

THE MANIPULATION OF HISTORY IN THE NOVEL

***YEKANINI* by J.J.J. GWAYI**

By

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**SUBMITTED IN PART FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MAGISTER ARTIUM**

IN THE

DEPARTMENT OF NGUNI LANGUAGES

AT

VISTA UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR R.S. CHAPOLE

OCTOBER 2000

SOWETO



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DECLARATION

I declare that The Manipulation of History in the Novel, *Yekanini*, by Jessie Joyce Gwayi, is my own work, and that all sources used or quoted in the novel have been indicated and acknowledged in terms of complete references and that the thesis was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.



SONNY JOHANNES MABENA

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Julia Modera, and
my only son, Bonginkosi Solomon.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My deepest gratitude goes to Professor R.S. Chaphole, my supervisor, for his untiring guidance, tolerance and encouragement without which the study might not have been completed. *Thank you, sir. Usihole kwaze kwaba lapha.*

I am deeply indebted to Dr. N.J. Manyaka and Dr. M.M.R. Dube for the resources they willingly provided to me and made available for my use.

My sincere thanks go to Mrs E. Makhele and Mrs S. Malinga for their motherly encouragement even when, at some stage, I contemplated giving up. Had it not been for their encouragement, the ship would have sunk before reaching the harbour.

My special thanks go to Mrs B. Viljoen for helping me by checking some of the shortcomings in the study.

Lastly, to my wife, Rose, who tolerated me when I temporarily neglected her while I was busy with my studies.

SUMMARY

This study envisages J.J. Gwayi's usage of history in writing her novel, *Yekanini*. The study shows Gwayi's success in writing an historical novel and how the novel is linked to the past.

History refers to something which happened in the past. Gwayi has based her novel (current) on the novels written in the past (precursors). The concepts of intertextuality, influence and parasite have helped me to find traces of Ntuli's *Umbuso KaShaka* and Mofolo's *Chaka* in Gwayi's novel, *Yekanini*. Gwayi has tried to reinterpret the misinterpretations in the work of the two precursor writers. In finding misinterpretations I compare what each writer says about Shaka and his mother, Nandi, and evaluate the declarations and check the reliability of the information and the reality of the novel.

The study also tries to find out what and to what extent might have influenced Gwayi to write this novel. Gwayi herself says that she has read many Zulu and English books and found them all wrong. She has written *Yekanini* to right the wrongs of the past.

The role played by the individual characters has been shown. It is now clear that in writing about either Shaka or Nandi, it would be a mistake to leave out the other. Gwayi sums it up by saying, "The work of an artist would be incomplete."

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

This is a study of Gwayi's historical novel, *Yekanini*. "Yekanini" is a Zulu exclamation of surprise meaning "O gosh!" or "O my!" The novel accounts on the early life of Shaka, the son of Senzangakhona. The history will be focused on in more detail in section 1.3. A novel based on history is known as an historical novel. Writing an historical novel is bringing fiction to history. This entails the use of style. According to Chatsman (1970:15), style

... can be seen as a departure from a set of patterns which have been labelled as a norm.

In support of Chatsman, Sebeok (1960:109), declares the following:

Style may be investigated, both as deviation from a norm and as a system of coherent ways or patterns of doing things.

Gwayi uses history in this novel – history can therefore be called the style of the writer. The writer may choose to write a social, religious or political novel. Gwayi chose an historical novel – the manipulation of history in her novel makes it an

historical novel. Historical novels centre on events of the past. Van Gorpert et al (1984:270) states:

When the time of the novel is connected to the past, we get an historical novel.

The historical novel can be distinguished from other novels by the presence of a special link with history; not merely with a real building or real event, but with a real person among the fictitious ones. It always has an historical framework or point of reference, e.g. KwaZulu, Shaka, the famous king of the Zulu, etc. The difference between an historical novel and an ordinary novel is best described by Scott (1971:4) when he says:

When life is seen in the context of history, we have a novel: when a novel's characters live in the same world with historical persons, we have an historical novel.

The historical novel is a form of fictional narrative which constructs history and creates it in an imaginative way. Both historical and fictional characters may appear. Though writing fiction, the good novelist researches his/her chosen period thoroughly and strives for verisimilitude. Verisimilitude refers to the likeliness to the truth, and therefore the appearance of being true or real, even though fantastic. This suggests that if the writer has done his/her work well, the reader will find the result to be an

acceptable presentation of reality or truth. It simply implies familiarity, believability and reality, which all lead to acceptability.

In the last fifty years this kind of fiction has become extremely popular. Writers of historical novels realise that our valuable historical knowledge may become extinct. Clayton (1976:36) confirms it when he writes:

When the conflicts of the pre-Revolutionary colonial racist society sharpens, the white South African novelist inevitably becomes concerned with apocalypse; possible extinction, and possible survival.

Many writers of historical novels unconsciously write with the aim of preserving our desirable past. Gwayi, by writing *Yekanini*, is among those writers who strive for the survival and preservation of our valuable ancient sources which, if not preserved in the form of historical novels or history books, might be lost for ever in our societies.

A novel is a prose narrative expressing the views of the writer. It is written about the lives of the people of the past. It portrays the lives of the individual characters. It brings the past to the contemporary reader. This premise is supported by Wesseling (1960:...) when she writes:

The function of the historical novel is to compensate for the incapacity of antiquarian historiography to mediate between the past and the contemporary

reading public.

In this manner there is no loss in the present generation since *Yekanini* and other historical novels appear to be purely didactics. They become a thread of mediation or arbitration between the present and the past societies. This makes them reliable sources from the valuable past – the past with the required information, and the present as *tabula rasa*. "Tabula rasa" refers to a blank sheet or lack of information and implies a willingness to learn or know.

Having given a brief explanation of the category of novel in which *Yekanini* falls, the focus will now be shifted to the content of this chapter, namely aims, scope and framework. This involves an analysis of the novel. In analysing the novel, a brief outline will be given, while intertextuality, influence, parasite and characterisation will be explained in some depth. In the explanation and analysis, comparison of the precursor and the contemporary novel will be essential. Comparison is an important tool or yardstick for the reader to determine whether Gwayi has succeeded in writing or reproducing a quality novel. A "quality novel" is one which appears real and contains acceptable information. Comparison will also show us how she successfully manipulates history in the writing of her novel.

Since the study is entirely based on history, it was necessary to read as many historically based novels and books as possible in order to obtain sufficient and relevant information for the completion of the study. Without extensive reading one cannot easily compile such an exciting report. Christie et al (1980:9), in their argument, state:

History approach requires too much reading from a student in areas which are more properly the hunting grounds of historians and political scientists.

It was not easy to collect and select all the information. Existing sources contain some information which is relevant, but also information that has no bearing on this study. The study itself, being an historical study, requires only historical information. One cannot include scientific or psychological material in this particular study, since it will then no longer be historical literature. Literature is a form of action of which Fischer (1970:207) states:

Born of reality, it acts back upon reality.

The novel must show the world as a changing environment and also help to change it. This is shown through the actions and the sayings of the characters. The gradual shaping of the life of Shaka and the development of hatred among the inhabitants of esiKlebheni is observed in character portrayal. Character portrayal refers to what the characters do and say – it implies their actions and words.

1.1 Aims

One may speak of subsidiary and main aims. Subsidiary aims are aims less important than the main aims, but have an important role to play in the development

of the plot and theme. Therefore their role must not be underestimated. Main aims will be meaningless without subsidiary aims. In this case the subsidiary aims will be to give a brief outline of the novel to make it easier for the critic to understand the study and be able to analyse the literary work of Gwayi. This will enable one who reads intertextuality to understand this study better. In a nutshell, it is to facilitate better understanding of the study.

The main aim will be to trace the prints of other novels such as Ntuli's *Umbuso KaShaka* and Mofolo's *Chaka* in Gwayi's novel, *Yekanini*. This will be done through the theory of intertextuality. Influence and parasite will also be dealt with. They help to fulfil the trends of intertextuality. No one has ever tried to trace the presence of Ntuli's and Mofolo's work in *Yekanini*. Should this study be a success, many readers will benefit from it. This will also help to awaken the interest of future students and motivate them to try and find more of the said prints. This also applies to other novels.

Characterisation will be dealt with to show what type of characters Gwayi has written about. Characterisation and characters will be defined and discussed in chapter 3. This will involve the role played by individual characters. Each character is unique and should be treated, viewed and approached as such. Environment plays a greater role in the influence of the individual character. Each character will react differently in different situations.

The characters of the historical novel are characters of the real past or pose as real people. For the reality of the novel their existence should be void of miracles such as

the evil spirits (imikhovu) in *Umbuso kaShaka*. Such miracles spoil the verisimilitude of the novel. Once the verisimilitude of the novel is spoilt, the reality of the novel is challenged. This detracts from the quality of the novel. Reality simply refers to actuality which implies the quality of being real, or real existence. Cuddon (1985:...) states:

It is the novelist's premise that social, political and economic forces are significant shapes of human life. Man's meaning is a function of his life in society and therefore literature must reflect social and political reality.

The neglect of verisimilitude leads to a decrease in the standard and/or reality of the novel is, however, no absolute distinction between verisimilitude and reality, since the one complements the other in giving meaning and credibility to the actions of the characters. For a writer to produce a quality novel, verisimilitude and reality must be priorities.

1.2 Scope

The study comprises four chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction, aim, scope, and framework. The first chapter is intended to state what could be expected in the study as a whole. The introduction introduces the study; the aim covers the actual purpose of the document, whereas the scope determines the division of the content. The content has been divided into different chapters.

The sections in this study, just as the sections of the novel, are separate but contextually linked – they complement one another. In order to understand one, a reader must also read the other sections. This involves what is happening in the story itself and the people involved in the story. These people are the characters. They are the people who are successfully or unsuccessfully manipulated by the writer.

Chapter 2 will deal with the theories which assisted in tracing the work of other authors in Gwayi's novel. These theories deal with intertextuality, which will be treated together with influence and parasite. These theories cannot be separated easily.

It has since become imperative to deal with intertextuality and leave out either influence or parasite. This will be comparable to Shaka and his mother, Nandi. Gwayi says that the work of the artist will be incomplete if he/she should try to write about the one while leaving out the other.

Chapter 3 will focus on characterisation. Here the reader will be led to understand what characterisation entails. Each of the most important characters in the book will be dealt with individually. This will be done because each character is unique, with his/her own, individual personality and behavioural pattern. This also means that it is not possible to make generalisations when discussing the characters.

Chapter 4 is the conclusion which will also be a summary of the whole study. It will sum up the whole content of the novel and show how Gwayi uses her precursors' work to write her own novel. Influence and parasite, as measures supporting intertextuality, will also be summed up. The summary will not be an unnecessary recapitulation of the study, but will deal with significant highlights and include an opinion of the study as a whole.

1.3 A brief outline of the novel

The study is based on the novel *Yekanini*, written by Jane Jesse Joyce Gwayi. In this study the novel will be analysed and compared with *Umbuso kaShaka*, written by F.L. Ntuli, and *Chaka*, written by Thomas Mofolo.

The novel as a whole shows the reader how Shaka and his mother, Nandi, are treated by their own people. *Yekanini* is an informative historical novel written about the early life of Shaka, the once famous king of the Zulu. According to Makhambeni (1992:6), making use of a well-known historical figure is one of the qualities of the historical novel.

Historical novels usually discuss the life history of prominent historical figures, or sometimes events like war which left a particular impression on the lifestyle of the Zulu community. The most prominent figures in Zulu history are the kings such as Shaka, Dingane, Mpande and Cetshwayo.

The history of Shaka is as common as his name among a number of people. It is found in Zulu, English, Sotho and many other versions. By using such a character, Gwayi links her novel to history. Such figures help to distinguish between an historical and an ordinary novel. The distinction is clearly explained by Scott (1971:4), when he states:

The historical novel is distinguished among other novels by the presence of a special link to history; not merely a real person among the fictitious ones. When life is seen in the context of history, we have a novel: when the novel's characters live in the same world with historical persons, we have an historical novel.

The historical novel brings the past to the present. That is known to be one of its main functions. It depicts exciting historical events from the past. This helps to keep the present generation informed of their past or of their history. In the assimilation and transformation one finds the following interesting quotation:

The passionate involvement with actuality, with the country's past, present and future remains the most prominent feature of present-day-narrative. Most of the important novels published during the past five years

can be called historical not in the sense of depicting exciting events from the romanticised past, but because of unearthing the root and causes of the state of present society. In this narrative the narrator seems to be intimately involved, concerned with and committed to understanding his individual past in seeing the whole of the country's history, and then always speaking as one of the many ordinary people experiencing that history.

While discussing the novel, references will be made to other versions for better understanding of the content of the novel as well as the discussion itself. References are important to help explain the study.

In spite of many and different versions, the story or message of Shaka usually remains the same. Most analysts come to the conclusion that Shaka was a very brave Zulu king and, after suffering much pain and hardship in his youth, eventually built a mighty Zulu nation. This, however, did not happen without much struggle. This is confirmed by Ntuli (1981:13), when he writes:

.Ngimncane manje, nabantu bami bayingcosana.

Kodwa ngizokhula ngibe mkhulu ikhanda lami,

lize liyosithela emafini; uyothi uma ubheka phezulu

ungaze walibona.

I am still small (young) now, my people are few.
I shall grow up and become a great king in the
future , my head will reach the sky, and when
you look at me, you won't see me.

This statement leads to the belief among many writers that the name Zulu comes from Shaka himself, since he compares the rise of his tribe to the skies or heavens. This signifies his greatness as a king. This greatness is his main objective and he is eager to fulfil it.

Even Lubbe (1982:93) confirms Shaka's contribution to the Zulu nation when he writes:

In 'n relatief kort tyd, in minder as 12 jaar, het
Shaka die kleiner Zoeloestam uitgebou tot 'n
magtige nasie.

In a relatively short time, in less than 12 years,
Shaka built the small Zulu tribe into a mighty
nation .

The novel squarely rests on history. To find enough information, required vast reading and research. Gwayi assures us of the reality of the novel when she states the following in one of her novels, *Bafa Baphela*:

Lendaba iyiqiniso. Engikwenzile nje mina ukubafunza
amazwi abawakhulumayo abantu bayo. Nokho-ke
akhuluma ngezinto ezenzekile impela ...

This is the real truth. What I did was to feed
the characters with the words they are
saying ...

Before writing this novel, Gwayi read many other books and novels and studied many other sources on the life of Shaka, written by various authors. What she found out, was that many of them were wrong – she then took it on her to correct them. She also became aware of the fact that some writers had made the mistake of omitting Nandi when writing about Shaka. Neither was neglected in *Yekanini*, since neglecting either of the two would result in imbalances.

A history of the nation originates from narratives passed on from one generation to the next orally. Even before writing was introduced, such works of art were preserved in the form of oral narration of the stories. This mostly happened in the evenings, when all the family members came together for the evening meal. Written work was then developed from these stories. This happened during and after colonisation.

The reader would want to know what is happening in the novel. This can be answered by considering the three stages of the novel. The novel can be

approached in three distinct but linked stages of Shaka's lifetime which Gwayi intended to highlight. Gwayi, although she did not label them, used Shaka's unbearable youth at esiKlebheni, which finally led to their expulsion from the king's kraal, as the first stage. The second part of the story centres on Shaka and Nandi in exile, while the third part of the story deals with Shaka's return to KwaZulu, and the way in which he deposed Sigujane and then crowned himself as king of the mighty Zulu. Lubbe (1983:93) confirms this when he states:

Sikuyana is egter kort daarna vermoor deur Shaka,
wat uit ballingskap teruggekeer het om die
opperhoofskap van die Zoeloes op te eis.

Shortly afterwards Sigujane was murdered by Shaka,
who returned from exile to claim the Zulu throne.

Selectivity, organisation and systematic presentation is a prerequisite in the historical novel. When writing *Yekaniini*, Gwayi was selective in that she did not write about the whole life of Shaka, but chose to focus on his early life, starting with the misunderstanding and hatred between Nandi and the other wives. It is this selectivity, organisation and systematic presentation which make her novel one of the best.

This selectivity or specification of a certain period in the historical novel is admired by D.B. Ntuli. Ntuli considers it as a quality or characteristic of the contemporary historical novel. The current writers choose a specific period in the life of an historical

figure and write about it. They do not write about the whole life of an historical figure as earlier writers used to do. Because of its qualities, *Yekanini* features in the genre of the contemporary historical novel. The idea is supported by Ntuli (1983:66-67) when he writes:

Most of the prominent early novels were written about historical figures, especially the Zulu kings. These biographies covered the whole life history of each king, whereas contemporary writers take only specific episodes or periods in the life of the king. In JJ Gwayi's *Yekanini* "O my!" (1976), for example, we read the story of Shaka up to the day of his installation as a king. Generally speaking, recently-published historical novels are more imaginative and streamlined than the earlier ones. Instead of giving the whole life history of the main character, the writer highlights only an important or dramatic period in his life, e.g. "Ukufa kukaShaka" where only "The death of Shaka is dealt with.

Does this not lead to misunderstanding of the whole story? Gwayi takes it for granted that the mysterious birth of Shaka is known to all the readers and that a repetition of it would lead to boredom. This mysterious birth is to become an obstacle at esiKlebheni. There are many history books which narrate Shaka's mysterious birth. Mael (1974:13) states:

Shaka's birth is the result of the negligence of "ukuhlobonga", the prevention of sexual tension among young, unmarried people, by both Nandi and Senzangakhona.

This seems to have been done purposely by Senzangakhona:

...whose wives, up to this stage, have not borne him any baby boy, Kunene (1989:137).

It is African tradition (norms and values) that the king should have a son (heir), who will become king after his death. It is believed that if a king has no heir, the royal family may become extinct, which may bring harm to the whole nation. An heir must be of the royal blood. It is for this reason that Senzangakhona wants a woman who will bear him a baby boy. Nandi, a beautiful young woman of eLangeni, and Senzangakhona's relative, is aware of the king's wishes and falls for it. Kunene (1989:160) quotes Sekese as saying:

The young maiden, Nandi, mother of Chaka, chose the young bachelor, Senzangakhona, son of Jama. Nandi had left her home to go and visit Senzangakhona. From his escorting of her, Nandi became pregnant.

Senzangakhona is informed of this and immediately sends fifty three heads of cattle for "lobola", the bride's price. Shaka, the intended heir of Senzangakhona is born,

but when the months are counted, it shows that they had sex before marriage. This marks the beginning of the contest and jealousy which is aggravated by the fact that immediately after the birth of Shaka, Senzangakhona's other wives, one after the other, also bear sons, which appears to be a delayed solution to the problem.

This is to become a bone of contention, each wife struggling to convince Senzangakhona to make her son his successor after his death.

The greatest and insurmountable problem is Shaka who, at this stage, seems to be his father's favourite. They suddenly conspire against him and his mother, Nandi, and eventually succeed in ousting them. This, again, marks the beginning of another phase of the story, namely exile.

To Gwayi the main source of conflict is Shaka's heroic qualities which make him the possible heir of Senzangakhona. These qualities are bravery and endurance. These qualities are also mentioned by Kunene in Mofolo's work when he tells us that while Shaka was still a baby, he did not even cry when he fell. Kunene (1981:128) continues to say:

Quite early in the story, Mofolo tells us that Chaka, even as a baby, showed signs of being tough and stubborn. As he grew bigger he refused to show repentance when he was being punished because that would be a sign of weakness.

The nation, particularly the Zulu, expects to see such qualities in the one it regards as a king. A very tough and brave king will be able to protect his subjects from their enemies. All Shaka's half-brothers, Dingane, Mhlangana, Mpande and Sigujana lack these qualities. Gwayi tells us more about these qualities on page 122. It is these qualities which leave other wives of king Senzangakhona with the concern that finally leads to Nandi and Shaka's expulsion. Senzangakhona married Nandi to bear him a son who would be his successor after his death. That is where Gwayi starts her novel. She covers, in part, Nandi's heyday by foreshadowing (Gwayi 1976:42). The following is Senzangakhona's imagination:

Ingqondo yakhe yabuyela emuva esikhathini
aqala ukubona ngaso lentokazi yaseLangeni,
eNguge. Yayiyinhle lesosikhathi.

He imagined the day he first met this beautiful
young lass, of eLangeni, at eNguge. She was
beautiful then.

Today Nandi is hated almost by all at esiKlebheni. Mpikase, one of Senzangakhona's wives is, as the word goes, warrior. She shows a strong dislike of Nandi and Shaka. She calls Shaka "ingcegela", hammerhead, even in the presence of his mother. She tells Shaka that Nandi has spoiled him and if she cannot do her work, she will do it on her behalf. She will cut this hanging head fit.

This is contrary to what other people think of Shaka's physical appearance. Many people envy Shaka's physique because they say he looks like Senzangakhona. Both Shaka and Dingane's heads look like Senzangakhona's.

Does Gwayi manage to raise conflict? Just like a molehill which develops into a mountain, so does the heated argument between Mpikase and Shaka develop into a storm. Shaka is always referred to as an illegitimate, "umlanjwana". They swear that Shaka, an illegitimate child, cannot be king. This is proved by Dhlomo in his "*Izibongo zikaShaka*":

Uteku lwabafazi, bakwaNoMgabhi,
Betekula behlezi emlovini,
Beth' uShaka kayikubusa kayikubankosi,
Kanti yilaph' esezonethezela.

Jokes by NoMgabhi women,
While basking in the sun,
Saying Shaka won't rule, won't be king,
Yet it is when he is reforming.

Among those who hate Nandi is Mudli, Senzangakhona's uncle. He hates Nandi because she has come to marry Senzangakhona without the customary marriage ritual. He claims that nobody accompanied her to KwaZulu and no beasts, which is a sign of acceptance, were ever slaughtered for her. Nandi came to KwaZulu all by herself. This is contrary to what Gwayi (1976:43) says:

Uma simane simchita nje isilo (Senzangakhona),
Mhlawumbe abantu baso bazokhonona ngendlela
Abakhonona ngayo elethwa ngabase Langeni.

If the king just divorces her, maybe his people
will complain as they did when she was brought
to KwaZulu by the people of eLangeni.

Mofolo is also of the opinion that Nandi is not customarily brought to KwaZulu. Secondly, and most importantly, Mudli hates Nandi because she has married Senzangakhona despite the fact that she knows that marriages between Zulu and eLangeni are forbidden because they are related to one another. Marrying your relative is regarded as a failure to find a proper husband to marry.

It is open to any reader to conclude whether it is really wrong to exile Shaka because of his illegitimacy, and whether the Zulu crown is rightfully his. According to Mofolo in his drama, *Chaka*, Senzangakhona, after hearing of Nandi's pregnancy, sends fifty five heads of cattle to eLangeni for "lobola". According to Zulu custom, this makes Shaka a legitimate son of Senzangakhona. The assumption that he is illegitimate, is thus nullified. He is just the victim of hatred which finds an excuse to dismiss him and his mother. It is simply a pretext.

The question is how will Nandi make her people understand her predicament. Her failure to make her husband understand leads to her deportation. Her resistance is

broken by the evil pressures and hatred of her co-wives and Mudli. Mudli has the greatest influence of them all. He has a strong influence on Senzangakhona as well as on the Zulu nation. No-one ever thinks of Nandi as a queen.

As their love is eroded, Nandi's life becomes more and more unpleasant, until it eventually becomes unbearable. She tries everything in her power to avoid confrontation with her co-wives – but in vain. This is the way Gwayi develops her plot. The loss of Senzangakhona's ram marks the end of his tolerance and Nandi's expulsion results. This affects Shaka's life greatly. Both Nandi and Shaka fail to testify against Mudli although they know that he is not telling Senzangakhona the correct version of the story. Traditional norms and values are considered. When Nandi argues with Senzangakhona to defend her son, Senzangakhona is annoyed and makes a very unpleasant decision (Gwayi 1976:54):

Wayilalela (uNandi) inkosi imtshela ukuthi maliphuma
ilanga ngakusasa ekuseni ebe engasekho lapha
esiKlebheni nezingane zakhe makaphindele kubo
kebayomlayisisa.

Let her (Nandi) and her children leave before
sunrise , go back home so that they can give
her advice.

By doing so we accept that Senzangakhona is committing an unforgivable error for that time. This error has to lead to his heirs killing one another for the Zulu crown.

Each of them claims the Zulu crown as his rightful possession. This assassination and murder has bad results. It ends up weakening the whole Zulu empire. It also creates some loopholes for the Voortrekkers and Colonists to use. There is irony in saying "...kebayomlayisisa" (...so that they advise her), when in actual fact she is expelled. Senzangakhona is weak, even in making his decisions. This should have been the last avenue to pursue. Senzangakhona's decision brings empathy to all the readers who read to understand the content of the novel. This decision embarrasses the whole tribe of eLangeni, particularly their young women who still want to marry. Elangeni symbolises light, but is now shadowed. Gwayi shows the public how some women are treated in such an abusive manner, suffer disgrace and become victims of the men's devastating wrath. Some leaders have neither empathy with nor sympathy for their subjects and wives. There has to be moral, fair justice and judgement.

In spite of what people would say, Nandi swallows her pride and goes back to her people. Contrary to Senzangakhona, Nandi has a very strong personality which enables her to face any situation. Nandi is determined to protect and secure her son even if it costs her her life and expulsion. She no longer trusts her husband, Senzangakhona, and the Zulu who hate and have deported them. Her instincts, just like those of Mary, the mother of Jesus, tell her that Senzangakhona wants to kill Shaka. Her determination to protect him grows. She becomes the type of woman described by Clayton (1976:30):

A woman who wants only to protect her children
sees them killed by political conflict.

Nandi even marries Gendenyana, an ordinary man, and moves from one place to another to protect her son, Shaka. She has shown him love and trustworthiness. She is what is known in Sesotho:

Mme motho o tsoara teepa ka bohalleng.

Mother in need, is mother in deed.

Before dawn, as Senzangakhona has instructed, Nandi and her children, two at this time, Shaka and Nomcebo, are no longer to be seen at esiKlebheni. They are going back to eLangeni, at Nguge, her brother, Mbengi's kraal.

The judgement passed by Senzangakhona has an influence on Shaka's behaviour and attitude towards the Zulu. He vows that he will get even one day. He will never rest until it happens. He is sustained by an oedipal hatred of his father, and develops a desperate desire to deny paternity. He is sometimes seen sitting alone and thinking deeply. His thoughts are dominated by the desire for superiority. The suppression of his aggressive feelings gives rise to various defensive strategies.

In order to achieve his purpose as a hero, he develops a strong desire for power. He resorts to killing. But the more he kills, the stronger his lust for killing becomes. He is very happy when Dingiswayo, the great king of Mthetwas, offers him the iziChwe regiment (the one to which Shaka belongs) to go and overthrow Sigujane. His purpose is finally achieved.

Besides being a warrior, Shaka shows that he has a sharp and observant mind. He has only gone to war once, against Kali, the king of amaMbatha, but he has discovered a method of fighting which is later to make both Dingiswayo and Shaka very great. This indicates a tremendous mind. Dingiswayo implements the plan against his will because his aim when fighting is to discipline his enemy and not to kill him, because the dead are silent. If you kill him, you do not teach him any lesson.

According to Mofolo, Shaka is helped by the diviner to be fearless and powerful, and to rise to power. Mofolo portrays it as if Shaka cannot move a step without being directed by the diviner (isanusi). That means that the diviner has full control over Shaka, something we all know he would not have accepted. Shaka does not want to share his desire to rule with or be manipulated by anyone else.

Ntuli, on the other hand, tells us of "imikhovu", the evil spirits. He tells us of Galaza and Mhlophekazi who stay with the hyenas (izimpisi). This affects the reality of his work. Cuddon (1985:...) declares:

Man's meaning is a function of his life in society
and therefore literature must reflect social, economic
and political reality.

Living with hyenas affects the social reality of Ntuli's novel. If Shaka is under full control of the "isanusi", his political ambition will be affected. There are some things

such as the monster which are exaggerated. These exaggerations affect the reader's interest in the work.

Another unbelievable incident in Ntuli and Mofolo's work is the belief that Shaka killed his mother. This is but insidious to Shaka's image. Ntuli (1981:82) writes:

Wawuphakamisa uShaka umkhontshwana wakhe
omncane, wamgwaza unina ... uShaka wambulala
kanjalo-ke unina.

Shaka raised one small spear, he stabbed his mother
... That is how Shaka killed his mother.

In support of this, Kunene (1989:150) quotes Mofolo as saying;

Thereupon he stabbed his mother with a spear.

They all mention Shaka's small red spear. Shaka does not want to bathe his red spear in the blood of innocent people such as Nandi, but in the blood of his enemies. A contradiction to what Ntuli and Mofolo say is realised when Kunene tells us what Bryant says, namely that Shaka loved his mother very much. The following proves that Shaka could not have killed his mother:

But the greatest testimony of his affection for
his mother was his response to the news that

she was lying critically ill. Bryant states that Chaka, who was then some sixty miles away, taking part in an elephant hunt, began a gruelling march back to Emkhindini village where his mother was ... he ordered that the sport be instantly abandoned and all marched hastily home throughout the night.

It is indeed hard to believe that it was Shaka who killed his mother when so many people believe that he loved her so much. Shaka did much for Nandi and, under the circumstances, it was simply not possible for him to kill her.

CHAPTER 2

1.2 Intertextuality

Intertextuality is one of the many difficult but commonly used words to analyse literature. It is one of the recent theories used in analysing works of art. In this chapter I shall do everything in my power to show the traces of Ntuli's *Umbuso kaShaka* and Mofolo's *Chaka* in Gwayi's novel *Yekanini*. This process is called intertextuality. A thorough research has shown that there is a close link between intertextuality and deconstruction, since both confirm the idea of multi-meaning and multi-progeny of a single text. In this chapter I shall show how each of these theories support one another.

Though the concept of intertextuality is coined by Kieteven who, with Roland Barthes and Culler, suggests that a text is an intertextual construct, the product of various cultural discourses, the mother of intertextuality is Kristeva. Deconstruction is a term deconstructed and developed by Jacques Derrida from structuralism. This Derrida used to look at various texts. Each of these texts reflect multi-meanings. This idea depicted him as a protestant to his fellow structuralists.

Many sources have been read to make the study of intertextuality possible. Much information was elicited from Dr J. Manyaka's studies and presentations for MA and PhD degrees. This will serve to explain why his work, or Dr Manyaka himself, has been quoted more than others.

Many unfamiliar words used in this study are defined in the process of explaining intertextuality. There is no chapter in this study which is or will be provided for the definition of the difficult words because many words are as difficult and will take as many pages as intertextuality itself to explain.

2.2 Intertextuality in relation to *Yekanini*

According to Manyaka, intertextuality is a deliberate, reworking, recycling, revisiting or echoing of earlier text. Text is dependent upon other texts which are absorbed and transformed. Text itself is a happening in which signs and the traces of signs make themselves available to the reader for the adventure of understanding. It is an episode in all-encompassing intertextuality.

The above statement will mean the adoption and transformation of other texts by the text under discussion. This means that a single text consists of a range of other texts, discourses and themes which, at times, constitute a form or a kind of repetition, where a traditional art form is embedded in a current text, e.g. *Yekanini* is concerned with the early life of Shaka of which the precursors have already revealed something.

The above statement supports the idea of Kristeva, the mother of the term intertextuality, who states that a text finds itself among a vast number of other texts from which it derives its meaning. Here the implication is that a text cannot stand alone or live independently outside other texts. Writers are writing because they are always influenced by the writers who wrote before them, e.g. Ntuli and Mofolo

influencing Gwayi. This influence comes in such a manner that even the writers themselves may be quite unconscious of it. This could also come in a number of ways. It could be in the form of social concerns, themes, styles or structural patterns in the form of prose.

Intertextuality is therefore said to be a sum total of knowledge that makes it possible for the text to have meaning. Manyaka (1995:32) describes it as the presence of other texts in one's work:

The presence of other texts in one's work is what
in literacy is called intertextuality.

Intertextuality is a consistent part of deconstruction which depends on the notice that in a space of a given text, several other utterances taken from other texts intersect and neutralise one another. Yekanini is the progeny of the text in the sense that one finds some traces of both Ntuli and Mofolo's text in it. One finds that in all three novels, *Yekanini*, *Umbuso kaShaka* and *Chaka*, Nandi and her son, Shaka, are deported. Gwayi (1976:54):

Wayilalela inkosi imtshela ukuthi maliphuma
ilanga ngakusasa ekuseni ebe engasekho
.lapha esiKlebheni nezingane zakhe makaphindele
kubo kebayomlayisisa.

She listens to the king telling her that before

dawn the following day she and her children must be gone and going back to her people to be taught behaviour.

Ntuli (1981:11):

Kuthe kusenjalo, sabona umfazi ehamba
ethafeni eqonde kithina. Ehamba
njengokhathelayo. Ebelethe umthwalo
wamacansi, ngengalo ebambe umfana
ongangami.

Lomfana wasethi, "Mame, asisafuneki
lapha njengakuleya ndawo", ekhomba
ngekhanda kwelakwaZulu.

Just at that moment, we saw a woman
coming in our direction. She looked tired.

On her back she carried sleeping mats,
with her hand she held a boy of my age.

This boy then said, "Mother, we are also
not wanted here just like in that place."

He pointed in the direction of kwaZulu
with his head.

In Mofolo's *Chaka* we are told that Shaka goes into exile for his safety and that Senzangakhona sends Nandi into exile. Their writings are the same since they all focus on Shaka's harsh treatment which eventually results in the shaping of his life. With the theories of intertextuality and deconstruction one is at liberty to omit or add whatever suits one's writing the best.

Since text is influenced by the previous texts, I am bound not to confine my examples to *Yekanini*, *Umbuso kaShaka* and *Chaka* only, but to extend them to even religious, technical and many other types of literature. Intertextuality is the theory with which the writers or critics counteract originality. It does not mean that originality is an offence to combat, but only does away with the traditional, stereotype way of the origin-based method of approach. It is the theory which proclaims that something written about now, for example Shaka's youth days, might have been written about in the past. The wording might be slightly different, e.g. "the early days of Shaka", or something of the kind. This will serve to prove that there is something (text) which is embedded in another (text). It also gives us an impression that a given text is built up out of another/other text(s) and that nothing is original.

The issue of originality then takes us to the very common assumption that the Holy Bible is original. According to the premise that there is nothing original, even the Holy Bible itself will not be original. It is namely an account of what happened in the past. In writing the Bible, the authors wrote about things that had happened before, e.g. Jesus Christ was someone who had once lived and preached his gospel on earth. Authors might also have written about things that others had already written about, therefore there is some duplication, as can be seen in the books of St Matthew, St

Mark, St Luke and St John, which all have a common theme and content. The text differs only in the explanation and presentation by an individual author. This also applies to the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. The Old Testament tells us about the coming of the Son, Jesus Christ, while the New Testament concerns itself with human redemption by Jesus Christ, the application and implementation of the prophecies and the commandments.

Even the writing of an autobiography will not be considered original since it involves the theory of intertextuality. The autobiographer will write the autobiography according to the methods and principles of writing an autobiography. It will also contain an account of what was done in the past. In this manner even an autobiography is not something new.

In his deconstruction, Jacques Derrida claims that speech seems nearer to originating thought. When, he carries on, we hear speech, we attribute to it "presence" which we regard or consider to be lacking in writing. The speech of the great actor, orator or politician is thought to possess "presence": It incarnates, so to speak, the speaker's soul. This immediately suggests a latent text embedded in the other (texts). The implication is that any given text has a number of other texts embedded in it. This covert text may be invisible or passive in a given text as a close link in Gwayi, Ntuli and Mofolo's work of art is concealed. The current writer, for instance Gwayi, may not be aware that she has infringed upon someone else's work. Only the embedded text depicts the presence of the other in one's text. This becomes possible only when the reader or critic concurs with the theories of

intertextuality and deconstruction. These are the only theories which make the covert text visible.

When reading *Yekanini* we read about the early life of Shaka. The source of this theme is oral. This refers to oral speech and all its gestures. It is oral in the sense that Shaka, an historical figure, once lived and that people talked about him even before his popularity went down in the history of the Zulu. Writers like, at the least, Ntuli and Mofolo, have written about him in their novels *Umbuso kaShaka* and *Chaka* respectively. Gwayi is writing about the same theme about which her precursors wrote. In her work there is something (presence) which she feels has been lacking in the precursors' writings. The love of Nandi for Shaka is left incomplete by her precursors. By writing about historical figures, Gwayi feeds on history. This implies that the entire story is based on history. The success in the manipulation of history is realised in her novel, *Yekanini*.

William Shakespeare, regarded as the best English dramatist in history, wrote about the assassination of Julius Caesar by Brutus, who was his friend and an honourable man. When Julius Caesar was stabbed and saw that it was Brutus, he posed a rhetorical question, "And you, Brutus?" This again happens in kwaZulu when Shaka is assassinated by his brothers and his trusted healer, Mbopha kaSithayi. Identifying one of his assassins as Mbopha, he also poses a rhetorical question, "Nawe Mbopha kaSithayi?" or "And you Mbopha of Sithayi?" This shows that the text is not confined to one place. What happens in other countries also happens in South Africa. The text which has been used by the English dramatist, Shakespeare, was also used by Zondi in South Africa. Zondi's text complements Shakespeare's.

There are texts which are used to supplement others. Earlier texts supplement the present ones and vice versa, in the sense that the present one may need the earlier one for interpretation since intertextuality involves interpretation and reinterpretation. This is essential for the avoidance of ambiguity in the text. Multimeanings in a single text do not imply ambiguity but clear and understandable interpretation. These earlier texts may not be as obvious in one text as they are in the other. The theory of deconstruction declares that a man's composition is unconsciously supplemented and facilitated by the earlier text. The importance of other texts in the other, as said before, is to neutralise one another. Hartland (1988:168) states:

Intertextuality is the consistent part of deconstruction which depends on the notice that in the space of a given text several utterances taken from other texts intersect and neutralise one another.

While Mofolo is of the opinion that Shaka exiles himself because his half-brothers want to kill him, Ntuli and Gwayi agree that Nandi and Shaka are given orders by Senzangakhona to leave esiKlebheni at once. This composition of texts may be in the form of interpretation. By composition we mean the work or novel written by writers such as Gwayi, Ntuli and Mofolo.

There is a very strong French concept that there is absence that always announces itself in that which is present, though it is not that which is present. In Yekanini we read about the early life of Shaka but the love of Nandi for Shaka announces itself. Nandi goes from one place to another in search of a suitable and safe place for her

son. The presence of the one text suggests the presence of the other, either at that moment or before. Sais states:

Man finds in things nothing but what he
himself has imported into them.

We now know that according to the theory of intertextuality there is nothing new or original. There is only a duplication of the past. This is confirmed by Hottorn (1992:8), when he writes:

When words written on the writing pad are
removed a slight scratch or trace of them
remains on the surface.

This immediately suggests that no text is ever blotted out. Even oral text which is not written down for the record, is never blotted out but becomes latent and shows itself only when it is needed. For a while it is stored in the subconscious mind and is then brought back to the conscious mind only when it is needed. The name Shaka has been on the tongues of many people since the nineteenth century. During colonisation it was told orally by the Blacks which inspired some Whites to write it down. At this time the Blacks could not write yet, but told the story orally for the Whites to write. Some reinterpreted the texts to make them suit their own purposes. It was only in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries that the Blacks also started writing about Shaka.

A story stored in the subconscious mind comes back as a dream or in the form of a dream. At times it happens, for example, that one comes to quite a new place which one has never seen before, but the place looks familiar, as if one has been there before. This could either be what one has once seen and has stored in the subconscious mind, and now associates with the picture that has been created in the mind, or it could be a place one has seen before. This revelation usually comes to us in the form of a dream. In actual fact you end up not knowing where you have seen that place. Tracking back the historical information is feeding on history.

The above thesis is similar to the weather bureau statement. The weather bureau predicts the condition of the weather because of its past record of comparison. They understand current weather conditions in relation to the weather's behaviour in the past. Manyaka emphasises the following:

A thesis that a work of art can only be read in connection with or against other texts which provide a grid through which it is read and structured by establishing expectations which enable one to pick out salient features which are common to both and give them structure.

According to the deconstruction method a text is a happening in which signs and the traces of signs make themselves available to the reader for the adventure of understanding. Abrams (1979:574) states:

The text is a chain of marks vibrating with the free and incessant play of difference.

The text is influenced by the previous text(s) and is always read in relation with the other texts which already exist. We understand *Yekanini* when we read this novel in relation with the work of Ntuli and Mofolo. Without the work of these precursor writers, interpretation of Gwayi's work would have been difficult. The work of Ntuli and Mofolo pose as yardsticks to measure how successful Gwayi is in writing *Yekanini*.

The fact that the text was used, does not mean that the successors can no longer use it. This is what gives Gwayi the liberty to use the text. Gwayi used the text in the same way as when candidates are being asked to write a composition on a certain topic. That does not imply copying just because the same topic is used. It rather depends on one's interpretation of copying. This brings us to Elliot, quoted by Manyaka:

Minor poets borrow, major poets steal.

Borrowing implies that the owner is still in possession of the rights of ownership while stealing implies stripping the owner of these rights of ownership. Even if they are not entirely dispossessed, the value of the right of ownership is seriously dented in such a way that if the work was written for economic purposes, its economic value would have declined significantly. This may then lead to a gradual but serious destruction

of the precursor's text. Gwayi, however, uses the text in such a way that the precursor's text remains undented.

Freud, quoted by Louw (1989:79) sees this as a representation of the manner in which a trace is left in our physical apparatus of perception which impinges upon its meaning. If so, the so-called origin of the text can be traced but the trace will be endless. The trace can only end up in a question such as "Who came first – the hen or the egg?" This endlessness suggests that there is no real origin of a text but only sources. This implies that the material, books and novels which Gwayi read before writing Yekanini are but sources, and her novel supplementary to the earlier novels. This does not imply a replacement or substitute of the earlier novels. It stands as a replica of these earlier novels. Replica can refer to a similar progeny, but not to the original. So, when we read the given text, it will always trace that which is absent, i.e. text written a long time ago. This text will always give answers to questions such as "Who is this Shaka? What happened?" etc. In giving answers to these questions, Selden's codes are fairly covered.

It is a fact that we understand the present by bringing the past into the present. It is natural of human to engage in constant comparison of the present with the past in order to find solutions. Using another/other text(s) to coin one's text is but another way of bringing the dormant past to the present or to life. When the past is read in an unbroken chain, it gives the holistic meaning, but if it is read in a broken and separated chain, it gives broken and confusing meaning. Historical events have to be written according to their chronological order. This helps to facilitate better understanding of the text.

With the past text the writer, like Gwayi, intends to give unambiguous meaning to the present. That Shaka has killed his beloved mother is still debatable. Gwayi, in her novel, reveals mutual love between Shaka and Nandi, and this dismisses the dogma that Shaka killed his mother. The past becomes the tin-opener to the unknown present and, in turn, the present an interpretation of the ambiguous past.

We strongly believe in the past as part of the solution to the unpredictable present because even a judge will link the court proceedings to the past to find and pass an accurate and satisfactory verdict or judgement. This is done by intertwining the past with the present, with the purpose of finding a suitable solution and not a resolution. This helps to explain how important the earlier text is on which the whole novel, *Yekanini*, is based.

Intertextuality does not imply meaningless repetition - if it is considered repetition. It only implies that there is not an ultimate new work of art. All art work is based on the previous one(s). If the writer has written about a certain event, it does not mean that he/she has closed the use of it to others, though we know that copyright is reserved.

Manyaka (1995:24) insists that:

A text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and
as such does not function as a closed function.

In this manner the text can still be manipulated by other writers as a source of their own work of art. This is exactly what Gwayi has done in her novel, *Yekanini*. After

collecting the required historical information, she re-arranges it in the manner she believes to be the best. This arrangement alone requires much skill. Without that skill Gwayi would not have been successful in writing such a fascinating novel.

Once again Gwayi says uncompromisingly that she has read many English and Zulu novels and books written about the life of Shaka and has found that they are all, to put it mildly, incorrect, if not wrong. She has read many more sources and out of these composed her text. That suggests to us that Gwayi has found the topic (text) and for her it is just to develop it further. She writes this novel on the basis of the previous ones, e.g. Shaka's mysterious birth, illegitimacy, suffering and ascension to the Zulu throne.

In this manner Gwayi feeds on history like a baby feeding on breast milk, not with the purpose of killing its mother, but simply for it (the baby) to survive. The books and novels written on the life of Shaka provide a foundation on which Gwayi composes her own. The new text usually resembles the former, except where the writers seem to have unconsciously agreed to disagree.

Taking from the above thesis Gwayi's novel will then be a new interpretation of the life of Shaka. By interpretation in this case, is meant a composition from another composition. The term can further be interpreted as a new production, but according to intertextuality, a link to the earlier text. There is no lapse of a text. Texts are linked to one another like mountains forming a chain.

Even if there is nothing new, the writer, when writing his/her work, writes as if there is no predecessor, and as if nothing has been written before. He/she writes as if he/she is the sole composer of the text. Only in his/her subconscious mind does he/she do all in his/her power not to infringe upon someone else's premises. He/she tries to avoid to put his/her foot where angels fear to tread. It is this avoidance which makes the work of art one's own. The writer, because of certain deliberations and caution, claims the piece of work as his/her own. The text then becomes one's own import and has to be manipulated and taken as such.

Gwayi has composed her text in such a way that it looks original and independent. While Ntuli and Mofolo try to write about the whole life of Shaka, Gwayi writes only about the early life or youth days of Shaka. This covers only a quarter of what Ntuli and Mofolo have written about, whereas it covers the whole novel of Yekanini. Through accuracy the novel looks as if its precursors fed on it. It is then an indirect use of other writers' texts. This, again, is an indirect method of bringing the past to the present and is another way through which the past could be conserved.

Through intertextuality one is able to evaluate the validity of the text. One is able to tell if the host is better than its offspring. This will also depend on the skill, experience and the manipulation of the text by the new shareholder or owner. If he/she has taken only what is suitable for his/her work and leaves out what he/she deems not to be necessary, he/she is a shareholder – but if he/she has decided to take all and dispossess the precursor of his/her rights, he/she is a new owner. However, the difference between the shareholder and the owner is very small.

There is, however, no yardstick to measure to what extent the earlier or existing text has to be used in order that a text could be judged as or categorised under intertextuality. Manyaka (1995:38) quotes:

This problem refers to the extent to which a new text uses or alludes to a precursor's text or how repeated a new phrase/word/expression from an old text must be in a new text.

This problem was also unresolved by Jenny in Culler (1983:104), where he poses a question such as:

At what point can one start to speak of the presence of one text in another as an instance of intertextuality?

Gwayi has used texts from many other sources to write her novel. She has selected only what she feels to be correct and suitable information for her novel. Worton and Sill (1991:7) maintain:

Every literature imitation is a supplement which seeks to complete and to supplement the original and which functions at times for later readers as a pretext of the original.

If the writer translates the same text from one language to the other, that would be a translation and not intertextuality, e.g. Umbuso *KaShaka*. If the writer writes it as it is, it is copying or duplication, e.g. *Tjaka die Koning van die Zoeloe*. As said before, copying is punishable by law. Duplication has another implication. This is because there may be a few additions in the so-called original which, in one way or another, grant the new owner the right of possession. In this manner the owner, because of the new establishment, loses ownership to the parasite, whereas in intertextuality this is not the case.

Intertextuality is one theory which, when used, leaves the host intact, even if some information has been taken from the host. Both the host and the sister texts survive. This implies feeding on the host text, but with no intention to harm it. The original work is left to survive. This then, is a justified usage of someone else's work, since it is not considered a direct copy or duplication, but a slight change from the original. This means that only the original is a key to the new text. A change is very important to anything, any situation, because it is this change that causes things to look the same. The more things change, the more they look the same. Kunene (1989:111) quotes Mofolo as saying that it was Senzangakhona's senior wives' wishes that Shaka should be killed so that their sons could succeed their father as kings. Though there is a slight difference, Gwayi is of the same opinion when she writes:

Wayebabona (uSenzangakhona) abafazi bakhe
ngengqondo bebangisana ngoba kuyilowo nalowo
efuna ukuba akhethe indodana yakhe ukuba ibe inkosi
esafa.

Senzangakhona imagines his wives competing,
each wants Senzangakhona to choose her son as
a king after his death.

Some critics refer to intertextuality as an absorption and transformation of another/other text(s). They further state that, put into the possession of absorption and transformation of other texts, intertextuality serves as a way of thinking, a way of analysing texts or a way of seeing how literary texts come to acquire meaning. While Ntuli, in his novel, *Umbuso KaShaka* and Mofolo in his drama, *Chaka*, portray Shaka as a monster who enjoys spilling the blood of innocent people, and Nandi as an irresponsible queen who just deserts her husband without any valid reason, Gwayi portrays them as poor innocent people who suffer greatly just because of the unjust laws that oppress women and children. This is the overall meaning which critics get from *Yekani*. There are always elements of one text in another. Gwayi's work shares Ntuli and Mofolo's work. They all tell us about Shaka's sufferings, his physique and bravery which makes him a possible heir to Senzangakhona's throne. This may not be possible without an appropriate use of language. Manyaka (1995:35) confirms:

Text is brought into existence (from dominant stage) through a language (language before and around).

Using a language, every text depends on the writer's and the reader's social, economic, political, cultural and religious backgrounds for its interpretation and

meaning, e.g. as owl is associated with bad luck among Blacks because it is considered to be a bird of the witches. With the Chinese it is associated with luck. In different conditions and different backgrounds, text can be interpreted differently. For instance, *coal* on a very hot summer's day, when many people are roasting, will mean nothing – but on a very cold winter's day, it will remind them of fire or a source of warmth. The use of the word "coal" on a hot summer's day means irrelevant usage of the word or text. On a hot summer's day only something like a refrigerator is relevant.

There are many different societies with different cultures on earth. In other societies bearing a child out of marriage, as Nandi did, is strictly tabooed. It is a punishable offence whereby a transgressor, be it a male (Senzangakhona) or female (Nandi) is made to pay maintenance or be served with orders of forced marriage. According to Mofolo Senzangakhona is pushed to marry Nandi by the following circumstances:

Firstly is the fact that even after marrying three or four wives, none of them has born him a son yet.

Secondly is the fact that after falling in love with Nandi he is pushed by his desire to disregard the restraints of the custom which dictate that a girl shall not be deflowered out of wedlock, hence the hurried marriage once he (Senzangakhona) knows of Nandi's pregnancy.

On the other hand, in some societies it is in fact a test as to whether the young woman for whom "lobola" or the bride's price has to be paid, does actually have that capacity of bearing children, because no cattle can just be paid for a non-child bearing female. This is considered a waste. Hearing people talking about it everywhere becomes unbearable to Senzangakhona, hence a hurried marriage.

In such societies even a very young girl may be sent to marry a man of her parents' choice, regardless of his age, just because he has a lot of cattle. One man's meat is another man's poison. What is good for one is interpreted as bad by the other.

Marrying Senzangakhona in spite of the fact that they are related is regarded as Nandi's greatest error by Gwayi, while it is regarded as Senzangakhona's disregard for "ukuhlobonga" (sexual avoidance by young unmarried people before marriage) by allowing himself to be pushed and controlled by his desire by Mofolo.

Economy, on the other hand, is one of the contributory factors in the above practice. A girl of twelve years may be sent to marry a man of sixty years just because he possesses a large number of cattle. Among the Blacks cattle are the sign of wealth. Nandi is allowed to marry Senzangakhona just because he is the king. A man is respected because of his status and the size of his kraal.

Politicians have another connotation. When Shaka kills people whom he dislikes, he is praised for bravery and bringing order to the nation. His wars of destruction are justified because it is the king who kills.

From a religious point of view all of the above are condemned and regarded as gross and punishable sins. This is forbidden by the Holy Scriptures. Exodus 20:13 reads:

Thou shall not kill.

This is but the rejection of the unjust values. The interrelationship between or among texts is noticed in the process of reading and internalisation of all these texts.

The current texts are introduced to the precursors to supplement the precursor or to complement what the current writer feels has been omitted or is outstanding. This forms an unavoidable and unending link between the past and the present, the precursor and the current.

This repetition of the text in the other, enhances communication and comprehension. In this manner the current text helps to clarify and anoint the precursor through experience gained over the years. A 99 model Mercedes Benz will not be exactly the same as the one made twenty years ago. The new Benz (progeny) serves to improve the quality and the image of the Benz, old or new. This is one way of spreading the precursor's ideas. Each model feeds or depends on the other for recognition. There is a mutual relationship between the old and the new, though the new one is not a replica of the old. A replica, as said before, implies a duplicate of the text.

One single work of the current writer may refer to a number of precursors (works). It may not refer to a precursor's work only, but also to other writers who have used the

same text(s). This thesis explains the fact that, on the one hand, any element relates to another element in the text and, on the other hand, that it can differ from the other elements. The essence of the theory of intertextuality is not really concerned with the differences as much as with the relationship with other texts. All the writers who write about Shaka's life, including Gwayi, aim at showing us how Shaka is treated by other people, how he associates with them and what the psychological results of his unpleasant youth are. Mofolo states that this treatment has finally led Shaka to the heroic because it has made him fearless. It is for this reason that Ntuli tells us that Shaka has vowed to kill all the people of eLangeni save Mbopha, who has given him water when he needed it. According to Gwayi, Shaka sometimes sits alone and thinks. On page 49, Gwayi describes how Shaka beats Mudli's sons. Because of such instances, Mofolo describes him as an epic hero.

Each writer writes to either fill the gaps or complete what is incomplete. Gwayi claims that she has written her novel in order to right the wrongs. There appears to be many wrongs in Ntuli and Mofolo's works. Ntuli tells us about "imikhovu", evil spirits, in his novel, while Mofolo tells us about "isanusi", the diviner., who totally controls Shaka's life, something which could not possibly happen to the proud and confident Shaka. This makes the precursors unreal and justifies the composition of Gwayi's *Yekanini*.

With many other writers, including Ntuli and Mofolo, Shaka, because of being an illegitimate child, is condemned and all his heroic deeds, the good and praises he shows to national heroes, are shattered. Gwayi writes to reveal to readers such a grievous misinterpretation. In this manner there is a contradiction among the writers

themselves. Gwayi writes *Yekanini* to expose the extent to which the other authors are caught in the contradiction and limitations.

This is brought to life by intertextuality. Intertextuality gives us real interpretation and the meaning of the text. Interpretation may become misinterpretation. It happens in many instances that people read the text and analyse it differently. This means a given text refers the reader or critic to other texts which may seem, at that moment, not to be present. It may be the concept of supplement, i.e. that which is missing in one's text, or trace, that which can be traced back. Mofolo tells us that Shaka rejects the old world which rejected him, and tries to build himself a new one that will worship and adore him, and do his bidding. Ntuli (1981:13), Shaka explains his new world:

Ngizokhula ngibe mkhulu ikhanda lami, lize liyosithela
emafini; uyothi noma ubheka phezulu ungaze walibona.
Ubuso bami buyokuxhophha ngokukhazimula nabantu
bami bayokhula kanye nami bayowugwinya wonke
umhlaba.

I shall be as great as the skies; you won't be able to
see me when you look at me. My face will be shining
brightly; and my people will multiply and be great and
under my command will conquer the whole world.

Gwayi describes him just as he enters his new world, Gwayi (1976:122):

Abambonayo uShaka esehamba emagcekeni omuzi
owawusungowakhe manje, esehlome ephela waze
wahloma nosiba lwakhe ekhanda, abamkhohlwanga
umuntu obonakala eyinkosi nje ezihambela.

Those who saw Shaka loitering around the kraal
which is now his own, never made any mistake
to judge him as the king by merely looking at him.

2.3 *Yekanini* in relation to the biblical text

As mentioned before, if the Bible accounts on something that has already happened, it is not original. There is a covert link between *Yekanini* and the biblical text. In the Bible we read about Mary, the mother of Jesus, who goes from one place to another looking for a suitable and safe place for her son, Jesus Christ. After his birth, Jesus is hunted by king Herod and the Jews because it is said that He is the king of the Jews.

For the love of her son, Mary, with the help of Joseph, Jesus' foster father, goes into exile in Egypt. Here they stay until Jesus Christ is big enough to work.

In *Yekanini* we read about Nandi, Shaka's mother. For the love of Shaka, she goes from one place to another seeking a suitable and safe shelter for her son. She is running away from the Zulu who, she suspects, will kill her son. Senzangakhona makes a plan to kill Shaka. He tells Ntaba, his chieftain, to kill him if he does not

comply. Gendyane, Shaka's stepfather, comes to his rescue. Nandi brings Shaka up in her home. This is but an obvious example of the repetition of texts in the other. Ntuli (1993:60):

While we cannot have any objection to the repetition of themes, we are concerned that some books written recently on old themes do not vary sufficiently from the earlier ones, nor are they of a higher literary standard.

Ntuli confirms the fact that no text stands alone but is always found among other texts. The current writers write with the aim of uplifting the standard. This can only be done through omissions and additions of some texts. The previous errors are corrected. We must, however, not neglect the fact that some writers write while unaware of the fact that they are infringing on the work of other writers.

2.4 Influence

According to The Short Oxford English Dictionary, p 106, influence means to exert influence upon, to affect by influence, to move by undue influence. It may mean power to produce effect, actions or natural forces; or power to affect actions, characters or beliefs through examples, fear and admiration. Manyaka (1992:14) declares:

Influence does not imply an imitative relationship between the source and the influenced subject,

in that the influenced will always remain the same (himself or herself).

2.4.1 Personal influence

Influence yields inspiration. One has to be influenced first in order to be inspired. Influence is also encouraged by experience. To many writers it becomes difficult to venture into the new environment without the necessary experience. Adequate knowledge of history will have a positive influence on the writer. Bacon and Green state:

Historical knowledge is frequently necessary to the adequate comprehension of literature, for the experience of the literacy text is frequently built upon a knowledge of history which the writer assumes the reader to possess.

Gwayi is influenced by other novels written on the history of Shaka to write her own novel. There are also stories about the Zulu kings and national heroes that she hears from the student nurses with whom she works at the Mc Cord Hospital. There are some things which she feels to be untrue and which she has to correct when writing her novel. Manyaka (1992:11) states:

Influence helps only in shaping one's work.

It is this influence which has helped Gwayi to write her own novel. This is coupled with favourable conditions. Gwayi is mostly influenced to write novels after her marriage to the famous writer, Moses Ngcobo. From this stage the environment becomes conducive to the writing of novels.

2.4.2 Influence in relation to *Yekanini*

Zulu traditional prose was confined to oral literature. Western influence extended it to written literature. It is for this reason that Palmer (1972:6) maintains:

A reasonably fair statement of the position would seem to be that the African novel grew out of the Western novel.

The above statement is confirmed by Groenewaldt, in his *The Development of Zulu Drama* (1979:20), when he tells us that Father Bernard Huss encouraged the mother-tongue speakers to rewrite European plays to suit African culture.

Influence should not be regarded as a causation but be perceived as a contributory factor to the emergence and shaping of a work of art. This, however, does not mean that a work of art grows out of influence, but is only to confirm that there is a number of factors that come across the author's mind when he/she composes his/her work of art. These factors are brought about by the imperceptible power which is made possible by favourable conditions. Though Gwayi is influenced to write about the life of Shaka, she eventually decides to write only about his early life. Gwayi's influence

is indigenous, i.e. based on African tradition. This covers oral forms such as proverbs, idioms, praise songs, folk tales and myths. African style is immune to western or exotic style. Traditional influences refer to influences from oral literature. Oral literature in itself is African tradition which includes African dances and songs. These songs and dances include songs and dances performed by the young men (boys) from the initiation schools. Initiation is purely African.

For an artist to produce a work of art, quite a number of influences work in on him/her. Ntuli and Mofolo have written historical works of art which had a great influence on the writing of Gwayi's *Yekanini*. Gwayi's influence, unlike Ntuli's which is Western because of the inclusion of "imikhovu" (creatures liken to the weird sisters in Shakespeare's dramas; or evil spirits), is traditional in that she writes about Shaka and excludes all exaggerations. The story of Shaka has been told orally and differently by many orators. This influences different views and influences from and by different writers, hence different books and novels about Shaka.

Shaka's praises have great influence on Gwayi. These are heroic praises such as Shaka's praises:

Ilemb' eleq' amany; amalembe ngokukhalipha.

A sharp bladed hoe, sharper than other hoes.

Here the implication is that Shaka is wiser, braver and stronger than others. This is just what Gwayi has written about in *Yekanini*. Gwayi loves the qualities and the

actions of Shaka. At no stage does Gwayi write about Shaka as a coward. Shaka likes perfection through hard practices. Gwayi (1976:86):

Kwaya kwaya kwaya waze wabedlula bonke ngempela.

Gradually he surpassed them all.

The idea of bravery and persistence comes from his praises:

UDlungwana ombelebele.

A persistent Dlungwana.

The text used in *Yekanini* is not new at all. It is text that has been used before. Gwayi is influenced by coming across this text several times. Influence is therefore said to be one of the elements of intertextuality. Manyaka (1992:16) confirms:

Influence, as we conceive it, means that there are no texts, but only relationship between texts.

Influence is an impact that a writer, or even an artwork itself, has on an individual writer or work of art. This impact leads to inspiring the writer to produce or compose, in this case, a work of art. According to this statement, even those who strongly believe in originality are misled. All text (composition) is the result of influence. The current writer only selects what is relevant and leaves out what is irrelevant to his/her

work. Influence also involves venture and risks. This means risking other people's ideas if they are one's own. Jabbi (1979:107) writes:

The influence may be manifested in plagiarism, other more or less direct forms of replication. In a slightly different sense, a critic may infer a relatively mechanical idea of influence by imitating a closely imitative relationship between source and manifestation when a less deterministic account may be nearer the truth. Suggestions that a work of art was consciously modelled on another may be inspired by such an idea.

Influence brings the influenced nearer the precursor but not a direct replication, because some writers, when composing, may not be fully conscious of the precursor's work in theirs. Gwayi is not fully aware of the fact that she has used much of Mofolo's work in her novel. This happens in a very unconscious manner and that is why Jabbi (1979:107) treats influence as:

...the passive imitation relieved by no adaptive originality of usage.

This means unintentional and unconscious imitation. This is not a replica or a plane of reference, but an entire composition. References to the milieu is appropriate because it is actually where and when the story takes place. Undulating mountains

and landscapes of KwaZulu is the interest of all writers including Gwayi, Mofolo and Ntuli.

2.5 Parasite

According to The Short Oxford *English Dictionary*, parasite is an animal or plant living on or in another and getting its food from it. It may be a person supported by another and giving him nothing in return. A parasite cannot hold a host responsible for supporting it since this process usually takes place without the host's awareness. With parasitic relationship there is usually no mutual support. Neither the host nor the parasite is aware of the situation.

We understand parasite as either an animal or a plant that feeds on another. Parasite is a natural process which has been practised since the creation of nature. Plants or animals depend on one another for their survival. It may be plants on other plants and animals on other animals. The process remains parasitic (dependent).

Animals are not exonerated from the process. Ticks and fleas depend on other animals (hosts) for their blood. This process may go unnoticed for a long time by both the host and the parasite. Even if it is noticed, the host may sometimes not know how or be in a position to rid itself of the parasite. On the other hand, the parasite may not be aware of the fact that it is inflicting great pain or damage on the host. It may not be aware of its infringement on someone else's premises. This is because the parasitic process happens without any intention to kill or destroy but

merely to make the parasite's life possible. The relationship between the two, host and parasite, is called parasitical relationship. Manyaka (1992:7) confirms:

The relationship, i.e. host and parasite, is referred to as parasitical relationship.

In literature writers like Gwayi who use other writers' ideas to write their own novels or critics who use approaches or theories of their precursors to analyse any work of art are parasites. This implies feeding on a precursor writer, not for the purpose of defaming his/her reputation in literature, but for the survival of his/her own novel. She has collected as many historical facts as she could from many different history books and novels, mostly written in Zulu and English. She has read *Shaka Zulu*, *The Rise of the Zulu Empire*, *Shaka King of the Zulu*, *Umbuso kaShaka* and *Chaka*. Her work has become a success and has survived. This is due to the support of the precursor work.

Jacques Derrida is a typical example of a parasite. Derrida has constructed his theory of deconstruction from structuralist theory. He has used the ideas of structuralism with a slight difference to declare his theory. In this case a French word "difference" tells the difference. Deconstruction itself means theory constructed from another theory. Parasitic is a form of deconstruction in the sense that from the existing text a new or other text is formed. Critics who use such theories to analyse or criticise the literary work are parasites.

The critics or writers only use or consume the desired text enough for their text to survive. This is not with the purpose of destroying the host, but for the current text to survive, otherwise the host would become a prey and the critic or writer a preying critic or writer. A parasite does not go about looking for a prey because that would mean destruction, but for a host in order to survive.

All current writers write with the precursor's work in the background. They link their literary work to the precursor's, but usually without any remarkable damage. This confirms the fact that each text implies other text(s). The trace of each work of art may be found in another. The new text helps to boost the image of and clarifies loopholes in the former text. The host text sacrifices the loss of some of its status, powers and sometimes well-being.

Some critics consider parasite as a new writer, such as Gwayi, who models her work along the lines of her precursor writers such as Ntuli and Mofolo, or even other influences like oral art, cultural, religious, political aspects and others. Host is considered an emulated precursor writer, e.g. Ntuli and Mofolo, because the new writer (parasite) feeds on them, and seeks what will make his/her work look good and survive.

A parasite text supplements a precursor text. This is done by clarifying the precursor's text. Parasite relation appears only when one text is read in relation to the other. This is only obvious under a constructive reading of a text. Constructive reading is productive. It enables many current texts to develop from the precursor. A text or writing can be repeated, printed or reprinted. This repetition invites

interpretation and reinterpretation. This reinterpretation allows for multiplicity of meaning in a text. This means that the reader should not only look for what he/she wants from a given text, but must also be aware of the writer's intention. Readers have been given freedom to read the text without constraints and therefore text can have infinity of meaning. To consider the meaning of a text in a broader view than its author's intention, has nothing to do with allowing it to mean anything. It simply represents the argument that meaning is best described, not in terms of mental processes, but in terms of the text's particular use of the linguistic system that it employs. Manyaka (1992:7) writes:

A parasite would be any writer, critic or reader who uses another (precursor) as a source of inspiration because he (parasite) sucks what would make him good and survive.

In this case, a reader or writer becomes or remains a consumer of our society. This strongly confirms the fact that one text complements the other. The host, on the other hand, is viewed as any writer (precursor) who inspires or motivates the other. The relationship between the work of the two will be to inspire (host) and to clarify (parasite). This mutual relationship is called parasitic relationship since both the host and the parasite have equal gain or benefit. There is an equilibrium which exists between the two.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 *Gwayi's historical characters*

In this section I shall concentrate on how Gwayi uses the people of her novel, characters, to further the theme of her novel. The use of characters in the novel is referred to as characterisation. This implies the manner in which the writer shows the qualities and the behaviour of the characters in her novel. In a nutshell, it implies the way the reader or the audience is helped to understand the characters in the novel and the way characters themselves are revealed to the reader. When characters are revealed to the reader or audience, we refer to it as character portrayal. Character portrayal then implies the process through which characters, people in the novel, are revealed to the reader. Character portrayal is, in fact, characterisation.

Characterisation in one way or another determines how good or bad the novel is, and how successful the author is in writing the novel. It is therefore essential for the author to do everything in his/her power to work towards excellence in manipulating his/her characters.

Characterisation is the manner in which the author shows the qualities, actions, words and reactions of the people in his/her novel. It is the art by which the writer reveals his character to the reader. Cohen (1973:17) treats characterisation as:

The art of creating fictional character in words

which gives them identity.

Through this art characters are known by their actions, e.g. what Shaka does to create conflict; their dialogue with other characters, e.g. Mfudukazi and nandi's dialogue as the source of conflict; what other characters say about them, e.g. Senzangakhona saying that Nandi is adamant; what he/she thinks, e.g. nandi saying all her co-wives hate and bewitch her and her son Shaka.

In this novel Gwayi is skilfully introducing her characters in either the dramatic or the descriptive method. From the dialogue between Mpikase and Shaka one can tell that there is conflict at esiKlebheni. Gwayi (1976:1):

We Shaka! Sewumkhaliselani uDingane?

Shaka! Why do you beat Dingane?

Characterisation is one of the many devices used by critics to judge how successful the author is in writing the novel. In all history books characters are usually described and the story related to the audience. In this manner characters are not given an opportunity to reveal themselves or develop as the story progresses in the novel. This is the main difference between a history book and a novel or fiction.

It is, however, not the case with *Yekanini*. In *Yekanini* we get to know the type of characters as we read about them. We understand different characters because the writer reveals to us their outer and inner lives, behaviour and thinking. We know what kind of character Shaka is because of how Gwayi reveals him to us. Therefore, characterisation has to do with how the reader is given to understand the different characters in the novel. Cohen (1973:177) defines it as:

The means whereby an author establishes
the illusion that the person created by his words
is indeed a real person.

This refers to characters who develop as the story progresses. This development of characters gives life and reality to the novel. Characters written about in *Yekanini* are different from those characters written about in the myths in that Gwayi's characters once lived. They are historical characters.

The inclusion of historical figures and events in the writer's novel is one way or method of establishing a foothold in the past. Historical characters and events are made use of in the historical novel. Historical period is indicated by specific historical events, such as Shaka's ascension to the Zulu throne, Mfecane and many other occurrences and incidents. Historical characters are distinguished by their well-known names and reputations in history. Shaka, among other things, is known for bravery.

3.2 Individual characters

To treat the issue of characterisation successfully, we have to treat the characters themselves. Different kinds of novels have different types of characters. *Yekanini* is an historical novel which accounts on the issue of history. Characters in this type of a novel therefore refer to real life and real people, i.e. people who once lived during a particular historical period and people who are life-like. Time, space and events also refer to something that once happened in real life, in a certain period, certain places and through certain activities.

Even the content of the novel is based on history, though the writer is not writing a history book but fiction based on reality. Because it is fiction, the author arranges all events in an artistic way since it requires a lot of art to arrange events in chronological or any other manner. The author, in his/her arrangements, will concentrate more on certain issues than on others. This does not mean neglecting other important issues because, when writing a novel, the author is aware of the fact that his/her judgement is holistic, i.e. on the novel as a whole. Should this requirement not be considered, the writer's novel may not be up to standard. This is one limitation which can lower the quality of a novel. When writing, some writers tend to voice their personal feelings. It is these personal feelings of the writers which tend to make their novels biased. This affects the credibility of the novel.

In *Yekanini* Gwayi creates her characters in a way that will suit their events. No character can act on behalf of or replace another, even if their story is entirely or partly the same. Shaka is the king of the Zulu who, because of political injustices, is brought up at eLangeni, the place of his mother's birth. With the help of Dingiswayo, king of the Mthethwas, he is able to overthrow Sigujana and become king of the Zulu.

The former president, Mr Nelson Mandela, on the other hand, because of political injustices, is sentenced to twenty seven years' imprisonment at Robben Island. With the international pressure on the apartheid government, he becomes the President of South Africa. Both Mandela and Shaka are great characters in the history of South Africa. They are important figures and complex human beings who have made an impact on human life. Neither of the two can be created in such a way that he acts on behalf and gives the picture of the other. Shaka is a warrior who likes killing, hence the brutal murder of his half-brother, Sigujana, for the royal crown – and many more. Mandela is a peace-loving leader, hence the negotiations with former government officials.

In writing a novel about such characters, the writer has to make certain that he/she makes them life-like. Saying that characters in the novel should be life-like means that they should convey human qualities in everything they do. If there could be one who could change his form from that of a human being to that of a lion, that could leave us with the benefit of doubt as to the reality of the novel because changing form is not a human quality. Human beings should at all times remain human beings. Christie et al (1980:10), confirm this premise when they say:

The historical novel has traditionally dealt with the realistic; realistic life seen through a window in all its undistorted familiarity.

The novel stands in a recognisable reality to life.

Christie et al carry on by saying:

The reality of the work of fiction is not necessarily or primarily a reality of circumstances or detail or common place routine. Realism and naturalism in the novel are literary or literary philosophical conventions.

Since characters are life-like people, we get to know them by their actions, dialogue with other characters, what other characters say about them and what they themselves say and think. The author's skill to reveal the characters to the audience starts with the introduction of characters to the readers. From the introduction of characters, unless there is a twist in the tale, the reader can predict what type of character he/she will read about. Certain skills are used to introduce the characters. These skills, depending on the individual writer's potential and capability, vary greatly from one writer to another.

There are many methods or ways of successfully introducing characters to the reader. In a single novel one or two of them are used. In *Yekani* we see Gwayi skillfully introducing her characters by using either the dramatic or descriptive method. Many critics are of the opinion that most Zulu novelists employ these two methods concurrently and perhaps to the best advantage. This brings us to the discussion of some of the characters in the novel and this is done in the order of their importance. Not all characters will be discussed – only those who play the most important roles in the story. The others are minor or subsidiary characters. Though they only play smaller roles in the story, their roles must not be underestimated. Their inclusion helps to make the story a success.

3.2.1 Shaka

Shaka is born out of wedlock in approximately 1787, near the present town of Melmoth, north of the Tugela River. He is always compared to Napoleon Bonaparte of France. His mysterious birth causes him to fall into disgrace with his aunts (half-mothers). They all complain bitterly about his behaviour.

When Nandi becomes pregnant, nobody is aware of her pregnancy. Many believe it is a stomach disease called "isishaka". When the baby is born, it is named after the disease, hence the name Shaka. In his praises the praise singer calls him:

USishaka kasishayeki, UNodumehlezi

kaMenzi.

The unconquered Sishaka, Nodumehlezi
of Menzi.

Nodumehlezi is associated with bravery and popularity. Immediately after his birth at eLangeni, Shaka is taken by Mudli, Senzangakhona's uncle, to Shaka's grandmother, Mtaniya, in kwaZulu. He remains hidden in his grandmother's house for a long time. Rumours are spread that his grandmother is very ill and that no visitors are allowed. There are many people, however, who do not believe the story. They think that she is harbouring an evil-spirited animal (impaka). Later it becomes obvious that it is an illegitimate child, Shaka. In kwaZulu as well as eLangeni his name is on the lips of all the people. He becomes popular everywhere, hence the name Nodumehlezi.

Shaka, a young, lonely boy, is introduced to us as being terrified of his aunt, Mpikase, Dingane's mother, who furiously asks him why he beats Dingane. Gwayi (1976:7):

Nguyena ongiqalayo, mama, kuphendula
uShaka .

He asks for it, mother, answers Shaka.

The dramatic method used to introduce Shaka to us serves to show us what kind of character he is. He is hyperactive and quick in beating other children. Unlike Dingane who cannot easily read and judge other people's moods and tempers, Shaka is pre-warned of any danger. The following extract from Yekanini shows us how sensitive Shaka is in unpredictable situations. Gwayi (1976:7):

Lamtshela nje igazi lakhe uShaka ukuthi
useyinyathele emsileni kuMpikase.

Shaka could feel that he has opened a can
of worms.

We hear about Shaka, son of Senzangakhona, believed to be an illegitimate child, when he is introduced to us in the first sentence, where Mpikase calls him. Gwayi portrays him to us as a main character. He is always found in the company of his mother, Nandi, because Gwayi believes that writing about either Shaka or Nandi will be incomplete without including the other. Without Shaka, Yekanini would not have been a success. He is as brave as a lion and likes to beat his half-brothers who do not want to comply with his wishes and plans. Lubbe confirms it when he writes:

Shaka was egter 'n dapper seun.

Shaka was, however, a brave boy.

He shows qualities of bravery which none of his half-brothers have. This makes him unpopular with Senzangakhona's other wives who become jealous of him since he is a possible heir to his father's throne.

Mofolo tells us that Shaka, even as a baby, shows signs of being tough and stubborn. As he grows up, Mofolo carries on, he refuses to show repentance when he is punished, since that would be a sign of weakness. Shaka is regularly chastised, but seldom lets his mother know about it, and never cries.

Shaka likes to dominate all the boys of his age. This, according to Gwayi, makes him a source of conflict at esiKlebheni, his father's kraal. This makes life very difficult at esiKlebheni. He and his mother are intensely hated by his father's other wives as well as by Mudli, Senzangakhona's uncle. Mudli hates Nandi because, in the first place, she has come to marry the Zulu prince, Senzangakhona, despite the fact that they are related and, in the second place, he feels that Shaka, the illegitimate son of Senzangakhona, may have a chance of competing with Dingane and the others for the throne after Senzangakhona's death. Because of all these feelings, Shaka and Nandi are expelled immediately on the day that Shaka beats Mudli's sons.

His youth days are unpleasant because, at the age of six, he and his mother are deported by Senzangakhona. Because of the expulsion from esiKlebheni, Shaka is brought up at eLangeni, among his mother's people. However, they are even expelled

from there eventually and end up living with Dingiswayo, the strong king of the Mthethwa. He is not only strong, but wise and a just ruler. Shaka's hard youth days makes his heart as hard as stone. It caused a desire for power as well as the desire to take revenge on all the people who have ill-treated them in his youth. Mael (1974:16) confirms Shaka's longing for revenge when he writes:

He was sure to exalt all those who befriended him
and his mother and revenge all those who ridiculed
them.

Shaka shows bravery from childhood. No boy of his age can ever match him in a fight. He is not even afraid of bigger boys. Gwayi (1876:44) writes;

Elinye ibhungu lathi liyamshaya wavika ngendukwana
yakhe. Lathi lisamangele ngokuvika kwakhe
walinkampula esiswini ... Lamsukela phakathi
kwezinkomo esibayeni lamshaya waphuma
esangweni esemivimbovimbo.

When one of the elderly boys tries to beat
him, he blocks the blow with his small
stick and immediately strikes him very hard
on the stomach. The angry boy beats him

all over the body.

Although Shaka is being beaten, he does not cry. He only marks those who laugh at him and tells them that one day he will get even with them. He usually beats other boys because they call him an illegitimate child (umlanjwana). Even today the word "umlanjwana" is not a well-accepted word in the Zulu language. It is regarded as an insult to the person referred to.

At eLangeni he also dominates through his hard work. He strongly believes in the saying that "practice makes perfect". He practises whatever is viewed as an obstacle to him to enable him to do it perfectly. Gwayi shows us how he practises a game which involves the throwing of a spear. Gwayi (1976:86) writes:

Kwaya, kwaya, kwaya waze wabedlula bonke
ngempela.

Gradually he became more perfect than others.

The repetition of the word "kwaya" shows patience exercised by Shaka in practising what he considers good and advantageous to him. He starts to display the wonderful qualities of a hero. It shows his unwillingness to surrender or give in to anything which proves to be difficult to him. As Mofolo says, he considers this a sign of weakness.

His bravery is proven when he kills a snake (imamba) at eLangeni. His uncle, Mbengi, slaughters a goat as reward for his bravery. In Zulu this is called "insonyama", the special meat eaten by heroes and famous people. Among the Mthethwa he kills a leopard, and is given a cow as reward by king Ngomane, who is acting on behalf of Dingiswayo. It is the first time in the history of the Zulu that a boy as young as Shaka kills a leopard. He also kills a troublesome lunatic and is rewarded by Dingiswayo with all that person's cattle. These are but some of Shaka's acts of bravery through which he earns some of the following praises:

Unomakhwelo, ingonyama,
Umahlom'ehlthini njengohlanya;
Uhlany' olusemehlwen' amadoda.

Nomakhwelo, the lion,
The warrior in the forest like a lunatic;
A lunatic watched by men.

Shaka is eventually incorporated in the iziChwe "ibutho" regiment. In this he seems to have found an outlet for his personal frustration in battlefield aggression. He is not, however, pleased with the outdated style of warfare practised by the regiments. He soon changes the whole style of warfare by the introduction of a well-designed, short, broad-bladed spear for close combat. This soon takes the place of a long throwing

spear. He does not want his warriors to throw a spear but to personally charge the enemy and stab him. Knight (1989:10) confirms this when he says:

He preferred to charge down upon his
enemy and engage him in hand-to-hand
combat.

Shaka becomes so popular in Dingiswayo's wars that he ends up being called or nicknamed Nodumehlezi. This name is associated with popularity. His praises are later to include "uNodumehlezi kaMenzi..."

Throughout his life Shaka had that leadership desire which is eventually fulfilled when king Dingiswayo gives him the eziChwe regiment to go and overthrow Sigujana and become the king of the Zulu. Shaka and Ngomane, Dingiswayo's trusted chieftain, do this successfully. Mofolo confirms the occurrence when he tells us that the nation sees him as a child of true royal blood born to rule and to reign over the people. Gwayi (1976:122) also complements Mofolo when she writes:

Abambonayo uShaka esehamba emagcekeni
omuzi owawusungowakhe manje, abamkhohlwanga
umuntu obonakala eyinkosi nje ezihambela.

Those who saw Shaka wandering on the

premises of the home that now belongs
to him, never forgot seeing a real king in
nature.

His appearance, movement and attire spell dignity and royalty. At this stage the Zulu are divided. Many admire him as a brave king with a good reputation who will, they hope, build up a very strong Zulu nation. Others, like Mudli, because of their guilty conscience, fear for their lives. They are aware of the danger that Shaka might decide to revenge the evil they did to him. This fear is justified when we consider the praises:

Umoya womzansi umngenela,
Ohlal' ubangenela nangeminyango –
Ugasela kade lubagasela.

The south-westerly wind,
Usually gets in through the closed doors.
The attacker who has long been attacking them.

This proves that Shaka has been troublesome. He has been attacking others constantly. His constant attacks awaken fear in the people surrounding him. This is seen in one of the stanzas of his praises. This stanza tells us that the fear of Shaka was so intense, that women miscarried if they heard that he was going to attack their tribes:

Odabula kuNdimande noMgovu,
Abafaz' abanendeni baphulaza,
Imikhubulo bayishiya izinqindi,
Imbewu yasal emanxiweni.

Shaka who crossed Ndimande and Mgovu,
Pregnant women miscarried,
Their miscarriages were left strewn,
Their seeds were left in the deserted kraals.

It is also believed that the word "zulu" comes from Shaka who compares his people to the heavens. Knight (1989:5) states:

The word "Zulu" means the heavens, and
his followers took the name "amaZulu"
"the people of the heavens."

After a long suffering and struggle, Gwayi tells us on page 123 that all the Zulu shouted: "Bayethe! Bayethe! UyiZulu!" as the sign of Shaka's acceptance as king of the Zulu. Even his enemies are compelled to shout "Bayethe!" After this Mudli and others are killed. The praise singer refers to this incident when he says:

Umashwabada kaMaganda noNsele,

Owashwabadel' izindlubu zakwaMudli
namakhasi.

The devourer of Maganda and Nsele,
Who devoured Mudli's beans and pods.

3.2.2 Senzangakhona

Senzangakhona as an antagonist helps to develop and further the theme of the novel. Treating him as a minor or secondary character may be misleading because without him, the story could not have been understood as it is understood today. This could have changed the story significantly and turned it into another story. Quite a new theme could have been revealed.

Senzangakhona has a weak personality. Mofolo tells us that Senzangakhona is pushed by his desire to disregard the restraint of custom which dictates that a girl shall not be deflowered out of wedlock, and then tries to camouflage his crime in the society by a hurried marriage when he finds out that Nandi is pregnant.

Senzangakhona goes about causing trouble. He is driven by a strong desire to have a son who can then be his heir after his death. His praise singer portrays him as one who is constantly causing trouble:

Inakaz' emnyama yakithi kwaNobamba,

Ehamb' ibang' amacala.

A black beast of Nohamba,

Going about causing trouble.

Senzangakhona lacks the backbone and clear mind to take control of all the issues at esiKlebheni. The quarelling and misunderstanding among his wives need an exceptionally gifted and unique man to restore peace and harmony. He fails to treat all his wives equally so as to promote peace. He clearly contributes to Shaka's unacceptable behaviour. He cannot make the decision to part with Nandi, but waits to be encouraged to do so by his uncle, Mudli. He has to be influenced to do things most of the time. Even though he is no longer in love with Nandi, he continues to visit her at the request of his first queen, Mkabi – hence the birth of Nomcobo, Shaka's sister. Schoeman (1977:14) confirms the visit when he says:

Dit was Mkabi se werk – Mkabi, die hoof- en
lieflingvrou wat planne kan uitdink. Sy het 'n
paar keer haar man, Senzangakhona, omgepraat
om vir Nandi na sy slaaphut te laat kom. Mkabi
het dit gedoen wanneer dit al laat in die aand
was. Sy het dit gedoen op die tyd wanneer
vrouens al in hul hutte was en nie meer oor

die kookskerms staan en loer het, wie na
wie se hut gaan nie.

Mkabi was responsible for it – Mkabi, the first
and most beloved wife who could devise many
plans. On many occasions she persuaded
her husband, Senzangakhona, to allow Nandi
to come to his hut. Mkabi only did this late in the
evening when the other women were already in
their huts and no longer sitting at their cooking
places where they curiously watched who went
to whose hut.

Senzangakhona's character keep on changing with the situation. This reveals weakness
in his reign. He cannot withstand the pressure exerted on him by his wives. He is finally
persuaded to expel Nandi, an act that perpetrates the social evil of racial prejudice. This
is a social embarrassment and affects the whole eLangeni tribe to which Nandi belongs.
Enmity between the Zulu and eLangeni people is stirred up. Shaka is prepared to
avenge the act when the time is ripe.

His unstable behaviour is again noticed when Mbengi sends the now mature Shaka to
perform a ritual ceremony for him. He accepts him back and carries out all his
responsibilities. But when Shaka refuses his offer, he feels that his authority is being

challenged and immediately deports him again, as the only solution to him, without finding out the reason for his refusal. He vows to see him no more at esiKlebheni.

This happens in a short period of time. Senzangakhona is a man who does not stick to his word. After a few years he hears of Shaka's bravery. He immediately decides to have him back again, because he wants to reinforce his army. He orders Ntaba, his chieftain, to kill him if he does not want to come back. One then wonders whether he wants Shaka back in order to strengthen his army or just because he, in his jealousy, wants a pretext to kill him. He contradicts himself when he claims Shaka as his son whom he wants back, while on the other hand, he orders Ntaba to kill him.

From his praises one can easily detect that Senzangakhona is an unpredictable character. He changes like a weather cock.

Amanz' aseMpembeni yinguqunguqu,

Angiwaqondi nalaph' ayayo,

Amany' ayewuka,

Amany' ayaqonsa.

The waters of Mpembeni are changing,

I can't even tell where they go,

Whether up or down.

After the failure of his plan to kill Shaka, Senzangakhona visits Dingiswayo, the king of the Mthethwa, under whose protection Shaka is, in the hope of persuading him to agree to give Shaka to him. This visit is mentioned by his praise singer in his praises when he says:

Umlunguzi wezingoje,

Izingoje zilunguzelane.

The spy of the caves,

The caves spy each other.

In this context the word "lunguza" refers to visit or spy. "Lunguza" refers to visits such as this which Senzangakhona has undertaken to Mthethwa.

This sojourn bears no fruit for Senzangakhona because Dingiswayo does not agree to his plan. He refuses. The wise Dingiswayo is alert. He uses this opportunity to advise him to make Shaka his successor after his death. Senzangakhona agrees but does not tell his tribe when he gets home. He changes with every new situation. He prefers Sigujana to Shaka. This might be because he has already promised one of his wives to do this. Gwayi (1976:118) writes:

Wayebabona abafazi bakhe ngengqondo

bebangisana ngoba yilwo nalowo efuna

akhethe indodana yakhe ukuba ibe yinkosi

lapha esafa.

He imagines his wives quarelling, each trying to persuade him to make her son his successor after his death.

There is no order at esiKlebheni towards the sunset of his life. This makes life difficult for all at esiKlebheni, save Nandi and her children who have already left. This helps the writer to increase the suspense since the reader becomes anxious to know what will be the end of it all. While the optimist hopes that things will turn for the best in the future and that Nandi will live a normal life, the pessimist expects it to be the worst time of her life. It also poses a question as to whether Senzangakhona is able to manage his affairs well. As a king he is expected to be firm but fair to all his subjects. After his death the state of affairs at esiKlebheni helps Shaka to usurp the king on the Zulu throne. Bergh and Bergh (1984:14) confirm the state of affairs when they write:

Sigujane is acknowledged as Senzangakhona's successor in 1816, Shaka plotted to have him killed.

With Sigujana eliminated, and with the approval of Dingiswayo, Shaka meets no opposition in becoming the new ruler of the Zulu tribe.

3.2.3 Nandi

Nandi, poor soul, is easily taken in by Mfudukazi's pretence and falls into a trap, revealing the most sensitive secrets. This worsens the already estranged relationship at esiKlebheni. Her relationship with Senzangakhona is about to fall apart. Everybody blames her for gossiping. She has not foreseen the repercussions of her own actions. She has a loose tongue and just talks before thinking. This puts her life at stake.

In spite of all this, Gwayi portrays Nandi as a very strong character with a strong personality who does not easily change. She stands firmly by her son, Shaka, and supports him through thick and thin in spite of what other people say about him. She has strong maternal love for her son and prefers to be expelled from esiKlebheni rather than giving up the support of her son. She is determined to protect, bring up and help him ascend the Zulu throne. This underlines what Nandi says when she consoles a worried Shaka:

Ungakhali mlidlwana wami. Ngolunye usuku
uzakuba yinkosi ezweni. Ngiyawubona ulokolokoza
emehlweni akho.

Don't cry my dear (little fire). One day you will
be the great king of the nation. I can see it

(fire) twinkling in your eyes.

Nandi and Shaka have a very strong bond of love. Many critics do not believe the idea of other writers that it is Shaka who kills his mother. Nandi has given up her status as queen and marries Gendeyana, an ordinary man, for the sake of Shaka. When Nandi marries Gendeyana Shaka is sent to stay with Gendeyana's brother for protection against Senzangakhona. The praise singer compares him with a child who has no mother:

Abanye basemhlane konina,

Babelethwe.

Others are on their mothers' backs,

Are carried.

Nandi moves from one place to another in search of better shelter for her dear son. She does not rest until Shaka has found suitable accommodation. His moving around with his mother looking for a suitable place to stay earned him the following praises:

Umbebe kaMama, '

Beba simuke.

Mother's breast,

Suck and let's go.

Nandi is also a typical example of a flat character. She remains unchanged from the beginning to the end of the story. Gwayi has made her flat and adamant, as Senzangakhona says about her, in order to prolong the duration of the story. She does not mind what she says to Senzangakhona for the protection of her son.

Nandi holds eternal grudges against those (Zulu) who ill-treated them and pardons all who showed love and kindness at esiKlebheni, e.g. Mkabi, the first queen, Mkabayi, Senzangakhona's sister and Lungazana, the last queen. She hates Mpikase who usually remarks on Shaka's hammer head and the face which is like that of a baboon. Nandi believes that Shaka and Dingane's heads are the same, since they both take after their father, Senzangakhona. Her love for her son blots out the importance of her marriage. She values her love for Shaka more than her marriage.

Nandi and Shaka are major or principal characters in the story. They both have longer and the most important roles in the story. We read about them from the beginning to the end of the story. Without them the story wouldn't have been interesting, and Gwayi could have been unsuccessful in writing the novel.

3.2.4 Mpikase

Mpikase, one of Nandi's co-wives, is revealed as the most feared wife of Senzangakhona. She is feared but not respected. Her heavy body compels everyone to fear her. She is fully aware of it, and very proud of it too. Mfudukazi tells her what Nandi has said about them. She even stands up to demonstrate to Mfudukazi how fit she is. She cannot be undermined by the slim Nandi. Gwayi (1976:36) says:

Ake ngisukume ukuze ungibone kahle,
Mfudukazi. Uma ungibona wena ucabanga
ngingowokudelelwa nguNandi?

Let me stand up so that you can see me
clearly, Mfudukazi. Do you think I am
one to be looked down upon by Nandi?

Gwayi introduces her to us in the very first line of the novel. She is very angry with Shaka for having beaten her son, Dingane. She claims that it is not the first time and that Shaka is spoilt by his mother. She speaks loudly so that Nandi, sitting in her hut, can hear her. She obviously knows that they have grudges against Nandi. She calls Shaka names to provoke his mother. They hate Nandi because she has come to marry their husband despite the fact that they are related. However, she does not have the guts to challenge Nandi and tell her how she feels about her. She prefers to channel her feelings through Shaka. One would want to know what the end of this hatred will be.

Mpikase is always stern and mean, though very beautiful. She does not try to earn respect. Because she is so stern, Mfudukazi tells her more about their discussion with Nandi. She intimidates her by her commanding questions such as, Gwayi (1976:35):

Ekulandisa ngami?

Discussing me?

She shows such determination that Mfudukazi feels small when asked this question. This causes Mfudukazi to exaggerate in the story so as to please her. She knows exactly which buttons to press to get Mfudukazi to tell her even more. She interrupts now and then, pretending that she is not interested in the story. Gwayi (1976:36):

Ngeke ngisakhuluma lutho ngoba
ngiyakubona ukuthi kawuqonde
kungilandisa indaba, Mfudukazi.

I shall say no more because it is
clear that you do not want to tell me
the story, Mfudukazi.

Mpikase is also a flat character who does not change throughout the story. She hates Nandi and does not want to forgive her, even when asked by Mkabi, their senior. From

what she says about Shaka and Nandi, and from what she does, one can clearly see her hatred. Gwayi makes all the characters in the novel unique. No two characters are identical. Each character plays his/her own role.

3.2.5 Mfudukazi

Mfudukazi is one of the characters who helps to ignite the development of the theme. She is a trickster who can easily elicit information from others. She likes gossip which leads to conflict between others. With her tricks she easily convinces Nandi that she is on her side. She easily takes away Nandi's suspicions. She first pretends that she has come to ask for a pinch of snuff. This gesture has an important implication in Zulu. Giving someone tobacco to smoke or snuff is a sign of friendship. This also applies to giving someone beer to quench his/her thirst. Knight (1989:5) describes the above as follows:

For diversion Zulu had "utshwala", a thick, rather sour beer and tobacco, which was dried, crushed and taken as snuff.

Asking for a pinch of snuff misleads Nandi not to suspect Mfudukazi, who comes like a hyena in sheep's clothing. This is exactly what Mfudukazi is trying to achieve. She

poses as a friend who has empathy with her, while all the while she is plotting against her.

She is able to start conflict, but then quickly stands back and looks at what is happening. She goes to Nandi and tells lies about Mpikase, and then she goes to Mpikase and tells lies about Nandi. After igniting the fire of conflict, she just stands back and watches.

She has a very poor personality. She fails to keep a secret. She tells Mpikase everything they said, although she knows very well that she is creating misunderstanding. She is a good story teller who sometimes exaggerates. This skill is usually possessed by tricksters who have a good command of the language in which the story is related. She has a particular style of presenting her story. Taking into consideration the relationship between Nandi and Mpikase, she starts her story in the following manner, Gwayi (1976:35):

Phela benginoNandi emini yasekuseni.

Izinto angilandise zona zingakwethusa.

I was with Nandi before noon. You will
be surprised at what she told me.

She pauses, just as a good story teller would do to check if she gets the desired response. She is sure to catch the attention of Mpikase who regards Nandi as her enemy. She knows what to say to Mpikase in order to get a response. She says that Nandi says they are all snakes (they gossip about her) and that they bewitch her. She has pressed the right button. This will add to her annoyance. This helps to maintain suspense. The reader will always want to know what is going to happen next. The role of one character in the story is influenced by another. The behaviour of Mpikase and Mfudukazi affect Nandi's life greatly at esiKlebheni. Gwayi manages to use Mfudukazi and Mpikase to make the situation at esiKlebheni even worse. After Nandi's deportation we hear no more of Mpikase and Mfudukazi.

3.2.6 Mkabi, Mkabayi and Langazana

These three characters do not play major roles, but they do act as mediators and peace-makers. They are minor characters in the story, but they also help to prolong the duration of the story. Had it not been for them, Nandi would have left very early on in the story. They act as pacifiers and are associated with peace. Their approach to Senzangakhona is calm and that causes him to welcome their company. They all have good personalities and empathy for other people. Nandi appeals to them for help and advice whenever she is in trouble. In fact they are the only friends that Nandi still has at esiKlebheni. In spite of everything that has been said about Nandi, she still has some friends.

Although they are minor characters, we do not stop hearing about them after Nandi's expulsion. They also visit her at eLangeni. These three names also appear in many history books. The use of their names signifies reality. The novel appears real, which is one of the qualities of a good novel.

Mkabi is introduced as the first queen of Senzangakhona. Her cows are always milked first during milking time. She is wise, polite, sympathetic and loved by all at esiKlebheni. She fulfils her responsibilities as first queen at esiKlebheni. She does her best to ensure peace among Senzangakhona's other wives, and to do so with impartiality. She regards this as one of her responsibilities at esiKlebheni. This is confirmed by Mkabayi in Gwayi (1976:41) when she says:

Wena Mkabi ngibona ukuthi ufanele ukuyilungisa
lendaba nawozakwenu. Ngineqiniso lokhuti ngeke
uwubalekele lomsebenzi.

It is you, Mkabi, who should solve this problem
with your co-wives. I have confidence that you
will not decline this responsibility.

Through her impartiality in approaching conflict among her co-wives, she has earned herself a good name. She has since become one to be trusted by all. All go to her and tell her their secrets with confidence. Nandi has confidence in her. She strongly believes

that she is the only one who can change Senzangakhona's attitude. She appeals to her every time she has a problem at esiKlebheni. Gwayi (1976:40):

Ngize lapha ngoba ngizocela uMkabi ukuba
anele athole ithuba lokumbonisa ubaba
(Senzangakhona) ambonise lokho engehlulekile
mina ukumbonisa khona. Mhlambe kuyena
uzoqala ukubona ukuthi kanginamanga
uma ngithi ngimsulwa.

I have come here to ask Mkabi to try and
make dad (Senzangakhona) understand that
I am innocent.

She is the direct opposite of all Senzangakhona's wives in that she has tolerance – a quality most of the others lack – and is able to keep secrets. In spite of the fact that she is the first queen, she is never proud of her status. Unlike Mpikase and others, she swallows her pride and comes down to their level so as to solve their problems amicably. She is a very good example. She indirectly helps poor Senzangakhona to maintain peace at esiKlebheni. She tries in vain to restore the love between Senzangakhona and Nandi. She loves Nandi in that she continues to visit her even after her banishment from esiKlebheni. She is able to persuade Senzangakhona to let Nandi visit him in his sleeping hut. She is trying to revive their love.

Langazana is introduced as the last queen. The last queen usually gets married to the king during his late adult age. The king usually loves his last queen very much and this is sometimes the cause of much jealousy among the other queens, although they are silenced by the fact that this is customary.

Though very little is heard about Langazana, she contributes much to the consolation of the distressed Nandi. She is sympathetic to Nandi and warns her against talking to Mfudukazi because she is a liar (kuningi okwakhathshwa yindlovu kuyena). Though very young, she is able to give Nandi good advice.

Mkabayi is a sister to king Senzangakhona, Gwayi (1976:39):

Ucilo wazishaya endukwini kuyena ngoba
wafika kwaMkabi kukhona udadewabo
kaSenzangakhona uMkabayi.

She was fortunate because at Mkabi's
she found Mkabayi, Senzangakhona's sister.

Mkabayi loves Nandi and jokes with her when she meets her. Gwayi (1976:39):

Wabukeka umuhle kangaka Nandi, kusobala

ukuthi uphile kahle kulezinsuku.

You look so beautiful, Nandi, it is clear
that you are very well these days.

In other novels Mkabayi is portrayed as being very sly and as having manly qualities. She is the one who later has to plot to have Shaka assassinated by his half-brothers. At this stage, however, she loves Shaka and Nandi and is always prepared to help them. Gwayi (1976:41), shows us that it is not for the first time that she helps Nandi:

Ngizophindela futhi kumnawethu.

I shall go and meet my brother again.

This she will do to try and prove Nandi's innocence to her brother and try to clear her name from the blame attached to her (Nandi) by her co-wives. They claim that she insulted them by saying that they all bewitched her. Mkabayi, Mkabi and Langazana love Shaka and appreciate the things he does. They visit Shaka and Nandi at eNguge, Mbeki's kraal, even after their expulsion from esiKlebheni. This visit proves to Nandi and Shaka that they are not among those who say "good riddance"! They have very pleasing remarks about both Nandi and Shaka when they see Shaka. Gwayi (1976:58):

"Uyakhula mfana wami," kusho uMkabayi.

"You are growing up, my son," says Mkabayi.

"Ekhula njalo futhi muhle," kukhuluma uMkabi.

"He is also handsome," says Mkabi.

"Ikhanda lakhe lifuze elikababa," says Langazana.

"His head resembles that of my husband (Senzangakhona)," says Langazana.

This relationship pleases both Nandi and Shaka and helps them to temporarily forget about their exile and sufferings.

3.2.7 Dingane, Mhlangana and Mpande

We hear about them in the beginning of the story, and then they disappear. They also help to "ignite" the plot of the story. Once the writer is sure that the story is under way, they are taken out. They are minor characters who only help the story to take off. They are Shaka's half-brothers and do everything in their power to make his life difficult at esiKlebhēni. They are used by the writer to introduce their mothers. From their actions we can see that they are part of the negative influence against Shaka and his mother. This influence creates instability at esiKlebhēni, which leads to the expulsion of Nandi.

Among the other three brothers, Dingane seems to be the most important one, because the conflict at esiKlebheni centres mostly around him. He is spoilt and likes to cry. This is because he is always sure of his mother's backing when he cries. We hear about him in the second paragraph of the first chapter of the novel. He is introduced at the same time as the main characters. In this paragraph Dingane cries because he has been beaten by Shaka. He exaggerates his pain. His mother, Mpikase, is annoyed and angrily asks Shaka why he has done it. This pleases Dingane.

He is also used by the writer to introduce his mother to the reader and lay the foundation for the conflict. Mpikase's attitude towards Nandi immediately suggests conflict. When Shaka's behaviour, such as beating Dingane, is repeated, conflict becomes inevitable.

Even at a later stage Dingane proves to be different from Shaka and has quite different problems (which could have been easily solved by Shaka) to contend with. He lacks Shaka's zest for military expansion and seldom, if ever, accompanies the Zulu regiments to war. Even his praises confirm that he is not as brave as Shaka, who is compared to a lion. Contrary to Shaka, Dingane is compared to a harmless butterfly.

UVemvane lukaPhunga noMageba,

UVemvan' olumabal' azibhadu.

Ngibe ngiyaluthinta luyahwaqabala,

Lunjengoluka Phunga waseBulawini,

LunjengoVumo kubangoma.

The butterfly of Phunga and Mageba,

The beautiful spotted butterfly,

Which when touched, retreats,

Is like Phunga of Bulawini,

Is like Vuma of the diviners.

The lines, "The beautiful spotted butterfly which, when touched, retreats," show us that he is never brave. The composer might have composed them unconsciously or was unaware of this fact, but they serve to reveal the real character of Dingane. He is never brave but depends on surprises. His assassination of Shaka is a surprise; his plot to kill the Whites under Piet Retief is a surprise. He first welcomes them and thus reduces their suspicions. When he is sure that he has their confidence, he surprises them by shouting, "Bulalani abathakathi!" which means "Kill the wizards." He runs away and disappears into his shelter and that is why he is known as the "spotted butterfly – when touched, it retreats."

Because of his cowardice, Dingane believes in surprise. This surprise is eventually applied by Mpande on him. Dingane uses Mhlangana to murder Shaka and later kills Mhlangana by surprise. By killing Mhlangana, he earns himself the following praises:

Ithol' elinsizwa lakokaDondo,
Elihambe liwakhahlel' amany' amathole.

The hornless calf of Dondo,
Which keeps on kicking others.

After killing Shaka he becomes known as:

UMgabadeli, owagabadela
Inkundla yakwaBulawayo.

Mgabadeli, who attacked
Bulawayo's kraal.

All his praises show that he is very good at surprise and that he is never brave.

Mpande is one of Shaka's half-brothers whom Gwayi feels has to be introduced to the audience. Gwayi (1976:15):

Kwakukhona omuniye umfowabo kaShaka futhi.
Igama lakhe yena kwakunguMpande.

There was yet another brother of Shaka.

His name was Mpande.

Many writers are of the opinion that Mpande is an idiot. When one studies his character, one easily observes signs of wisdom in him. His wisdom is first observed by Shaka one day when he remarks:

Umlilo usuka emlotheni.

Fire starts from the waste.

This proverb means that something considered useless may cause great harm. He makes this remark because he is suspicious of Mpande who pretends that he is insane and plays on the ash mould.

Shaka is right. Mpande is prewarned of any danger. Shaka beats Dingane and Mhlangana, but never Mpande. He is able to study the situation and make something out of it. He can easily detect when things are about to turn against him. He quickly runs away to safety. Gwayi (1976:22):

Akusilutho abanewabo babuye badlale ngaye
uMpande sengathi akulele lutho lapha kuyena;
ukuthi naye wayekwazi ukucabanga njengabo
kwabonakala kahle ngalelolanga. Nguyena

owabona kuqala ukuthi izinto kazisalungile neze manje, selidumele emantsumpeni. Ukuze angabuzwa ubuhlungu ayeneqiniso lokuthi uShaka uzakubazwisa abanewabo washeshe walalela lapho esethi mabahambe. Nguye lowaya eyozingenela endlini yakubo engasabhekanga ngemuva ukuze abone ukuthi akabalekeli yini ubala.

In spite of his brothers ill-treating him, Mpande, as if he were not wise; that he is as wise as they are, was observed that day. He is the first to see that the situation is changing. In order to avoid Shaka's punishment, which he was sure of, he responded when Shaka told them to leave. He went straight to his mother's house without checking if he was not running away for nothing.

He is good at sensing danger. During his youth days, his behaviour has saved his mother from joining her co-wives' fight against Nandi. Knight (1989:24) describes him as a born leader:

His apparent indolence concealed the deep political perception of a born survivor.

Mpande, through his wisdom and pretence, is able to survive many political rivals and plots. He remains alive under both the vicious Shaka and Dingane, when so many of his family members have been assassinated as political rivals. Mpande knows that Dingane wants to kill him. That is why, in his praises, he remarks:

Inkonyane kaNdaba,
Eyakhula beyizonda.

The calf of Ndaba,
Which is hated.

Mpande is able to betray Dingane and joins the Whites against him. Because of this event, his praises carry on saying:

UMsimude owavela ngesiluba,
Phakathi kwamaNgisi namaQadasi.
Inkonjan' edukel' ezulwini;
UNowela muva wawoShaka.

Msimude who was seen by the headcover,
Between the British and the Boers,
A swallow that went to heaven,

The successor of Shaka.

According to Nyembezi (1958:70), Mpande is one of the Zulu kings who does not like wars. Maybe it is for this reason that Mpande has become the only Zulu king who ruled for more than thirty years (longer than any Zulu king of the time) and died a natural death. The word "mpande" means "the root". Mpande has really proved to be the root of the Zulu.

Mhlangana, although he proves to be better than Mpande, never becomes a king. He is used by Dingane to help him murder Shaka, and is later killed by the same Dingane. He does not seem to be as wise and as sensitive as Mpande. From his childhood he now and then comes into conflict with Shaka. He also contributes to the hatred levelled at Nandi at esiKlebheni. His mother is the one who goes to Nandi to complain that Shaka has thrown sand into Mhlangana's eyes and that they are as red as blood. She feels that Nandi does not punish Shaka as they do with their children and that she spoils Shaka.

Mudli is Senzangakhona's uncle which, according to Zulu custom, means his godfather. He hates Nandi because he feels that she has come to marry Senzangakhona, her relative, without the traditional ceremony. This is not true because, according to Kunene (1989:16)), Senzangakhona has paid Nandi's people for deflowering her:

Senzangakhona gave Nandi's people 53 cattle

and then asked them that, if Nandi should give birth to a boy, he must be given the name Chaka.

Fifty three head of cattle is equivalent to "lobola", the bride's price which involves cattle. Cattle play a crucial role in the Zulu scheme of things, not just as practical assets, a source of food and of hides for clothing and warfare, but also as a means of assessing status and worth. Gwayi (1976:43) confirms this "lobola" when she says:

Wanikina ikhanda lakhe okwesibili uma ecabanga
ukuthi umshado wabo lowo empeleni wawungemshado
ngoba awusinelwanga ngendlela, akusilutho kwalotsholwa
kwaqedwa eLangeni.

He (Senzangakhona) shook his head for the second time when remembered that in fact their wedding was not celebrated properly, even if the "lobola" (bride's price) was paid to the people of eLangeni.

This proves that Nandi has not come to kwaZulu on her own, as Mudli says. She was brought by the people of eLangeni. When the bride is brought to the bridegroom's home, a slaughtering ceremony, which is the sign of acceptance, is conducted. This means that the bride and the groom's ancestors are brought together. This crowns the bride as the new member of the family.

According to Nyembezi (1958:17), Mudli is the one who goes to eLangeni to fetch Shaka and his mother:

UShaka wavelela eLangeni kodwa kwafihlwa lokho.
Ukhula nje yindaba efihliwe. Sekuzawusuka uMudli
Amnyenyise amlethe kuMtaniya, ugogo wakhe ozala
uSenzangakhona, ngoba isalukazi sinesifiso sokubona
umntwana womntanaso. Ngesikhathi uShaka efikile,
akwaziwa lapha ekhaya, ufihliwe, uhlezi ngogo wakhe.

Shaka was born at eLangeni and that was kept
secret. Mudli went to fetch him secretly and brought
him to Mntaniya, his grandmother, Senzangakhona's
mother, because the old lady wanted to see her son's
son. During Shaka's stay there, nobody knew, he was
hidden, and stayed with his grandmother.

This is also mentioned in Senzangakhona's praises:

Ungezwa bethi valela njalo Solunjalose,
Kanti abasho kuwe
Bash'unyok' uMbulazikazi,

Yen' ovalel' ingonyam' endlini.

You hear them saying, "keep in captivity, Solunjalose,"

They don't refer to you,

But your mother, Mbulazikazi,

She who keeps the king in captivity.

According to these praises Shaka is considered the heir to his father, Senzangakhona.

He is referred to as "ingonyama", the lion, which means the king.

The above serves to explain how Gwayi manipulates and introduces her characters to us. We get to know the characters as we read about them. At the end of the story we are able to tell what kind of characters we have been reading about. This is because of her unambiguous character portrayal.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is usually a summary of the study, yet there are a few issues that sometimes need to be highlighted in the conclusion. After the critic has read the study, he/she will notice Gwayi's capability and success in writing this novel. Not many writers have this ability to write in such a way that the progeny appears to be the original.

This study is mainly based on three related concepts or theories. They are intertextuality, influence and parasite. These are said to be related concepts because each one of them complements the other. At some stage they look inseparable. When one discusses intertextuality, one finds oneself discussing either influence or parasite. These concepts are related in terms of form and content which make them difficult to separate.

Their relationship becomes obvious when we look at the features like theme, characterisation and the milieu. Thus, the interrelationship between Gwayi and the other two, Ntuli and Mofolo, is observed in the usage of theme. A theme is the central idea which, in *Yekanini*, reveals how Shaka grows up suffering. Because of the ability of the writer to present the novel, the picture of his suffering is created or formed in the reader's mind immediately as the reader finds out what all the Zulu think of Shaka and his mother.

It is difficult to trace one writer's work from another. Intertextuality has proved that there are signs of Ntuli and Mofolo's work in Gwayi's novel. The definition and explanation of intertextuality was given in chapter 3. Gwayi used the same theme as the one used by Ntuli and Mofolo.

In this study intertextuality confirms that *Yekanini* was written to give meaning to all former misinterpretations. *Yekanini* has improved on the shortfalls of its precursors.

Intertextuality shows that the story of Shaka is more like that of Jesus Christ. Both are ousted by their own people who do not want to accept them as kings. Nandi plays the part of Mary, while Senzangakhona that of Herod.

Both intertextuality and deconstruction have proved that no text stands alone. One text complements the other for proper meaning. Each text has multi-meaning which enables the reader to give meaning to any text. This enables the writer to identify the loopholes and fill the gaps where there are shortcomings.

It is a common practice among writers to use one another's text. Elliot considers this practice as borrowing by the minor writers and stealing by the major writers. Major writers have the ability to use a text in such a way that its owner fails to identify.

From the explanation in the study we are convinced that it is essential to bring the past into the present in order to understand and solve the current problems. Comparing the present with the past will give us a clear understanding of the present. The contemporary helps to improve the past.

Gwayi's text looks original. Gwayi has organised her novel in such a way that it looks original. She has avoided all the things that may destroy the reality of the novel. Evil spirits and the like found in Ntuli and Mofolo's work are avoided. She has not copied nor duplicated the text, but composed it.

Gwayi is inspired by influence to write a novel. Influence is evoked by a knowledge of the Zulu history. Zulu history is based on what happened in the past and what other writers have written about. In this case traditional influence is involved. About traditional influence, Nwoga (1979:44) says:

One important local influence is of course the traditional literature. Most African writers have said that in the process of finding their own voice they have had to go back to their roots to the point where external influences have become mere catalysts of self-discovery.

One can then conclude that historical writers write their novels and dramas for the sake of preserving the essential past. Leaning on the past is parasitic. It is a natural process that plants and animals depend on one another for their survival. This process has been adopted by the writers. Ntuli and Mofolo are hosts while Gwayi is a parasite. This concludes my major aim.

My secondary aim is briefly to give an outline of the novel so as to show how Gwayi tries to feature Selden's questions of hermeneutic code. The first and second

questions are answered immediately when we get to know that the story is about Shaka who grows up suffering because of being neglected and expelled by his father. The obstacle is the contest by Senzangakhona's wives as to whose son should be king. Senzangakhona fails to solve this problem. Shaka, the bravest of them all, seems to be a possible heir. It is for this very reason that Senzangakhona's other wives become jealous of Nandi. They do not rest until Nandi is deported.

The question "Who commits murder?" is answered when we see Senzangakhona expelling Nandi and Shaka from esiKlebheni. This expulsion causes Shaka to feel neglected and ousted, which hardens his personality. After the death of his father he goes back to kwaZulu, kills Sigujana and crowns himself king of the Zulu. His purpose has been achieved.

Gwayi has also shown Shaka's bravery in everything that he does. Mofolo supports this when he tells us that Shaka, even when young, never cried, even when he was punished. He never tells his mother when the older boys beat him. He does not consider them to be as vicious and dangerous as the snake and the leopard that he has killed.

Gwayi has portrayed the place of kwaZulu as it was during the rule of Senzangakhona. She avoids using KwaZulu-Natal, the political name currently used for the same place. This suits the setting of her novel.

Her omissions are appropriate. Had she used everything, her novel could have been spoilt. Much has been said in the study about the factors that spoil the novel. She

might have felt that relating the early lives of Senzangakhona and Nandi could be monotonous to the reader. This would have made the novel uninteresting.

Gwayi, as is seen in the study, has managed to make her characters real people with whom one can have sympathy. Her characters act just like normal people, without any exaggerations. There are quite a lot of exaggerations to be seen in *Umbuso kaShaka* and *Chaka*. Evil spirits and the weird sisters tamper with the reality of the novel. This once more crowns Gwayi as the best novelist.

Other writers spoil their work by portraying Shaka as a monster who has even killed his own mother. This is an unbelievable premise. This is believed to have been coined by the White writers in order to discredit the Black. In *Yekanini* he is portrayed as suffering, just as Jesus Christ suffered. It is not easy to interpret the comparison if you take a one-sided view. A flexible mind is required to interpret this.

This is a fascinating study which has helped me to understand Gwayi best. I hope everyone will enjoy reading it.

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