

THE STATE OF THE ZULU NOVEL  
IN THE POST WAR ERA WITH  
EMPHASIS ON C.T. MSIMANG'S NOVELS

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely children, Lesego, Neo and Realeboga; to my dearest mother, MaNtombi; and to my closest friend, Ntombi who have given me endless moral support especially during the most troublesome times in my life. I am very grateful to them all in many more ways than can be mentioned here.

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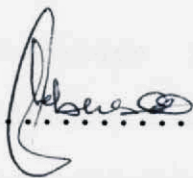
Finally, I owe much gratitude to Zodwa Dlamini, Margaret Mhlongo, Annah Sithole, and Sylvia Makete, for extending their patience when typing this work.

(iii)

## DECLARATION

I declare that:

- A. This dissertation is my own work;
- B. All the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references;
- C. This dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.

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## SUMMARY

This dissertation critically investigates two Zulu novels, Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni and Buzani KuMkabayi, written by C.T. Msimang.

The present work discusses the state of the Zulu novel in the Post World War era and its development from the pre-literate period to the present. This study provides an overview of the nature of literature and its relationship to the Zulu traditional culture and its society. A link between oral literature and written literature is made evident with reference to characterisation, theme and literary style. Various traditional customs and beliefs are illustrated in this work which serve to portray the hybrid character envisaged by this literature.

The major aspects of literature in discussion (character portrayal, theme and stylistics) are defined and discussed along with an anatomy of the sociological approach, literary techniques and devices available to writers for use in the interpretation of literature.

To conclude, we investigated the feelings of other African writers, how they relate in writing, the concept of "African Literature". Their literary views are looked at in relation to the historical development of European literature and other



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## CHAPTER I

### THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF ZULU LITERATURE

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

When we look at the manner in which the early literature of Western Europe emerged more than fifteen centuries ago, we notice two distinct patterns. In the areas such as Italy and Spain which were incorporated into the Roman Empire, the introduction of writing was a by-product of the Roman conquest. But in the areas such as England, Scandinavia and Germany where Roman penetration had not been as intense, writing was introduced not through military and administrative conquest, but as an instrument for the propagation of Christianity and the development of intellectual life. The same patterns determined the literary development of Black Africa under European colonial power. Where British authority was paramount, the literary use of indigenous languages was encouraged and eventually flourished. By contrast, the people of the areas ruled by France, Portugal, Spain and Italy hardly produced any writing in their own languages, all the literary energy was released in the languages of the conquerors (Gerard 1981:176 ff).

Literatures in South Africa do not begin with writing but have their origins in oral traditions of pre-literate

societies. This implies that before the advent of literacy in African societies there already existed a vast range of "Verbal Art", "Oral Tradition" or "Oral Literature", whichever term we choose refers to the true nature of African Literature (Bauman 1975:291).

Literacy refers to the people who have mastered reading and writing as a mode of communication. As we intimated earlier, orality and literacy are interrelated, and the effect of orality cannot be minimized at the expense of literacy. Literacy is, in fact, an extension of orality. People need to communicate ideas, and these ideas are communicated in terms of words which are linked together to formulate speech, the communicated ideas could then be converted into writing, and writing is an alternative way of communication. Literacy is therefore an alternative form of communicating ideas, learning to read, and to write.

Ong claims that the way we communicate affects the way we think. He says literacy changes the way we think, the way we express things, the way we understand things, the way we learn things and even the things we value to such an extent that "Writing restructures the consciousness". Ong further asserts that, "Once we become literate we internalise writing and it becomes part of our mind and affects the way

we think, even when we are not writing". He says that "Without writing the literate would not and could not think as it does, not only when it is engaged in writing but normally even when it is composing its thoughts in oral form" (Ong 1982:79).

In spite of claims that writing destroys the memory and weakens the mind, Moto, quoted by Ong says that "Literacy is crucial for the development of an individual socially, religiously, politically, and economically". He goes on to say that literacy enables us to think analytically, to develop sequential analysis and without this type of thought, study of sciences, languages, etc. would be impossible" (Ong 1982:80).

From the aforementioned statements or discussion it is important to note that people learn to communicate orally first, and that orality has an effect on literacy. The way we write stems from the way we speak. Orality therefore plays an important role in the development of literacy. Some literary scholars like Frielick (1984:201) suggest that when we study written forms of African literature we need to consider the oral forms that have played a part in shaping them. Orality and literacy are thus interrelated and the importance of orality should not be underestimated.

## 1.2 Missionary Activity

The history of Native education in South Africa is due entirely to the efforts of the Missionaries (White and Couzens 1984:60).

The prime function of Protestant Missionary Activity was to fight against the slave trade and slavery and to convert the heathens. The question of literacy, education and creative writing was secondary if not accidental (cf Janheinz 1968; Gerard 1981). However, for the missionaries to be able to spread the word of God to their converts, they had to familiarize themselves with the language of the Native inhabitants in order to reduce it to writing. Translators of scriptural texts began, followed by the composition of Christian hymns. The more gifted of the converted pupils were encouraged to attempt original composition. In the words of Gerard (1981:180) that is where modern African literature may truly be said to have begun: with Christian hymns [cf Ntsikana and Shembe]; with recordings of oral lore [cf Jacottet Books I & II].

The growth in the educational system was fostering a stronger sense of dignity and keener critical attitudes among the African elite it had created. As the years went by, a rift emerged between the African elites and the Missionaries. Missionaries became more and more suspicious

of writings that smacked of hostility towards white supremacy. The deterioration in the relationship between these two groups caught the attention of some people. The Foreign Mission Conference of North America obtained support from the Phelps Stokes Fund for a full inquiry into educational systems in Africa. While condoning the educational policy maintained by Protestant Missionaries, the Phelps-Stokes reports defined the importance of the African languages in far more comprehensive terms:

With full appreciation of the European language, the value of the Native tongue is immensely more vital, in that it is one of the chief means of preserving whatever is good in Native customs, ideas and ideals, and thereby preserving what is more important than all else, namely, Native self-respect. All peoples have an inherent right to their own language. It is the means of giving expression to their own personality, however primitive they may be. The processes of education must begin with characteristics of the people as they are and help them to evolve to their higher levels. No greater injustice may be committed against a people than to deprive them of their own language (Gerard 1981:183).

Interest in the study and promotion of African languages was soon to receive concrete implementation. In 1930 the International African Institute (IAI) launched an international competition for books written in African languages. A number of writers including Soga, Mqhayi, Bereng and Vilakazi were awarded prizes. In 1950, the conference of Missionary Societies launched the Margaret Wrong Memorial Fund Competition which also provided valuable encouragement to indigenous writing. Jolobe was the prize winner in 1957.

These were some of the main lines which shaped the formative years of indigenous writing in the lower sub-continent. When we move from this somewhat broader but necessary introduction, to a narrower focus, we ask the question: What was happening to Zulu written literature during these early stages of emergence and development?

### 1.3 Beginnings of Modern Zulu Literature

It is generally agreed, says Ntuli, that modern Zulu literature was born in 1930 with the publication of the first novel, Insila kaShaka by J. Langalibalele Dube (cf Gerard 1981, Janh 1968, Ntuli 1981). This literature is about 60 years old now. Most of the prominent early novels in Zulu were written about historical figures, especially

the Zulu Kings. These biographies covered the whole life history of each king.

Curiously enough, although Zululand had been subjected to British influence and control at a comparatively late date and after prolonged resistance which was forcibly crushed in 1906, the first piece of prose fiction to be printed in English by a black writer in the Union was a novella, ambitiously entitled *An African Tragedy* (1928), by the Zulu author R.R.R. Dhlomo (1901-1971). This, like Sinxo's Xhosa novels, gave a sombre picture of African life in the city slums; but it was also highly critical of such traditional customs as the bride-price. Perhaps because of Dube's example, Dhlomo's further writing was entirely in Zulu, and consisted in historical novels about the leaders who had presided over the rise and decline of Zulu power in the nineteenth century: *U-Dingane* (1936), *U-Shaka* (1937), *U-Mpande* 1938), and later *U-Cetshwayo* (1952) and *U-Dinizulu* (1968). In the 1940s, he reverted for a while to his earlier inspiration with *Indlela yababi* ("The evil way", 1946), a dramatic narrative of life in the African townships of Johannesburg.

His younger brother, H.I.E. Dhlomo (1903-1956) was also one of the early black South African writers who wrote in English. *The Girl Who Killed to Save* (1936), staging a

crisis that almost destroyed the Xhosa nation in 1857, is the first play in English by a black writer. *The Valley of a Thousand Hills* (1941) is a long elegiac narrative in the Victorian-Romantic manner, contrasting the harmony of nature with the cruelty of colonial society.

In spite of the historical interest and popular success of these works by Dube and the Dhlomo brothers, the most gifted Zulu writer to emerge prior to the second World War was Benedict W. Vilakazi (1906-1947), a linguist and a keen student of traditional poetry, who, like his Xhosa contemporary Jordan, had graduated at the University of South Africa. The best of his work is contained in two volumes of poetry, *Inkondlo kaZulu* ("Zulu Songs," 1935) and *Amal'ezulu* ("Zulu Horizons," 1945), where after experimenting none too successfully with European poetic forms, he returned to the traditional manner of oral art which he applied to modern topics, including a moving and justly renowned poem about the plight of the black miners.

Vilakazi also brought a noteworthy contribution to the development of the novel in Zulu. For at the time when Dube and Dhlomo were initiating the historical novel in Zulu, Vilakazi published *Noma Nini* ("For ever," 1935), which, although it takes place in the late nineteenth century, was the first Zulu novel to deal with the moral and psychological problems involved in the inner clash between the new Christian ideals of conduct and the old

"pagan" mores. In this, and in Vilakazi's other two novels, *UDingiswayo kaJobe* ("Dingiswayo, Son of Jobe," 1939) and *Nje nempela* ("Truly, Indeed," 1949), the Zulu critic J.S.M. Khumalo has recently objected to faulty character depiction and plot construction. But although it may be true to claim that the flow of the narrative is encumbered by an undue amount of historical and anthropological information, it is also quite possible to the author that this was the core of the message, which he tried to convey more attractively and more efficiently by embodying it in some love story derived, perhaps, from fashionable western interest in such matters (Gerard, 1981:pp 200 ff).

#### 1.4 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF C.T. MSIMANG.

Christian Themba Msimang was born at Ethaleni Mission in the district of Nkandla, Zululand on 25 October 1944. He received his primary education in Zululand and went on to obtain Junior and Secondary Certificates through the Transafrica Correspondence College.

He continued his studies through UNISA, obtaining a BA Degree in 1974 and an LLB in 1978. He obtained both his Hons BA and MA with distinction. His MA Dissertation, entitled *Folktale influence on the Zulu novel*, has been published by Via Afrika. He obtained his D Litt et Phil Degree in 1989. In his thesis, *Some phonological aspects*

of the Tekela Nguni dialects, Themba Msimang initially traces the history of these enigmatic speech forms, some of which are found also in the traditionally non-Nguni areas. He has used the findings of his extensive and thorough research in the field and in the available literature to prove, by means of interdialectal phonology, that all the Tekela dialects are off-shoots at various stages in the past, of one Tekela language. The work is at the same time a natural point of departure for students interested in the pre-history of the languages of the South Eastern Zone of Africa.

After working as a domestic servant for eight years, he was employed by Werkmans Attorneys in Johannesburg as a filing clerk in 1970. When he commenced his law studies they appointed him as an articled clerk. In January 1977 he was appointed by UNISA as a Professional Assistant in African Languages and was promoted to an Associate Professorship in 1990, and Full Professorship in January 1992.

Prof Msimang serves on various language and cultural bodies. He is Chairman of the Zulu Subject Committee of the Department of Education and Training as well as member of the Combined Subject Committee and the Examinations Board of the same department. He is Chairman of STANON (an HSRC Project on Standard and Non-Standard Languages in South Africa) and Chairman of SAFOS (Southern African Folklore Society). He also sits on the following

committees: ACCLLS (Advisory Committee for Comparative Linguistics and Literature under the auspices of LITERATOR); interdisciplinary congress on Values, chaired by Prof J J Burden, Zulu Language Board, Bureau for Zulu Language and Culture, USIBA Zulu Writers' Guild and a member of ALASA. He serves on the SABC panel of adjudicators for both Radio and Television Artes awards since 1986 (for radio) and 1991 (for TV). He is an examiner for a number of institutions for Standard 10 and postgraduate studies. Conducts practical Zulu classes as from 1982 for the Department of Continued Education at Unisa.

He has written a number of articles and reviews, as well as a number of books on Zulu literature. He has edited and translated several publications. His novel, *Kusadliwa Ngoludala*, won the B W Vilakazi award in 1984; and his novel, *Buzani KuMkabayi*, won the De Jager-HAUM overall literary prize in 1982 and the B W Vilakazi award in 1986. Prof Msimang received the coveted Vilakazi award once again in 1988 with his book *Izimbongi Izolo Nanamuhla I* (Poets - Yesterday and Today) which is an evaluation of Zulu poetry from 1935-1980 with an anthology. In July 1991 at a biennial ALASA conference at the University of Port Elizabeth he received the Literature Shuter & Shooter Prize for studies in African Literature with his article: *Reception of Shaka Zulu: An evaluation of its Cultural and Historical Context*.

Besides history and law his other favourite subjects are folklore, sociolinguistics, Zulu literature and linguistics. His *Akuyiwe emhlahlweni* and *Izulu Eladuma eSandlwana* were serialised by the Zulu service of the SABC as radio plays. He has delivered papers on literature and linguistics at local and overseas congresses.

On 1 August 1992 Msimang was appointed to the post of head of the Department in African Languages at UNISA.

## CHAPTER II

### 2. DEVELOPING AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

"All art is propaganda, though not all propaganda is art",  
Chinua Achebe (Achebe in Irele, 1981:1).

In these words Achebe quoted by Irele asserts that art is often concealed by theories which fail to take account of the fundamental fact that all forms of literature must have a reference to human life and consciousness if it has to have any value. Achebe also signifies in this statement that "African writing has its relations to the Western World, which has crossed our historical path and modified the realities of our life as well as our entire perspective upon the world". He says that the imaginative writing in particular directly represents the concrete facts of our collective experience in the form of images. The symbolic projection expressed in our literature reveals a means of drawing the experience of the people more fully and intimately so as to comprehend its meaning for now and for the future. But according to Achebe African modern literature has served to indicate to us "Where we have been beaten by the rain" (Irele, 1981:2).

From Achebe's latter statement Irele in The African Experience in Literature and Ideology, expresses that selecting an adequate approach to the study and critical interpretation of African literature is not easy because one has to first postulate a specific character of this literature. Of importance again is that our literature needs to be related to other areas of literary expression and should also have significance for human experience. Our literature of Africa is for these reasons connected to the total configuration of life and experience on our continent. This means that our African literature is compassionate to the African cultural practices and to the colonialist - social relations of this country (Irele 1981:9).

In choosing the relevant approach to the critical study of African literature we need to specify the nature of this art. In his attempt to define African literature, Irele says that the term "African" corresponds to a geographical notion, but in practical terms, it includes those other areas of collective awareness that have been determined by ethnic, historical and sociological factors, and all these factors affect and express themselves in our literature. Related to certain aspects that are intrinsic to literature, African literature involves a consideration of aesthetic modes in their intimate correlation to the cultural and social structures which determine and define the expressive schemes of African peoples and societies

(Irele 1981:10).

Irele's definition expresses what other writers like Iyasere say, "African literature should expound and uphold African norms and values which form the cultural framework in which the African writer casts his compositions" (Iyasere 1975:107). Other scholarly critics like Msimang also maintain that a fair assessment of the African work of art is the one that takes cognisance of the cultural context which is reflected in such a work reflecting the people's experiences on their environment (Msimang 1986: 1).

Considering the essential force of African literature - its reference to the historical and experiential - we therefore have to consider which means of approach can be adequately applied to the critical study of the body of literature that relates to the history and experiences of African peoples and societies.

As it was stated in the introductory paragraphs, modern African literature first developed from oral tradition and came under intrinsic and Western inspiration. Our literature became accustomed to certain characteristics due to colonialism and the influence of Western tradition. Despite the fact that African scholars were aware of intrinsic values and norms contained in oral tradition, they also had to contend with a number of approaches to

literature, universally. However, various South African scholars made the suggestions of the need for an African viewpoint and furthermore highlighted the descriptions of the basis of African features of literature.

African scholars were faced with the problem of presenting their literatures in foreign languages like English, French and Portuguese. This issue was raised in their theoretical works where their views developed due to misunderstanding of non-African scholars who misinterpreted the inherent culture of their literature. As a result, there were factors which hindered the development of an African theory of literature, viz.

- there was no total agreement concerning the concept "African Literature".
- African literature was used by some scholars as a platform for political aspirations and assertion of their African heritage,
- Western critics were intently criticized for their "biased" outlook towards African literature (Swanepoel 1990:49).

Various approaches whose derivation is from African traditions and contemporary poetics head for a convergence of values. Regarding this view, other approaches which have surfaced are sociological, structural, mythological and Marxist (Swanepoel 1990:50).

The literary approach which will form the basis of this discussion is the sociological approach which represents a synthesis from Amuta and Irele.

## 2.2 The Sociological Approach

Amuta in The Theory of African Literature insists that the literary criticism that would become a major enterprise in enquiring relevance to contemporary African existence is the one that encompasses the socio-economic, political, and ideological contradictions which define the life and historical experiences of the African people. Such an approach must form the basis of a new and more functionally relevant theoretical approach to African literary discourse. In his words Amuta declares that :

African literature and its criticism testify to the historical contradictions that define the African situation. In order to resolve these contradictions in the direction of progressive change, literary criticism must be predicted on a theoretical outlook that couples cultural theory back to practice.

In this respect, literary theory and practice must form part of the anti-imperialist struggle, thus demystifying literary criticism and reintegrating it into the social experience and practice of which literature itself is very much

part (Amuta 1989:7). Roland Barthes on the other hand declares that: "All criticism must include in its discourse ... an implicit reflection on itself; every criticism is a criticism of the works and a criticism of itself. In other words, criticism is not a table of results of a body of judgements, it is essentially an activity, i.e. a series of intellectual acts profoundly committed to the historical and subjective existence ... of the man who performs them" (Amuta 1989:12).

With this theoretical conception of the nature of criticism, Amuta sees criticism of African literature as a product and process of active interrogation of human sociality and its cultural manifestations. Fundamentally he says, a series of critical acts in a society should be analyzed along a diachronic paradigm. This implies that criticism does have a history, i.e. specific trends in social and cultural criticism are included, they may become dominant and fade away because of specific and determinate historical causes. Literary criticism thus derives from an instinct that dates back the existence of the literary text or the literary event (Amuta 1989:13).

Amuta's views are in line with Irele's whom we discuss presently.

It is Irele's view that the African is transforming into something new and that the African literature is expounding into a new key of expression. This view is being used to clearly criticize modern African literature. Irele further goes on to say that new writers must first consider the imaginative traditions in Africa in order for them to do justice to the interest and value of African literature. The sociological approach should basically take into account "everything within our society which has informed the work". Irele stresses that "African criticism involves a process where the difference that marks the two frames of reference of this literature imposes upon the critical function of those principles worked out in Western tradition". He further continues to say that modes of sensibility in African literature come from the African background where language makes a distinct social reality (Irele 1971:22).

From this point of view Irele emphasizes a question of "universal relevance of literary expression which is involved in the judgement of our new writing which can be viewed from an African perspective. He asserts that African works are closer to a reality and to an experience of which an African feels being party to and therefore engages his responses in a way that is both direct and immediately real" (Irele 1981:4). Irele further asserts that "meaning" in our modern expression also refers to the ideological writing which must be taken along with the

imaginative literature for a full understanding of the historical development of our modern African consciousness. He emphasizes that the main focus of our imaginative and ideological expression in its development so far has been upon the colonial experience.

Therefore value and meaning can only be evoked in a work of art by the people who embody the social values and moral codes of that particular culture and tradition. The tradition "ukugingisa igabade" (eliminating by placing a lump of earth in the throat) exercised by the Zulu in Buzani kuMkabayi, was universally relevant at the time when Mkabayi and Mmama were born. The people who understood the meaning and consequences of this culture were those associated with the context of their life and experience of the human tradition concerned. In Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni the tradition of "Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni" (divination) was also relevant to the people who exercised the culture of that particular society in the sense that a non-African may not adequately appreciate the central conception of this practice.

A literary work, according to Irele, need not be dissociated from its reference to a particular context of life and experience, and of existential awareness in order to have a general human relevance and application. The recognition of the greatness in a writer is thus a matter of positive conditioning, relative to the historical and

cultural circumstances in which his work is operative. Msimang's novel exemplifies what Irele refers to, that social values should be embodied by the African works. In both novels, Msimang propagates the notion of polygamy which is a tradition practised among Africans. He (Msimang) creates in his works awareness to the reader as to how Zulus interact in the institution of marriage. Both novels depict the true African tradition - in the polygamous setting conflict is the main ingredient, with the heir to the Zulu throne the major cause of conflict.

Achebe, quoted by Irele, says that the writer's expression must not only capture the flow of experience but must also propose a broader vision of life that transcends the immediate situation to which his work refers. He expresses that true art contains within it a profound human implication. On this note Achebe assumes that African literature has been conscientised by the Western tradition to an extent that it has become today so central to the world's scheme of values that only its categories and modes of apprehension can properly be thought of as "universal". He says that what we have already designated in our mind and by our modern literature is the need to confront the practical effects of this assumption - effects we have experienced from our own African tradition. Achebe, therefore, believes that modern African literature has initially presented itself as a challenge to the pervasive spirit of imperialism (Irele 1981:2).

In my view both Msimang's novels present what Achebe regards as the human import which is sometimes denied to African literature on account of what is limited reference to the African environment. I strongly maintain that these novels express the ruling class system of the Zulus before the emergence of the colonial government where the African experience is portrayed. Mphahlele, quoted by Lewis Nkosi in Fiction by Black South Africans also reveals his awareness of the nature of South African experience when it has to be contained in an artistic form. Mphahlele says that "some South African writers portray in their work the over-melodramatic nature of the political situation and the barrenness and infertile nature of tradition. He further expresses that some South African writers consider racial theme as the "main theme" whereas prudent writers reveal the depth and richness of African experience". In his assertion Mphahlele believes that writers should move in the direction of saying something positive about African experience in South Africa instead of writing as though everything the Africans did in this country was a reaction to white oppression (Beier 1982:223).

In view of Mphahlele's comments, Msimang's works depict the African comprehensive image of classical tradition in terms of its relationship to the social determination. His work (Msimang) has a relationship to social systems and values within the total culture of the traditional world. For example, a number of classical traditions are expressed in

- both his novels :
- "Ukugingisa Igabade". " ... Akekho phakathi kwalamawele engizomgingisa igabade. Elami lithi kanginaye umntwana engizomgingisa igabade, uMkabayi noMmama bazophila bobabili (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:11). This is a tradition among Zulus that when twins were born one of them was killed by having a lump of earth placed in his or her throat. It was believed that if this was not done, someone in the family would die (Krige 1950:75).
  - "Ihlambo" Safika isikhathi sokukhipha inhlambo leNdlunkulu ... kwalahlwa izagila, kwadilizwa inzilo ... (Buzani KuMkabayi 1982:25). "Ihlambo" is a ceremonial washing of spears which takes place a month after the slaughter of the funeral goat. The "Ihlambo" beast is killed and eaten with "white medicines" to cleanse the people from the defilement of death and to show the end of the mourning period (Krige 1950:167).
  - "Umhlahlo" "Nami mfowethu ngeke ngivume ukuba umuzi kababa uphelele phambi kwami ... Ngakho-ke khuluma kahle nendlovukazi yakho ungasitsheli ukuthi iyenqaba ngoba thina sonke ngazwi linye sithi akuyiwe emhlahlweni!!" (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:116). ("Umhlahlo) is a tradition practised by Zulus to detect and punish the sorcerer. Witchcraft is looked upon as the most terrible crime by the Zulus, and as such cannot be tried by

judicial systems. In a case of witchcraft, there is no trial, but "a smelling out - ukunuka" in which the doctor uses his occult powers to find the culprit, or some infallible ordeal is undergone by the suspected person (Krige 1950:225).

Irele, therefore, emphasises that African literature should be presented for African critics and that there is a need for a serious and intelligent approach which will presuppose a minimum level of intellectual preparation, the acquiring of an adequate measure of knowledge, and the application to the task of critical interpretation (Irele 1971:21).

In Dr Leavis's words quoted by Irele, he declares that :

Literature is not the isolated work, but a complete whole, a movement that implies a living tradition. Literary history has the function of bringing clear to us literary tradition in its stretch back to the oral, and its forward movement as inscribed within the new written expression (Irele 1981:15).

Irele, therefore, says that if the principal benefit of literary history is to place a body of texts into perspective as literature, then the interpretive role is designated as literary criticism. He further says that the introspective method implied in criticism therefore,

enables us to envisage the inner reality of the work through a structure of words and meanings, and the human import is apprehended through that reality. He affirms by saying that if criticism is a valid activity one is entitled to a personal view of its purpose - we need to go beyond the text itself in order to reconstitute its total meaning, its profound significance, and its human significance (Irele 1981:16).

Irele concludes by saying that there are four different ways in which we can envisage a sociological approach to literature :

- We can have a sociology of literary production - this is the organisation of literary artists. This kind of work is not distinguished from literary history, it is synchronic in nature.
- We can have content analysis of literary works in a sociological perspective - in African literature this work refers to culture, tradition and society.
- The third kind of sociology of literature is the one which attempts to correlate forms and themes with moments of social production and consciousness.
- The fourth possibility according to Irele, is not "sociological" in any methodological or technical sense,

but it implies a strong awareness of the social implications of literature. This approach tends to substitute literary criticism for social theory, it is based on a strongly articulated social theory - this is literature with a vital current of feelings and of values, and have the responsibility for maintaining the moral health of the society.

Irele anticipates that the sociological perspective with content analysis of literary works would become a major enterprise in acquiring relevance to contemporary African existence, and that it is this literary criticism that would assume a wider social and cultural significance (Swanepoel 1990:52).

In his own words Irele declares that,  
"the question of an adequate approach to the criticism of African literature can probably never be settled to any degree of satisfaction in such a way as to compel universal and total agreement on one point of view. No single approach is adequate for literature is by nature irreducible to any sort of common measure". By this statement Irele implies that literature cannot be seen as an object of study which expresses the lived experiences of peoples only, but it is involved in the responses to the facts of human existence and

intervenes in those areas of experience where we assume consciousness of our situation with regard to others and to the world. Any kind of discussion of literature therefore, implies a responsiveness to the text through a unique structure of signs and meanings, and to those areas of experience, feelings, attitudes and insights - which that structure evokes to take on significance (Irele 1981:24).

African literature has to be apprehended in its complex resonances - it has to be integrated into a cultural whole which situates the aesthetic event within the living context of the historical (Irele 1981:24).

To some people African literature means several things :

- To some it is a tool for the literate African's attribute of the essence of this cultural heritage - an assertion and at times an imposition of the contents and excellence of a Black culture on a white dominated world.
- To others African literature means "a new literature of the world" with its authentic and original genres, themes, and messages.
- To a few, it is simply a political document of protest against the assumptions of colonialism and imperialism as

they relate to the world of the Black man.

- To other people, African literature in all its divergences represents a mere appendage to British or French literature since most of the African writers write chiefly in English or French (Emenyonu in Irele 1981:1).

To Emenyonu, as quoted by Irele, the literary world was not prepared for the emergence of African writing when it did. Critics at that time knew little or nothing of the existence and the depth of oral literature in Africa, and therefore, little or nothing of the true roots of written African literature. Some of the critics were gaining their first insight into the African social scene, and approached African writing for its sociological aspect only, rather than its literary interest. Criticism of African literature therefore, centred around the discovery of the degree of new information on African primitive ways which each subsequent work reveals. The African novel of the second half of the twentieth century was regarded as simply a sociological document. Emenyonu asserts that literary criticism as a genre had no place in pre-colonial Africa, where the best qualified and reliable critics were indeed the public itself. African novel was then dichotomised into the traditional or oral, and the modern, that is, written literature by some university. Some critics from college departments wanted to see in African literature a steady source for the ethnographic data of the "old Africa

discovered. They wanted to see African literature as a cohesive piece of study which is made more interesting by the changes that it undergoes in its complexion and emphasis as a result of the cultural, historical and social circumstances which act on its existence, because they believed that the fusion of ancient and modern genres would not be difficult to explain (Emenyonu in Irele 1981:5).

Lewis Nkosi expresses similar sentiments with Emenyonu that in Black fiction it is impossible to detect any significant and complex talents which respond with both the vigour of the imagination and sufficient technical resources to the problems posed by conditions in South Africa. He asserts that Black fiction has renounced African tradition without showing itself capable of benefiting from the accumulated example of modern European literature. He exclaimed that: "nothing stands behind the fiction of Black South Africans - no tradition, whether indigenous or alien". He further says that South African writers seem to be totally unaware of their most compelling innovations, they merely "tell stories" or attempt to solve problems to which European practitioners have responded with great technical originality and sustained vigour. Nkosi emphasizes that writers should structure their books so as to show dedication to a superior form of realism which succeeds partly because the writer is alive to the fact that reality itself is elusive to the process of time (Beier 1982:221-223).

Focusing on what had been said based on the character of African literature and its literary criticism, Priebe declares that European and American critics who discovered African writing written in English, were interested in the Africanity of African literature. They wanted to know what made it different from their own literature. The fact that African literature uses language and forms from Europe, they suspected that something indigenous, traditional and authentically African must have been infused in African literature. They then postulated that studies of African writing are often represented by notions such as "traditional folklore", "oral poetry" or "ritual drama". These "traditions" were thought to have exercised some kind of influence on the conventions of Western literature. They then transform and reshape the smooth surface of recognized form. From then, African literature was presented primarily in terms of its hybrid character, and much effort was devoted to locating the indigenous, traditional elements. This procedure led to the invention of evolutionary sequences, namely, there was an emergence of traditional masquerade theatre, the modern novel somehow "had its roots in the folktale", titles like "From oral art to written poetry" were common. Priebe strongly suggests that there should be a link between a text and its social context (Priebe 1988:xii).

CHAPTER III

3. CONFRONTING MSIMANG'S CHARACTERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The critical study of African Art, according to Priebe, should be confronted from an ethical consciousness that leads us into the societal structures of African life and proceeds in a realistic, linear and historical manner, and should reveal the depth and breadth of strategies open to the individual and society for coping with reality. He argues that African art is based on two-dimensional realism - it is didactic and expresses all ethical practices (Priebe 1988:48).

In this study, Msimang's novels will be studied in terms of the rhetoric of realism the writer employs in relation to the relationship he sets up between his work and his society. Msimang's novels bear a close resemblance, in certain respects, to oral narrative tales, especially those of the Zulu and other Nguni people. The resemblance is most noticeable in the conception and execution of plots, themes, conflicts and their resolutions, and in character portrayal. From this view, Msimang like other novelists, namely, Nyembezi, Vilakazi and Ntuli etc. believes that some of the characteristics of oral narrative tales have found their way into their writings to indicate some

continuity between Zulu oral literature and modern written literature. In this dissertation Msimang's novels Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni and Buzani kuMkabayi will be studied focusing on character delineation, depiction of themes and stylistic modes.

## 3.2 CHARACTER PORTRAYAL

Portrayal of characters like the villain, historical characters and female characters will form the basis of this chapter. Because several novelists express different views in depicting characters, it is worth mentioning some of their views in this regard:

Character portrayal in the work of art refers to the contrasting and classifying of characters according to relationships and role in a story. Character appraisal also implies discussing the depth or flimsiness of the presentation of the character's personal nature (Maphike 1991 : 5).

Shaw states that the creation of images of imaginary persons in a work of art is called character portrayal. In this sense Shaw refers to character delineation as a sum of techniques employed by an artist in representing characters in a literary work of art so that such characters are perceived by the reader as persons endowed with moral and

dispositional as well as physical qualities (Shaw 1976 : 51)

Chatman argues that character delineation is the depiction of clear images of a person, his actions and manner of thought and life. A man's nature, environment, habits, emotions, desires instincts - all these make his important people clear to us through a portrayal of these elements (Chatman 1978 : 107).

From the above affirmations of character portrayal it is apparent that physical actions, traits, thought and speech are essential elements of a character.

As it has already been indicated that the birth of the imaginative literature in Zulu is inextricably bound up with missionary enterprise, modern African literature is seen as partly an offshoot of European literature, in so much that the vernacular writing inevitably reflects European influence. Some African writers have therefore introduced Western genres into their own creative tradition. Msimang is one of the non-conformist in this regard, he believes that in order to be convincing, the imaginary persons must be grounded in reality. By this he implies that characters must be rooted in their own "tradition" (Msimang 1986 : 99)

Parallel to Msimang's notion, Ntuli, one of the Zulu

novelists, asserts that many earlier novelists based their novels on historical characters in which Zulu kings featured prominently. Outstanding writers like Dhlomo, Vilakazi and others, wrote biographies on Zulu chiefs or kings. Another popular historical character among Zulu writers is the villain. A villain is a character who is created with the express purpose of bringing disharmony among his fellow characters. Functionally the villain may be regarded as an antagonist, because his actions are directed against those of the protagonist (Van Rooyen 1984:142).

Msimang argues that the villain is an antagonist and is second only to the protagonist. Both the hero and the villain are primary characters. The villain is usually more bad than good. He features in the story with the purpose of opposing the very interests the hero is trying to promote. He constantly puts obstacles in the way of the hero. This helps to intensify and generate suspense and tension, and the plot becomes more dynamic. A villain may be a single character or a group of characters (Msimang 1986:104).

### 3.3 THE PORTRAYAL OF THE VILLAIN

MSIMANG, C.T. Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni

### 3.3.1 THE BACKGROUND OF THE STORY

This novel is a social and a didactic novel which is about the problems envisaged in a polygamous setting. It centres around the conflict between Sigodo's wives. Sigodo is a respectable man who has three wives through customary marriage. His wives are: MaSibisi "iNdlunkulu" (chief hut in a polygamous homestead), MaNzuza "iKhohlo" (wife of the left-hand house) and MaMkhize "iQadi" (wife of the right-hand house).

MaSibisi is portrayed as the villain of the story who is in a conflict situation with "Ozakhwabo" (the co-wives) in the entire homestead at eGugwini. She is also involved in a clash with Sigodo's younger brother, Jamela, the chief induna; Makati, her uncle; Ntombini, her younger sister; Xulu, the family's traditional doctor and later with Gendeni, her bosom friend. MaSibisi has a problem. She does not bear baby boys. She is jealous of her co-wives because both had given birth to boys. She believes that MaNzuza and MaMkhize are bewitching her. Her friend, Gendeni, advises her to seek help from Zangaza, the corrupt "witchdoctor".

Zangaza gave MaSibisi a deadly poison that would be mixed with "Umlaza" (sour milk) and be given to MaNzuza's son. Unfortunately, Ncengani, MaSibisi's beloved daughter, drank the poisoned "umlaza" and died instantly, the whole

district of Mfongosi was shocked by Ncengani's unceremonious death. The whole family decides that "Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni" (divination is the solution) to consult the diviner who will unravel the cause of Ncengani's death. MaSibisi disapproves and flatly refuses to go and Sigodo respects her feelings.

MaSibisi did not stop her attempts to kill MaNzuza and MaMkhize's sons. She went again to Zangaza to seek more "muthi". Zangaza was shocked by MaSibisi's vengeful behaviour. He thought she would stop after killing her own daughter. Zangaza on the other hand wanted to prove that he is the most powerful "inyanga". He gives MaSibisi "unonsusana" (a deadly poison). MaSibisi was fortunate this time. The two boys were affected by the muthi, but did not die. The situation at eGugwini homestead was such that Sigodo was forced to resign from work to solve his family problems. There was no other way to solve the existing problems except to go to "Emhlahlweni" as suggested by his family and relatives. MaSibisi and Zangaza were revealed at "Emhlahlweni" by the most powerful diviner Simbo. MaSibisi could not bear the exposure. She jumped into the river and drowned.

### 3.3.2 THE VILLAIN

The villain has the folk narrative influence in its portrayal, therefore the morphological approach used by

Propp and Dundes will form part of the tools by which the villain in Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni will be examined. The intention of applying this theory is to show that some of the characteristics of oral narrative tales have found their way into the writings of modern writers, like Msimang, and to indicate some continuity between Zulu oral and modern written literature. Valdimir Propp did his epoch-making work on the structure of Russian tales as early as 1927. In his book, The Morphology of the Folktale, Propp shows a maximum of thirty one units sequentially extracted from the large number of Russian tales he studied. He termed these units "Functions" since they constitute the acts of dramatic personae of the tales. He defines functions as follows :

Functions of characters serve as a stable constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled. They constitute the fundamental components of a tale (Nondo 1980:6).

Nondo declares that in terms of the above definition, while the characters in the tale vary, their functions are constant. Dundes adopted Propp's method. While studying American Indian tales, he found out that these were made up of morphological units similar to those discovered by Propp. He called Propp's "functions", motifemes, mainly to establish some relationship between this term and motif, a

term used to denote the actual items or bricks that build tales. The novelist, Msimang, applies this theory to depict the functions of a villain similar to those of folktales. Msimang portrays MaSibisi as a villain. Below are the defined motifemes to be employed in this character delineation :

### 3.3.3 VILLAIN GENRE TALE MOTIFEMES

INITIAL SITUATION : Introduction of main characters and their initial conditions.

LACK : A need, a want by one or more characters. The statement explaining or implying a lack is normally made in the introductory remarks. This motivates the character(s) affected to action he or she tries to get what is lacking. This generates movement much like the motoric moment in any modern genre.

ABSENCE: An intensified form of absence is represented by the death of parents.

FALSE FRIENDSHIP :

The villain, through pretence gains the friendship of one or more dupes.

CONTRACT:

An implied or overt agreement takes place between the friends. It is about some course of action.

INTERDICTION:

A prohibition, implicit or explicit, binding the contracting parties. A custom may be an interdiction.

VIOLATION:

The interdiction is almost invariably broken. The one restrained does exactly what she/he has been instructed not to do. Violation does not necessarily follow an open interdiction, it is usually culture bound. General moral codes of the society must be observed.

MEDIATION:

This is the point of discovery; the villain is unmasked.

PURSUIT OR CHASE:

The villain flees and is pursued by those she has deceived.

PUNISHMENT:

Chastisement of villain if caught.

LACK LIQUIDATION:

This is the stage where the lack-deficiency has been removed, where the problem has been solved, where the state of disequilibrium has been brought to a state of equilibrium.

3.3.4 THE PRESENTATION OF A MOTIFEMIC ANALYSIS OF A VILLAIN

INITIAL SITUATION:

Characters are introduced.

"Phela uMaSibisi lona kwabe kuyiNdlovukazi kaSigodo Thwala, umnumzane wase Gugwini, umnumzane owabe edla kusale, enesithembu samakhosikazi amathathu: uMaSibisi, uManzuza waseKhohlo, kanye noMaMkhize : iQadi lomuzi.

("MaSibisi is Sigodo Thwala's queen wife. Sigodo is a respectable man of Gugwini, he has three wives through customary

marriage. His wives are : MaSibisi, MaNzuza (wife of the left-hand house), and MaMkhize (wife of the far right-hand house" (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:2).

LACK:

"Yeka okwami mina kaMahlase! ... Nami ngangithi uThwala ngomzalela inkosana nendlalifa, kodwa akusabanga njalo. Konke lokhu kuhlupheka kungenxa yemisebenzi kanye nezenzo zabakhunkuli (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:1).

("MaSibisi moans because she does not bear a son who will be an heir in Sigodo's homestead. She believes that MaNzuza and MaMkhize are bewitching her").

ABSENCE:

The death of MaSibisi's parents led her to make a deceitful decision. If they were alive, she would not think of breaking the law with fear for chastisement.

"... Ngize ngijezise uMvelinqangi ngithi wabathathelani abazali bami mina angishiye na."  
(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 2)

FALSE FRIENDSHIP :

Gendeni gains the friendship of MaSibisi by advising her to consult Zangaza the "witch-doctor", though she knew that he is a destructive "inyanga".  
"Uphume uphumo nawe ufune eyakho inyanga ... Ukuba yithi thina izinto zo-Gendeni ngabe sishona ngesikhala sa-MaHese siyokhuluma nezinto zoZangaza". (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 11).

("Go out and look for your own "inyanga ... If it were me, Gendeni, I would go and talk to guys like, Zangaza".)

CONTRACT:

Through Gendeni's friendship, MaSibisi gains confidence of consulting the witch-doctor without the consent of her husband.

"... Lendaba ngiyixoxe nomngani wami uGendeni wakwaLamula oyisiguli sakho, wabe esengilayela lapha kuwe ngethemba lokuthi wena unalo ikhambi losizi olunjalo". (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 44).

("I discussed this matter with my friend, Gendeni Lamula, who is your patient. She has informed me about you with the hope that you will be able to solve my misery").

INTERDICTION:

It is customary that if the woman does not bear boys or girls her husband consults his family traditional doctor who will cure her by turning her womb. The woman is bound by the customs as she is prohibited from taking the matter in her own hands.

"Nakho lokhu kwakho kuyaxaka njalo ngoba phela uXulu yinyanga eyaziwayo. Manje wehlulwa yini ukuba akuphendule inzalo?"

(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 11).

("Your matter is surprising because Xulu is a powerful "inyanga". Now why don't you ask him to turn your womb?")

VIOLATION:

MaSibisi violates the traditional law. She consults Zangaza and use cattle and goats as payment. She bewitches her daughter, Ncengani, and her co-wife's sons. She made Ngcobo, the diviner to violate the ancestral law and asked him not to expose her during divination.

"UZangaza ukhokhelwa ngenkomo kunye nembuzi. Usevumile yini uThwala ukuba ukhokhe inkomo ...?" "Qha-ke baba, ukuza kwami kuwe kungaphandle kwesandla sika Thwala, ngokunjalo futhi nenkomo yakho izoba ngaphandle kwesandla sakhe ...)" (Akuyiwe emhlahlweni, 1983 : 43).

("Zangaza is paid with a cow and a goat. Has Thwala agreed to pay me with a cow ... "No-no, Sir, I came here without his permission, and so the payment will be without his consent.")

EXPOSURE:

Jamela insist that they consult the diviner, Simbo, who revealed both MaSibisi and Zangaza and their strange deeds.

"Athi amakhosi angiyinuke inkosikazi yendlunkulu ehlangene nomthakathi omubi uZangaza." Asho ebabhula ngenkonkoni bobabili uSimbo. (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:165).

"The spirits say that I should "sniff out" the wife of the chief hut together with the evil witch, Zangaza." Simbo, the diviner, touches them with the gnu's tail. MaSibisi's exposure gives Sigodo and his family insight into MaSibisi's evil doings.

LACK LIQUIDATED:

This is the stage where the problem has been solved. The situation has been brought to a state of equilibrium.

"Yeheni bantu! MaSibisi! Kanti sibhuqwa nguwe?" Kubabaza uMaMbeje ... Abhiyoze uSimbo: "Chithekani bantu kuphelile ebenize ngako. Sengimnukile, sengimnukile umthakathi. (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:165).

("Good gracious! MaSibisi!! You are the one who is killing us?" Shouts MaMbhenje ... Simbo moves up and about : "Disperse people, what you've come for has come to an end. I have "sniffed out", "sniffed out" the sorcerer.")

PURSUIT OR CHASE:

MaSibisi flees and people try to pursue and apprehend her.

"... Abone ukuthi limshonele umntakaMahlase aphume ngejubane. Ubaleka njalo akavalile emlonyeni. Agijime ngesivinini

ephikelele emfuleni babe beyathe bayamnganda ashelelele njengenhlanzi emanzini. (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 165).

("MaSibisi realises that she has been found guilty, she runs away. Whilst she is running she is yelling. She ran very fast when approaching the river she slipped into it like a fish").

PUNISHMENT:

MaSibisi jumps into the river and drowns. She commits suicide which is a form of punishment.

"Mbambeni bo! Nangu eyoziphonsa emfuleni". Kumemeza uMaNzuza.

"Myekeni afe umthakashana ndini wabulala ingane yami. Hawu!

Baphela abantabami ngumthakathi. Myekeni afe." NguSigodo lowo.

"Ngiyekeni ngiyozibulala mina. Kulungile ngiyekeni ngizibulale ..."

Agijime njalo afike azilahle emfuleni, emuke namanzi.

(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983 : 166).

("Stop her, people! there she is jumping into the river", screams MaNzuza. "Let the witch die, she killed my child. Oh! the witch has bewitched my children. Let her die". That is Sigodo. "Leave me alone I'm going to commit suicide. It's okay I'm going to kill myself ... " She continued running and jumped into the river and drowned").

### 3.4 THE PORTRAYAL OF HISTORICAL CHARACTER(S)

Msimang, C.T. Buzani KuMkabayi

#### 3.4.1 THE SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL "Buzani KuMkabayi"

Mollema, in her unpublished dissertation gives a summary of the novel, Buzani KuMkabayi. This is a biographical novel based on Mkabayi kaJama's life history. Mkabayi was the sister of Senzangakhona, daughter of Jama. From birth Mkabayi is placed in an antagonistic situation. She was born first of twins, and according to the Zulu custom, she should be eliminated. The Zulu custom demanded that when twins were born, one of them was killed by placing "Igabade" "a lump of soil" in her throat. It was believed that if this is not done,

disaster will befall that family.

Both king Jama and the queen "iNdlunkulu" disregarded this custom out of love for the girls, Mkabayi and Mmama. They succumb to the domineering parental-love drive which completely subdues and crushes the royal patriotic love. The Zulu nation submerged with fear, hates the twins especially, Mkabayi, whom they suspect to augur a national calamity, which they believe will befall them as punishment by the ancestral spirits against an impudent and errant royal family. The predicted restrained catastrophe was released in the summer season when it was a very hot, weary day, which suddenly turned into swift lightning flashes and the rumble of thunder. Mkabayi's mother, the queen mother, was a victim in this disaster. She dies violently in front of her. Mkabayi was the sole spectator of this cruel death at the age of five years.

When Jama died, Mkabayi played a very important role in shaping the Zulu kingdom. With the help of her cousin, Mudli, she (Mkabayi) looked after the kingdom of the Zulu whilst Senzangakhona was still a minor. Of importance in Mkabayi's life span, is Shaka. Shaka is portrayed by Msimang as a heroic and historical character. Shaka's figure excites images of heroism and fighting grit among the African. He and Mkabayi are prominent figures in this novel. Shaka was the son of Senzangakhona. There is a certain amount of obscurity about the birth and

childhood of Shaka. It is declared by various sources that Shaka was an illegitimate child. Senzangakhona had a number of wives and Shaka had a most unlovable nature and was detested by all his father's homestead. Shaka and his mother, Nandi, were expelled from the royal kraal by Senzangakhona. Consequently, on the death of Senzangakhona, with the help of Dingiswayo, Shaka set out with an army to the Zulu country where he took the throne by force from Sigujana.

During Shaka's powerful reign, Mkabayi, together with her nephews, Dingane and Mhlangana, plotted the assassination of Shaka. Desirous to put Dingane on the throne, she devised the murder of Mhlangana. Mkabayi is described as a crafty, powerful woman, who had her own district called eBaqulusini. She wielded great influence in the affairs of the country. She detested being controlled and especially her masculinity drew admiration from the poets.

While not entirely degenerated, Mkabayi is morally shattered and ruined by her feelings of guilt. Her feelings are warped and twisted by plotting males and she was completely unaware of this. By contriving Shaka's death, she denounces and disintegrates the kingdom for which she has renounced all. By killing Shaka, who symbolises what she desires, she actually destroyed herself. At the end, Mkabayi is grief-stricken because

she discovers what errors she has committed religiously and politically. She becomes remorseful and repentant. Her greatest pain, however, comes when she realises that by allowing Dingane to murder Shaka, she consented over the dissolution of the Zulu Kingdom. She feels cursed and curses herself. She mourns the death of Shaka. While mourning Shaka, Mkabayi identifies with Shaka's leadership qualities, and ultimately her lost subject. She acknowledges that Shaka is the only king who was able to achieve her main aim, building the mighty Zulu empire.

The feeling of guilt and despair breaks her down. Confessing her sin, she dies. She leaves the onlooking counsellors astounded by her majestic yet useless realisation that she has "labouriously contrived her own annihilation by murdering the 'Kingdom' she had so jealously nurtured" (Mollema 1992:12-14).

In this novel, two prominent characters, Shaka and Mkabayi, will be portrayed. These characters form the basis of the formation of the Zulu kingdom, and are regarded as classical characters. In delineating the personality of these characters, we will firstly portray the legendary figure, Shaka. The relevant classical theory that will justify that Shaka is a true hero of tradition, is Lord Raglan's theory. Dundes in his assertion claims that this theory delineates a pattern of twenty two elements underlying the life stories of a

great number of folk heroes (Moephuli 1972:50). From my assumption, I think this folk theory can be successfully applied to delineate Shaka and to express the illusion of quotidian historical continuity as expressed by Priebe earlier. This theory will also express the relationship between the society and the realism expressed by Msimang to prove that his novel is grounded in the ethical consciousness. The following is Lord Raglan's theory portraying the hero of tradition :

#### 3.4.2 LORD RAGLAN'S SCHEME

1. His mother is a royal virgin.
2. His father is a king, and
3. Often a near relative of his mother, but
4. The circumstances of conception are unusual, and
5. He is also reputed to be the son of a God.
6. At birth, an attempt is made, often by his father, to kill him, but
7. He is spirited away, and
8. Reared by foster parents in a far country.
9. We are told nothing of his childhood, but
10. On reaching manhood he returns or goes back to his future kingdom.
11. After victory over the king, and or giant, dragon, or wild beasts, or enemies.
12. He marries a princess, often the daughter of his predecessor, and

13. Becomes a king.
14. For a time he reigns uneventfully, and
15. Promulgates laws to improve his kingdom, and
16. Later he loses favour with the Gods and or his subjects, and
17. Is overthrown from the throne and city.
18. He meets with a mysterious death,
19. Often at the top of the hill.
20. His children, if any, do not succeed him.
21. His body is not buried, but nevertheless,
22. he has one or more holy sepultures (Moephuli 1972:51).

Moephuli asserts that :

Raglan applied the pattern to the stories of the heroes as Theseus, Moses and king Arthur. Each of these heroes is given a score based by the number of elements he has in his biography. The striking similarity of the biographies of these heroes is demonstrated by the high scores or more than a dozen examples. (Moephuli 1972:51)

The following is a presentation of an analysis of Shaka's portrayal following Lord Raglan's scheme :

1. Shaka was born of a virgin mother, Nandi.  
"... Bathe bangathi sithe uSenzangakhona noNandi,

uthando obese luvele luchichima, lwabeqa ... Nakho phela sekuvela ungiyosho emva kwezinyanga ezimbalwa. ("Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:112).

("Senzangakhona and Nandi were overwhelmed by love at first sight, they were both irresistible. After a few months signs of pregnancy were visible.")

2. Shaka's father is a king. His father is Senzangakhona, ruler of the Zulu clan and direct descendant of Malandela through Jama, his father.

3. Shaka's father is a relative of his mother. "Empeleni ihlazo likhulu kakhulu ngoba abantwana laba bayizihlobo. Phela unina kaNandi nguMfunda ozalwa nguKhondlo ozalwa nguQwabe umnewabo kaZulu (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982 : 113).

"Truly the conception is disgraceful because these children are relatives. By the way Nandi's mother is Mfunda, daughter of Khondlo, son of Qwabe who is Zulu's younger brother. Qwabe and Zulu are Nozidiya's sons, who is Malandela's wife.")

4. The circumstances of Shaka's conception are unusual. It was taboo among the Zulu tribe that anyone should have a child before marriage. This law was irksome to young men like Senzangakhona, who was in love with

Nandi, his paramour, who bore him a son (Krige 1926:9).

"Kube buhlungu kakhulu eNguga ukonakala komntwana engaganile. Kubuzwe ukuthi ngabe yimuphi lomfokazana onamagangangozi. Yenzeke indaba lapho uNandi esekhomba umtanenkosi yakwaZulu. Ehluleke uMbengi ukuthi uzoyithini lendaba. Phela ukaba bekungumuntu phaga ubezovele asiwe kwagoqanyawo. Manje kone abakhulu" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:112).

5. It is said that Shaka is in a sense a religious king. When he succeeded to the throne, he had been to the river and seen a serpent which came out of the water, coiled itself around him, licked his body, and receded, staring at him. This is the messenger of the ancestors, which assures Shaka that his career deserves their watchfulness and assistance (Mphahlele 1963:171).

6. Shaka was supposed to be killed at birth as he was an illegitimate child. Senzangakhona was made to deny that Shaka was his son. "Abone uMudli ukuthi into ezosiza nxa sekunje ukuba aphike. Waphika walandula umfo kaMkwelo. Waphika kwakhona nje ukuthi uNandi ukhulelwe" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982 : 113).

7. Though Shaka was allowed to stay with his mother in his father's homestead, the nation and some members of his family despised him due to the fact that he was the king's illegitimate child. He was expelled from the royal kingdom through the instigation of Senzangakhona's wives. "Kwaba buhlungu kakhulu-ke kuMkabayi esezwa ukuthi uNandi uxoshiwe esiKlebheni kwathi nendodana yakhe uShaka wadingiswa" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:116).
8. Shaka was reared by foster parents : it was Mbengi at Elangeni; Gendeyane at Qwabe district; Macingwane the Chunu's clan; and lastly by Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa tribe. "Akasaziwa belu uShaka lapha kwaZulu. Abanye bathi waye wayokhosela ekhayakonina, Elangeni; abanye bathi usasuka lapho usese maMbedwini, koGendeyana lapho sekwendele khona unina. Abanye bathi akunjalo, uShaka useNgonyameni, umuzi wenkosi yamaChunu oseNkandla. Kugcine sekuzwakala ukuthi uShaka ulaphaya kwa Mthethwa ngaphansi kwenkosi uDingiswayo" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:117).
9. We are told nothing of his childhood, but we are told of his exploits when he was a young man - how he killed a tiger single-handed when all the young men had fled in terror. He soon became one of the bravest warriors and the favourite of the king. He also killed it. Dingiswayo declared Shaka the chief

warrior of the "IziChwe" regime. When Senzangakhona paid a visit to his overlord, Dingiswayo, he was delighted and impressed with Shaka's distinctions.

"Ngesibindi nokuhlabana kwakhe usephenduke indaba egudwini. Kuthe khona ukuba abulale ingwe eyedwa, uNgomane wabona ukuthi lokhu kufanele ukubikwa. Nempela amthathe uShaka ayomethula enkosini uDingiswayo. Kuthe kusabatshazwa lokhukuhlabana kukaShaka, kwezwakala futhi ukuthi ubulale uhlanya olwaselugede izinkomo zamadoda kungekho noyedwa onesibindi sokulugasela. uDingiswayo amenze induna yeziChwe uShaka. Ngenkathi uSenzangakhona evakashele kwaMthethwa, ziningi ezixoxwa ngoShaka, besho ukuthi useyinduna yempi, bebala nokuhlabana kwakhe nokuthi nje uyisilomo lapha kwaMthethwa" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:117-119).

10. On reaching manhood, Shaka with Dingiswayo's help, runs on up to "kingship".
11. Shaka mobilized an army to go and claim his kingship. After victory over king Sgujana, Shaka becomes the king of the Zulu tribe. This statement is declared by Msimang when Shaka took over kingship :

"Nina bakwaZulu, ... kasizile lapha ngempi, size ngoxolo. Inkosi, uDingiswayo ubone ukuthi lungeze

lwaba khona uxolo esizweni sakwaZulu nxa ubukhosi buphethwe ngumuntu ongaqondene. Kakade inxele kaliwakhi umuzi. Oqondene ngqo nalobukhosi bakwaZulu nguShaka lona esizombeka. Abamemukelayo bemukele uxolo kodwa abamenqabayi sebecela inselele kithina bakwaMthethwa." (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:126).

12. Shaka does not marry.
13. Shaka becomes the king of Zulus.
14. Shaka reigns eventfully as soon as he was king. He quickly realised that unless he crushed his enemies out of existence, he could never be paramount. He began to attack tribes around him.
15. Shaka promulgates laws. He completely overthrew the old ways of fighting and made it his objective to follow the enemy home, kill their chief and as many of the men as possible, and return home with the cattle and women.
16. Shaka became so reckless and brutal that his subjects for the first time began to object and grumble.
17. Shaka was not driven out of the throne, but his brothers Dingane and Mhlangana, and Mbotha, Shaka's trusted servant, including Mkabayi, plotted against

him.

18. They succeeded in murdering Shaka.

19. The first assegai - thrust went through Shaka's back, he turned around and was surprised to see his brother. He moaned and fell a few yards from the gate of his kraal and was stabbed in the back.

20. Shaka did not have any children to succeed him.

21. His body was not buried, it was dragged to a neighbouring grain pit where it was left for one night. Eventually he was buried in a pit in his kraal, kwaNyakamubi.

22. He did not have any sepultures. These were not available in the Zulu culture then.

The following are quotations from Msimang that depict points 13-22 from Raglan's scheme :

"Kwamhlaba umxhwele ukubona ukuzinikela kukaShaka ezindabeni zombuso. Wayenganaso isikhathi sokunye ngaphandle kokotha ibandla... Zazizingi zona izintombi zesigodlo kodwa kwase kwazi ngisho ingane ukuthi uShaka akazimisele ngokuganwa ..." (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:138).

"Banele babingelelane uDingane bese elwethula udaba olumhluphayo : 'Jama, ngiyabonga ukukubona ungena ngalamasango akwaDukuza ukubanawe ube ngufakazi wokubhubha kwezwe lawobabamkhulu libhujiswa yiloShaka osephenduke inkentshane ..." Usewubhuqile umbuso wakwaZulu, Jama. Umbuso ungumbuso ngabantu kodwa lapha kithi kwaMalandela abantu sebephenduke ukudla kwamange".

(Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:139-141).

"Kubo bobabili, uMhlangana noMbopha, kwase kudlange ukwesaba uMkabayi ngaphezu kokwesaba uShaka. Babengakuthandabuzi ukuthi uShaka akasoze adabule kulesisife asicushelwa nguMkabayi ...".

(Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982 : 150).

"Aphume uShaka aqonde esibayeni kwaNyakamubi. Uthe uma eqala ukwemukela iziyendane wayesegxumile uMbopha wangena phakathi kwazo noShaka ... Athi nxa ephenduka uShaka ahlangane noMhlangana. Kuwo lowo mnyama kuqhamuke uDingane naye angabe esabuza, awubhuxeke esifubeni umkhonto ... Adiyazele kancane uShaka ethi uzama ukubaleka ... Bagwaze bephindelela kuwo lowo mnyama. Azikhalele uShaka: "Hhawu! Niyangibulala bafowethu na? Kodwa ngenzeni, Mhlangana? ... Kodwa ngeke nilibuse, ziyeza izinyoni zeZulu. Jama, ngeke nilibuse liyobuswa zinyoni ..." Abone uMbopha ukuthi akawi uShaka yize emanxebanxeba, awuphisele umjijimezo ezibilini. "Hhawu! Mbopha! Uyangibulala nawe Mbopha kaSithayi na? ..." (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:154).

"Ababulali abasavumelani manje, abanye bathi uShaka makangcwatshwe abanye bayaphika. uMkabayi wathi akayekwe esibayeni edindilizile edicwa yimvula. Bafike bashageka nxa bemfica uShaka elubhambalala njengoba bemshiye izolo. Bagcine bevumelene ngokuthi akafakwe emgodini wopata khona lapho esibayeni. Nempela kuhlathshwe inkunzi emnyama agoqwe ngesikhumba sayo njengesiko. Kubulawe izintombi zesigodlo ezizomphelekezela. Afihlwe kanye nemvunulo yakhe nayo yonke impahla azoyisebenzisa kwelabaphansi" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:156).

Following Lord Raglan's pattern analysis, Shaka has scored nineteen points out of twenty two. This proves that Shaka is a true hero of tradition as portrayed by Msimang.

### 3.5 DELINEATING MKABAYI'S CHARACTER

Mkabayi is often described by many writers as the unscrupulous, terrible woman of antiquity. She is perceived as a crafty, powerful woman, who had great influence in the affairs of the country which she reigned successfully. She detested being controlled and especially her masculinity drew fear and admiration from her suitors. This is expressed by Msimang in the following excerpt :

Umaze engamtshelwanga ukuthi nangu uMkabayi.

Umkhethe phakathi kweziningi izintombi, wamkhetha ngisho esehamba noMmama yize abanye behluleka

ukwehlukana amawele. Isuke yaba ngumgqongo ngokunye intokazi kaJama, yazithelela amanzi zonke izintombi ebihamba nazo. UJobe ukhangwe wukunyathela kwayo, inyathela umhlaba sengathi iyawenyanya, ishaya idwale, ichiphatheke ... uJobe ubeyibona ide ithi ukuhwaqa, athande khona lokho, nanxa eke wathi ukushaywa wuvalo lokuthi angahle abe nenkani udade lona" (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:39).

Msimang portrays Mkabayi's conduct as that of a woman shaped by her circumstances. It is no doubt that Mkabayi has an effect of an androgynous character. Androgyny is in effect, closely linked to transsexualism. This is the term used to describe a person with both male and female characteristics without being able to clearly identify his sex. Researchers have found out that androgyny is largely due to the psychological make-up of a person that, as infants, the influence of the parents and their environmental perceptions have contributed to a sexually neutral mind with somewhat mismatched characteristics. A child will almost always comfortably accept whatever sex identity given before the age of two years. Parents have simply to change its name and dress it in different clothes for the child to take on the opposite role.

Parallel to recent research findings, Jung quoted by Mollema expresses that every man has a complete personality

the day he is born, and because of this inherent wholeness of personality, any psychological development depends on personal experiences. If these experiences produce an extreme state of psychological disharmony, the individual's personality could become distorted (Mollema 1992 : 13). Mkabayi's personality is affected by disregarding the traditional custom which demands that "when twins were born one of them was killed by having a lump of earth placed in her throat. It was believed that if this was not done, disaster will befall that family" (Krige 1988:75). Jama revolted against the cultural norms and beliefs that were exercised by the society, he insisted that both twins should not be killed :

"Usitshele isizwe, Mntwana, ukuthi kulukhuni satshe kimi ukugcina isiko elaziwayo. Akekho phakathi kwalamawele engizomgingisa igabade. Elami lithi kanginaye umntwana engizomgingisa igabade, uMkabayi noMmana bazophila bobabili: (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:11).

(Tell the nation, "Mntwana", that it is difficult for me to exercise the known tribal culture. None of the twins will be killed by swallowing a clod, both Mkabayi and Mmama shall live").

Mkabayi's personality is completely changed by further personal experiences :

Mkabayi is rejected by the society. The endured hatred of the nation towards her had an effect on her personality's transformation.

"UMkabayi ebona izwe limfulathele wanquma ukuba naye alifulathele. Wayengazihluphi ngokuyodlala nontanga ... Wayezikhonzele unina, owawumfica njalo ezihlalele naye ngisho kusendlini noma phandle ..." (Buzani KuMkabayi 1982:19).

("When Mkabayi realised that the nation has turned against her she decided to turn against it. She did not bother herself to play with her peers ... she was very attached to her mum, you would find her always with her mum, be it in the house or outside").

The death of Mkabayi's mother and her father's disillusionment caused Mkabayi to have a split behavioural pattern which affected her personality. After her mother's death, Mkabayi develops an atmosphere of hate and revenge. She yearns for love, but it is short-lived, her mother died when she was too young. She desires love, but did not attain it, she therefore hardens as a sign of repressing this desire. She involves herself in political issues of the Zulu nation to compensate for the lost love.

"... Ngacabanga ngesifungo engasifunga ngingedwa vo, sokuba ngizohlala nobaba owashiywa ngowakwakhe ngenxa yami,

ngizame ukuvala lesosikhala esavuleka ngenxa yami. Ngenza isifungo ngathi ngiyogcagca nezintaba zakwaZulu ..."  
(Msimang 1982:69-70).

("... I thought about the vow that I made by myself, that I shall stay with my father who has been left by his wife because of me, and I will try and fill that vacuum that was opened because of me. I therefore made a vow that I will marry with the Zulu mountains ...").

As the child grows up, the question of its sex identity becomes more and more difficult to answer especially at the advent of puberty. Some children go as far as perceiving themselves disgusting or hating the way they are being perceived and treated by others as dictated by their sex. Mkabayi for instance, is born female, but her whole life through she acts, talks, behaves as a male. She has a female body but never felt female as the female role is restricting and repugnant. She does not think herself as being either male or female, maybe a third gender person.

Mkabayi's musculity is seen when she proposes love on behalf of her father, she even addresses the whole nation to present iNdlunkulu, the queen mother :

"Ungibona ngilapha ... ngizofunela ubaba isingani esizosala siba ngumduduzi wakhe ... okukhulu kakhulu ngifuna ukuvusa indlu yakwethu engikholwa ukuthi yadilika ngenxa yami.

Ngifuna umuntu onenhliziy o efana neyakho. Ubaba wehlelwa yilosizi ngenxa yothando ayenalo ngami. Loluthando ngingalubuyisela ngokuba ngingamshiyi entandaneke ngaloluhlobo ..." (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:81).

("As I'm here ... I'm looking for a soul mate for my father who would comfort him ... More than that I would like to rebuild my family which was destroyed because of me. I am looking for a person like you, Mthaniya. My father is miserable because of the love he has given me. The love he has shown me I could only return by not leaving him lonely as he is now ...").

Androgyny is most evident in behavioural dynamics. A person with a female body can be very masculine in terms of character, mentally and psychologically. In such cases, the person is all male in every way except physically. In this instance where the person with female body is pro-male character, this person is regarded with as much intensity as if she were all-man. Such a person is treated with much respect especially in the work-field where they will apply themselves as single-minded, assertive and dominant. The person's ability to relate to others in relationships is also male related : emotions are not displayed as such, where, instead of giving sympathy, advice is given. Mkabayi is seen exhibiting male features, her actions, thoughts and personality signify masculinity, yet she portrays an image of a beautiful woman. Her male qualities

are depicted when she summons to address the whole Zulu nation presenting their queen mother :

"... Zulu kaMalandela, nginiqoqele lapha nje ngizonibikela ukuthi sengiwenzile umzamo wokuqala. Njengoba nike nezwa kukikizelwa, bekuhalaliselwa ukungena kwezintombi zakwaSibiya phezu kweMfolozi emnyama ziphelezela inkosana yakhona, uMthaniya, okunguyena ozovusa iNdlunkulu yakwaNobamba ..." (Buzani kuMkabayi 1982:89).

("... Zulu nation of Malandela, I have summoned you here to let you know of my first attempt. As you have heard people ululating, they were welcoming Mthaniya Sibiya who will be the queen mother of Nobamba ...").

Androgyny can thus be seen as a bridge between male and female where the person can relate to both sexes without being stereotyped. Androgyny has an added advantage of being mentally free-free from harassment of any sort and open to more opportunities as the world is seen in a different light. However, society has yet to understand such a phenomenon as it treats it with ignorance and rejection which makes the androgynous person isolated and to feel less confident and self-reliant than say, a homogeneous person.

In this chapter, the traditional-historical contributions of Propp and Dundes, and Lord Raglan which underpin the

sociological approach formed the primary tools of portrayal of characters. The reason is that both Msimang's novels are attributed to the history and cultural traditional life of the Zulu nation. His novels depict Irele's views sited earlier that, African works must have an intimate correlation to the cultural and social structures which determine and define the expressive schemes of African peoples and societies.

## CHAPTER IV

### 4. THEMES IN MSIMANG'S NOVELS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

"Man controls nature, the world and himself by virtue of his mental or spiritual capacities. Man is a product of nature and society. To survive physically and to achieve fulfilment man has to relate to nature and to society by means of both mental and physical labour of production. Society is the organized form of this production" (Carusi 1991:41).

This excerpt interprets man's actions with the view of reinforcing those norms and values of life and forms of behaviour that help to perpetuate society and enable man to fulfil himself within his community. The literary work, in this case, stories, have the capacity to have as their central theme, life itself. Stories are also capable of postulating man's hopes and fears, his successes and failures and his ideals as well. Mbiti (1966:31) asserts that "stories are, to a certain extent, a mirror of life : They reflect what people do, what they think, how they live and have lived, their values, their joys and sorrows. Everything is caught in their dynamism of life, and whether

an object has life or not, the story gives it imaginary life : it participates in man' schemes of the world".

representation of events from which a novel is born.

Vilakazi, in his dissertation, also asserts like Mbiti that Bantu literature refers to that work of art which Bantu people have themselves produced in the revelation of their feelings, their sorrows and joys, their failures and successes, with a degree of verbal skill higher than that displayed in ordinary conversation. Vilakazi further declares that Bantu literature means cultural development with its own vehicle of communication and its own technique of expression, used by the Bantu in their own individual way, be it spontaneous or studied (Vilakazi 1946:269).

displaying their work. It is very small and it is very good.

With regard to the description of the African novel, Makopo asserts that "it is a perpetual quest for reality, the field of its research being always the social world, the material of its analysis being always manners as the indication of man's soul". Therefore it is essential to note that for quite some time the literary works of the "Black" man were regarded as inferior by the Westerner. But it should then be remembered that the Black man's outlook on life differs from that of the Westerner. It is therefore imperative to understand the Black man's system of values, so that a critical standard is arrived at in his own culture. However, the socio-historical political milieu of the Black writer in general must be understood because it influences his works and that his genres derive

meaning within a cultural context. According to Makopo the majority of novels produced by Bantu writers are but a concatenation of events from which a moral is learnt. Since the traditional Bantu story is didactic, didacticism is reflected in modern Bantu literature. Some African writers choose their themes from history, witchcraft, love, conflict between African beliefs and Christianity; the degeneration of youth in the locations around European cities, the clash between the traditional family authority and the individualism of modern times, which places them inside the greatest social problems of the Bantu in general. Makopo in his paper declares that from these themes a large number of writers are only superficial in depicting their theme, a very small number attempt to probe beneath the surface of life (Makopo 1980:3).

#### 4.2 Defining Theme

Before embarking on the critical assessment of theme, the concept of a theme and its execution will first be dealt with:

Msimang, in Folktale Influences on the Zulu Novel, defines a theme in terms of two categories : Firstly in the narrow sense, theme is known as the moral lesson. If, for example, the theme involves a certain issue or a problem in society, readers will expect the narrator to give a solution to that problem. If there is no resolution to the

problem, the readers will feel dissatisfied. Dietrich and Sundell, quoted by Msimang, assert that stories must not always be overtly didactic and moralising. They declare that didacticism featured mostly in the eighteenth and nineteenth century era and this practice is now outdated. Msimang concur with their opinion and asserts that it is more artistic to present the theme indirectly. Theme should therefore be seen as a result of the confrontation of characters and ideas (Msimang 1986:134).

In the broader sense, theme is defined as the central idea in a story; it is the subject of discourse. Msimang asserts that the fact that theme is central, implies that everything else, including plot, setting, characters and their action, is concerned with conveying that theme. If the story is the work of art, the thematic structure will draw these elements into a unity. This means that it is the theme that gives meaning in a story (Msimang 1986:133).

Brooks and Warren quoted by Makhambeni express their views in relation to what theme is:

"Theme is what a piece of literature stacks up to. It is the idea, the significance, the interpretation of persons and events, the pervasive and unifying view of life which is embodied in the total narrative ... What we make of such human experience always, directly

or indirectly, some comment on values in human nature and human conduct, on good and bad, on the true and false, some conception of what the human place is in the world (Brooks and Warren in Makhambeni, 1959:273).

Another concept related to the theme that is worth defining is the motif as it forms part of the theme. Msimang says motifs are peripheral issues that may be communicated time and again by the narrator, these issues are related to the theme and form sub-themes. Motifs or sub-themes are defined as :

Figures or ideas that repeat themselves in the total design and are related to the major theme by being variations or aspects of it (Dietrich and Sundell in Msimang, 1986:135).

#### 4.3 Themes Depicted

In portraying themes in the novels Buzani KuMkabayi and Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, Msimang has chosen "reverse acculturation" as his literary theme. In my view this is an umbrella theme which encompasses themes portrayed in both novels. Denotatively acculturation means to adapt or adopt a different culture. The concept of "reverse acculturation" is made explicit by Janos Riesz in Diogenes

Journal : There like Nelson who sought to preserve the culture of the South people. It was without saying that

The concept of "acculturation" according to Riesz is closely linked to the history of European colonialism. He asserts that in spite of all efforts to endow it with a "neutral" or "positive" meaning, the term has never meant anything other than the subjection of indigenous cultures to Western civilization in all its forms. With regard to "reverse" acculturation, Riesz refers to cases in which the flow of exchange is inverted, and also implies to cases in which Westerners succumb to the seduction of "primitive" culture. By this "forward" and "reverse" movement Reisz simply means that in the historical conditions of colonialization, acculturation of the non-European is the rule while that of Europeans by non-European culture is the exception (Reisz 1986:46-47).

Reverse acculturation is confirmed by contemporary writers who employ the language of the colonizers in their novels written from the post colonial era to date. These novels feature missionaries who attempted to convert Blacks to Christianity but their efforts were in vain. As a result the White missionaries underwent a metamorphosis. Thus the phenomenon of reverse acculturation is unanimously seen as a failure. For example, Soga the writer of "South-Eastern Bantu" who wrote in English was handicapped by inexperience due to lack of consonance where ethnographic matter is concerned. Nevertheless it stands as a challenge to those

Bantu authors like Msimang who aspire to preserve the culture of the Nguni people. It goes without saying that the merger successes of the reverend fathers is largely due to the military contingent's presence and power. It can be assumed that struggles of the missionaries were made up of persecution and resistance and were thus the subject of an obsessional nature in the missionaries' minds.

Reisz asserts that "although the resistance of non-European peoples to assimilation is increasingly strong, a growing number of Western artists, authors and intellectuals are succumbing to the attraction of exogenous cultures. African literature written in French in the twentieth century could be analyzed from the point of view of acculturation - in both directions. Closely linked to the colonization of Africa, there can be found a literature of propaganda, which focuses on the model African who is one hundred percent assimilated to French culture." When such acculturation has been achieved the model African approaches this culture with zeal and fevour (Reisz 1986:52).

With regard to reverse acculturation, the second generation of African writers in this century attempted above all to exalt African culture and to present it as equal to Western civilization. Some novels of the 1950's depict the anti-colonial genre and have a thematic title "the failure of acculturation". In both novels, Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni and

Buzani KuMkabayi, characters like MaSibisi and Jama have renounced their African tradition and are severely punished. In Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, MaSibisi failed to adhere to the traditional custom that it is a cultural right to consult the traditional doctor to turn a woman's womb if she does not bear baby boys, and also a woman does not consult and pay the doctor without the husband's consent. MaSibisi was punished by the ancestors, her daughter Ncengani, mistakenly drank "muthi" and died instantly and MaSibisi was consequently revealed at the divination "Emhlahlweni" that she is a witch. With regard to Buzani KuMkabayi, Jama failed to succumb to the national culture that when twins are born one of them was eliminated by placing a clod in her throat. He succumbed to the domineering parental-love drive which completely subdues and then crushes the royal patriotic love. Consequently, the queen mother dies violently and famine also portends national calamity.

From the basis of the reverse acculturation as our literary theme under discussion, Msimang's novels bring out clearly a reversal of values in comparison to writings inspired by the colonial era. Reisz emphasizes that "adopting Western values in most cases signifies defeat or death; the return to Africa promises healing and deliverance" (Reisz 1986:54). In the literary criticism of the theme we denote "reverse acculturation" as the subject of discourse because it is concerned with conveying the major theme of the

novels under discussion. Because the central idea of our novels has been discussed already, we will now focus on the variations of theme that are portrayed in the total design. This brings us to the issues that are related to the main theme known as sub-themes or motifs. Sub-themes denoted by these novels are sociological, political, historical and religious ideals. These aspects formulate what Makhambeni refers to as the "merging of socio-political-religious situation" (Makhambeni 1988:18). Although these peripheral but related issues are portrayed cohesively in the texts, they will in this study be discussed in isolation for the sake of emphasis:

#### 4.4 The Historical Theme

Buzani KuMkabayi is the historical novel that discusses the life history of prominent historical figures like Mkabayi, Shaka, Dingane, etc. Historical war events and historical data also feature in this novel. In defining the historical novel Makhambeni asserts that it is a door through which the novelist leads his readers into times other than their own. This novel is bound to give the reader insight into the past and also to relate present events to the past. The historical writer endeavours to present his work in the manner that he is reliving the past in terms of the present. To achieve this effect historical facts should attempt to heighten and intensify the truth by including any material that is in harmony with the facts

(Makhambeni 1988:7-8).

In depicting the historical theme means expressing the ideological outlook of the text. The recognition of the greatness in a writer is a matter of positive conditioning relative to the historical circumstances in which his work operate. Buzani KuMkabayi is portraying the historical image of the Zulu nation before the advent of the colonial government. In this work of art the writer seeks to interpret a heritage that enriched the African people. Although this is not a historical text, the historical events are portrayed fictitiously to depict the historical significance in the life of the Zulus. The following are the most basic historical events in this literary text :

The most evident and dramatic historical event that had an effect to the Kingdom of the Zulu is the rejection and refusal of abiding by the customary practice. Both king Jama and the Queen disregarded this custom out of love for the twin girls. They succumbed to the domineering parental love drive which subdues the royal patriotic love. Jama refuses to eliminate Mkabayi and insists that both twin-girls are royal and shall live:

"... Sengizwile ukuthi nithi mangendise  
omunye wabantabami ... Kungenzeka kanjani  
nokho ngoba emithanjeni KaMkabayi nekaMmama  
kugobhoza elami igazi na? Usitshela isizwe,

Mntwana, ukuthi kulukhuni satshe kimi  
ukugcina isiko elaziwayo. Akekho phakathi  
kwalamawele engizomgingisa igade "(Buzani  
KuMkabayi, 1982:11).

*(When they come into the hall,*

("... I now understand that you want me to  
eliminate one of my children ... How can  
this happen because in both Mkabayi and  
Mmama's veins flow my blood? Go and  
tell the nation, Mntwana, that it is  
difficult for me to adhere to the known  
custom. None of the twins shall be made  
to swallow the clod".)

The result of refusal and rejection to adhere to the  
customary practice is depicted by the Zulu nation which was  
gripped with fear. The nation hated the twins, they  
believed that a national calamity would befall them as  
punishment. The writer imaginatively relates the sudden  
death of the queen as a form of punishment by the  
ancestors. Mkabayi is the sole witness of this cruel  
death, she is the victim of fate. Mkabayi is described by  
the author as revealing signs of unusual coldness as it is  
not expected in a child of five years to harden this way :

"Nxa zingena emnyango zethuke  
zishoqongane, nxa zelumela iNdlunkulu  
igobodise phezu kweziko. UMkabayi

olokhu ehlezi ngezansi kukanina,  
azibheke ngokumangala "(Buzani  
KuMkabayi 1982:21).

("When they came into the hut,  
they were startled to find the queen  
in a bending position over the fire  
place. Mkabayi sitting there with  
wonderment").

Mkabayi's behaviour is dramatically presented to the reader to create a historical perspective. The writer makes Mkabayi develop in an atmosphere of hate and revenge so that she can later on return hate and revenge. He makes her yearn for love and hardens her youthful will to love so that she is icy against suitors. She always desires love, but can never attain it.

Mkabayi's ego compensates for this unobtainable love, but can never attain it. She developed love for the socio-political issues of the Zulu nation with much patriotism. Contrary to her parents, who chose to portray parental love against patriotic love, Mkabayi hardens herself, she refused to get married with the fear that it might thwart her aim. She later makes a confession that she is doing this to repay the love of her parents :

"Ngizobudela ubuntombi bami nezinjabulo

zobusha ngibe wumlindaziko wakwaNobamba njengoba  
nobaba nomame badela impilo yabo nezinjabulo  
zayo ngenxa yami ..." (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1992:68).

("I shall forfeit my maidenhood and the pleasure  
of youth and become a spinster of NoBamba, for  
the sake of my father and mother who opted to  
die for me ...").

Mkabayi is seen by the whole nation exhibiting androgynous  
qualities. Her behavioural dynamics are most evident in  
terms of her character, action, thought and personality.  
Mkabayi's androgynous behaviour is seen as a bridge between  
males and females where she was seen relating to both sexes  
without being stereotyped. She is seen undertaking to  
arrange and select a wife for her father. She summons and  
addresses the tribesman when the need arises. She succeeds  
in obtaining her objective of ensuring proper and rightful  
succession of Zulu kings to the throne.

Mkabayi is represented as a powerful male genius in martial  
and state affairs. She insists that peace and political  
reconstruction must be maintained in the whole nation. She  
succeeds in convincing the tribesmen that her actions are  
right and appropriate to the situation. She is seen  
addressing the nation in ensuring peace and harmony in her  
forefather's land:

"Bobaba nabantwana bonke nani sizwe  
sikaNdaba, ngiyabonga ukuthi nxa nginibiza  
nisabele ... Umbuso kaZulu eniyizinsika zawo  
ukuleloqophelo njengoba ngikhuluma nani  
nje ... Nonke niyakwazi lokho, isimanga  
ukuthi nithule. Ngiyabuza-ke sizwe  
sikaMalandela ukuthi nithule nithini?"  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:101).

("Fathers and sons and you Ndaba's tribe,  
I thank you for your response when I  
call you ... You are the pillars of the  
Zulu nation and as I'm speaking to you the  
nation is at stake. You all know that, but  
what is surprising is that you are all quiet.  
I'm now asking why are you quiet, Malandela  
tribe?").

Mkabayi's androgyny enables her to portray the historical figure as dramatically depicted by the writer. She survived five Zulu kings and contributed eventfully to their reign, she built the Zulu kingdom and also contributed to its decline by conspiring to the assassination of the powerful Zulu king Shaka. Since this novel's theme is historically related, the writer has written it with the inclusion of historical characters like Shaka, Dingane, Mhlangana, Mpande, etc. He has made mention of King's royal palaces like Nobamba, Esiklebheni,

Dukuza, Mngungundlovu, etc. Various war events expressed in this novel also portray a historical theme in an artistic and convincing way.

#### 4.5 The Political Theme

Amuta stated earlier in chapter II that the African works must depict the socio-economic, political and ideological contradictions which define the life and historical experiences of the African people. The novel Buzani KuMkabayi serves to express the political structure of the Zulu nation. Typical situations and events in this novel portray the Zulu society in its totality. Irele argues that African writers' enterprise must reflect both the imagination and the ideology closely associated to human life and consciousness. To understand ideologies by which men experience their societies is to understand both the past and the present more deeply and such understanding contributes to our liberation (Amuta 1989:viii). The function of ideology is to legitimize the power of the ruling class system in society. In the final analysis, the dominant ideas of a society are the ideas of its ruling class. The implication of the ideological perspective is to penetrate to the realities of men's experience in a certain situation (Engels 1976:9).

The novel Buzani KuMkabayi expresses how the socio-economic aspect affected the ruling class at that time. For

example, since king Jama, exercised his powers as a king, he failed to adhere to the laws of his society, and neglected to exercise the nation's tradition. He overlooked the Zulu custom of eliminating one of the twins. The economic ideology was affected, the whole Zulu nation experienced famine. The economic structure of the nation was crippled and ceased development. However, the Zulus lacked confidence in the country's politics, laws and beliefs because of the negligence created by the ruling class during Jama's reign. This is sited in the following excerpt:

"Isangquma esavithiza sashaya icole  
kasijokolanga ngomhla wokubhubha kweNdlunkulu  
kepha saphikelela nsuku zonke savithiza, saze  
saqotha emasimini. Inala yaphenduka indlala  
kamadlantule ... Amanzi eziphethwini  
nasemithonjeni asha qhu, koma abantu nezinkomo.  
Izimbuzi zona zabe sezifisa okwamazeze ebusika.  
Ubuhle nobumnandi kwaphela nya KwaZulu. Abantu  
baba muncu izwe lonke lwaba luhlubi" (Buzani  
KuMkabayi, 1982:24-25).

("The hailstorm destroyed everything and did not cease the day the queen mother died but continued for days thereafter, everything in the fields was destroyed. Plentitude of food was ceased by famine ... Water from

tributaries and wells became dry, people and cows became thirsty. Goats were dying like fleas in winter. Beauty and joy came to an end for the Zulu people. People became bitter and sorrowful throughout the nation").

In "Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni", the economic production ceased development because of the change in the ruling class system - when the White government had the illegitimate power over the Zulus, Sigodo was forced to leave his homestead and headed for the city to go and work, leaving behind his polygamous wives in a conflict situation. This problem is presented by the writer as follows:

"Kwathi ukuba athole ucingo olulandula indodana yakhe uSigodo waqoqa zonke izimpahlana zakhe wavalelisa kubelungu. Indlela endekazi ngesitimela nangamabhasi akazange ayizwe ngoba inhliziyo yabe isisekhaya lapho yabe ilwa impi eyesabekayo yokuthi ukuba ubenze lokhuya wayeka lokhuya ngabe lokhuya akwenzekanga" (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:111).

("When Sigodo received a telegram informing him that his son has not yet recovered from his illness, he packed all his belongings and bade the whites goodbye. He did not feel the distance of travelling by train and buses

because he has been in conflict about this and that").

In both novels the society's historical epoch has been affected by the ruling class at that time and its social relation into which men were not free to choose their own social mentality. They were constrained by the nature and stage of development of their ruling class.

Engels quoted by Eagleton remarks that art is far richer than political and economic theory because it is less purely ideological. He asserts that ideology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas, and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole. In this sense we can say that Buzani kuMkabayi expresses the ideological perspective. Jama, chief of the Zulus, from his experience as a Zulu decides to prohibit a true understanding of his society by overlooking the most important tradition of the Zulus. By exercising his powers of the ruling class he did not adhere to the custom of his society and consequently his nation experienced disaster. Jama's way of ruling supports what Engels asserts that art has a more complex relationship to ideology. It embodies the interest of the ruling class in that complex structures of social perception which ensures that the situation in which one social class has power over the others is either

seen by most members of the society as "natural" or not seen at all (Eagleton 1976:10).

Ideology also signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world, which is the kind of experience literature gives us too - what it feels like to live in particular conditions, rather than a conceptual analysis of those conditions. For example :

In Buzani KuMkabayi, the type of life people experienced and the conditions of the society they lived in; the autocratic ruling; adhering to customs and beliefs of the Zulus; the economic production affected by disregarding the tradition of the society; the changes experienced by the society when Mkabayi ruled the country with an iron hand; express the attitude of the people living in those conditions - they disliked most ideologies practised by their ruling class. In Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, the type of conditions experienced by the polygamous wives of Sigodo and the conflict which was unleashed by MaSibisi for not bearing a son who will be an heir of Sigodo's homestead leaves much to be desired. The type of ruling class at that time enforced Sigodo to work in an urban area leaving his wife, MaSibisi, to take the law into her hands because of his absence. MaNzuza and MaMkhize, Sigodo's two other wives, express disgust for the kind of life they experienced at eGugwini.

Finally, the political ideology must give us experience of the living situation and allow us to see the nature and the experiences of men. Literature has therefore, the task to deliver the story of the struggles of men and women to free themselves from certain forms of exploitation and oppression.

#### 4.6 The Cultural Theme

From Irele's view-point in relation to the sociological approach, we view African literature as involving a consideration of aesthetic modes in their intimate correlation to the cultural and social structures which determine and define the expressive schemes of African peoples and societies. This denotes that African literature should exhibit African norms and values which express the cultural framework in which the work of art is composed. People's experience of their environment is reflected through the tribal culture they belong to. In both novels, Msimang depicts the cultural theme to express awareness envisaged in the African tradition. His literature also highlights that African culture developed from oral tradition which was acculturated by the Western influence. Despite the fact that in the post-colonial setting people became accustomed to Westernized style of living due to coloniliasm, Msimang takes the onus in portraying the cultural theme that delineates the traditional tribal culture practiced in the Zulu community.

Since value and meaning can only be evoked by the people who embody the social values and moral codes of a particular culture and tradition, Msimang delineates various cultures in his novel to express their relevance. Cultural forms depicted in these texts comprise systems of shared ideas, systems of concepts and rules and meanings that underlie these traditions, and are expressed in the ways that humans live:

- "Ukugingisa igabade" (Elimination by means of swallowing a clod) is a tradition practised by Zulus. It was taboo not to adhere to this culture because if it is not carried out catastrophe will befall them as punishment by the ancestral-spirits.
- "Ihlambo" is a ceremonial washing of spears which takes place a month after the slaughter of the funeral goat. The beast for "ihlambo" is killed and eaten with "white medicine" to cleanse the people from the defilement of death and to show the end of a mourning period" (Krige 1950:167).
- "Umhlahlo" is a tradition practised by Zulus to detect and punish the sorcerer. Witchcraft is not tried by judicial processes. There is no trial, but "sniffing out" - "ukunuka" in

which the doctor uses his occult powers to find the culprit, or some infallible ordeal is undergone by the suspected person (Krige 1950:225).

- Status of wives - the status of the wives of the commoner is regulated according to the order in which they were married, the first one being the chief wife. The great wife of the chief or king must be chosen in consultation with the chief men of the tribe. In any homestead the chief wife or indlunkulu occupies the chief hut which is situated at the top end of the homestead opposite the main entrance. The eldest son of this hut is the chief heir and his father's successor (Krige 1950:40).

- "Ijadu" (inter-tribal love dances). In pre-Shakan days, Natal was peopled by small exogamous sibs, and for this reason the "ijadu" or inter-tribal love dances, were arranged by chiefs to bring prospective couples in touch with one another (Krige 1950:217).

- Powers of the king. Culturally the king has legislative and judicial power, but was

not to be autocratic as the powers exercised by the great Zulu kings have led us to suppose.

The king could make no new laws without the consent of his councillors who represented the people; thus in giving out laws without such consent he would be departing from custom ... (Krige 1950:215), etc.

In portraying various cultures in both his literary texts, Msimang gets credibility among the Zulu readers, researchers and critics for the reasons that his work is connected to the total configurations of life and experience of the Zulu society. His literary work is what Irele terms compassionate to the African cultural practices.

#### 4.7 THE RELIGIOUS THEME

The Religious theme is portrayed in the works of Msimang clarifying the social system of Zulus in the pre-colonial setting. People's beliefs are reflected in the cultural framework of their society. Religion is regarded as an aspect of a sociological phenomenon because the effect of religious belief have a social activity. Any analysis or religion presupposes a definition of religion as a type of belief system and social activity. One might argue that such definitional issues, if resolved at the outset, determine the nature of what will be discovered during the

empirical investigation.

Weber says that religion involves accepting commonsense interpretations of religions in the wider society. By this, he implies that religion is a belief in the supernatural realms. Sociologically, religion is a set of beliefs and associated forms of conduct, it presupposes both the nature of social actions and the most appropriate processes whereby knowledge about it is to be gained. Weber argues that human conduct expressed by religion is essentially meaningful (Weber in Turner, 1984:7).

Religion, with regard to the Zulus, is an aspect which plays a very important part in their lives, namely, in warfare, ceremonies, in the different crises situations, etc. The most vital religion of the zulus is their ancestor worship. In all instances the ancestors are looked to for help and guidance and propitiated with offerings. Zulus belief that the ancestors take a real interest in their descendants; they guard them from danger and attend to their needs, but in return they require to be sacrificed to (Krige 1950:283). The following scenarios in Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni express how the ancestors are propitiated when things go wrong: Masibisi is heard uttering these words,

"Ngacishe ngazibulalela ubala, kodwa bangimele  
abaphansi. Cishe ngathi abaphansi bangifu-

lathele kanti abaphansi abakaze bamfulathele umntanabo. Uyena umuntu ozehlukanisa naba-phansi kuyathi kungasamlungeli agale athi abaphansi bamhlale. Lenyanga ngayinikwa idlozi" (Akuye Emhlahlweni, 1983:150).

("I nearly killed myself for nothing, and yet the ancestors are with me. I nearly thought the ancestors have turned against their child. It is I who divorced myself from the ancestors and when things go wrong I will start saying the ancestors have turned against me").

Before going for divination "Emhlahlweni", Jamela made an offering to the ancestors to ask them to help and guide them. Jamela respectfully talked to the ancestors and said:

"Nina bakaMalandisa owalandisa ubade wabo angadli bubende. Nina bakwaThwala bakwa Mnyamande! Nakhu laphe sesikhona thina zingane zenu. Sithi yemukeleni le mpahla, lenyongo naleli gazi. Ngimemeza wena Mbokode, wena baba, wena owavula iGugu lakwaThwala. Ngimemeza wena ngikuthuma kobabamkhulu nakokhokho. Ngithuma wena baba ngoba abanye angibazi. Wena obaziyo Mbokode

usuyosicelela kobabamkhulu nabo ubathume  
koyisemkhulu ... kuze kufinyelele  
kuMvelingangi. Sicela indlela maThwala  
amahle, sikhanyiseleni kumnyama kithi.  
"(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:153)

("Jamela called all the forefathers of the  
Thwala family. He called all their  
ancestors to receive the goat as their  
offering. He asked his father Mbokode to  
consult all the other forefathers whom he  
does not know and to go to God as well.  
Mbokode persuades their ancestors to guide  
them and to open all routes because they  
are in darkness").

Jamela also persuaded the ancestors to bless the divination  
ceremony they will be attending to reveal the sorcerer:

"Sicela uma siphuma kusasa niphume nathi  
baba, kuthi nalapho esiya khona  
nisikhanyisele. Abafana abagulayo Mbokode  
nabo sibanxusela kini ukuba nibalinde  
nibasingathe baba. Sizobashiya bebhewe  
uZanele nina bakwa Malindisa, sithi nani  
nibeke elenu iso maThwala amahle"  
(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:153)

("We ask you to be with us the following day, brighten our way wherever we are going. We plead unto you, Mbokodo, that you should please take care of the sick boys. We will live them under Zanele's supervision. We ask you also to please take care of them as well").

The novel Buzani kuMkabayi also expresses a relationship to social systems and beliefs within the total culture of the traditional world. The text reveals the power of the ancestral spirits. This is the spirit that is invoked for help and that provides for his descendants. All prosperity is ascribed to the favour of the ancestors, misfortune to their anger:

Jama, chief of the Zulus, from his knowledge and beliefs of the Zulu tradition, decides to disobey a true understanding of the national religion of his society. He knew that if this belief is overlooked there would be unpleasant consequences. He did all this because of the domineering parental love drive which completely subdues and crushes the royal patriotic love:

"Elami lithi kanginaye umntwana  
engizomgingisa igabede, uMkabayi noMmama  
bazophila bobali "(Buzani KuMkabayi,  
1983:11).

("My final word is that no child of mine  
will be killed by swallowing a clod.  
Mkabayi and Mmama shall both live").

Jama propitiated the ancestors by making an offering trying  
to plead with the ancestors not to punish them against an  
impudent and errant deed. Jama comforted the queen mother  
and said :

"Ungakhihli isililo kungafe muntu, Nkosikazi.  
Akukho lutho olubi oluzosehlela. Ngizobulala  
impahla ngishweleze ulaka lwabaphansi.  
Ungakhathazeki, nkosikazi" (Buzani kuMkabayi,  
1982:16)

("Do not cry when no one has died, my wife.  
Nothing bad will happen to us. I will kill  
a goat and plead with the ancestors to ease  
their anger. Do not worry, my dear wife.")

Despite the fact that Jama propitiated the ancestors,  
misfortune befell his nation. The ancestral spirits  
express their anger by violently killing the queen mother  
and the whole nation experienced drought and famine:

"Emveni kokubhubha kweNdlunkulu yakwa Nobamba,  
izulu lana eyomvimbi, lavimbanisa, abantu  
baphenduka izihlalandawonye. Ukudla emasimini

kwagcugca, ikhaba ebelilihle likepa laphenduka  
labomvana. Inala yaphenduka indlala kamadlantule"  
(Buzani KuMkabanyi, 1982:24).

"When the queen of Nobamba Died, it rained  
continuously, people were confined to their homes.  
Crops in the fields drowned, beautiful mealies  
turned redish. Plentitude of food turned out to  
famine that was experienced during the period of  
the great seventeenth-century.")

Weather scenes also depict peoples's societal beliefs. The  
text describes a cold and chilly day when Mkabayi and Mmama  
were born:

("Kwakusebusika ngoNtulikazi, izulu lihoshe  
ishisandlu. Ilanga lase liphumile kuyikhona  
imisebe yalo isathi icoshacosha isithwathwa  
esabe simhlophe wu..." (Msimang 1982:1)

("It was in July during winter, it was a  
windy weather. It was at sunrise when the  
sun-rays melted the frost ...").

The Zulus believe that if the weather is dull and grey with  
biting winds, something unpleasant is forthcoming. As the  
queen mother was expectant, Jama expected that she will  
give birth to a son who will succeed him, unfortunately for

him, twins were born, and girls for that matter.

The following setting expresses the weather scene which depicts the death of the queen mother:

"Empeleni lalibalele licoba ilanga. Kwakunga-buzwa ukuthi lingahle line. Kusenjalo liqale ukuhloma. Libuyise amafu amanyama. Ngokuphazima kweso kundize amahlolamvula ... Lidume lindindizele liphinde lidume liqaqambe. Kube kubi impela, izinyanga zikhiphe abafana bezulu, sekuxega amabheshu..." (Buzani kuMkabayi, 1982:20)

("It was indeed a hot, weary day. It was clear that there was a possibility of rain. Suddenly dark thunder clouds started to accumulate. Black clouds were gathering. With the lighting flashes, swifts of lightning came striking. It thundered and rumbled, it thundered and throbbed, It started to get very bad indeed, the diviners took out the "heaven-herd boys" to cease the anger of the ancestors".)

When Shaka was killed, it rained uncontrollably. It is believed that the ancestors wept and mourned his death, as it was believed that Shaka was annointed by the ancestral spirits.

Dreams are also ways in which the spirits reveal themselves or their desires to men. The spirits often warn people in dreams against unsuspected, or against coming dangers, but they may also cause them to be ill and die. Dreams sent by the ancestral spirits can always be recognised, for they mostly come with a message from the dead. (Krige 1950:286-287).

Krige asserts that many a young man wins the heart of his lady by causing her to dream of him. Mkabayi experienced dreams depicting that she will meet a lover. As she portrayed the androgynous character, the ancestors showed her a woman that was rightful for his father, Jama, through various dreams. It indeed happened, she met a woman whom she fell in love with at first sight :

"Ebusuku aphuphe unina. Akasho lutho njalo  
kuye unina, uyambuka nje, ude emamatheka.  
Agcine emamathekile naye uMkabayi...  
Ufanekiso wokuqala ngokaBacobekile noMthaniya  
nomusa wabo. Ufanekiso wesibili ngokanina.  
Isimanga wukuthi uBacobekile akagqamile kangako  
kodwa unina kanye noMthaniya bagqame ngokufanayo.  
Bamatheka ngokufanayo..." (Buzani kuMakabayi,  
1982:75).

("At night she dreamt about her mother. She  
is not saying anything to her, she looks at

her and smiled. Mkabayi smiles back at her...

The first picture she had was that of

Bacobekile and Mthaniya. The second picture

was her mum's. What is surprising is that

Bacobekile's image was not conspicuous as

compared to that of Mthaniya and her mother.

They are both smiling ...")

From the ethical consciousness reflected in Msimang's work, the historical , political, cultural and religious aspects are reflective of the values of a society. These important elements are employed in the whole system of values that are reflected in African literature, particularly in the Zulu genres. The two novels have empirically valid statements about Zulu society at a given period of time. In other words, we have a work that is not only a distinctive piece of literature, but also an important piece of meta-history, meta-ethnography, and meta-theology.

## CHAPTER V

### 5. STYLE IN MSIMANG'S NOVELS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Style will form the basis of discussion in this chapter. Elements of style that are employed in the novel will be outlined. The following aspects of the novel will be highlighted in relation to style -content, plot, point of view, character, tenor of discourse. Focus will also be on the assessment of C.T. Msimang's style of writing.

#### 5.2 STYLE DEFINED

Style is the systematic variation of language. Because style is the systematic linguistic variation, it must focus on linguistic variation. On these basis, style is regarded as the management of language. Language is the basic element of style and it is through language that ideas are communicated. An appealing style is sure to have more attraction to critics or readers.

Msimang asserts that: To some critics style means the totality of techniques employed by an author in manipulating the language to express his thoughts, feelings and emotions. Among these we have Abrams (1981:190) who regards style as a manner of linguistic expression or a

manner of expressing whatever the author wants to say in prose or verse. Such critics then do not distinguish between bad or good style. On the other hand we get critics who emphasize effectiveness in the manner of expression. This means that to them, if a literary work manifests poor style, it has no style at all. Among these, Lucas (1974:16), defines style simply as the effective use of language (Msimang, 1986:177).

Good style is what is regarded as a higher, active principle of composition by which the writer penetrates and reveals the inner feelings of his subject. Through the individuality of the writer, his ideas and intent are expressed. It is therefore crucial in our discussion about style to refer to the most salient features of a work of a particular writer. Enkvist (1970:12) suggests the following approaches to style:

Style as a shell surrounding a pre-existing core of thought or expression; style as a set of individual characteristics; style as a deviation from the norm; style as those relations among linguistic entities that are stable in terms of wider spans of texts than sentences.

The above features on style illustrate the fact that style does not only refer to arrangements of words in a sentence.

Brook and Warren quoted by Enkvist view style as follows :

They say style is viewed merely to refer to the selection and ordering of language. Style is the aggregate of frequencies of linguistic items in two different senses. Style is the result of more than one stylistic item. For instance, a given word in a text only acquires stylistic significance by juxtaposition with other words. Secondly the study of style must not be restricted to phonological, morphological, lexical or syntactic observation, it must be made up of observations made at various levels (Enkvist, 1967:30).

### 5.3 ELEMENTS OF STYLE

Msimang contends that the basic element of style is language; a rich vocabulary which will allow the writer to choose the word that best communicates his ideas. Words form sentences and sentences form paragraphs. Again words can be used figuratively. Similarly, figures of speech are universal elements of style. These include humour, irony,

satire, sarcasm, hyperbole and imagery. Dialogue is another very important element of style (Msimang, 1986:178).

However, Msimang comments that a successful writer is the one who uses all these elements in an artistic manner. With regard to sentence construction, the writer should bear in mind that :

The strength of a sentence consists in such disposition of its several words and members as may tend most powerfully to impress the mind of the reader with the meaning which the author wishes to convey. It must be free from all redundant words (Blackman, 1923:85).

Msimang further says that the figures of speech must harmonise with the work. They should not stand apart as jewels or ornaments. They must not be the embellishment of ideas, they must be the ideas. Dialogue too, must harmonise with the theme of the work. It must not be artificial yet it must differ from the everyday conversation. It must supply new information, shed light on the characters and convey the theme and develop the plot (Msimang, 1986:179).

#### 5.4 STYLE IN THE NOVEL

In a novel style can be viewed according to the main constituents namely, content; plot; point of view; tenor of discourse; and all accompaniment of the linguistic format:

##### 5.4.1 CONTENT

Content focuses on how the novelist views his subject matter. Subject matter is what the novelist sets out to write about, ranging from politics, religion, culture, history, etc. The novelist may express his views about the quality of life and the society. He or she may tell us about his attitude towards a particular subject matter and this brings about theme of his narrative. The subject of discourse is realized through the manipulation of linguistic items. Various linguistic devices may be employed to depict her content. Content is also realized through the use of linguistic determinants like mode, dialect, personal factors, etc. Style links up with content through the use of language. Style is therefore content-bound.

##### 5.4.2 PLOT

The backbone of the novel is the plot. Plot holds various elements of the novel together and gives it a structure. The novelist manipulates linguistic devices

to develop the plot. Plot is therefore dependent on the writer's linking of words, and his choice of words ultimately colours his style. In the plot, devices like suspense, tension, conflict, etc. sustain the reader's interest in the narrative. The novelist develops his plot through the use of language which is blended in style. The novelist can deviate from the norm through his use of flashback and flashforward devices in an attempt to produce an artistic work of art, which is characterised by the sequential order of events. Writing a novel may be fictional. The writer however has the licence to violate the rules of grammar. This is what in literary jargon is called "poetic justice" or "poetic licence".

#### 5.4.3 POINT OF VIEW

Through combination and selection of words, the novelist may adopt a particular angle from which the story of the novel is told, and this is known as the point of view.

The novelist may use the first person mode or the third person mode of narration (omniscient or partially omniscient perspective). The novelist achieves this through the manipulation of the language. For example, she may use the first person subject concord /ngi- nga-/ (I) in her narrative. The point of view depends on the relationship between the narrator and the character or

hero or heroine. The narrator knows more than the character, i.e. he has more information at his disposal but he remains faithful to the ignorance of the character in order to achieve a credible suspense. According to Ngara (1982:16) "The ordering of incidents in a pattern", together with the point of view adopted by the author is what we will call "the narrative structure". The point of view in a narrative structure is therefore inherent in the plot.

#### 5.4.4 NAMING TECHNIQUE

Naming technique (the method of portraying characters) can elevate the style adopted by the novelist. Through deliberate and conscious use of the naming technique the novelist can bring his characters to the fore. For example in Buzani KuMkabayi, Mkabayi is given her name by the father. The name "Mkabayi" contains the possessive formative /mka-/, meaning "the wife of" (most likely her father). This is evident in that Mkabayi's character shows identification problems in relation to the androgynous personality she is portraying. Names have close relationships to the meaning of their functions. This is common in the Zulu tradition where the meaning of a name is often an expression of a wish that an individual will meet an ideal. Names are thus more than labels; they are in themselves part of a socialization process. Mkabayi has a special relationship with her

father especially after her mother's death. The linguistic items expressed by Mkabayi's name postulate the writer's style of writing.

Narrating a story requires the novelist to have characters - people who populate the world of the novel. Characters are used as the novelist's agents of communication. Therefore, with the writer's manipulation of the language we learn to characterize his characters. Naming technique is a feature that singles out the writer from other writers, for instance, in Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, Msimang makes use of names that influence the personality of his characters like Ncengani. Ncengani's name has been bestowed on her by MaSibisi to portray MaSibisi's evil personality. The name "Ncengani" means "not to bother about anyone", MaSibisi's behaviour both in speech and physical action in the novel conforms to the writers naming:

"Ngamqamba ngiqonde khona lokho  
phela uNcengani. Ngangibuza khona ukuthi  
kuzoze konakale kuphethe njena ngoba  
ngikhonzeleni, ngincengani kabani"  
(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:13).

("I gave her this name for a particular  
reason. I was questioning why I should  
allow things to go on as they are until

something goes wrong, for how long should I beg people for, because of this.")

A character in the novel may have idiosyncrasies which constitute his idiolect. Msimang, in Buzani KuMkabayi, describes Mudli's bravery in the following lines:

"Nokho nginesicelo sinye nje enkosini yami. Ngicela ukuba ngingafi ngokushaywa ngezagila sengathi ngingumthakathi. Noma umfokazana. Lokhu kuthunaza igazi lase-bukhosini. Ngicela ukufa njengeqhawe, ngiwe ngejozi. Ijozi yilona ebengihlala ngibhekene nalo ezimpini engangizilwa ngivikela lombuso kaNdaba. Yilesa kuphela isicelo sami" (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:130).

("I have only one plea to make to my king. I am pleading that I should not be killed by knobkerries as if I'm a witch or a nobody. This would affect the royal blood. I would like to die like a brave man, be killed with a spear. My life used to revolve around spears in wars protecting Ndaba's kingdom. This is my only plea").

In the above excerpt, Mudli expresses his bravery in deciding how his death should be conducted. Through the

stream of consciousness, as a form of characterization and through the writer's choice of words, Msimang is seen entering into Mudli's mind in order for us to bring to the fore what Mudli is thinking in a situation like the one mentioned above. Mudli's psychological make-up is portrayed to the reader by means of linguistic codes used by the writer. The role and actions played by each character in the narrative emerges from the writer's use of language. The dialogue that characters involve themselves with, is known as simulated medium because their conversation is fictional and is meant to represent spoken language.

#### 5.4.5 TENOR OF DISCOURSE

Ngara (1982:24) asserts that tenor of discourse is determined by the writer's tone of voice and choice of words. The tone may be informal or formal, light or heavy tone may be employed in the novel. Msimang in Buzani KuMkabayi, describes the solemn tone in Mkabayi's following words :

"Saba sikhulu isizungu sokushiywa nguMudli kuMkabayi, saba ngaphezu kwesokushiywa ngu-Senzangakhona ayemkhonze ngenhliziyo yakhe yonke. UMudli wayesefile. UMKabayi washaya izandla kakhulu, wazamula, wathi: 'Sazalwa nabanye namhla sesiguga nabanye ...'"

(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:131).

("It was such a big loss for Mkabayi to be left by Mudli, the loss was more than when Senzangakhona passed away though he was much dear to him. Mudli is now dead. Mkabayi loudly clapped her hands, yawned, and she said: 'We were born with other people and now we are ageing with other people' ...").

Msimang's tone as depicted from the above excerpt, is solemn and remorseful when describing Mkabayi's emotions, thoughts and feelings.

In Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, the high and heavy tone is identified in MaMbeje's utterances when the diviner revealed that MaSibisi is the sorcerer :

"Yeheni Bantu! MaSibisi!! Kanti sibhuqwa nguwe?" ... "Chithekani madoda uphelile umhlahlo ... Sengimnukile, sengimnukile umthakathi" (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:165).

("Oh my goodness! MaSibisi!! You are the one who's killing us?" ... "Disperse people the divination is over ... I have "sniffed out", "sniffed out" the sorcerer").

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF MSIMANG'S STYLE IN "AKUYIWE EMHLAHLWENI" AND "BUZANI KUMKABAYI"

From the basis of the above discussion on style, we have come to realise that style reflects the distinctive personality of the writer. This means that style represents the writer's beliefs and ideology. In this discussion we will focus on how the writer presents his purpose and meaning in terms of the stylistic devices he employs in his work. Basically, we will look at how words and sentences are arranged to give meaning to a text. This includes all accompaniment of the linguistic items mentioned in paragraph 5.4.

In both novels we depict two types of sentences that are used by the writer to derive his meaning. Where he uses short sentences these are coupled with interjectives and ideophones. The following are examples of short sentences found in different texts:

"Zanele, Zanele. Hawu! Zanele. Zane...le,  
... Ngafa isisu ngane kama ... ma.  
Ha...wu! Ngafa Zane...le. Ngibizeleni  
umama ... Ngibizele ... Hawu!  
MaNzuza! Mbambe bo! MaNzuza"  
(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983: 48-49).

("Zanele, Zanele. Oh! Zanele. Zane...le,

... My tummy is killing me my ...  
sister. O...h! I'm dying Zane...le  
Call my mum ... call ... Oh! MaNzuza!  
Hold her! MaNzuza").

Short sentences are also portrayed in Buzani KuMkabayi:

"Hhawu! Niyangibulala bafowethu na?  
Kodwa ngenzeni kini, bantabakababa?  
Ngenzeni, Dingane? Ngenzeni, Mhlangana?  
... Hhawu! Niyangibulala, bafowethu,  
Ningibulalela ubukhosi? Kodwa ngeke  
nilibuse. Ziyeza izinyoni zezulu.  
Jama, ngeke nilibuse, liyobuswa  
zinyoni ... Hhawu! Mbopha! Uya-  
ngibulala? Uyangibulala nawe Mbopha  
KaSithayi na? Hhawu! Ngikwethe ..."  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982: 153-154).

(Ooh! Are you killing me my brothers?  
What have I done to you, my brothers?  
What have I done, Dingane? What have  
I done Mhlangana? ... Ooh! You are  
killing me, my brothers, you are  
killing me for the kingdom? But you  
will not rule this land. The whites  
are coming. I swear, you will not rule  
this land, it will be ruled by the

whites ... Ooh! Mbopha! You are  
killing me. You are also killing me  
Mbopha, Sithayi's son? Ooh! I trust ...").

The short expression "Ngafa isusu" is figurative, it expresses severe stomach-ache. Again the expressions "Ziyeza izinyoni zezulu" denotes figurative meaning "whites are coming" and "liyobuswa izinyoni ..." is also figurative, it denotes that "the whites will rule the Zulu nation". The figurative expressions employed in both texts could only be understood by the people who embody the meaning of their traditional culture.

Because both novels have tragic events, and usually when tragic characters are in emotional stress and in a awe inspiring situation, writers usually employ short sentences in their art-form. Msimang also applies this stylistic device in his narrative to portray emotions, feelings and attitude of tragic characters. This device also contributes to what the theme of his literary work of art reveals and also determines the relevant mood of certain events.

Where long sentences are used in the narration, sombreness, tension, relief and happiness are types of moods experienced in this particular narration. This stylistic device changes the regularity of tempo - usually narration is elongated. This is evident in the following examples

where a sombre tone is experienced:

"Hawu! Yeka okwami, kuyingaba khona ngoba akufani nokwabanye. Nami ngangithi uThwala ngiyomzalela indodana kulo muzi wakhe iGugu ... ngangithi uThwala ngomzalela inkosana nendlalifa, kodwa akusabanganjalo. Nami ngangangithi ngizozizalela ummeleli nomphenduleli wami, kodwa akusabanganjalo. Nami ngangithi ngiyofana nabantu bonke ngishiye induku ebandla, kodwa akusabanganjalo" (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:1)

("Oh! My!, my problem is strange it is unlike other peoples'. I also thought I would bear Thwala a son in his iGugu homestead ... I thought I would bear a son for Thwala who will be his heir, but it has not been like that. I thought I would bear a protector and a representative, but it has not been like that. I thought I would be like other people and leave somebody behind, but it has not been like that.")

These words were uttered by MaSibisi expressing remorse, she feels bitter for not bearing a son who will be an heir at Thwala's homestead. The above linguistic expressions reflect a sombre tone. This sad tone is also expressed by

the novelist in Buzani KuMkabayi. Mkabayi is grief-stricken, she now realizes the errors she has committed religiously and politically. She is remorseful and repentant. Her greatest pain comes when she realizes that by allowing Dingane to murder Shaka, she consented over the dissolution of the Zulu kingdom she feels cursed and curses herself. She mourns for the death of Shaka. Msimang's linguistic codes reveal this tone :

"Ngikhumbula nomntanomfowethu, uSiShaka  
Kasishayeki. Ngimkhumbule ngoba naye  
wayengenalo elinye igugu ngaphandle  
kombuso kaNdaba. Wayefuze mina  
uDlungwane, Siwangu. Akazange abe  
namagugu amabili asadla amabele ...  
Kepha nxa usukhulile inhliziyo iyala uku-  
bheka phambili, ibheka emuva, ikhumbule  
okwayizolo nakuthangi. Yingalokho ngithi  
kuwe ngikhumbule kude ekhaya. Ngikhumbule  
imifula nezintaba zakithi. Ngikhumbule  
nomuzi kababa, uNobamba obambe amadoda"  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:192-193).

("I'm missing my brother's son, Shaka  
the great. I miss him because he also did  
not have any other pride expect the Zulu  
kingdom. He resembled me, Siwangu. He did  
not have two kingdoms whilst he was alive ...

It happens though that when you get old you  
look back unlike looking ahead of you,  
thinking about yesterday and the day before.  
That is why I say to you I'm home sick. I'm  
missing rivers and mountains of my home. I'm  
missing my father's homestead, NoBamba".)

The above long sentences reveal sadness and remorse. They depict the milieu which forms part of the constituent aspect of stylistic device.

Msimang integrates simple and compound language to express his linguistic performance. He blends his language with archaic and simple words to enhance his readers and display the richness of the Zulu language.

The inclusion of difficult and unusual words is not intended to obscure his subject of discourse, but to develop and upgrade the Zulu language, for example:

"Wathatha ulwendo olude esephinde-  
la emuva" (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:168).

("She undertook a long journey home.")

ulwendo	>	uhambo	(journey)
unzima	>	ukhulelwe	(pregnant)

The above words are examples of unusual words in this text, and have a low frequency in the everyday communicative speech, their inclusion in the texts will serve to develop and enrich our language.

Msimang's language usage is rich, his proverbs and idioms are integrated in the texts. The employment of idioms and proverbs is not distorted, they have been used in their normal sense. His artwork is even more heightened where he makes use of ideophones, figures of speech and images. The following devices are examples reflecting the richness of the language :

- ... ezamasiso ziqhuba kanjani > impahla owangibekala yona (the livestock you kept for me). (idiomatic expression)
- ukuphoqoka okwezele lommbila > ukufa masinya (to die instantly) (idiomatic expression)
- ukhukho lumuka nomoya > useyafa (he is dying) (proverb)
- ayizwe ishaya kancane ithu du...du...du... > (the heart is beating slowly) (ideophone)
- usekhotheme uDlungwane > akasekho ... (Shaka is dead) (Euphemism)
- ziyeza izinyoni zezulu > symbolizes aeroplanes boarded by whites (image)
- liyobuswa izinyoni > white rulers (image) (personification) etc.

Poetic devices like repetition are interposed and

integrated into Msimang's text to create that aesthetic mode dictated by the artist's purpose :

"Nami ngangithi uThwala ngomzalela  
indodana kulo muzi wakhe iGugu ..."  
"Ngangithi uThwala ngomzalela indodana  
nendlalifa, kodwa akusabanganjalo".  
"Nami ngangithi ngizozizalela ummeleli ...,  
kodwa akusabanga njalo". "Nami ngangithi  
ngiyofana nabantu bonke ... kodwa akusabanga  
njalo". (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:1)

"Ngikhumbula nomntanomfowethu ..."  
"Ngikhumbule ngoba wayengenalo ..."  
"... ikhumbule okwayizolo nakuthangi".  
"... Ngikhumbule kude ekhaya."  
"Ngikhumbule imifula nezintaba ..."  
"Ngikhumbule nomuzi kababa ..."  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982: 192-193).

The above excerpts also reflect poetic devices like rhyme, rhythm, assonance, alliteration, etc. These are resonant in Msimang's novels and are skillfully employed to formulate a good artistic form or structure.

Msimang has made use of the foreshadowing and flashback devices. This device is what Ngara refers to as "paralinguistic device". The foreshadowing device is

mirrored in the following passage:

"Ngenza isifungo, mntakwethu, ngathi  
ngiyogcagca nezintaba zakwaZulu.  
Wo! Maye! Ngiyeke ngezintaba zakwa-  
Zulu ... Nxa ungibona nginje, nje  
ngilidela, mntakababa. Mmama, kunje,  
futhi kuyohlala kunje, noma nini"  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:69).

("I made a vow, my dear sister,  
I said I will get married to the Zulu  
mountains. As you see me, I am a  
spinster, dear sister. Mmama, the  
situation is like this right now, it  
will remain like this, for ever".)

The aforementioned device is used as a means of prophesying  
for the dreamer, the manner in which things are going to  
turn out. Subsequently, Mkabayi does not marry, she  
remains the spinster of Zululand (Nobamba) for the rest of  
her life.

Flashback is also utilized in this text as part of the  
paralinguistic device. It is exhibited in the following  
abstract :

"... Ngisemusha ngala ukuyongena

esigodlweni sikayihlokazi, uJobe,  
kanti kuzothi lapho sengidingiswa  
bese ngibekwa ngaphansi kwesandla  
sendodana yalowoJobe engamala  
ebusheni bami" (Buzani KuMkabayi,  
1982: 194).

("... When I was still young I  
refused to marry in your father's  
royal kingdom, Jobe, and when I was  
expelled I am placed under the  
supervision of Jobe's son, whose  
father I refused to marry".)

What makes Msimang a prudent writer is the artistic usage  
of images which enhances the aesthetic quality of his  
artform. The images are portrayed figuratively and by  
using traditional symbols.

He describes the physical features of his characters using  
different images - Thwala's being is described using  
traditional symbols as "umnumzane owabe edla kusale"  
(idiom) - (a rich man). MaSibisi's features are portrayed  
as "Ubenjana lwenkosikazi engenasithunzi" (a tiny woman).  
... Unguntongwana sengathi akancelanga" (... she is lean as  
if she was not breast fed) (metaphor) - "Wayesho  
ngezinguzunga zamehlo okusengathi aghutshwa amanye"  
(personification) (she has very big eyes). "Inhloko yona

umbonjolwana nje, ayehlukene kakhulu nendlu kathekwane" (metaphor) (her head-dress is untidy). "... isidwaba siyayacaza, sibhula amazolo ngapha nangapha ..." (her leather kilt is moving up and about) (personification) (Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:2).

In Buzani KuMkabayi, Msimang employs cultural images to drive his point home in re-educating Africans with regard to African values, tradition and religion to enable to re-locate their identity. The following traditions are portrayed in this novel:

"... Kuthe kusuka lapho kwase kwala imbeleko, inkosi yaze yasizwa yinyanga yasezansi ngasoNgoye eyafike yenza izihlambezo ezashaya emhlolweni, yakhulelwa iNdlunkulu" (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:2).

(" ... When the Queen mother failed to conceive, the King sought help from the traditional doctor who gave the Queen some medicine that helped her conceive.")

Culturally, the father of a child does not experience the birth of his child, nor does he enter the room where his wife is giving birth. The writer included this tradition to expose the mistake that is done in the modern trend whereby African men form part of the delivery crew

(obstetricians):

"... Ukuba kakwenqabi isiko, ngabe uziyela yena lapho iNkosikazi ikhona, ayoziBonela, ..." (Buzani KuMkabayi, (1982: 3).

("... If the culture was not prohibiting him, he would personally go where his wife is, and go and see for himself ...".)

Children born in the royal household are bestowed names during a special ceremony called " iJadu". Princes or princesses are given gifts during this ceremony.

"Lwafika olungaliyo lweJadu, uZulu waphelela ngezinkani kwaNobamba ... UJama waqala ngokukhunga uMkabayi, waMkhunga ngogebedu lwenkone, wayeseza kuMmama wamkhunga ngesiqengqo esimaqanda kawayiba ..." (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:9).

("When the day of celebrating "iJadu" came, all Zulus were gathered at Nobamba district (the king's palace). Both Mkabayi and Mmama were showered with gifts - each got different types of cows".)

"IJadu" ceremony also refers to inter-tribal dances which were arranged by chiefs to bring prospective couples into touch with one another (Krige, 1950:217). This custom is pictured by the reader through the linguistic items from this text.

"Emukelwe ngelikhulu isasasa lapha  
kwaMthethwa uSenzangakhona. Kube  
nelikhulu iJadu leli kusina intsha ..."  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:119).

("Senzangakhona received a ceremonial  
welcome from the Mthethwa tribe.

There was a big "IJadu" ceremony organized  
where youngsters were dancing ...")

More poetic devices are encompassed to illustrate Msimang's style of writing. His narration is interspersed with traditional praises or oral poetry originating from a traditional way of life. This type of poetry has a definite place and function in certain rites which are an inherent part of the traditional existence of any group of people. Their function is to proclaim publicly the praises of the chief, or any notable visitor, at public ceremonies or privately. It was also a tribal custom to applaud a King whenever you come across him. For instance, Mswelazonke was sent to deliver the message about the birth of Mkabayi and Mmama, he first addressed the King by

proclaiming his praises :

UJama ka Ndaba,

UJama kaluthwana kangakanani,

Nasenhlamvini yomkhont' angenela,

Nasengatsheni angaphathelela.

Obengumqingo wanga itshe laseZihlalo,

Ebelingalayezwa ngabaphathi' izinhhlendla,

Thina bamaklwa singathath' ichopha sophule ...

(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982: 1-2).

The writer selected the most important incidents in the history of the Zulu nation and sings relevant praises to achieve his artistic use of language. When Dingane was annointed to the Zulu throne the following praises were said :

"UMgabadelì

Ogabadele inkundla yakwaBulawayo.

Odonswe ngezintaba ezimakhelekethe,

UMBombosh' omnyama.

Isiziba esiseMavivane, Dingane,

Isiziba esinzonzo sinzonzobele,

Siminzise umuntu ethi uyageza,

Waze washona nangesicoco."

(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:165).

Songs form part of the constituents of the stylist-device used by Msimang in his narrative expression. Songs form part of the ritual value in the lives of the Zulu people, and there are many occasions in Zulu life where songs are part of the ceremony of some important events. Before the "actual" divination "umhlahlo", junior diviners welcome the people from Mfongosi district who came for divination. Several songs were sung as a form of warming-up the diviners who will conduct the actual divination process :

"... Lilodwa eligida ngehubo elithi:

'Bajabula bonke uma ngilele phansi.

Ngagula ngalala phansi!' Ithi isemnandi

leyo kugalwe enye ethi:

'Ngibuza kuwe dlozi, lami; ngithi

ngikhanyisele dlozi lami.'

Abanye bahuba isiXhosa bathi:

'Kwadidiyel' unonkala ngasemlanjeni.'

(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:162).

("... One diviner was dancing and singing saying:

'Bajabula bonke uma ngilele phansi.

Ngabula ngalala phansi!'

Whilst they were enjoying this one they started another one which says:

'Ngibuza kuwe dlozi lami; ngithi

ngikhanyisele dlozi lami.'

Some were singing Xhosa songs saying:

'Kwadidiyel' unonkala ngasemlanjeni').

Dialogue is also used by the writer to achieve a particular effect in a particular context of narration. If used artistically, dialogue should not distort information. Excessive use of dialogue in prose may affect the compactness of the narrative and reduce it into drama. Msimang has succeeded in using dialogue to drive his point home. Dialogue may take different forms in narration:

Dialogue may be regular, that is, it is used in normal conversation, tone is usually regulated :

"Ungibona ngilapha nje ngithi ngizo-  
ngizoxazulula yona leyonkinga. Ngi-  
zofunela ubaba isingani esizosala siba  
ngumduduzi wakhe nxa sengiphuma mina  
kwaNobamba sengiyozifunela elami inxiwa.  
Okukhulu kakhulu, mntanomuntu, ukuthi  
ngifuna ukuvusa indlu yakwethu engi-  
kholwa ukuthi yadilika ngenxa yami ..."  
(Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:81).

("As I am here I have come to solve  
that problem. I am here to look for  
a soul-mate for my father who will  
comfort him when I get married and

no longer at Nobamba. More than anything, my dear, I am trying to re-build my father's family which was destroyed because of me ...").

Dialogue can be used figuratively. Euphemism is used in addressing the king. The chief's name is sacred, and it is addressed by the "hlonipha" custom. The chief is usually called by his praise-names, such as "Noble Elephant" Jama is address by Mswelazonke as follows :

"Ndlov' enamandla! Ndlovu edla naba-sondezeli bayo! Wena kaPhunga no-Mageba! Indlukulu iyaphila, silo sa-makhosi!" (Buzani KuMkabayi, 1982:3).

("Powerful elephant! elephant that eats with closer ones! You son of Phunga and Mageba! The Queen Mother is alive, "King of lions!"

Dialogue can be reflected in a commentary form, giving narration a faster tempo. Here the narrator usually gives some report and sentences are shorter than usual in this regard.

The narrator gives a report about the divination process:

"Wo! suka, kube sengathi bambizile.  
Athathe umkhonto wakhe awubuyisele  
kwesokudla, ihawu neshoba kwesokunxele  
anikele kubo esemubi njengezulu liza  
nesangquma. Kuthi lapho enikina khona  
umzonya, ukhangwe izingungulo zamehlo  
ezibomvu, ezibona ngaphakathi kwesikhumba.  
Eziggolozela umuntu kuxhaphazele  
isisu, indoda ixegelwe ibheshu kanti  
ibilinkamfule ngefosi lagina ..."  
(Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni, 1983:162).

("Oh! yeah, they should not have called  
him. He took his spear and handled it  
with his right hand, the shield and the  
gnu tail on the left hand and went  
straight to them furiously. He looked  
at them starring as if he could see  
through their flesh. His looks make  
you have "butterflies in the stomach",  
and shake the man's skin covering even  
though it was tight").

Dialogue may express the emotional feelings of the  
characters as in the following situation :

"Singquzuke isililo eGugwini. Ezwakale  
phezulu uMaMkhize: 'Howu! Ngiyazi...sa

nkosi yami. Ngiyakwazi... sa okwase...  
Gugwini. Hi...hi...hi... Ngiyakwesaba  
okwaseGugwini'. UMaNzuza naye ehluleke  
ukuzibamba: 'Ho...wu! Howu nkosi yami  
... Yadindiliza intombi kaThwala engangezi-  
ntaba! Kazi uphi Ntombi kaSibisi. Ngiyazisa  
ngomntwana ongenacala. Hi...hi...hi...'  
UJamele naye ehluleke ukuzibamba." (Akuyiwe  
Emhlahlweni, 1983:50).

("Mourning broke up at Gugwini. MaMkhize  
cried loudly: 'Ooh! my ... Lord.  
I am sca...red from what I see here at  
Gugwini.' MaNzuza also broke into tears:  
'Oo...h! Ooh... my Lord ... Thwala's  
beautiful daughter is dead! I wonder where  
MaSibisi is. Why should the innocent child  
die. Hm... hm... hm...' Jamela also broke  
down and wept").

Personally, I feel that Msimang's style of presenting his artwork is perfect, the subject of discourse is clearly presented in the form of well selected linguistic codes. Though some readers and critics consider his language usage difficult to comprehend, I personally commend it, without the rich figurative and metaphorical language and inclusion of traditional images, Msimang has employed in his work, the Zulu language will cease development, and therefore it

should not be compromised. I believe that assertiveness towards one's language increases one's knowledge through its character inherent in the language. In a language however, there is culture and our whole human import is displayed by the enriched linguistic codes used.

CHAPTER VI

6. CONCLUSION

In our concluding statement we would like to investigate the feelings of the Zulu writers, to see how they relate in writing the concept of "African Literature". The reason why we make this investigation is that besides the works contributed by European writers towards the growth of African Literature, there are Native African writers who have written on African themes through the medium of English. Again there is a considerable argument regarding the correct classification of this type of literature. Some people contend that it should be called "African Literature"; but such a categorisation would render the phrase "African Literature" undesirably vague because African writers who have written in English are included in this classification. African writers who will form the investigation process are CLS Nyembezi, BW Vilakazi and JC Dlamini.

6.1 Nyembezi's Literary Views

Firstly, Nyembezi envisages his lifetime aim as being to preserve the Zulu cultural heritage for future generations. Nyembezi does this mostly in his publications either explicitly or indirectly. S.D. Ngcongwane as quoted by Canonici, sees Nyembezi's novels as portraying history and

culture of peoples at a crossroads, torn between Western and African values and norms. This portrayal is done in the most amused, detached yet sympathetic manner. From this, Nyembezi finds refuge where artistry and hope reign supreme. So inspirational are Nyembezi's novels that critics have complained that such novels are not available in English for a wider public and thus fail to influence change in societal attitudes as other outstanding literary works have been able to do. However, Nyembezi's response to this is that his novels are like prayers -they are spoken in his natural language but that "if anyone wants to do a translation of my novels, I have no objection, but I cannot bring myself to do it" (Canonici, 1985:75).

One of Nyembezi's aim as a writer was to preserve cultural material of the Zulu nation. This is highlighted in the present ever-changing social climate where the pressures of Western culture, Christianity and economy are driving people away from the extended family system which was the guardian of ancient traditions. This is even more so due to an educational system based on Western scientific principles coupled with media technology which is rapidly transforming Zulu society. As a result, the present-day Zulu faintly resembles his great-grandfather who lived at the beginning of the century. Thus, the danger of a loss of identity and losing the nation's soul is apparent.

Nyembezi's efforts are not to halt the process of

modernization in mid-air but rather to find one's cultural roots which have been neglected over the years so that young generations may come to appreciate and take pride in their origin.

Therefore, Nyembezi's aim to preserve the Zulu culture is to foster a national identity among the Zulu people. This has been achieved through the novels, through research work on Zulu customs, through educational material and even through the 'Igoda' series of school readers. Richard M. Dorson (1972:3) notes that only recently has the "rich luxuriant folklore of Africa" taken prominence, more so because of a well prepared élite who is able to collect and analyse. Nyembezi definitely fits this description by managing to blend the old and the new giving it a balanced view of the Zulu people and to show how their development shall take place (Dorson in Canonici, 1985:76).

## 6.2 Vilakazi's Literary Views

Vilakazi speaks of a Bantu Literature which is a cultural development with its own means of communication used by the Bantu people in their own individual way. Furthermore, African literature implies the expression of the Bantu mind and heart in revealing what we call beauty with aesthetic pleasure to both writer and reader where the Bantu proves his ability to "stand alone". This indicates the isolation of all books where the Bantu have contributed in style and

thought and have helped maintain the independence and integrity of a new genre which may be a significant contribution to the world's artistic heritage.

In the initial survey of Nguni written literature the writers are divided into two fields: Firstly, the forerunners of Nguni literature who used the European tradition in producing African literature, and secondly, the field of real Nguni literature where the authors themselves are Nguni (Vilakazi, 1946:270).

### 6.3 Dlamini's Literary Views

Dlamini, as quoted by Mseleku, asserts that his literary works depict the "truth" about African people. He believes that Africans should not delve into criticising Whites for our oppression, but that we should look at our faults and how we played a role in oppressing ourselves. He asserts that whites have acculturated us and yet they do not give up their identities. We Africans oppressed ourselves by "playing to the white man's tune by giving up our own identity". This is the sign of lacking independent thinking and self-esteem. We must blame ourselves for instilling images of insecurity and inferiority complexes.

Dlamini's major concern in his literary works is to uproot ignorance infiltrated into the African minds. The reason being that our nation is the most deprived, undernourished

and illiterate. He feels that people are somehow confused and look upon whites for liberation. He believes that we have to educate ourselves and liberate our minds into believing in white supremacy. In so doing, we need to look at our faults and rectify our mistakes. He asserts that we should liberate ourselves by acknowledging that we have our own values, traditions, religion and our own identity.

The role played by Dlamini's works with regard to white supremacy and colonialism is portrayed in most of his poems where he criticises the whites for their education which has instilled the kind of ignorance and attitude we have of ourselves. In his poems he express that what made them supreme is our ignorance because we have made them supreme by elevating their language, culture and identity. He still lays his emphasis on self-criticism.

Dlamini's employment of the target language in his works fulfils his ultimate aim - writing for the Africans, the self-enslaved and ignorant people. Though his language usage is considered by some interested individuals as problematic and difficult to read, he asserts that without the rich metaphorical language and the abstract images he employs, poetry will cease to be poetry. He feels he cannot compromise it, as it is an essential ingredient of poetry. He strongly emphasizes the point that when you study English, you are considered not to have done English if you have not read Shakespeare. What makes Shakespeare

unique and classical is his language, he does not compromise it. He advises that people must learn to be assertive and learn to accept reality inherent in their culture because in language there is culture, knowledge and our whole human import. He finally expresses that our languages determine who we are and he therefore feels that the source of our freedom is ourselves since we have the key (Mseleku, 1993:70-77).

To conclude this dissertation, I would like to commend Msimang for the literary works he has contributed to the African education in general. With regard to the two novels under discussion, Msimang's opinions are parallel to what Nyembezi, Vilakazi and Dlamini assert in relation to the African literary standards. Like Msimang, their utmost aim is at preserving the Zulu cultural heritage for future generations. This is seen from a number of publications he has made which portray mostly history and culture of the Zulu nation. Msimang's novels also depict the concept of "reverse acculturation" which expresses the reversal of the European culture. In these novels Msimang is bringing awareness of the African identity that is determined by ethnic, historical and sociological factors found in our African literature. Of essentiality again is the intimate correlation to the cultural, religious and social structures which define the expressive schemes of African people and societies.

In view of the communicative language used in Msimang's novels, we feel that the novelist has expressed the historical, political, cultural and social views about the quality of life of the Zulu people using the relevant linguistic items. His presentation of the subject of discourse depicts the perfect thematic structure of his works. Readers get to know the world that the novelist has created because his style of writing is readable. The language used by our writer draws upon and reflects the life visions of the peoples' background - reflecting their style of living, their beliefs and their values.

As a folklorist, Msimang forms part of the "rich, luxuriant folklore of Africa" as suggested by Dorson quoted by Canonici (1972:3). Msimang, like Nyembezi is also considered a well-prepared élite who is ready to collect and analyse folklore. His novels reveal that he (Msimang) has realised the importance of the great value of Zulu customs and literary forms which were used in the past. He has also managed to infuse the traditional (oral) and the modern (written) to educate people about their own identity and the importance of their culture in different class systems - at the grassroots level and in ivory towers.

In fostering a national identity among the Zulu people, Msimang has achieved it through the inclusion of Zulu customs. Different traditions are made explicit to the young and old to help them maintain the independence and

integrity of their world view. Despite the fact that many African writers portray racial themes in their works, Msimang has proved capable of revealing the depth and richness of African life. The most remarkable thing about Msimang is that he is a conservative - meaning that, he has no inclination to absorb alien influences and manners, and is not willing to adapt to foreign tradition. Reflecting classical traditions like icece, ijadu, ihlambo, umhlahlo, ukushweleza, etc. it is clear that Msimang is a conservative Zulu man and a purist of his language in that in language, there is knowledge about culture and the whole African human import. Broadly speaking, he is a man of integrity.

Finally, we would assert that the evolution in the history of Black African literature in this century that we have just retraced - i.e. from assimilation with European civilization to a re-appreciation of African civilization followed by a questioning of Western cultural hegemony - has its counterpart in European literature. From the contributions in African prudent writers, belief in the cultural superiority of the West has been shaken bit by bit. We will finally commend all writers like Msimang, Nyembezi, Vilakazi and Dlamini, who have attempted to analyze the African experiences and offer us a reverse image of the usual social relationships between Western culture and African image.

In the documentary review broadcasted on Radio-Metro (1993, September 09), Mphahlele emphasized assertiveness of the African consciousness. He asserted that being conscious of our Africanism interprets the African personality and identity. It also expresses an ideology of the African society. He argued that African consciousness is not a racist ideology, rather is an assertive, self-reliant, self-pride ideology depicting "ubuntu". "Ubuntu" is a religious ideology and does not ostracize other races.

The state of the Zulu novel beyond 1945, is very well represented by Christian Themba Msimang - an artist of no mean talent.

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