singobani." (p. 161).

Nobantwana

Nobantwana, on the other hand, is a retiring woman, humble and hard-working. When she wakes up early to go and work in the fields the people who meet her are surprised: "Indodakazi yenkosi yakwaNdwandwe, iganele enkosini yakwaMthethwa, ukuvuka ngalesisikhathi iyolima! Kwakumangalisa!" (p. 163). Her own words when she quarrels with Zenzile reveal her retiring nature which is her undoing: "Okwenkosikazi enkulu lapha eBalungwini, mina wakoNdwandwe angikwazi ngoba angizanga lapha ukugana, ngazohlalela ukubukana nobukhulu, ngezela ukugana kuphela." (p. 172). Nobantwana is very easy meat for the sly Zenzile.

Malusi

Malusi is not significant as an individual character,

his significance lies in the context of his character: he happens to be Zenzile's brother and Zwide's half-brother, that role is sufficient for purposes of the plot.

Zwide

Zwide is a cunning man who is also unscrupulously ambitious, and from the very nature of his character a war against Godongwane is on the cards. When he sends his sister, Nobantwana, to marry Godongwane, it is not for love of either of them, but it is to gain his private ends. This he reveals to Malusi, when, in discussing the threat of the rising might of Godongwane and the Mthethwa tribe he says, "Mina ngibona linye icebo mfowethu. Noma umuntu esenamandla anjani kuhle umthumele inyoka iyombulala, imbulale endlini lapho engabheke ngozi khona." (p. 93). He then explains that this "snake" which should "kill" Godongwane is his own sister, Nobantwana. How is she to kill Godongwane? In two ways, first, "Ngokwenza kwami kanjalo ngifuna intombazana iyogana iveze ubungane phakathi kwami noGodongwane kuze angangithathi ngezimpi zakhe ngingazelele." (p. 94). The second reason is "Ngalelicebo lokuganisela uGodongwane ngodadewethu ngiqonde ukuba kuthi noma yena esefa ngibe namandla okuba ifa lakwaMthethwa ngilithathe ngenxa yokuthi ngiphathele umntakadadewethu." (p. 94). So, his own sister is unwittingly used as a stepping stone to the Mthethwa crown! Seldom does one come across a wilier schemer.

When he is told that his favourite daughter, Maguduza, is possessed of ancestral spirits, he goes and looks at her:

"Wafika qede wambona elele phansi ethe ja. Wambuka ephefumulela phezulu okwenkabi igwazwe ngomkhonto yawa phansi, kuthi

ma iphefumula kuphume igazi ngenxeba, uyizwe ibubula njalo ilele. NoMaguduza wayephefumulela phezulu ngomlomo kuphuma amagwebu, esifubeni sakhe kube khona njalo izinto esengathi ziyagqigqizela zibanga umsindo." (p. 95). A pitiable sight indeed, but is there a word sorrow from Zwide? Does he show any emotion? No. But judge him when the same daughter has now graduated into a brilliant diviner, and she tells of a man (Siqongo) who will come and assist her in treating Zwide's soldiers so that they are invincible in battle: "uZwide wahlala phansi, wezwa inhliziyo yakhe igcwala umoya wobuqhawe nokunqoba, wabona iMfolozi emnyama neMfolozi emhlophe igcwala amakhanda ezinsizwa zezizwe ezazingathandi ukukhonza kwa-Ndwandwe zibheke yena njengenkosi yazo. Waphonsa emehlo buqamama eNingizimu wabona amaZulu nezicocwana zawo, nabakwaMthethwa neZulu lawo likaGodongwane, wabona abakwaMpanza nabakwaMahlaba nabasemaMbatheni beguqe phansi kwakhe, bekhothama bethi, 'Bayede!'" (p. 97). Zwide is that kind of man: he cares for nobody but himself and his own glory. His favourite daughter is only useful as a stepladder to greater power and glory for himself. Zwide's war against Godongwane was surely inevitable.

The Death of Dingiswayo

It is against this background, viz. the knowledge of Zwide's character, that the death of Dingiswayo is such a touching spectacle -- fit for the stage. One of Zwide's soldiers has mortally wounded Dingiswayo; he lies bleeding calling in turn for Jevuza, his beloved witch-doctor who saved him from his first stab wound, and Nobantwana his wife, his boyhood sweetheart, Zwide's own sister. Zwide is quickly

summoned to the scene. When Dingiswayo, who is already speechless, sees him, there is no hatred written on his dying face; it is as if he realizes that these are the workings of fate. He (Dingiswayo) tries to stretch a hand towards Zwide. Zwide rushes and takes his hand and supports him with the other. Zwide's words to the dying man are clear evidence of the fact that in him he sees no rival for power and glory (for indeed he is no longer one, as he lies dying there with his army defeated), he sees only his sister's dying husband, and he says to him, "Hhawu mkhwenyana, bengingakuqondile mina lokhu, yingozi Mthethwa, yingozi." Yes, this is a tragedy.

Plot and Character in Nje-Nempela

Defects in the Plot

Nje-Nempela has the worst plot-construction of Vilakazi's three novels. In his preface to the book ("Ibika") Vilakazi states, "Kulencwadi ngibhala indaba yothando lwensizwa nentombi Ukuyibhala kwami ngiyilumbanisa nodaba olukhulu lwempi ka Bhambatha kaMancinzaokaMancinza ngimbeke kulendaba ngoba ezinsukwini zanamhla siyakhohlwa yilabo abafa befela umqondo ongenakumbululwa muntu uma thina babhali abamnyama singawumisi phambi kwezinye izizwe, khona kuyothi noma sesafa kuthiwe sasizalwa ngamaqhawe." (p. 7). This is an admission by Vilakazi that the story of Malambule and Nomcebo forms the main plot of this novel -- a significant admission since it means that the Zulu Rebellion (Impi ka-Bhambatha") forms a sub-plot.

Vilakazi then gives a non-literary reason for including

the Zulu Rebellion in this novel. He says that his aim is to preserve this historical material for future generations to read so that they should remember the fallen Zulu heroes. Another aim is to present these Zulu heroes so that foreigners should understand their motives which drove them into taking the stand they took. In other words the main aim in including the Zulu Rebellion in this novel is to record history for patriotic purposes.

This is all very laudable, but does this historical matter fit into the construction of the plot of the novel? Does it form a sub-plot? Vilakazi himself uses the verb "lumbanisa" which means "place side by side" when he mentions the story of the Zulu Rebellion. He is, therefore, aware that he has not merged one incident into the other, to form one whole.

There is a difference between the way a historian and a novelist treat the same event. A novelist restricts himself to a particular point of view so that the reader sees the event as it affects or reveals characters in the novels. A historian, on the other hand, would try to give as many aspects of the event as possible in order to give a full picture of its historical significance. Thus with a novelist that bond of plot and character is maintained while no such bond is to be found in a historian's account.

One look at the main characters is sufficient to prove that there are two unrelated plots in this novel: the main characters of the first plot are Malambule, Nomcebo, Bhembesile and Maphulana, while the main characters of the second plot are Bhambatha, Chakijane, Sigananda and King

Dinizulu. Excepting for Malambule's brief and ignominious appearance in the Zulu Rebellion, the main characters of one plot do not feature in the other plot. These two plots therefore should not be in the same book, the first plot is the plot of the novel (on the author's submission) and the account of the Zulu Rebellion should be in some Zulu history book. In the following discussion of plot and character in this novel I am going to concentrate on the plot of Nje-Nempela.

The Main Characters

Nomcebo

At the beginning of the novel we meet Nomcebo as a simple and childlike character. She still races her younger brother, Zazini, to deliver her father's message to Malambule that he should not stray too far in this dangerous country. Malambule is surprised that at her age she does not fear accosting a strange man who is evidently still unmarried. Coming as he does from Barberton, where love is easy, Malambule does not suspect that beneath Nomkhosi's apparent simplicity lies a character with a firm moral basis. When she detects amorous overtones in his banter she gives him one steady gaze which quickly brings him back to his senses. In Barberton, of course, this banter would have evoked a coy smile or a giggle.

When, later on in the novel he courts her for the first time she is furious and with hot tears running down her cheeks she asks him, "Uma ungibuka nje uthi mina ngingowokuthanda wena? Wena ungubani? Uthi ngoba ulapha kwethu siku-

tholile udlula ngendlela bese uthi ngoba ugozobaliswe ngukugula, abadala bengekho wenake usuthola ithuba lokungeshela, khona lapha kwethu? Wena ungubani Nje-Nempela?" (pp. 42-43).

This outburst paralyzes and mystifies Malambule. He does not know that Nomcebo has weighed him and "found him wanting". He does not understand that she is asking him for his moral credentials for courting her.

Secondly, Nomcebo still clings to custom and she considers it an insult to her moral integrity to be courted at her home (young Romeos in the Zululand of the time customarily waylaid their Juliets on the way to/from the well or river, anywhere else but their homes. They only met them near their homes at night, when the girls had accepted them as lovers). But Malambule is fresh from Barberton, he has lost contact with Zulu custom. In Barberton the shebeens are the happy hunting grounds of the local miners and the shebeen-queens' daughters must be nice to the men lest their mothers lose customers.

Nevertheless Nomcebo loves Malambule (don't most Clarissa Harlowes find Richard Lovelaces a little irresistible?). On their second meeting -- far from her home -- she throws a coquettish challenge to him when she says, "Uyajabula uyahamba kusasa usuyobona abakini." (p. 57). He doesn't answer her directly; she persists, "Uyajabula." Then he starts courting her again -- which is just what she wants. When they are disturbed by Maphulana, Nomcebo vanishes, leaving in Malambule's hand her bead armlet which had fallen from her hand and which he had gallantly picked up to give

her. When a Zulu girl gives a man her bead ornament her English counterpart would simply say, "I love you too!"

There has always been some friction between Bhembesile's family and Nomcebo's. Bhembesile's family are not slow at discovering the connection between Malambule's departure and the disappearance of Nomcebo's bead armlet. They are very bitter that Malambule preferred Nomcebo to Bhembesile. In an attempt to eliminate this friction Nomcebo employs a stratagen more suited to the plot of a romance rather than a novel. It is inconceivable that Nomcebo (to hide her beauty which she feels is the main cause of the friction) could wear baboon-skins. In the first place there is the physical improbability of fitting the skins, head and all so that, "Yena uyozigqoka angabonakali lutho, Kuphela uyobuka ngazo izigqobe zamehlo emfene, aphefumule ngalo ikhala elide lemfene." (p. 75). Secondly, and more important, the baboon in Zululand is an animal closely associated with witchcraft; wizards and witches were known to go on their nefarious nocturnal missions mounted on these animals. Only qualified diviners and witch-doctors walked about wearing such skins. How could Nomcebo's parents possibly have allowed her to do this (if it were culturally possible for the thought even to enter her head)? We know Nomcebo to be a girl who clings to custom and tradition so this incident would be completely out of character for her. How Sishishili's messengers could have chosen her to become wife to his son (without seeing her face and form) is beyond me. This whole incident of baboon skins is, to me, a very clumsy attempt at "cleverness" by the author. It is a defect both in plot and character.

Nomcebo's deep love for Malambule is revealed in her confidence to Nomanzi, her bridesmaid. She tells her that she does not love Sishishili's son, her future husband, because the only man in her heart is Malambule. She has a premonition that she won't be Sishishili's son's wife for long. When she has finally been carried off to Malambule's home (after she has been Sishishili's son's wife for exactly 12 hours) and there is uncertainty about his safety and his whereabouts, she declares that she will never leave his home to marry someone else. Nomcebo truly loves Malambule and one forgives her for lying to Maloza, Malambule's sister, and saying, "Mina ngangingeke ngagana ngisho indodana kaSishishili, ukuhamba lokhu ngiya khona ngangiphekezela udadewethu lona owafayo uBhembesile. Into engangiyoyenza yayiyoba yisimanga ngoba kwakuyothi mhla ethi uza kwami ngimubhuqe ngesijula kuyasa ngemukile mina angisekho ngeduka nezwe." (p. 229). I don't believe a word she says but I admire her for her feeling and intention. She must not be judged as one would judge a witness giving evidence in a court case, but rather as a woman madly in love, talking sweet nonsense to the sister of her lover whom she is missing terribly.

Malambule

Malambule is not as strong a character as Nomcebo. His defection in the Zulu Rebellion is clearly spelled out in his character: he has lost touch with Zulu tradition (as we saw in his first attempt at courting Nomcebo), and he is a coward. Why does he send Zazini, Nomcebo's brother, to go and tell her that he loves her? (p. 26). Even the young boy (Zazini) is very annoyed to see such a coward and he answers

him, "Wena kawuzeshelili ngani yena?" (p. 26). When Malambule is called before the leaders of the Zulu Rebellion we learn, "....lapho uMalambule uvalo lwalungasamphethe kwase kuthi makawe phansi. Amadolo ayeseshayana...." (p. 142). When Malambule finally defects from the Zulu army to join the White army his rationalization about the Whites' power of detection which he uses as an excuse (pp. 179-182) is nothing short of high treason when the Zulus are at war against the Whites. He does well to flee when Mdlampisi, one of the loyal Zulu soldiers approaches him otherwise Nomcebo would have had a different husband.

Maphulana

Maphulana is witchdoctor and counsellor to Malambule and Nomcebo. He is the best suited for this role. At Nxumalo's home he is an adopted household fool ("isiphoxo") who assists with menial labour. In his youth, however, he had been one of King Cetshwayo's stewards (he fled after the Zulu War). He assumed the guise of a fool to avoid detection. He had courted Nomcebo's mother when she was a girl but she could not accept him as he had no property (how would he pay lobola?). How better could he rechannel his love for her except by becoming her servant, her daughter's and her son-in-law's counsellor and helper, finally acting their father when they leave for the urban areas? Maphulana is a wise old man (his marshalling of the expedition to "carry off" Nomcebo is sufficient proof), and he is a good witch-doctor (his "smelling out" of Nxumalo's family witch-doctor is proof of this).

The Minor Characters

Bhembesile's mother and Nomcebo's mother

The characters of Bhembesile's mother and Nomcebo's mother are clearly portrayed in this novel. Nomcebo's mother is concerned about Malambule's illness, she wishes that he gets well soon while Bhembesile's mother is not only indifferent she even suggests that he should be abandoned to his fate as his illness may be infectious. When in his delirium he says that he is not ill, and when he falls heavily after attempting to stand up, this is clear evidence to Bhembesile's mother that he is feigning this illness. She even expresses a fear that through this "feigned" illness he is shielding sinister motives. Nomcebo's mother knowing that Bhembesile's mother is saying all this out of sheer perversity, nurses Malambule until the crisis is over. The one's heartlessness and the other's motherliness are fittingly rewarded in Malambule's choice of future wife.

Malambule's brothers

The characters of Malambule's brothers are also well portrayed in this novel. Chithumuzi and Bangani are the hot-heads in the family while Qethuka and Masimini are cool-headed and thoughtful. When Malambule asks them to assist him in going to carry off Nomcebo, Chithumuzi -- hot-headed and impetuous -- suggests that they leave immediately but Qethuka wants to know how far Nomcebo's home is, and he tells them that Malambule cannot accompany them as he is to accompany their father to a meeting at Siganda's kraal. (This, of course, raises a number of problems: How will they find her home? How will they know her? etc., problems which never

entered Chithumuzi's head). When, on their way to carry off Nomcebo, they meet her wedding train (not knowing Nomcebo, they cannot guess that this is the group accompanying her to the wedding), Chithumuzi wants to challenge the men to a fight, it is the cool-headed Masimini who dissuades him by saying, "Qha, bafowethu leyondaba kayilungile senifuna ukuzithela ngamashwa, kodwa aniboni yini nokuthi bahamba nesangoma nasiya sifake izikhumba." (p. 100). While Maphulana has gone to send a message to Nomcebo (at Sishishili's home) that Malambule's brothers have come for her, Chithumuzi suddenly fears betrayal by Maphulana and he suggests an immediate attack on the home. Maphulana's timely return averts what would otherwise have been a critical situation.

When the more thoughtful Qethuka loses his head on seeing Zazini and his friend coming with Nomcebo and Nomanzi (in a bid to carry off a woman, the presence of her brother and his friend is a real hazard, this explains Qethuka's behaviour and attitude which, otherwise, would have been out of character for him), Chithumuzi says, "Wenzani Qethuka? Usuqamba ukulwa? Awuzubhekana nalensizwa yezizwe, uzobhekana nami uqobo lwami." (p. 162). Chithumuzi is impetuous to the end: When Malambule decides to leave home and go to the towns to seek a new life there, a bitter argument ensues. Chithumuzi's contribution to the argument is his decision to join Malambule and go to town with him.

Conclusion

Irreparable harm is done to the plot of this novel by the interpolation of the Zulu Rebellion. The story is gripping from the first page until page 28, when the events leading to

the Zulu Rebellion are introduced. From then onwards one has much difficulty in following the story as one wades through a maze of information which has nothing to do with the plot of the novel.

In the end the greatest disappointment is that Nomcebo, whom one has grown to love and respect, becomes wife to Malambule, a traitor ("imbuka" -- nothing more detestable in Zululand). She deserves much better, but do we always get what we deserve?

General Observations on Plot and Character in Vilakazi's Novels

Although a discussion of plot together with character is ideal in any discussion of a novel, it imposes certain restrictions. I have, for instance not touched on certain minor characters whose contributions have no significant bearing on the plot, just as I have not discussed certain incidents which shed no light on character. In this section I wish to touch on certain matters that did not fit into my general discussion and then end the section with a short comparative survey of plot and character in the three novels discussed.

Plot

Vilakazi sometimes does not pay sufficient attention to detail in the construction of his plots and this leads to certain inaccuracies creeping into the plots. On page 31 in UDingiswayo KaJobe we are told, "Bafika balala kwaQwabe kodwa kwathi ebusuku uGodongwane weqa iNanabuke (the White man) isalele, weqa kanye nesilwane sayo, nesihlangu sayo nokunye kokugqoka wayishiya iNanabuke ilele ubuthongo nabantu bayo." Vilakazi then describes how the Qwabe people killed this White man the next day. On page 197 Vilakazi reviews this

incident but now he says it was Dingiswayo (Godongwane) who killed the White man: "Ngenkathi ehamba nenanabuke waze wayibulala wayephuca zonke izinto zayo."

In Nje-Nempela there is some confusion as to the kind of bead ornament Malambule got from Nomcebo. In page 59 Vilakazi writes, "Kanti usebamba ubuhlalu bayo obabulenga engalweni," i.e. a bead armband, but in page 74 he writes, "kwathi futhi lapho amantombazana esebone ukuhlalu basentanenyeni kuNomcebo bungasabonakali ----" i.e. a bead necklace.

In Noma Nini we find the following statement on page 24 , "Umakhwatha lo wayengakabi nanzalo noma wayesemdala. Umfana wakhe wayesemncane kakhulu ---- nalona owayemthole kuNombonjane wayengakhombisi umqondo walutho. Ngakho-ke uNomkhosi uyena owayelusa". This clearly means that Nomkhosi was the eldest girl at home. In the middle of the next paragraph we learn, "Isigcino (uNomkhosi) waze wayithanda lemihlola, waqala ukuxoxa ngayo koDadewabo uNontula okunguyena nkosazana ka-Makhwatha." which now means that Nontula, and not Nomkhosi was the eldest girl at home.

Another defect in Vilakazi's plot-construction is found in his sequence of events. He follows up a certain series of events and then, on starting a new chapter, he takes the reader back to trace another series from where he had left it off. One example will suffice (as the three novels abound in this defect): In chapter 2 of UDingiswayo KaJobe we learn that Godongwane escapes from oYengweni; is helped by Jevuza and Dingiwe; bids Nobantwana farewell; reaches the Hlubi country and becomes a great warrior, and the chapter ends with Godongwane on his way back home. Chapter 3 takes us

back to Godongwane bidding Nobantwana farewell and then traces the events surrounding Dingiwe and Nobantwana.

The main defect in Vilakazi's plot-construction (including in his plots what should be omitted) I have already dealt with in my discussion of each novel.

Character

I find characterization in Vilakazi's novels very good. Even minor characters have some individuality (e.g. Malambule's brothers in Nje-Nempela.) It is surprising that Vilakazi never pairs a strong hero with a strong heroine. In Noma Nini Nomkhosi is a much stronger character than Nsikana, in UDingiswayo KaJobe there is hardly any comparison between Godongwane and Nobantwana, just as there is no comparison between Nomcebo and Malambule in Nje-Nempela.

On plot and character I rate uDingiswayo KaJobe first with Noma Nini a poor second (an atmosphere of lethargy pervades this whole novel as there are too few points of conflict), and Nje-Nempela last.

Conclusion

Vilakazi is considered the greatest Zulu author by many people. I agree that he is the greatest Zulu poet to date, but is he also the greatest novelist? I have heard many teachers of Zulu literature proclaim that Nje-Nempela is the best novel written in the Zulu language. One only has to study the plots of Vilakazi's novels to know that some other criterion is used by those who proclaim him the greatest Zulu novelist. This other criterion is diction. No Zulu author to date even approaches the poetic excellence of Vilakazi's diction. He picks the strings on the reader's heart as on an instrument when he is at his best. His

diction is at its best in some of the sections which should never have formed part of the plot (e.g. Chapter 7 in UDingiswayo KaJobe; Chapter 3 in Nje-Nempela). Let us take an example from Chapter 7 in UDingiswayo KaJobe. In the folk-tale "Inganekwane kaNcazane" an animal with a long tail and long ears comes to Ncazane daily (while she keeps birds away from the corn on her father's fields) and asks her to carry it to her little hut. On arrival at the hut the animal looks at the ground cooked mealies and pot full of sour milk (Ncazane's midday meal), looks at Ncazane, smiles, and then "Kothi lapho isilokazane sesimamathekile uNcazane abone kujuzama the emlo-nyeni waso, sibuze sithi, 'Ncajane', simbuke futhi, siphinde sithi, 'Ncajane, akabani lawamashi?'. Apendule uNcazane, 'Ngawami'. Sisondele kuye simuthi ncaka ngembebe, sithi, 'mush'ukuthi ngawakho, thana ngawami,' sisho sizikhomba sona esifubeni. Lapho uNcazane usehuthumela ukwesaba, sibuye sibuze sona isilokazane sithi, 'Ncajane, Ncajane, akabani lawamashi?'. Apendule uNcazane athi, 'Ngawakho'.

"Kube akashilo uNcazane sisuke isilokazane siqoshame phansi siphelelwe icala, sithathe udiwo nomcaba sikubeke phakathi kwemilenzana yaso sivube, sizikholise. Sidle, sidle, sidle, sibe-k'ethala size sikhothe nokhamba, bese simbuka uNcazane sithi, 'Kumnandi Ncajane!' UNcazane athule, aphelelwe amandla akohlwe ukuthi uzothini. Ulimi lwakhe ngenxa yokulamba lunamathele phezulu emankankaneni ----" (pp. 118-119). A novelist with such diction can get away with murder.

Finally, Vilakazi's novels are so good in diction and character that one wonders whether they couldn't be edited with a view to improving their plots. This would be simple enough, once permission is obtained, because it entails omission mostly, and in a few cases, abridgement.

Appendix IA synopsis of the plot of Noma Nini

Makhwatha, who is fleeing from Dingane, picks up an abandoned infant on the way. On reaching Mvoti he settles there and names this infant — a girl — Nomkhosi. She grows up with his children and she looks after his cattle. On meeting her, a boy from a nearby school always shouts his envy of her dog's proximity to her. Too young to know that this is a subtle Zulu way of making overtures to a girl, she asks him one day why he always shouts at her. He tells her that he is still too young to answer her and extracts a promise from her that she will wait for him and his answer: "Noma Nini".

He goes to work in Durban and she is employed by Rev. and Mrs Grout, who teach her how to read and write. She accepts Christianity and becomes a leading churchwoman. There is a leading churchman at Rev. Grout's and his name is Tomasi. Nomkhosi has not yet forgotten about Nsikana, the young man she promised to wait for, but now that he neither writes nor makes an appearance, and now that Tomasi is Rev. Grout's favourite she finally agrees to marry Tomasi.

Tomasi secretly courts Nomkhosi's half-sister, Ntombinjani and he is successful. He visits Sihlangusinye, a witch doctor, to obtain a love potion to retain Nomkhosi's love when he fears that her love for him is diminishing.

Nsikana, after surviving a robbery attempt in which he is brutally assaulted, has arrived home and he sends Nomkhosi a Christmas present. This present is an expensive silk head-cloth in which a slip of paper with the words "Noma Nini" is enclosed. Tomasi tries his best to make it impossible

for Nsikana and Nomkhosi to meet. Nsikana's half-brothers, jealous of him and his "new ways" try to have him killed but they fail.

Ref Grout unwittingly offers to assist Nsikana in gaining Nomkhosi and it is only his wife's good advice that pulls him out of the predicament: she advises that the problem of choice of husband be left to her family, according to Zulu custom. In the end Nontula, Nomkhosi's elder half-sister sways the balance in Nsikana's favour.

Appendix II

A Synopsis of the plot of U Dingiswayo KaJobe

Jobe, chief of the Mthethwa tribe lives in his kraal, Ebalungwini. He decides that a second royal kraal, o-Yengweni, be built and he places Nqola, his younger brother, in charge of the soldiers (among whom are Tana and Godongwane, Jobe's sons) living there.

On a hunting expedition Nqola is accidentally killed by Godongwane, but Nqola did not believe he had been accidentally stabbed and he said so before dying. Nqola's death is reported to Jobe by Nodunga who is sent back to Tana and Godongwane with a deadly threat.

Jobe lives in constant fear of aspirants to his throne who may take his life at any time. He then appoints a day on which to visit oYengweni and appoint the future chief of the Mthethwas. On the appointed day he arrives with two regiments and in the middle of the festivities he turns and strikes Tana with his knobkerrie and instructs his soldiers to finish him off. Another soldier tries to stab Godongwane but before he does so he is killed by Jevuza, Godongwane's

witch-doctor. Godongwane flees, but while he is jumping over the fence of the kraal a spear, aimed by one of Jobe's soldiers, pierces him in the back. He escapes with the spear in his back and hides in a neighbouring forest. Jobe's soldiers then attack all the soldiers of oYengweni.

Godongwane's sister, Dingiwe, discovers him in the forest the next day. She pulls out the spear, brings him food and, together with Jevuza she carries him away to Mbangambi's (her uncle) place. Jevuza nurses him there until he recovers, then he flees the country after bidding Nobantwana, his girl-friend, a tender farewell.

He lives for a few years under Bhungane where he becomes warrior, then he returns home in the company of some men who are guiding a certain white man heading for Delagoa Bay. On the way he robs this white man of his horse and gun, reaches home and kills Mawewe (his younger half-brother who had become chief after Jobe's death) and becomes chief of the Mthethwas. On ascending the throne he tells his people that he is no longer to be called Godongwane, he should be called Dingiswayo (the one who was banished). From this day onwards he is known as Dingiswayo kaJobe.

Among his wives is his childhood sweetheart, Nobantwana, who is now overshadowed by Zenzile, her half-sister whom he has also married. This leads to a war with Zwide, Nobantwana's brother, during which Dingiswayo dies.

Appendix III

A Synopsis of the plot of Nje-Nempela

Malambule, a traveller from Barberton who has been given shelter for the day at Nkominophondo's home in Dumbe,

is asked not to stroll too far away from the home as this place abounds in dangerous wild animals. Nomcebo, Nxumalo's daughter, is sent to call him back, when he sees her he falls in love with her.

Next morning he goes down to the river to wash, on his way back he contracts a local fever known as "gudluthukela". Bhembesile's mother and Nomcebo's mother nurse him, the former reluctantly. He asks Zazini to tell his sister, Nomcebo, that he loves her. After his assistance has been sought, Maphulana, who does menial labour at the Nxumalo's, arranges a meeting between Nomcebo and Malambule. When Malambule courts her, she asks him, "Wena ungubani Nje-Nempela?" When they meet a second time she "accidentally" leaves her bead-armlet with him (a sign of love).

Malambule recuperates and then leaves for home after presenting Nkominopho with a rug and promising Maphulana that he would come back for Nomcebo.

While he is gone the son to chief Sishishili arranges to marry Nomcebo and Bhembesile, her half-sister. There is rivalry and bad blood between the two families.

When Malambule reaches home he arranges that his brothers should come and "carry off" (take her away to be married with her consent, but without paying lobolo) Nomcebo. When they reach Dumbe they discover that she has already left to go and marry Sishishili's son. Accompanied by Maphulana they go to Sishishili's home, carry her off on the evening of the wedding day and leave for their home.

In the meantime Malambule, who had not accompanied them on this expedition, has defected from the Zulu army engaged in the Zulu Rebellion (1906). He joins the Whites and only returns home after the trial and banishment of King Dinizulu. He

returns with his father who is very ill and who dies on arrival at home. After his burial Malambule and his girl, Noncebo; Chithumuzi and his girl, Nomanzi; Maloza, Malambule's sister; and Maphulana leave home to seek a new life in the urban areas.