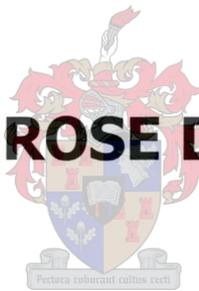


# **CHARACTERIZATION IN SELECTED XHOSA NOVELS OF THE 90'S**

**BY**

**KUTALA PRIMROSE DOKOLWANA**



Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts at the University of Stellenbosch.

Study leader:                      Prof NS Zulu

DECEMBER 2001

## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the portrayal of characters in four Xhosa novels of the 1990s. The objective is to find out whether or not characterization in the Xhosa novels of the 1990s improves. This is done with the view that past studies of characterization done before 1990 by Jafta (1978; 1996), Satyo (1978), Sirayi (1989) and Dlali (1992) gave the picture that a high percentage of writers portray characters as archetypes because of thematic concerns. This often renders characterization poor in the sense that the reader is able to predict the outcome of events through the actions of the characters.

However, Zulu (1999:3) argues that with the inception of democracy in South Africa in 1994, African Languages literature was liberated as well from several constraints, and reveals some signs of maturing. This study is thus conducted to confirm or refute Zulu's (1999) claim that there are signs of improvement in the way writers portray characters.

The study concentrates on four selected Xhosa novels published in the 1990s. The novels are selected on the criteria that they have won literary prizes and are written by prolific writers.

It is found that in all four novels, **Iqlina lomtshato**, **Kazi Ndenzeni na?**, **Koda Kube Nni na?** and **Ukhozi Olumaphiko** the novelists have succeeded in creating realistic, live, dynamic, complex and multidimensional characters. The change and development of characters are influenced by environmental change as a result of social, political and economic factors. However, the study also shows that some events in **Ukhozi Olumphiko** are implausible.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek die voorstelling van karakters in vier Xhosa novellas in die 1990s. Die hoofdoelstelling is om te bepaal of daar 'n verbetering in kwaliteit is in die Xhosa novellas in die negentiger jare. Hierdie ondersoek word gedoen in die lig van voorafgaande studies soos Jafte (1978, 1996); Satyo (1978); Sirayi (1989) and Dlali (1992) wat bevind dat 'n groot aantal skrywers, karakters in Xhosa novellas as stereoptipes voorstel op grond van die "telematiese" oorwegings at hulle het. Dit het dikwels die gevolg dat karakterisering swak is in die sin dat die leser die uiteinde van gebeurtenisse kan voorspel deur die handeling van die karakters.

Zulu (1999:3) argumenteer egter dat met die verkryging van demokrasie in Suid Afrika, is die letterkunde van die Afrikatale ook bevry, en dit vertoon tekens dat die literêre wasdom bereik. Hierdie studie word dus onderneem om Zulu (1999) se aanspraak te ondersteun of te weerlê dat daar tekens van verbetering is in die wyse waarop skrywers karakters voorstel.

Die studie konsentreer op vier geselekteerde Xhosa novelles wat in die 1990s gepubliseer is. Die novelles is geselekteer volgens kriteria dat hulle literêre pryse gewen het en deur erkende skrywers geskryf is.

Daar word bevind in die studie dat die skrywers in al vier die novelles, **Iqlina Iomtshato**, **Kazi Ndenzeni na?**, **Koda Kube Nni na?** en **Ukhozi Olumaphiko** suksesvol was in die skep van realistiese, lewendige, ekonomiese komplekse en multi-dimensionele karakters. Die verandering en ontwikkeling van karakters word beïnvloed deur omgewingsverandering, sowel as deur sosiale, politieke en ekonomiese faktore. Dit word egter bevind dat sommige handeling in die novelle **Ukhozi Olumaphiko** ongeloofwaardig is.

## INTSHWANKATHELO

Lo msebenzi uphonononga ukuvezwa kwabalinganiswa kwiinoveli zesiXhosa ezine ezibhalwe ukususela kumnyaka ka-1990 ukuya ku-1999. Injongo yalo msebenzi kukuqwalasela ukuba ikho kusini na impucuko kwindlela abazotywa ngayo abalinganiswa kwezi noveli zesiXhosa zibhalwe ngomnyaka ka-1990 ukubheka phambili. Oku kwenziwa phantsi koluvo lokuba izifundo zamandulo ezimalunga nokuzotywa kwabalinganiswa ngokubhalwa nguJafta (1978;1996), uSatyo (1978) uSirayi (1989) noDlali (1992) zibonakalisa ukuba uninzi lwababhali luveza abalinganiswa njengemizekelo esisiseko ukuzama ukubanjulumanisa nomxholo wenoveli leyo. Oku ke kubeka ukuzotywa kwabalinganiswa kwizinga eliphantsi nanjengoko umfundi aye akwazi lula ukuthelekelela iziphumo zezehlo ngokujonga iintshukumo ezi zabalinganiswa.

Ukanti ke, uZulu (1999:3) uveza ukuba ukususela mhla kwamiselwa ulawulo lukawonke-wonke okanye inkululeko eMzantsi Afrika ngomnyaka ka-1994, uncwadi lweeLwimi zaseAfrika lwaye lwakhululeka nalo, lwaze lwabonakalisa iimpawu zokuvuthwa.

Lo msebenzi ke ujolise ekuqinisekiseni okanye ekuphikiseni ingcamango kaZulu (1999) yokuba kukho iimpawu ezibonakalisa ukuphuhla kwindlela ababhali abaveza ngayo abalinganiswa.

Lo msebenzi ke uza kuqwalasela kwiinoveli zesiXhosa ezine ezikhethiweyo nezishicilelwe kwisithuba sika-1990 ukubheka phambili. Ezi noveli zikhethwe phantsi komgomo wokuba ziphumelele amabhaso oncwadi yaye zibhalwe ngoomakhwekhwetha bababhali abavunyiweyo.

Kuye kwafunyaniswa into yokuba kwezi noveli zone, Iqhina lomtshato, Kazi Ndenzeni na?, Koda Kube Nini na?, kunye noKhozi Olumaphiko ababhali beenoveli baphumelele ekwakheni abalinganiswa ababonisa izinto ngobunjalo bazo, abaphilayo, abanentshukumo, abantsonkothileyo nabambaxa. Utshintsho nokuphuhla kwabalinganiswa lubangelwa kukutshintsha kweendawo abahlala kuzo ngokudalwa ziimeko zokuhlala, ezopolitiko, nezozoqoqosho. Ukanti ke, ezinye zezehlo kuKhozi Olumaphiko aziqondakali ngokugqibeleleyo.

***I dedicate my work to my mother, Fezeka, her granddaughter,  
Sanelisiwe and my husband, Road.***

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR NRF REPORT**

The financial assistance of National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the National Research Foundation.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have a feeling that this work would not be finished without acknowledging the untiring support and contribution of some few individuals to the success of this thesis.

First I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my study leader, Prof NS Zulu for his patience, understanding and guidance during my study period. If it were not for his character, I would not have reached this standard today.

I also wish to thank Ms Karin Vergeer, the Course Co-ordinator for her readiness to help. The help and friendliness is highly appreciated.

In particular, I am grateful to my family, my husband and my little daughter for their understanding, patience and endurance for the long period of my studies.

Great appreciation is also expressed to the Canon Collins Educational Trust for Southern Africa for their financial support throughout my study.

Last but not least, I wish to express many thanks to my colleagues at work, and my friends in general for their moral support.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract .....	i
Opsomming .....	ii
Abstract in Xhosa .....	iii
Dedication .....	iv
NRF Acknowledgement.....	v
Acknowledgement .....	vi
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Aim of Study .....	1
1.3 Scope of Study .....	2
1.4 Organization of Study .....	3
1.5 Approach and method .....	3
1.5.1 Character .....	5
1.5.2 Character classification .....	10
1.5.3 Characterization .....	13
1.5.4 Techniques of Characterization.....	14
1.6 Conclusion .....	18
<b>Chapter 2: Characterization in <i>Iqhina Lomtshato: Mayosi, N</i></b>	
2.1 Introduction .....	20
2.2 Characters in <i>Iqhina Lomtshato</i> .....	20
2.3 Characterization in <i>Iqhina Lomtshato</i> .....	29
2.4 Conclusion .....	37
<b>Chapter 3: Characterization in <i>Kazi Ndenzeni Na: Mcimeli, RF</i></b>	
3.1 Introduction .....	38
3.2 Characters in <i>Kazi Ndenzeni Na</i> .....	39
3.3 Characterization in <i>Kazi Ndenzeni Na</i> .....	53
3.4 Conclusion .....	63

**Chapter 4: Characterization in *Ukhozi Olumphiko: Saule, N***

4.1	Introduction .....	80
4.2	Characters in <i>Ukhozi Olumphiko: Saule, N</i> .....	65
4.3	Characterization in <i>Ukhozi Olumphiko: Saule, N</i> .....	73
4.4	Conclusion .....	79

**Chapter 5: Characterization in *Koda Kube Nini? : Ngewu, LL***

5.1	Introduction .....	80
5.2	Characters in <i>Koda Kube Nini?</i> .....	81
5.3	Characterization in <i>Koda Kube Nini?</i> .....	91
5.4	Conclusion .....	98

**Chapter 6: Conclusion .....** 99

BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	107
--------------------	-----

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I intend to put forward the primary objectives, scope and organization of this study. I also address the question of the approach and method to be employed in viewing the research problem. This study is based on four selected Xhosa novels of the 1990s, viewed against the structuralism approach of characterization.

### 1.2 AIM OF STUDY

This study aims to examine how Xhosa writers of the 1990s handle characterization in the novel. The aspect of characterization is not a well researched subject especially in the work of the 1990s. In the studies of characterization conducted before 1990 in the Xhosa drama and novel by Jafta (1978:1996), Satyo (1978), Sirayi (1989) and Dlali (1992), it has been found that a high percentage of writers still portray characters as archetypes, for thematic reasons. There is basically no problem with such characterization, as confirmed by Scholes and Kellogg (1966:161) that: "to suggest that one order of characterization is better than another is folly. To recognize that differences exist is the beginning of wisdom." The only problem with flat characterization lies with the handling of such characterization by the novel writers.

The novel writers poorly handle flat characterization in the sense that the reader is able to predict the outcome of the events through the actions of the characters. The outcome is often based on the moral that overrides all events. Msimang (1986) is of the view that the character portrayal of the African novel in South Africa in general, and in Zulu in particular, has been greatly influenced by the folktale. Zulu (1994) shares the same view on characterization of the Sesotho novel.

The poor handling of characterization in African Languages literature in general, has been hampered, according to Ntuli and Swanepoel (1993), Mtuze (1994) and Grobler (1995), by the didactic and Christian stipulation of the missionaries and the apartheid censorship of books that were primarily written for school children.

In short, what is known about characterization up to the 1980s is that African novels in general have flat characters and resolution is brought about by improbable means.

With the inception of democracy in 1994 in South Africa, Zulu (1999) argues, South African literature in African Languages was liberated from the constraints of the censorship bear, and now reveals some signs of maturing. He contends that: "...in the 1990s the literature of African languages has gained respectability and is entering the new millennium with many positive signs of maturing" (Zulu, 1999:3).

Therefore, there is a need to look at specific aspects of the novel in each African language in order to confirm or refute Zulu's (1999) findings. This study is prompted by the lack of research on characterization in the Xhosa novels of the 1990s. Therefore it aims to find out how characterization in the Xhosa novels of the 1990s is handled.

### 1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY

The study will concentrate on four selected Xhosa novels in the 1990s. It has been decided to focus on the novels of the 1990s because very little is known about how characterization is handled in this literary period.

The selected novels are:

- Mayosi, N. 1995. *Iqhina lomtshato*.
- Mcimeli, R.F. 1995. *Kazi ndenzeni na?*
- Saule, N. 1996. *Ukhozi olumaphiko*.
- Ngewu, L.L. 1998. *Koda kube nini na?*

In the selection of novels, I have been biased towards the good novels because I want to see how characterization is handled. The selected novels above are considered to be good novels because they have either won literary prizes, or have been written by prolific writers.

With four novels, I feel I will be able to come to some conclusion on how characterization is handled by novel writers of the 1990s.

## 1.4 ORGANISATION OF STUDY

The study is organized in the following manner:

Chapter 1: Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter, which concentrates on the aim of study, scope, organization, approach and methods to be employed.

Chapter 2: Deals with analysis of characterization in *Iqhina lomtshato*.

Chapter 3: Deals with analysis of characterization in *Kazi ndenzeni na?*

Chapter 4: Deals with analysis of characterization in *Ukhozi olumaphiko*.

Chapter 5: Deals with analysis of characterization in *Koda kube nini na?*

Chapter 6: Conclusion on findings

## 1.5 APPROACH AND METHOD

Characterization in the four selected novels will be examined within the structuralism approach as it has been indicated earlier on.

Structuralism is defined by Barthes in Jefferson (1986:94) as “a certain mode of analysis of cultural artifacts, in so far as this mode originates in the methods of contemporary linguistics”. Furthermore, Peck & Coyle (1984:161) view structuralism as “an analytic approach, which is less concerned with the unique qualities of any individual example than with the structures that underlie the individual examples”.

Eagleton (1983:96) contends that literary structuralism, which is an attempt to apply to literature the methods and insights of the founder of modern structural linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure, became popular in the 1960s. Whereas earlier linguists had been concerned with the history and characteristics of particular languages, Saussure was interested in the structures that underlie all languages. Language is viewed by Saussure as a system of signs, which is to be studied “synchronically” - that is to say, studied as a complete system at a given point in time-rather than “diachronically”; in its historical development.

Each sign is to be seen as being made up of a “signifier” (a sound-image, or its graphic equivalent), and a “signified” (the concept or meaning). A concept as far as Zulu (1994:5) is concerned is not a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound. That is why Saussure viewed the relation between signifier and signified as an arbitrary one, depending most of the time on cultural and historical conventions. For instance, the sound - image “umthi” (tree) which is a signifier, in Xhosa, is associated with the concept “tree” which is the signified. As Zulu (1994:5) explains, the sign made by these entities is arbitrary and conventional because the association of the concept and the sound is a linguistic convention, determined syntagmatically and pragmatically. Saussure emphasized that “in the linguistic system there are only differences meaning is not mysteriously immanent in a sign but is functional, the result of its difference from other sign” (Eagleton 1983:97).

As Webster (1996:34) observes, Saussure divided up the concept of language into two areas, which have subsequently been very important in literary theory; *langue* and *parole*. By *langue*, he meant the totality of language; its entire vocabulary and grammar. By *parole*, he indicated a particular utterance or “speech act” which draws on and combines various elements from the *langue* aspect. Saussure's concern was in the rules and principles that enable language to exist and function.

Selden (1989:62) asserts that the structuralism assumption is that all stories can be reduced to certain essential narrative structures. According to Abrams (1993:281) the undertaking of a thoroughgoing literary structuralism, however, is to explain how it is that a competent reader is able to make sense of a particular text by specifying the underlying system of specifically literary conventions and rules of combination that has been unconsciously mastered by such a reader.

In applying structuralism to literature, contemporary literary structuralists, particularly Genette (1980), use narratology as a tool to study a narrative. Genette (1980) as Zulu (1994:6) observes is one of the structuralists who attaches significance to the system. In his structuralism narratology he incorporates the principle of *langue* and *parole*. Once more, Zulu (1994:6) adds that Genette's (1980) views of *recite* and *histoire* are essentially based on the notion of signifier and signified, respectively and his contribution to structuralism narratology is regarded by people such as Culler (1980) as a major achievement in the development of structuralism.

Genette's (1980) view on narrative fiction is based on three French terms *recite*, *histoire* and *narration* which are used and translated by Rimmon-Kennan (1983) as meaning text, story and narration respectively. Rimmon-Kennan (1983:3) makes a parallel distinction between these three elements when she states: "whereas 'story' is a succession of events, 'text' is a spoken or written discourse which undertakes their telling. The act or process of production is the third aspect-narration".

Character constitutes the story as it is through characters that action or events are presented. But characterization forms the text since it is about the interpretation of the characters in action. We will now look at the theory of character and see how it forms the basis of characterization.

### **1.5.1 Character**

The pillar of any fictional work is the constructed or imaginative person who behaves in a certain manner. The people in a novel are referred to as characters. According to Abrams (1993:23) characters are the persons presented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral, dispositional and emotional qualities that are expressed in what they say (the dialogue) and what they do (the action).

In writing about character, Roberts (1991:64) contends that character in literature is an extended verbal representation of a human being - the inner self that determines thought, speech and behavior.

From the definitions given above, it becomes evident that characters are invented or imaginary persons in a narrative work which are given human qualities and behavior. However, with the structuralism approach at hand, we should resist the temptation to discuss characters as if they are humans. As Peck and Coyle (1985:116) state: "we are not so much concerned with discussing the characters as people as with discussing how the texture of the writing creates such a credible picture."

Rimmon-Kennan (1983:30) highlights a problem concerning character that is experienced in literature today. As she points out, "character is pronounced 'dead' by many modern writers. Contemporary theorists, Structuralists for an example, can hardly accommodate character

within their theories, because of their commitment to an ideology which 'dissenters' man and runs counter to the notions of individuality and psychological depth." The problem of the "death" of characters in contemporary literature centres around the literary critic's concern about the mode of existence of character. Some of them view characters as people, some view characters as mere words while others view characters as actants. We will now look at the various views of characters.

(a) Character as people

The realistic approach is one of the pioneers of the viewing of characters as people. Marvin Mudrick (1961) quoted by Rimmon-Kennan (1983:31) contends that the "realistic" argument insists that characters acquire, in the course of action, a kind of independence from the events in which they live, and that they can be usefully discussed at some distance from their context.

Characters are seen as imitations of people and so are treated with greater or lesser sophistication as if they were our neighbors or friends. As Rimmon-Kennan (1983:32) observes, such an approach tends to speculate about the characters' "unconscious" motivations and even constructs for them a past and future beyond what is specified in the text.

Peck and Coyle (1985:115) explain how this approach works as they say; "the realistic approach allows the writer to create a very full impression of what it must be like for certain people to be caught in certain dilemmas; there is a searching presentation of the full range of psychological and social factors that are involved in every experience."

To perceive characters as people does not literally mean that characters in a novel are human beings. What it means is that the writer composes them in a manner so as to resemble human beings. They almost look like us, behave like us, think as we do such that we tend to relate to them as friends or enemies, we laugh with them when they are in joy, cry with them when in pain and even sympathize with them when in trouble. Smiley (1971:80) reassures us juncture that even though "characters may resemble actual people so much that does not make them humans."

Bal (1985:80) also puts emphasis on this point as she confirms that: “the people with whom literature is concerned are not real people, they are imitation, fantasy, fabricated creatures, paper people without flesh and blood.”

Moreover, there are vital differences between characters and living people. To name but few, a person is an individual performing actions while a character is an agent of action. In real life, the knowledge of people’s characters is hampered by many factors like self-protective masks over our real personalities, whereas everyone who comes in contact with a character can potentially know that character in exactly the same way, since the same traits are apparent to them all.

In my opinion, characters in a novel should resemble human beings to some degree. The reason becomes clear as one reads Msimang’s (1986:99) view as he states: “in order to be convincing, the writer’s imaginary persons must be grounded in reality. They must be true not so much to our world but their world i.e. the world that the artist has created for them.”

We must not forget that one of the reasons in studying novels, which is mentioned by Heese and Lawton (1994:134) is that: “we are drawn to fiction not only by the fun of fantasy, but by our interest in reality ... a good novel is true in the sense that it gives a sincere, well-observed, enlightening picture of a portion of human life”. At this point, I think it is clear that characters are not real people but man-made people.

(b) Character as mere words

According to Rimmon-Kennan (1983:32) to view character as mere words is the “pursuit” of the (semiotic) argument, which assimilates character to other verbal phenomena in the text to the extent of destroying its specificity in its own way. Quoting one of the pioneers of this theory, Weinsheimer (1979), Rimmon-Kennan (1983:32) puts this idea forward: “under the aegis of semiotic criticism, characters lose their privilege, their central status and their definition. This does not mean that they are metamorphosed into inanimate things or reduced to actants, but that they are textualized. As segments of a closed text, characters at most are patterns of recurrence, motifs which are continually recontextualised in other motifs. Characters dissolve.” O. B. Hardison’s statement in Chatman (1978:117) explains this approach more: “character and thought are the “natural causes” of action. Hamlet and Macbeth exist only as words on a

printed page. They have no consciousness and they do whatever the dramatist requires them to do. The feeling that they are living people whose personalities determine the actions they perform is an illusion.”

In contrary, as far as Chatman (1978) is concerned, the equation of characters with mere words is wrong on other grounds. Too often do we recall fictional characters vividly, yet not a single word of the text in which they came alive. Besides, Wellek and Warren (1963:102) argue that literature represents life and life is in large extent, a social reality. People may model their lives upon the patterns of fictional heroes and heroines. Rimmon-Kennan (1983:33) shares the same idea as she points out that character names often serve as “labels” for a trait or cluster of traits characteristic of non-fictional human beings, for example: “he is a Hamlet”. This implies that as fiction characters may sometimes play a very influential role in peoples lives, it just does not make sense to treat them as if they are just mere words.

#### (c) Characters as Actants

Characters are defined in relation to the events. They are seen on the basis of functions and actions they perform. This argument, as pointed out in Rimmon-Kennan (1983:34) is based on Aristotle who believed characters to be necessary only as “agents “or “performers“ of the action, a view shared by formalists and structuralists of our own century, though for different reasons.

Following Aristotle’s view, O.B. Hardison proposes that the emphasis is on action, not on the man performing the action “...Action comes first”. The agents who perform the action come second (Chatman 1978:108).

So that’s what it is, characters are seen as agents of action. The structuralists seem to share this view as they too, according to Chatman (1978:111) argue that characters are products of plots, that their status is “functional”; that they are in short, participants or actants rather than personages, that it is erroneous to consider them as real beings.

Also, Propp (1968) according to Rimmon-Kennan (1983:34) subordinates characters to “spheres of action” within which their performance can be categorized according to seven general roles, the villain, the donor, the helper, the sought-for-person and the father, the dispatcher, the hero and the false hero.

Prince (1982:72) summarizes various views shared by the structuralism theorists as he states: "Depending on the type of predicates that dominate, characters will be defined mainly by their actions, or by their words or by their feelings and so on... More fundamentally we may classify them in terms of the functions they fulfill. Thus, following Propp we may distinguish them using the domain of the folktale (i.e. seven roles), following Greimas and more generally, we may speak of subjects (desiring an object); objects (desired by the subject); senders (motivating the desire); receivers (recipients of the object); helpers (of the subject) and opponents (of the subject) and following Bremond, we may call them agents or patients, protectors, or frustrators, seducers or intimidators, informers or concealers."

Some structuralists theorists like Rimmon-Kennan (1983:34) find this approach problematic as revealed by her statement: "another problem is the subordination of characters to action or its relative independence of it." As much as I view action performed by a certain character important, compared to the character himself, it comes second. I think that the primary thing that attracts the interest of the reader is to know the character first, and then what he is capable of doing in the story. Alternatively, with regard to the above approaches of character, I would rather go with the view that the approaches are interdependent. It is also true that the application of each theory may depend on the type of narrative rather than creating absolute boundaries. Nonetheless, what is evident is that characters exist whether as people, mere words or actants and therefore need to be studied as one of the aspects in literature. Chatman's (1986:119) view towards an open theory of character calls for a viable theory of character that preserve openness and treats characters as autonomous beings, not as mere plot functions. The essence of this theory should argue that character is reconstructed by the audience from evidence announced or implicit in an original construction and communicated by the discourse, through whatever medium.

From the experiences, thoughts, feelings and actions of characters, we become able to classify them into types of characters that are utilized in two forms of plot that characterize the Xhosa novel - plots of fortune and plots of character. Developing or dynamic characters characterize plots of fortune. Forster uses the term "round " character. Plots of character render characters who remain constant in the process of changing situations. They are flat characters in Forster's terms. We will now look at E. M. Forster's character classification in detail and try to find out the role it plays in characterization.

## 1.5.2 Character classification

### (a) Round characters

As it has been indicated above, characters that feature in plots of fortune are “round” characters. Abrams (1993:24) defines a round character as someone who is complex both in temperament and motivation. He is more like people in real life, capable of surprising us and not easy to describe with any degree of adequacy. Msimang (1986:102) describes this character as the one “whose conduct is not readily predictable and who changes under the changing circumstances . This changing character is sometimes described as a dynamic or revolving character.”

Characters are classified according to the role they play in the structuring of conflict in the story. The **protagonist** is the main character, a central character, a hero or heroine who features prominently in the plots of fortune. This is the dominant character who according to Sirayi (1989:172) influences and precipitates the action or plot, and changes for better or worse according to the demands of the plot.

Major actions in the narrative focus revolve around the protagonist, who in Sirayi’s (1989) terms “serves as the focal interest and the end of the plot of fortune”. Roberts (1991:64) points out that the protagonist is central to the action, moves against an antagonist and exhibits the same qualities of living and adapting characters.

The protagonist may sometimes be ambivalent, that is, he may possess both attractive and unattractive qualities. As a result, Msimang (1986:104) proposes that “he may win - in which case he is the hero in the true sense of the word - or he may lose - in which case he is the victim.”

Sirayi (1989:174) argues that the principal characters in a literary work of art do not exist in a vacuum, but within the complex web of individual relationships. These characters are known as secondary, background or chorus characters who form the social setting which surrounds the major characters and in which they can move.

The **antagonist** is the second central character who features in the plots of fortune. This character is also known as villain as he is initiating the lack to be overcome by the hero. In other words, the antagonist is opposed to the views and actions of the protagonist. According to Msimang (1986) he features in the story with the purpose of thwarting the very interests that the hero is trying to promote. He constantly puts obstacles in the way of the hero. The purpose of this role is to intensify conflict and to generate suspense, which would lead to tension. Just like in the case of the protagonist, the antagonist may have a group of characters supporting him in framing up the protagonist.

The **tritagonist** is the third character that features in some plots of fortune. This character is constructed for the purpose of developing conflict between the protagonist and antagonist. The tritagonist may either play a positive or negative role in a novel. If he plays a positive role, he will often purport to reconcile the opposing camps. On the other hand the negative tritagonist intentionally fuels conflict between the opposing camps. Sometimes this character plays a neutral role in a literary work of art, but often ends up supporting one of the opposing camps. Amongst the secondary or chorus characters we mentioned earlier on, we sometimes find hint characters. They are characters that just appear in space to serve a particular purpose or to fill a certain gap and thereafter disappear.

It has been established from the discussion so far that the protagonist is a central character who undergoes change or development in the process of conflict. The antagonist is also a central character whose actions are in opposition to the protagonist. He also undergoes change. The third character that undergoes a minor change is the one who intervenes or purports conflict between the protagonist and antagonist, that is, the tritagonist. Lastly, the secondary characters need not experience any change, since they fulfill a background role.

#### (b) Flat Characters

In the plots of character, we find no trace of development in characters as they are constructed for the purpose of promoting a particularized view of life. Forster describes these characters as "flat". In flat character, only superficial, typifying characteristics are revealed to the reader. Abrams (1993:24) also uses the term "type" or two-dimensional which delineates the character built around a single idea or quality.

Roberts (1991:66) adds on this definition with emphasis that: "In contrast to the round character, the flat character does not grow, no matter what the circumstances." This implies that a flat character is either good or bad throughout the story. The exchangeability is identified as the essential characteristic of these characters.

Rimmon-Kennan (1983:40) feels that as a consequence of the restriction of qualities and the absence of development, flat characters are easily recognized and easily remembered by the reader.

We will now look at the major characters that feature in fictional work, which is characterized by the static human qualities.

The **hero** is the main character who features in the plots of character. Sirayi (1989:179) proposes that "the hero as he features in these plots can be defined as the admirable character who embodies societal or human ideals." This character is constructed in such a manner as to represent a particular ideal or situation in a particular society no matter what. He is portrayed as perfectly as possible. As far as Sirayi (1989:179) is concerned, this hero has to live in a state of perpetual constancy and completeness so as to set before the reader a clear-cut picture of the societal ideals he embodies.

In real life we rarely get such personalities and so this type of character is not true to life. However, that does not mean that such a literary work is less effective, not credible or unreal but it is just that it serves a purpose. In such fictional works, it is the particular idea or situation that must be real and credible.

In contrast, other plots of character have villains as main characters. A villain is a character in literary work with evil deeds or actions essential to the plot. Likewise, in the case of a villain, the character will display wickedness from the beginning to the end. The character does not have to undergo any changes, as the change may be detrimental to the intended picture. What is important in such novels, is the message that is brought forward.

In plots of character, we also find another character known as the **foil**. Cohen (1973:185) describes the foil as a secondary character who has an identity of his own but whose nature and behavior serve as a commentary upon that of the chief character. About the foil, Dietrich

and Sundell (1967:76) state: "a character who exists principally to bring out some trait or aspect of a major character through contrast is called a foil." The presence of the foil character in a novel is not compulsory. In some novels the complement or contrast of the main characters is very important to the plot, but in others it is not necessary.

Secondary or background characters also feature in plots of character, creating social setting in which the major characters can move. As far as Sirayi (1989) is concerned, it is indispensable that such characters should figure because society is the central concern of the plots of character.

In conclusion, it has come to realization in the discussion above that flat characters or types exist in literary work for a purpose. The main characters furnished with flatness are the hero, the villain and the foil. As much as we know that in real life situation we do not have people with such personalities, the main concern in this case is the life situation brought forward, not the character.

It is also imperative to explain that though we categorized the characters under two plot forms, round and flat characters can be found in any group. Most of the time, novel writers mix the two types of characters in their work, for instance, one may find that while the villain is busy with his evil deeds, the background characters condemn his acts. What is emphasized in this study is that round characters dominate in plots of fortune whereas flat characters dominate in plots of character.

So far we have tried to present the different views on character, and character classification. We will now look at the methods of character portrayal at the artist's disposal.

### **1.5.3 Characterization**

Cohen (1973:37) writes: "the art of creating fictional characters in words which give them human identity is called characterization. It is an art of illusion whereby the characters created seem to become people with traits and personalities which a reader can recognize, respond to, and analyze". On a similar note, Henry (1995:51) defines characterization as: "the techniques a writer uses to portray the people who perform the actions in a story."

According to Msimang (1986:99) characterization is a sum total of techniques employed by an artist in presenting characters in a literary work and perceived by the readers as persons endowed with moral and dispositional as well as physical qualities. Lastly, Chatman (1978:107) has this to say about characterization: “the depicting in writing of clear images of a person, his actions and manners of thought and life. A man’s nature, environment, habits, emotions, desires, instincts; all these go to make people what they are, and the skilful writer makes his important people clear to us, through a portrayal of these elements.”

According to Gray (1984) the varieties of characterization presented in literature are as numerous as those of the real people who surround us in real world, but there are different kinds of dealing with a literary character as we learn more of his or her motives than we would ever expect to be certain of in real life; consistency of motivation seems a necessary fact in literary characterization. At the same time, the importance of the reader’s understanding and participation in a narrative must be emphasized. An artist may succeed in presenting his characters but the reader may fail to understand and grasp the character as the writer wishes. This is evident in Heese and Lawton’s statement: “here the novelist depends upon the reader’s ability to recreate in his imagination the characters and events before him” (1994:146).

#### **1.5.4 Techniques of Characterization**

We will reduce the various methods of characterization into two basic types, the expository and dramatic methods. Rimmon-Kennan (1983) uses the terms direct definition and indirect presentation. In this study we will use Rimmon-Kennan’s terms.

##### **(a) Direct definition**

In direct definition, the narrator describes the character as he gives the summary of the character’s traits, his motives, thoughts and desires. The physical characteristics of the character are also revealed. Abrams (1993:24) also calls it “telling” when he says the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often evaluate, the motives and dispositional qualities of the characters.

As far as Roberts (1991) is concerned, the description of physical characteristics and especially of physiognomy is a traditional means whereby the writer can suggest what sort of character with which we are faced. Cohen (1973:37) supports this view depicting from his statement: "the author employs physical description of varying exactness and fullness so that the character can be visualized by the reader."

While the narrator gives description of the character, the pace of events decelerates. This should not be regarded as a fault but as an artistic skill of the novelist. So if this method is used artistically, it serves a purpose. On the other hand, the description of the character's physical appearance and his personality in general, affects the reader's construction of character as he does not have an option of using his own imagination. Hawthorn (1992:90) observes: "when we are told something we can only take or leave it." We shall distinguish between various forms of direct description:

(i) Direct statement by the author

In Roberts' view, what the author, speaking with the authorial voice, says about a character, is usually accurate, and the authorial voice is naturally to be accepted factually (1991:68). Sirayi (1989:196) observes a tendency in most critics to condemn authorial commentary without considering the aesthetic effect it achieves. He contends that authorial commentary may have mainly two functions which are the authorial judgment intended to control the reader's expectations and the reinforcing or evaluative device that serves to implant or reinforce values or norms on which the reader's appreciation of characters should depend.

(ii) Direct statement by the character himself

As Rimmon-Kennan (1983:63) points out: "a character's speech, whether in conversation or as a silent activity of the mind, can be indicative of a trait or traits both through its content and through its form."

According to Roberts (1991) such speeches require the reader to evaluate both the speaker and context of their remarks. This implies that what the character says about himself might be or might not be the true reflection of himself.

Boulton (1980:85) also adds that sometimes, the character may use monologue or soliloquy to portray an internal conflict when he is faced with two options or a crisis in which he has no one to confide in. Alternatively, the confidant which is a character in whom an important character in the work can confide - who is always a trusted friend of the same sex, is used. However, used with reasonable verisimilitude, the device is more useful and is more acceptable than the soliloquy, for people do not usually talk much to themselves, but most of us do sometimes feel the need to talk over our personal problems with some trusted friends.

(iii) Direct statement about a character by another character

As in real life, in fictional work, we often learn about a certain character from what other characters say about him. We also need to be careful when considering what other characters say about a certain character because it might not be true for various reasons. Boulton (1980:87) alerts us when he states that sometimes, the artist, in letting people talk about each other, is throwing sand in our eyes.

From the words the character utters when talking, we might be able to identify certain character traits like confidence, politeness, and literacy. Therefore, it is interesting to note that what a character says about another character may also be very revealing about him/herself.

(iv) Naming

Naming forms the fourth technique under direct description as it is also the way of describing a character. The name of a character may give a very good indication or key to the behavior of that character. Sometimes, it gives a key to the whole story. According to Sirayi (1989:183) the name-giving technique has cultural origins as it emanates from the African practice of giving names in terms of, among other things, historical events, parents' tastes and wishes, a person's physical appearance, psychological make-up and behavior or traits.

(b) Indirect Presentation

Indirect presentation refers to the portrayal of character's behavior through action and dialogue. Rimmon-Kennan (1983:61) explains that, a representation is indirect when, rather than mentioning a trait, it displays and exemplifies it in various ways. Abrams (1993:24) calls

the method “showing” where the author presents the character’s talking and acting and leaves the reader to infer what motives and dispositions lie behind what they say and do. To support this view, Cohen (1973:38) emphasizes that what the characters do and say provide enormous insight into their make-up.

Hawthorn (1992:90) reminds us that if we think of the most memorable literary characters, we probably find that we remember them doing or saying things, we do not so much remember being told things about them.

Under indirect presentation, we will briefly discuss action, speech, external appearance and environment.

(i) Action

We realize that in putting the characters into action, the author knows that action speaks louder than words. Rimmon-Kennan (1983:61) distinguishes between two types of actions; one-time actions or non-routine actions and habitual actions. She goes further describing one-time actions as follows: “one-time actions tend to evoke a dynamic aspect of the character, often playing a part in a turning point in a narrative.”

Round characters perform this type of action because the character is capable of surprising us. By contrast, habitual actions tend to reveal the character’s unchanging or static aspect. These actions that the character always performs contribute to the flatness of the character.

(ii) Speech

Speech refers to any form of talking; monologue, soliloquy or dialogue. In monologue the artist employs the so-called “stream-of-consciousness” where the reader is introduced to the character’s mind. Wellek and Warren (1963:224) define interior monologue as a direct insight of the reader into a character’s mind without the author’s intervention in the form of explanation or commentary.

Dialogue also plays a very important role in characterization. As stated earlier on, we depict the character’s personality on the way that character speaks, that includes the language he

uses, the style and the accent, for instance, if the character argues with another character, the language he uses may be an index to his background, education, home environment and his social class. Sometimes, a character may realize from the dialogue he has with another character that he is wrong or right in whatever he is doing. This device is known as self-analysis or introspection.

(iii) External Appearance

The external appearance of a character may also portray an important feature about that character's nature. Rimmon-Kennan (1983:65) suggests that one should distinguish between those external features which are grasped as beyond the character's control, such as height, colour of eyes, length of nose and those which at least partly depend on him, like hair-style and clothes. While the first group characterizes through contiguity alone, the second has additional casual overtones. The reader must be able to relate the external appearance of a character with his personality.

(iv) Environment

Environment is also an important way of portraying characters. As far as Rimmon-Kennan (1983) is concerned, there are two types of environment, the physical environment and human environment. The physical environment is made up of the surrounding like house, room, street, and town whereas the human environment is comprised of family, friends and rivals, and social class.

Bal (1985:93) uses the concept of place to refer to Rimmon-Kennan's physical environment and the concept of space to the perceived place. A character is portrayed in a certain physical surrounding or with certain social environment in order to reveal casual relations in his behavior. In other words, the environment of a character, whether human or physical, will always influence his behavior and his behavior will influence it.

## 1.6 CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, we realize that in round characterization we are faced with life-like characters, characters changing with changing circumstances. In flat characterization, we find that what is of utmost importance is the situation that is brought forward, characters are not endowed with human qualities as that might jeopardize the intended message. Characters in fictional works with flat characterization can be taken as mere words, or actants.

We also classified characters as they serve two different plot forms: plot of fortune and plot of character. The protagonist, antagonist and tritagonist have been identified as characters mainly endowed with human qualities. It has been stressed that these characters, especially the protagonist, are characterized by change in the process of conflict. On the other hand, the hero, villain and foil have been identified as characters who are constructed with complete perfection from the start and so display no change during the course of the action.

This chapter has also outlined the two methods of character portrayal which are direct description and indirect presentation. The success or failure of presentation of characterization in a novel depends on the novelist's utilization of these methods of characterization. The two methods cannot be compared to one another in terms of effectiveness. They are both equally effective methods if used artistically.

## CHAPTER 2

### CHARACTERISATION IN *IQHINA LOMTSHATO*: MAYOSI N.

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine how Mayosi handles characterisation in her novel *Iqhina lomtshato* (1995). *Iqhina lomtshato* (The knot of marriage) is one of the novels, which deal with the consequences of Apartheid. The novel artfully and realistically draws a picture of our past, concentrating on the political and social relationships. Zulu (1999:10) states: "the socio-political events of the Apartheid years have become a major subject matter in the African languages novel of the 1990's, and mark a new literary era in this genre." I support the above view, considering the common theme in the three novels that constitute this study.

#### 2.2 CHARACTERS IN *IQHINA LOMTSHATO*

Mayosi's novel is characterised with two lovebirds, Skhungo and Sindiswa, who started with their love while in high school. They cared for each other and ended up being inseparable. As the main characters in the story, they are faced with many problems and are also subject to the opposition from the antagonist. At the end they conquer, tying the knot of marriage.

In its characterisation, the novel has the plot of fortune where the characters are dynamic, changing with changing circumstances. As the title of the novel reveals, the story is based on love while at the same time it unfolds the political situation of South Africa twenty years back. The main action of the story takes place in what used to be the Republic of Transkei. We find that the story is centred around the intolerable treatment Black people in South Africa gets from the government of the time. In reaction to the ill-treatment the people gets from the South African government, Skhungo Faku who is the central character in the story escapes. He joins the liberation army in exile and comes back as the so-called terrorist, performing the so-called terrorist activities. What makes the story interesting is to find Skhungo's girlfriend Sindiswa, having an affair with the senior detective in the Republic of Transkei. Whenever Skhungo visits Sindiswa's place, which is also often visited by Max, the detective, the reader is kept in suspense, not knowing what is going to happen.

Skhungo Faku, the son of Bhodloza is a young man that has just matriculated and becomes unable to further his studies due to financial constraints. His girlfriend, Sindiswa, is also faced with the same problem. The two lovers meet on the New Year's Eve in a private place that they chose to use as their meeting place (indawo yedinga), and make vows on each other. They both promise to keep their love intact, wait for each other until they both get ready for marriage. The reader learns about this view in the following words:

*Ngenene wena ungowam, ngenene mna ndingowakho kude kuse emaphakadeni.*

(You are truly mine, and I am truly yours forever.) [p. 17]

Then they part. Skhungo is going to search for a job in Durban while Sindiswa is going to Umtata. This is a difficult time for both of them as it will be their first time to be far away from each other. From the start, we find the two love birds very committed to each other.

When the story starts, the reader is introduced to Sindiswa who has just arrived in Umtata, and stays at Bongiwe's place. She is looking for a job. Max Matshayana, a senior detective in Umtata falls in love with Sindiswa. He takes Sindiswa to the Casino at Mzamba without her consent. He proposes love to her on the way but Sindiswa is not interested. Sindiswa is caught in a dilemma as Max voluntarily does things for her. He promises to get a job for her, to rent a flat for her and moreover he buys some clothes for her in a boutique at Margate, and he also takes her to a salon to do her hair. Thereafter Sindiswa bows to Max's request not because she loves him but because she is ashamed to say no because of what Max has done for her. Max plays the role of an antagonist in the story. He is opposing the interests and feelings Sindiswa has for Skhungo, though he is not aware of them.

Max is portrayed as a very naive character. Though he had an unsuccessful marriage before, he is still unable to choose a right partner for his marriage. His mistake is to think that money can buy love. He has a tendency to use his high socio-economic status as a dominant aspect in the formation of relationships. He is well known in such an act, as he is described by Khwezikazi as a man with tender loving care and he is extravagant to his lovers:

*Ibe ndiyamazi ubhut' Max unesiphatho ukuba awumbhanxeli, kunjalo nje uyadilika*  
(I know Max as a man with a tender loving care if you also treat him good, he is also extravagant.) [p. 19]

He proves Khwezikazi right when he entices Sindiswa with the material things. He shows no concern about what Sindiswa's feelings are. In other words, Max can be described as a selfish character. He is only concerned with what makes himself happy. He shows no respect for other people's feelings. After he gives Sindiswa no choice but to love him, we also find him bribing Sindiswa to be a spy in her area of birth when he wants to trace Skhungo's secret visits in this area. He insists on begging Sindiswa to do the dirty work even though she has made it clear that she cannot do that. Finding Skhungo is a priority to him, as it would mean recognition and even a promotion in his work, he does not care about how Sindiswa feels about her homeboy.

Max's arrogance is clearly revealed when he plans his marriage with Sindiswa alone. He does not consult with Sindiswa's parents when he sets the date of the wedding, including when he chooses the venue, and the church minister. He seems to undermine their views. The unilateral planning of the wedding evokes dissatisfaction and concern to Sindiswa's parents and the community as a whole. We hear comments like:

*Ibiyintoni na khona into yokuqhutyelwa komtshato ekhasino ngathi akanamzi uRhadebe.*

(What caused the wedding to take place in the casino as if Rhadebe hasn't got a home.) [ p.106 ]

It is unfortunate that Max dedicates himself to loving the wrong person, Sindiswa, person who is not interested in his love. Sindiswa does not appreciate his love as her heart belongs to another man, Skhungo. Max is practising the saying 'love is blind'. He honestly loves Sindiswa as he reveals that when he proposes her;

*Mandikuxelele, Sindiswa, ndathi kwangemini yokuqala nje ndikubona ndawa kuwe. Ndiyakholwa ukhe uyive intetho yaseMangesini ethi , "love at first sight", kube njalo kum. Zonke ezi ntsuku ndiquqa phaya ndizamana neli thuba kuloko uBongiwe ...engandiphi nomtyhi lo.*

(Let me tell you, Sindiswa, I fell in love with you on the first day I set eyes on you. I believe that you are familiar with the English saying “love at first sight” that is what happened to me. All these days I was trying to get this chance but Bongiwe ...wouldn't give me a break.) [p. 4]

He often assures Sindiswa of his true love;

*Olwam uthando ngakuwe alunakulinganiswa, lwendele lusuka emazantsi entliziyo.  
You are really my special angel.*

(My love for you is so deep from the bottom of the heart, it can't be measured. You are really my special angel.) [p. 51]

Sindiswa is portrayed as a beauty, a woman that a lot of men would find it difficult to resist. This is revealed when Ntshangase advises Skhungo to act fast;

*Chief, ndiyakucebisa, ukuba uneenjongo uze ungalibazisi baza kumtsibela abanye.  
Uyothi usithi, kube sekophulwe kuthi kanti ufika emva komtshato weLawukazi.*

(Chief, I advise you, if you have aims of marrying her, do not delay, others will act fast. Otherwise you will be too late.) [p.37]

Even though Skhungo wanted to act as fast as Ntshangase says, he couldn't, because he has to find a job first. Both of them have just finished matric. He is not yet ready to take such a responsibility.

Max also reinforces the fact that Sindiswa's beauty is irresistible when he confesses the reason why he acts in the manner Sindiswa does not approve.

*Bendiza kude ndithini ke, ntyatyambo yam. Bendiza kuyeka ude uxhwilwe  
ngamaxhwili alo Mthatha. Eyam injongo ngaw'iphezulu.*

(What else could I do, my rose. I couldn't let you to be taken away by other men of this Umtata. I've got a high expectations about you.) [p. 4]

He gives such an explanation for taking her out without her consent. He is scared of losing her so he acts as fast as possible least he be late. We find out from the beginning that Sindiswa is not informed about the trip when she expresses her shock:

*Tata kutheni ngoku! Iyaphi le ndlela? Wabuza bukhwaza uSindiswa.*

(Daddy what is it now! Where are we going? asks Sindiswa in a high pitched tone.)

[p. 3]

We discover that Max tells a lie in order to win Sindiswa for his planned journey. He tells her that there is a vacancy that can be filled by her, Bongiwe has asked him to fetch her. Max is playing with her emotions. He knows quite well that Sindiswa is very desperate for a job. As a result she does not ask him any questions thus falling easily in his trap.

Max is disappointed by Sindiswa's reaction to his outing. Sindiswa is not impressed, instead she remembers her boyfriend Skhungo. She thinks about the vows she made to him that she will be committed to their love until they become ready for marriage. On the other hand, Max is used to the city girls, who would be overjoyed by his deed. He forgets that he is now dealing with a village girl, who is not concerned with the material things. She voices that out in p.9:

*Andikhathalele naloo moto yakho. Ndiqhele ukuzihambela ngezi zam inyawo.*

*Eyokundiqhayisela ngemoto ucinge ukuba ndiza kulotywa yiloo nto, utsho phantsi.*

(I don't care about your car. I am used to walking with my feet. If you thought you would impress me with the car and I will be taken up, well you are wrong.) [p. 9]

The most interesting part of the story is that though Sindiswa shows no interest in Max, due to circumstances, she is forced to suppress her true feelings and go out with Max. As a protagonist, we watch her having to adapt to difficult situations in her life. Though she has taken vows with her boyfriend Skhungo, she has to change with circumstances. What makes things more difficult for her is that she has lost contacts with Skhungo. On the other hand Max promises her heaven and earth. He finds her a job, rents a flat for her to stay independent of Bongiwe. Max also helps her with her financial problems. Given the circumstances, her action of going out with Max is possible and plausible. This shows that she is a human-like character.

Max's role as an antagonist becomes vivid when he searches high and low for Skhungo. As a senior detective in the Republic of Transkei who enjoys the fruits of independence, he is dedicated to uproot any signs of terrorism in his country. He hates Skhungo's guts and vows not to rest until he catches him. He even postpones the trip he has arranged to take

Sindiswa to Mauritius, because he wants to catch Skhungo. He tells Sindiswa about how sorry he is, and he mumbles:

*Andazi ukuba ngabagrogrisi abayifuna ntoni na iTranskei sesakhululeka nje. Ngoku thina sitya iziqhamo zenkululeko, singcamla ubuncwane bokuzilawula babe bona bezophazamisa begxobha-gxobha inzolo, uxolo nocwangco lwaseTranskei.*

(I do not know what these terrorists are for, because now Transkei is independent. Now we are enjoying the fruits of freedom and yet they disturb peace and order in Transkei.) [p.61]

Max does not have even a hint about who this Skhungo is, and how close he is to her. He even goes as far to as to ask Sindiswa to work together with him and spy on Skhungo's home. If they succeed, he would get a promotion in his job and Sindiswa would also get a reward, thousands of rands. As Skhungo continues with the terrorist actions, Max becomes more desperate and vows to leave no stone unturned. Fortunately for Sindiswa, Max keeps on telling her about all the developments on Skhungo's case, not knowing that she is very keen to know in case her lover is in danger.

When Skhungo arrives in Durban, it takes time for him to get a job. His aunt, Manyawuza convinces him to join the police force. At last he succumbs to her plea. Skhungo is then sent to Hammanskraal to undergo training. On the way to Hammanskraal he meets his old school friend, Ntshangase. The significance of this incidence in the story becomes evident later on when Skhungo's whereabouts will be revealed to Sindiswa by Ntshangase. At the end of the training, Skhungo and Ntshangase are deployed to Durban. Skhungo works for a short while and finds the police service's demands unbearable for him. He refuses to obey the orders, he has to face the disciplinary committee. He decides to cross the borders. We do not hear of him after that for a long time until he comes back as the so-called terrorist. Skhungo comes back just at the moment when Sindiswa accepts Max's marriage proposal. Ntshangase, his old school friend discloses the news to her and she could not believe it until she reads the message Skhungo sends to her. She becomes powerless as she thinks about Max's marriage proposal:

*Thixo wam! Yinto endiza kuyithini le? Yini Yehova! Bungathini ukudlalisa ngam ngolu hlobo ubomi?*

(My God! What am I going to do now? Oh God! Why is life so unfavourable to me in such a manner?) [p.51]

Sindiswa is in a difficult position, where she has to choose between Max and Skhungo. She knows exactly whom she loves but now the problem is how to part with Max who knows himself as the only boyfriend Sindiswa has. Things become more complicated when Sindiswa gets pregnant. Max is so excited to have a son, not knowing that he is not the father. Skhungo arranges to take his family with him to exile, and he succeeds.

Ntshangase, is a secondary character whose role is to form the social setting which surrounds the major characters. He plays a limited role in the story, that of being a link and a messenger between Skhungo and Sindiswa. After Skhungo left the country, Ntshangase takes a transfer to Umtata. He meets Sindiswa in Umtata and informs her about Skhungo's whereabouts. From Sindiswa's reaction, we realise that Sindiswa is still in love with Skhungo. She expresses shock as she says:

*Thixo wamazulu! Ntshangase ngaba usaphila kodwa?*

(God of Heaven! Ntshangase is he still alive?) [p.46]

After some time Sindiswa decides to tell Ntshangase about her affair with Max. She trusts him and confides in him as a true friend. By so doing she knows that she is passing the message, especially now that she has a baby. People do not know exactly what is happening in her love life and so she decides to come clean and tell them who the father of her child is. She states clearly to Ntshangase that her affair with Max is not based on mutual love as she does not love him, but due to the way Max proposed to her, she was left with no choice but to accept his proposal:

*Kodwa ndingadlula nje kwinto yokuba yayingeyontando yam konke ukuqala kwale nto. Wandiqweqwedisa uMax. Eneneni ndandizimisele ukuba andizi kumvuma kodwa uyayiqonda into yokuba umntu akwenzele izinto ungene ke ngoku ukumdanisa kube ngathi ungumntu ongenambulelo.*

(But I would like to state that this affair started without my consent. Max forced me. Honestly, I had no feelings for him, but you know when someone has done a lot of things for you, you just can't say no as that would disappoint him.) [p.84]

Ntshangase keeps on sending messages from Skhungo to Sindiswa, until they become married. The role he plays in the story is very crucial as it is difficult to anticipate the ending of the story without the assistance he gives to the couple.

Other secondary characters that play a limited role in the story are Khwezikazi and her boyfriend the Honourable Minister of Police. They represent the social life of a section of the upper class in Umtata. Khwezikazi is a township girl who is particular concerned about the status of a man she goes out with. She represents the type of girls that are described by the group of young men at the beginning of the novel:

*Wena ungumfiki apha eMtata, akuzazi izinto zalapha. Ezinjeya iintombi zijonge isipaji qha. Zezoongxowankulu namadoda akwizikhundla ezikhulu, hayi oomahambangenyawo.*

(You are the newcomer here at Umtata, you do not know what is happening here. Those kind of girls are concerned with money only. They are for the upper class men and those that hold high ranks at work, not pedestrians.) [p.2]

When Khwezikazi advises Sindiswa on love life, we also get to know exactly what kind of a girl she is. She tells Sindiswa not to waste time with a school boyfriend. She advises Sindiswa to grab Max's love as she views it as a fortune.

*Ndinguwe mna ngendizigobh'amacala kukuwelwa yenje yona imana ehla ivela ezulwini*

(If I were you I would be very grateful for getting such mercy from heaven.) [p.19]

Khwezikazi's role is to influence Sindiswa to accept Max's love. She also conducts an orientation session for Sindiswa, taking her away from the village life to the township life. Judging from Sindiswa's reaction after her speech, Khwezikazi wins. The two girls go back to Max both keen to be taken to Margate for shopping. After that we find out that Sindiswa does not show any resistance towards Max's surprises, as a result we do not hear of Khwezikazi again. She has played her role effectively.

The Honourable Zwelandile also represents the upper class men who play around with young girls while they are supposed to be with their family. He is Max's senior and is very respected by him. We notice the way Max shows respect to him at the beginning when they are about to drive off to the casino.

*Kwaphuma apho kuyo isiqingqana somfo osele esukela ubuqina waya ngokukhawuleza kumnyobo lowa. Wafika wanqwala. Waphulaphula. Wabuyela kweyakhe imoto.*

(There came out of the car a very short man who is in the middle age and went quickly to the posh car. He bowed his head. He then listened, and then went back to his car. ) [p.3]

The Transkei Government is known for its corruption especially during the period of its independence. The Honourable Zwelandile is strengthening this bad habit when Max approaches him in connection with a job for his girlfriend. This bad habit has been infiltrated into the minds of the people in the area of Umtata. We discover that from the speech from Max:

*Nanjengokuba usafun' umsebenzi nje, ucinga ukuba uza kuwufumana ngalo umpaku-mpaku? Ncama.*

(As you are still looking for a job, do you think you will get it by only asking with your mouth? Forget it.) [p.5]

Sindiswa is also asked the same question by Khwezikazi in p 19. Khwezikazi tells her that in Umtata one needs to have contacts with well-known people in order to get a job. That is why she advises her to grab Max's love and take it as an opportunity for her success in life. If she accepts Max's love, he will find her a job. We find out later on, that everything goes as she says.

We also hear about the Honourable Zwelandile when he narrowly escapes death as he was attacked by Skhungo. He sets the Minister's house alight and the house burns down into ashes. Skhungo is retaliating because of what was done to his home by the Transkei Police. Skhungo's action intensifies Max's determination to search for him. He is very angry about what Skhungo has done to a person he highly respects. He utters these words while briefing Sindiswa about what happened:

*Uyabona ukuba ubefuna ukubulala kanye uMphathiswa lo wamaPolisa? Uyingozi! Uyingozi!*

(Do you see that he wanted to kill the Minister of Police? He is dangerous! He is dangerous!) [p.65]

Max vows to leave no stone unturned in searching for Skhungo. When his plan of using Sindiswa to spy for him fails, he tries other means like arresting and torturing Skhungo's parents, but he fails. On the day of the trial almost all the police were sent to the court for security reasons.

*Wonke umntu wayezibonela nje ukuba angathi ekhe wathi cakatha umcondwana wakhe loo mgrogrisi, angambetha abe zizicwili. Ayengadibanisa kunjalo nje nantoni na ekufuphi naye nokuba oko kuthetha ukwenzakalisa intlaninge yabantu.*

(Everybody could see that if that terrorist could set his foot there, he would be beaten into pieces. For that matter they would include anything that is near him whether that would mean killing many people.) [p.68]

Max loses the case against Skhungo's parents and their lawyer sues the Government for putting the lives of the elders at risk.

As we have outlined almost all the characters in Mayosi's *Iqhina lomtshato*, we need to investigate the techniques that Mayosi has employed in presenting her characters in this literary work.

### 2.3 CHARACTERISATION IN IQHINA LOMTSHATO

Various ways of character portrayal such as point of view, expository and dramatic methods have been used by Mayosi in her novel *Iqhina lomtshato*. The novel is a third-person narrative, which is characterised by a speaker that is not involved in action, the narration for instance, in exposition the narrator could not tell us who was inside the car with tinted windows because he was not involved in action. He just reports what he sees:

*Akukho mntu ubonayo kakuhle ukuba ngoobani na abangaphakathi kuba iifestile zazo zibonisa luzizi kongaphandle.*

(Nobody could clearly see who was inside as the windows of the car are dark.) [p.1]

Where the narrator involves himself in the narrative, exercising a technique called narrator intrusion, a second pronoun 'we' is used, as in this example:

*Thina zizwe zintsundu sikholwa kukuba umntu simland'emva xa sifuna ukumazi ukuba ungubani na kakade. Silanda ingcambu yakhe size nayo siqale ukuthi ke ngoku siyamazi.*

(We, the black tribes, like to trace one's family background before we can say we know him or her.) [p.22]

The use of 'we' reveals that the narrator is a black person and so he is part of the belief. The technique of narrator intrusion is also utilised to comment directly on a certain point or on a particular character's behaviour or action, for example, when he describes Khwezikazi, he voices out his comment about the way she has dressed:

*Esi sinxibo sasiyifanele le mini kuba kwakushushu.*

(Her way of dressing suited the day as it was very hot.) [p.1]

The narrator's omniscience and also employs objectivity. His omniscience is shown by the fact that he can express the inner thoughts and feelings of the characters, their private speeches and their past experiences. For instance, the narrator informs us about the past experiences and family background of the three central characters, Skhungo, Sindiswa and Max. This input is of vital importance as the reader gains more knowledge and understanding about these characters.

The narrator's omniscience is utilised a lot in the story to reveal Sindiswa's inner thoughts and feelings. We become aware of Sindiswa's true feelings when she is overwhelmed by the thoughts of her love affair with Skhungo:

*Kwathi thaa engqondweni umfana ancuma naye ebebesenza kunye ibanga leshumi uSkhungo Faku.*

(She saw in her mind a young man that she was involved with, with whom she did STD 10, Skhungo Faku.) [p.6]

From the beginning, the reader knows that Sindiswa loves Skhungo and not Max. The reader learns from her inner thoughts that she made vows with Skhungo that they would

keep their love until they met again. Sindiswa does not have the guts to tell Max about her love with Skhungo as he would not take cognisance of that. Right through the story we are kept informed about Sindiswa's true feelings and inner thoughts.

Mayosi also uses dialogue a lot in her narrative, which gives it a dramatic quality. She chooses to give us the crucial conversations in the story as they are and not to report them. For instance, when Max proposes love to Sindiswa, we get his words directly. We also get a chance to see how Sindiswa responds to his proposal. It becomes easy for the reader to understand Sindiswa's behaviour as she has been denied a chance to say no. Whenever Sindiswa thinks about the vows they made with Skhungo, we are given that in a dramatic situation. This helps us to realise how deeply in love they are. The event does not appear once in the story and that also enhances the seriousness of their affair.

*Sindiswa masifungelane. Amazulu nendalo yonke esingqongileyo ingamangqina. Ngenene wena ungowam, ngenene mna ndingowakho kude kuse emaphakadeni.*  
(Sindiswa let us make some vows. The whole universe that surrounds us becomes our witness. You are truly mine, and I am truly yours forever.) [p.17]

Dialogue between Sindiswa and Khwezikazi is also presented to us in order to see how Khwezikazi has convinced Sindiswa to accept Max's love. This conversation also serves to confirm what is said about the beautiful girls in Umtata who are only concerned with money:

*Sindiswa tshom'am, zifake zitshone xa ixesha lisavuma kuba ingomso akulazi.*  
(Sindiswa my friend bury your claws deep down while it is still time. You do not know what tomorrow will be.) [p.21]

We also get the episode where Skhungo's aunt convinces him to join police force in a dramatic form. This is also done purposely to show Skhungo's resistance and unwillingness to take this job in the first place. It is because of the high rate of unemployment that he succumbs and accepts the police force. Very soon after he has come from training he disobeys the orders from his senior at work and he faces a disciplinary committee. He decides to skip the borders. The dialogue prepares the reader for the developments like these in the story.

There are various conversations that are directly presented in this narrative which have a particular significance to the development of the plot, like when Max begs Sindiswa to spy Skhungo's arrival at his home. From Max's desperation it is found what a selfish character he was. Also we as the readers are kept in suspense as we know who this Skhungo is.

Besides the conversation between two people, other forms of speech like soliloquy and monologue are used. These forms of speech are used to expose what is going on inside the character's mind. When Skhungo is alone in his room after his aunt convinced him to join police force, he remembers Sindiswa and talks to himself as he is about to make a tough decision in his life:

*Sindiswa ukuba ubukufutshane bendilufuna uluvo lwakho malunga nokuya kungenela ubupolisa, kodwa akunamsebenzi ndiza kuya sele ndidiniwe kukuhamba ndijikeleza.*

(Sindiswa if you were near here I would like to hear your views about joining the police force, but it does not matter I am going to join I am tired of roaming around.)

[p.36]

Later on, we find out that Skhungo has made a wrong decision as he fails to serve in the police service. When he comes home after the police have included him in the shooting at the innocent people whose only fault was to hold a protest march, Skhungo talks to himself by expressing the feeling of guilt:

*Kanjani? Ndingayenza kanjani into enjengale? Bahlaselwa njani abantu bengaxhobanga, bengalwi, beme bhuxe? Bahlaselwa njani abantu basetyhini ngolu hlobo? p.40*

(How? How can I do such a thing? How can we assault unarmed people who are not fighting? How can women be assaulted in such a manner?) [p.40]

Skhungo feels bitter about what he has done. He feels like he has betrayed the people of his country when he assaults and shoots them for protesting against the irregularities at their work place.

Soliloquy and monologue are also used whenever Sindiswa discloses her true feelings. For instance, after Max tells her how Skhungo's life is faced with danger, Sindiswa talks to

herself expressing shock on hearing the news and also excitement on Skhungo's escape for the moment.

*Thixo wamazulu! Okwangoku usawuvile umthandazo wam, walisindisa igerila lam. Ndingafane ndivuye andimazi nokuba uyaphila ngawo lo mzuzu.*

(Heaven's God! For the time being you have heard my prayer, and saved my guerilla. Let me not be so excited, I do not know whether he is still alive at this moment.) [p.65]

We also find Sindiswa talking alone when she is in trouble on the eve of the wedding day. She has not been able to find Ntshangase who is the liaison person between her and Skhungo, and so she does not know what is going to happen on the wedding day.

*Yehova! Khange ndiyicinge into yokuba ngokwenene izinto ziza kuhamba ngolu hlobo. Kazi yinto endiza kuyithini na le? p.92*

(Jehovah! I never thought that things would go this way. I don't know what to do?) [p.92]

Max also talks to himself when he expresses satisfaction and joy as he observes almost everything in his wedding preparations being in order as he planned.

*Aha! Max, ude waphunyezwa umnqweno wakho. Everything is in place, exactly as I have planned. Max is a genius.*

(Ah! Max you have now achieved your goal.) [p.98]

Max is not aware of Sindiswa's plot with her boyfriend Skhungo. Things do not go as he has planned as Sindiswa marries another man. He waits for the bride on the wedding day and the bride never comes.

There are also instances in the story where the expository method is utilised. In describing the character, the narrator touches on the physical characteristics, personality traits, motives, thoughts and desires. The purpose of using direct description is to help the reader to visualise the exactness and fullness of the character. For example, the narrator gives us the family background of the three central characters through the use of the

expository method. We get to know these characters very well through their past experiences.

Through the description of Sindiswa's inner thoughts we also get to know how deep her love for Skhungo is. We are told when and how their affair started, their happy times in their secret meeting place, *indawo yedinga* and the vows they make to each other on the New Years' Eve before their departure. As Sindiswa gets involved with Max, the reader is kept in suspense. Sindiswa does not open up to Max about her love life. Max suspects that there is something bothering Sindiswa but as the time goes by he does not concern himself about it. His main concern is to make her happy, unaware that Sindiswa does not love him.

The description of the secret place where Sindiswa used to meet with her lover, *indawo yedinga*, stresses the significance of the place to Sindiswa. It also explains why she often visits the place when she feels depressed:

*Le ndawo yayisoloko inantsingiselo eyodwa kubo. Yayiyindawo yokuphefumlelana, yokucebisana, yokukhuthazana, ikwayindawo yamaphupha abo.*

(This place always had a meaning of its own to them. It was a place to share their views, to advise each other, to motivate each other and it was also a place of their dreams.) [p.14]

Whenever Sindiswa visits the place of the promise, she is revived. From this place her hope to see her lover again is renewed. Their dream is fulfilled and they tie the knot at the very same secret place. Their marriage is also a secret with the universe and nature being the only witness.

External appearance of character is also a device that is used to portray the nature or personality trait of that character. When Khwezikazi comes out of the car in Umtata, her physical appearance is described as follows:

*Kwaphuma apho intsundwanekazi encothukileyo, umcuthalala welambalidlile, inxibe ibhulukhwana emfutshane enomntla othe nca ohambelana nebhlukhwana leyo ofihle amabele nje kuphela. Lwalukhululekile ulusu lwenzwakazi ikwanoncumo oluthandekayo. Intamo yayithiwe gqume lunwele oluhle. Ezindlebeni kwakujinga*

*amacici edayimani ayehambelana nentsinjana yomqala eneqhuqhutyana elimilise okwentliziyo apha ngaphambili.*

(There came out of the car a tall and slender dark beauty, wearing short pants with matching brief that covers only the breast. The lady has a beautiful smile in her face. The neck is totally covered by beautiful hair. In the ears, she is wearing diamond earrings that match with a necklace.) [p.1]

From the description of external appearance of Khwezikazi above, the writer touches on features like height, complexion, body structure, hair, clothes, and jewellery. The reaction from the group of young men who observe Khwezikazi as she goes down to Kentucky shows that the lady is irresistible. She is described as beautiful as a flower. At the same time, she represents the township girls who are known to be after a man's pocket. The way she dresses reveals her nature. She is so conscious of what she wears and how she looks. For instance, later on, she advises Sindiswa on what to wear and she insists that she must go to the salon to do her hair so as to look good. From then we find that Sindiswa really changes in her nature, meaning that the environment, including the physical and human has played an important role in her behaviour.

After Sindiswa has got a job she enrolls with the University of Transkei to further her studies. To go to university was her dream, but due to financial constraints she could not follow it. Now, she is in an environment that will make her dream come true. Sindiswa also learns to be flexible in Umtata. Khwezikazi tells her to take life easy, not in the way she does. Sindiswa is a village girl and behaves as such:

*Uyabona, njengokuba ndikujongile nje awusobe ulunge xa ubomi ubuthatha ngolu hlobo.*

(You see, as I look at you I find that you will never cope in life in this way.) [p.19]

By accepting Max's love Sindiswa is trying to adapt to the new environment she finds herself in, the township life. We cannot blame her totally for disappointing Max in such a way. But we also see her admiring the environment of their secret place of promise, as a secure environment that gives her hope in times of depression. In Umtata she does not live a true and honest life as a result she is always living in fear least the truth comes out. Whenever she visits their secret place she becomes free to talk to herself and to voice out

what her true feelings are. Both human and physical environment has influenced her behaviour.

Presentation of characters through their action is also another technique that is used in portraying characters in this novel. One's actions truly reflect what kind of a person he is. When Max takes Sindiswa to the Casino, thinking that she will be impressed, Sindiswa shows him that she is not impressed. Instead Sindiswa cries when they arrive. Even on the following day, Sindiswa shows no signs of happiness until Khwezikazi softens her a little bit. Max chooses to ignore what he sees and continues with his plan. Max has told Sindiswa for many times along the way to the Casino that he loves her but to show his love, he gives her a present when they arrive. The reader learns about it in the following:

*Yamkela oku njengomqondiso wosuku lokudibana kwethu okokuqala.*

(Take this as a symbol of memorial on the first day of our relationship.) [p.11]

Moreover, to show that he really loves her, Max asks Sindiswa to go with him to Margate on the following day where he will buy her anything that she likes. Above all, Max gives her a place to stay and also finds her a job at the bank of Transkei. These actions show clearly that Max loves this woman.

On the fourth year, Max proposes marriage to Sindiswa on the very same day his divorce comes true. This shows that if it was not for this divorce case, he would have married her long time ago. When Max discovers that Sindiswa is pregnant, he wants them to marry immediately so that the child is not born out of marriage:

*Into ephambili andifuni owam unyana abe ebizwa ngezinye iifani. Ndifuna athi evela abe ebhaliswa ngeyam ifani.*

(The most important thing is that I do not want my own son to be known by other people's surnames. I want him to be registered by my surname from the moment he is born.) [p.77]

Max is so excited to be a father-to-be, because he will experience fatherhood for the first time in his life. He does not even have a clue that he is not his son. Besides that Max often assures Sindiswa that he loves her very much and his actions also prove that.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

Mayosi's characters in *Iqhina lomtshato* are dynamic. We have seen the central characters developing through the story due to circumstances. Sindiswa's nature and behaviour change with changing circumstances. The same applies to Skhungo who is forced to cross the borders due to social pressure. Max strives for his happiness and is ignorant of other people's feelings. This leads to his downfall.

## CHAPTER 3

### CHARACTERISATION IN *KAZI NDEZENI NA*: MCIMELI R. F.

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Mcimeli's novel *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* (1995) is an attempt to expose sexual inequality and child abuse in our society. Male domination, women oppression and child abuse are social problems, which the common subject of study in our African literature especially nowadays. However, there is not much work that is done on this subject of women oppression and child abuse in our literature, which could help to wipe out the tendency to view these unhealthy family relationships as natural and inevitable. This novel unfolds clearly the ways in which male domination in general, women oppression and child abuse in particular, are practised in some families. The novelist has made a thorough research about the causes of this bad habit, the characteristics and the effects it has on the victims. He also shows how this practise infiltrates the minds of the victims and how they tend to view it as something that is natural.

*Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* (What have I done?) is about a young girl who illegitimate brings misfortune to her family. The misfortune starts from her mother, Weziwe, her father, Mzoli, and her grandparents Dalilizwe and Nokwakha. Her grandparents' wishes that their daughter will be married to a rich man one day, are shattered as Weziwe gets pregnant before marriage. They could not bear her sight as a result they took a merciless decision to expel her immediately after she gets a baby. She becomes homeless until her boyfriend Mzoli, whose wishes for a baby boy are also shattered, decides to accommodate her in his house, with the hope that their second child will be a boy. Unfortunately Mzoli dies. Weziwe and her baby, Nodita start suffering as the only thing they are left with is a house.

Weziwe meets Siphwo who takes over the responsibility of taking care of them as a father figure. Their relationship is good at first but after six years it changes drastically into a shameful one. Spido becomes a tyranny. He beats Weziwe and her

daughter everyday. Weziwe is submissive and teaches her child to be like wise. Her teacher Mr Maso who vows to help her out knows the abuse on Nodita. He notices changes in Nodita's behaviour, which are the result of the abuse she gets from her father. While doing Standard 4 her father takes her out of the school and finds a job for her. Spido continues with the abuse until he kills Weziwe. Nodita becomes hysterical and avenging her mother's killing, she kills her father. The social worker pleads for her not to be sentenced claiming that the young girl has been a victim of abuse for many years. She is emotionally distressed. Her action is a direct result of what her father has done to her. Above all the action must be viewed as self-defence, since her father also wanted to kill her. Nodita ends up being under the custody of her class teacher, Mr Maso who vows to educate her.

We will now look closely at the central characters in this novel, and find out what they are capable of doing in order to enhance action.

### **3.2 CHARACTERS IN *KAZI NDEZENI NA?***

In *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* we are introduced to quite a number of characters who play a crucial role in enhancing action in the story. The protagonist is a young unfortunate girl, Nodita, who is an illegitimate child. Her mother's ambitions about her life were shattered the day she found out that she was pregnant. Nodita's birth was a mistake as far as her mother Weziwe was concerned. As a result no one welcomed her on her first day to set foot in this world. Even her own mother showed no love towards her. We are told that she stayed for the first three days with no name. Seemingly no one had an interest of giving her a name. She gets a name after young boys playing near her home named her Nodirty Box. To shorten it, Weziwe named her Nodita. A name with no meaning to show ambitions and dreams of the parent.

After Weziwe is expelled from her home, she stays in N. U. 7 with Nodita's father. After Mzoli Mpiyakhe, Nodita's father dies, Weziwe meets Siphiwo, locally known as Spido, whom he accommodates in her house. Spido, as a father figure is supposed to provide security and comfort within his family but he turns out to be an antagonist. His presence is unpleasant in this home. Weziwe endures his dominant, tyrannical

and abusive behaviour for one reason, which is the fact that he is the breadwinner. As an antagonist Spido is opposed to the actions of Nodita, the protagonist. Fortunately for him, Nodita is a child and so most of the time he dominates.

Nodita grows up not knowing her real father. She only knows her mother and Spido as her father with no knowledge of her family background, like her grandparents. This results in tough experience in her life as she has no relative to turn to in times of difficulty. Nodita's real hardship becomes ripe when she is fourteen years old. She is a victim of child abuse. Both parents, her stepfather and her mother abuse her in different ways. Her father beats her every day for no reason. Moreover, she goes to bed starved as she is denied access to food. Her mother abuses her emotionally, by not telling her the truth about her father and also by teaching her to endure the atrocities she experiences through her stepfather. When she complains to her mother, Weziwe shouts at her saying:

*"Thul'ufe Nodita! Into oyiyo ungumntwana. Uyihlo uyakuqeqesha njengabo bonke abantwana."*

(Shut up Nodita! You are only a child. Your father is teaching you respect just like all other children.) [p.4]

Nodita asks herself many questions, which she cannot answer. Some of the answers to the questions lie with her mother. Her mother is very secretive and sensitive about her family background. Even though Nodita is not told the truth about Spido's relation to her, she becomes suspicious at the way he treats her. Nodita's teacher is also suspicious. Their suspicion becomes worse when Spido takes Nodita out of the school as young as she is. Nodita and her teacher, Mr Maso are asking themselves a question, what kind of a parent is he, that does not want his child to get education especially these days? Other parents make it clear that a child must be punished when he/she has done something wrong, but he/she cannot leave school for that. Spido's decision is killing Weziwe inside but she is scared to stand up and defend her child. In fact, Weziwe has that motherly love towards her daughter but she is hiding it. For instance, whenever Spido beats Nodita, Weziwe feels sad, and she finds it difficult to bear, that is why she drinks a glass of wine.

Most of the time she turns her face away and cries secretly. Sometimes, she pleases Spido by helping him in beating her daughter. In this way, Weziwe is portrayed as a tritagonist. She loves her daughter, Nodita but she does not want to lose Spido, her boyfriend. She is caught in dilemma especially when Spido asks her to choose whom she loves between him and Nodita as we learn here:

*Ndithi ndakuthi kuwe kha ukhethe oyena umthanda kakhulu kukho mna kukho lo mntwana uthi awukwazi ukuyenza loo nto kuba usithanda sobabini ngokulinganayo.*

(When I say to you choose the one you love more between me and this child, you say you cannot do that because you love us both in the same way.) [p.6]

In her position Weziwe is faced with the responsibility of satisfying both parties, which becomes impossible most of the times. What makes things difficult for her is that as a tritagonist she does not get a chance to be with one party at a time, she lives with both parties. The rivals are both important people to her, a daughter and a boyfriend, who is almost a husband to her. Every time there is a dispute between the rivals she has to ally with one side either Spido or her daughter. This explains why Weziwe is also a victim of Spido's abusive behaviour. Sometimes he accuses her of allying with her daughter against him.

Nodita in turn is very fond of her mother. There is a strong bond between them. She believes in her mother, she trusts her and she is even prepared to die for her. Amongst the things she does not like from her father, is the fact that he beats her mother. In her understanding adults cannot be punished like children no matter what they did. Her teacher that she also trusts very much told her that. Why then does her father keep on beating her mother? Though Nodita does not know the reason for her father's behaviour, but she can see that something is wrong in her home. She even suggests to her mother that they must both flee and leave Spido behind. But her mother is very submissive, with the hope that Spido will change his dominant and oppressive behaviour one day. Her hope is expressed as follows:

*Ndihleli ndinethemba lokuba uSpido usaza kuyiyeka into yokusoloko esibetha sixhamle ulonwabo lodwa emzini wam.*

(I always hope that Spido will refrain from beating us one day, so that we enjoy happiness in my house.) [p.137]

In the mean time, Nodita gradually loses respect and develops hatred towards her father.

The house rules that are set by Spido confine Nodita inside her home. She is not allowed to play with other children in the neighbourhood. Denying a child a right to play with other children constitutes child abuse on its own. Child's play is an important stage of development. Nodita is going to skip an important stage of development, if she does not play with other children. This will affect her life in future. Weziwe is also inhibited from forming social relations with neighbours. By breaking all the social ties with neighbours, Spido's intention is to have nobody that will interfere in the matters that take place in his home. From the description of this family's relationship, it becomes clear that members of this family do not know happiness. Weziwe is living in fear and they are raising a child under such unfavourable conditions. Nodita is no longer a little girl, she hears from other children at school how they relate to their parents, and asks herself questions like:

*Kutheni le nto aba bakhe abazali bangafaniyo nabanye abazali? Oogxa bakhe esikolweni badla ngokumxelela ukuba ababo abazali balungile kwaye bahamba necawa.*

(Why are her parents not like other parents? Her friends at school use to tell her that their parents are friendly and they go to church.) [p.58]

As a protagonist, Nodita's character is realistic, complex, dynamic, and changing with circumstances. For instance, as a child she looks up at her parents and other important people like teachers as role models. Her class teacher, Mr Maso easily detects the effects of the way Nodita is raised at home. Nodita's performance drops because whenever she comes home excited about her achievement at school, her

father discourages her. Also, her mother denies her a chance to do her homework or to read. She complains that she is wasting paraffin and the candles.

*Emva koko uze uye kulala, ungakhe ulinge ugqibe ipalafini yam namakhandlela am ngokulayita ubusuku bonke. Utata wakho uzisebenzela nzima ezi zinto, ebila esoma imini nobusuku.*

(After that you must go and sleep, and do not light up my paraffin lamp and my candles the whole night. Your father is working hard the whole day and night for these things.) [p.18]

Besides her poor school performance, Nodita's behaviour attracts attention. For instance she attacks one of the boys in her class. Nodita is so aggressive as a result she overwhelms her rival. Maso is very shocked and surprised at the way she fights. Nodita is described as very thin little girl but the power she possesses while fighting is amazing. Even though Maso calls her several times in trying to stop her, she does not take any notice until he throws a fierce slap on her face. Maso decides to investigate Nodita's upbringing so as to detect why she acts the way she does. The reader knows very well that Nodita mimics her father's behaviour. When Spido is angry or when he fights with someone, we are told that he becomes raving mad especially when someone tries to intervene.

*Akakho umntu endimthiye njengomntu ofaka impumlwana yakhe ebandayo kwimicimbi yeminye imizi.*

(There is nobody I despise as someone who puts his cold nose in other people's family matters.) [p.7]

He supports the well-known English saying 'mind your own business' which contradicts our principle of 'ubuntu'. As a result, Nodita knows that if someone interferes in your affairs you have the right to beat him to death, as her father says. That is why she attacked Vukile when he looked at her book, and laughed at her drawing. We are told that Nodita wishes to resemble her father when she becomes an adult.

*UNodita wayekhule eyibukela le milo kaSpido kunjalonje naye enomnqweno wokunga angathi akukhula afuze uyise lo ngokuba yincutshe ekulweni.*

(Nodita grew up watching Spido's fights and so she wished to follow her father's footsteps when she finally grew up and become an expert in fighting.) [p.4]

As a child that is raised under these conditions, she thinks to be the best fighter is an achievement in life. The irony is that Spido despises and condemns Nodita's fight at school not knowing that he is the direct cause of that behaviour.

*Usihlazisa esikolweni nakuyo yonke le lokishi ngobundlavini bokulwa.*

(You have degraded us at school and in the whole vicinity with your violent fighting behaviour.) [p.56]

Spido uses Nodita's fight at school as a tool to pull her out of the school. We know that he has been trying to do that for quite some time but Weziwe was the stumbling block. Weziwe always wishes her daughter to study until she gets a teacher's diploma at least. This time Spido overwhelms her as he states clearly that his word on this matter is final.

*Ndim indoda yalo mzi Weziwe. Kuza kwenziwa le nto ithandwa ndim. Nditsho nangoku, ndithi ukususela namhlanje lo mntwana wakho wahlukene nesikolo tu.*

(I am the man in this house, Weziwe. You are going to do as I like. I am saying again that as from today this child of yours will never attend school again.) [p.56]

Nodita cannot believe that her father is serious in what he says. She remembers that while she was still young her father used to say that he wanted her to study until she became a teacher. She fails to understand his actions now.

Weziwe makes an earnest appeal to his lover to allow her child to continue with schooling after eighteen years. He agrees. When Spido comes the following day

with the news that he has found a job for Nodita, Nodita and her mother soon realise that Spido meant every word he said the previous day. Nothing could change his mind as he has gone an extra mile. Spido is very excited though he has shattered Nodita's dreams of returning to school one day. He accepts the job for Nodita though Khwalo, the shopkeeper has made it clear that he wants someone who will work permanently in his shop. On hearing this news Weziwe again cries secretly, she is deeply hurt. At the same time she does not want Spido to see that.

Nodita decides to accept this job offer as a sacrifice in order to make up with her parents. She hopes to wipe out all the wrong things she has done to her parents. She no longer wants to be called a naughty child as his father always says. Again Nodita accepts the job with the hope that she will collect money and return to school one day as her mother promised her. In that way, Nodita starts working as young as she is. One of the characteristics of the protagonist is that his/her life must have ups and downs. Nodita tries to adjust to the situation as it prevails.

Khwalo, Nodita's employer is what is called a businessman. Nothing compares the profit he gets from his shop. Fortunately, he respects his family's views in whatever decision he takes. His wife MaDlamini is a very kind mother as a result Nodita enjoys working in this household. What makes things easy for Nodita is the presence of a girl of her age, Thozama, who is the last-born in this home. Nodita gains a lot of experience as an assistant in this household. She is more than willing to learn new things everyday. She finds working life more challenging as she is exposed to many things she never knew before. For her to get this job seems to be a blessing in disguise as she is free from Spido's confinement. She meets Thupeni who is also a worker in the business. He teaches her how to fight in order to protect her self when she is in danger. As Nodita has always wanted to fight like her father, she becomes enthusiastic to learn, though she does not want to endanger anybody. She is not aware that in future she will have to use the skill she is taught by Thupeni. She first realises the importance of this skill while she finds herself being a victim of two township girls in jail when she is arrested for stabbing Thupeni by mistake. In order to set herself free from these tsotsi girls, she had to fight them until they go down. She succeeds and they end up being friends. They acknowledge her

as a good fighter but also give her few tips about her mistakes while she was fighting.

While Nodita is working for the Khwalo family, she compares the way they live with her homes and finds a big difference. Though Khwalo is business-minded, he consults his family in whatever he does. Her father is annoyed by Khwalo's action but he is told that it is the motto of their family.

*Uyabona ke Khwalo, andiyithandi le nto. Kutheni sele sixelelwa ngumfazi nangumntwana nje ngoku izinto emasizenze? Umntwana ungena phi kwizinto zabantu abadala? Kaloku Spido nguye esidibene ngaye apha. Kumele ke ukuba naye abenelizwi. Ndiqhuba ngolo hlobo ke apha kulo wam umzi. Ukuba awuvumelani naloo nto thatha umntwana wakho uhambe naye..* (You see Khwalo, I don't like this. Why are we told what to do by your wife and the child? Why do you involve a child in matters of the old people? It is because she is the cause of this meeting. We are supposed to give her a chance to speak. That is the way I do things in my family. If you do not agree with these rules you may just take your child and go with her.) [p.75]

Spido wants to apply the dominant and oppressive powers he uses in his family but he does not get any chance. Since he wants Khwalo to employ Nodita, he is compelled to agree, but vows that in his house something like that will never happen.

Even though Nodita accepted the job hoping that her father will end his abusive behaviour towards her and her mother, Spido continues to beat Weziwe. Whenever Nodita visits her home during the weekend she finds her mother in agony. Every time she sees her mother in pain, hatred and apathy towards her father grows further and further inside her. Nodita loves her mother very much as a result she despises Spido for ill-treating and beating her until she suffers from a heart disease. From now on, Nodita wishes to protect her mother from being the victim of Spido's abusive behaviour. Even at work she feels anxious about her mother's safety. When she visits her home she is told by her mother that Spido is very angry for what she

did to Thupeni and he is going to punish her for that. Nodita feels strong enough to endure any punishment inflicted to her by Spido, but her main concern is her mother. She voices out that she does not care even if he beats her to death but he must not touch her mother.

As Nodita works for the Khwalo family, who go to church every Sunday, she becomes interested in going to church with them. She asks for permission from her mother and Weziwe tells her that there is nothing wrong with that. Nodita is very surprised to find out that the Sunday school teacher is Mr Maso. After the service has come out, they chat a lot and Nodita soon enjoys everything about the church. She learns to pray and is very keen to come to church on the following Sunday. Above all, she is very excited to meet her teacher again especially that she is free to speak with him. She is sure that her parents will never know that she talks to Maso because they do not even know which direction the church door faces. When she visits her home the next Saturday, she is excited about what she has learnt from church and she wants to tell her mother about it. The first thing she does when she gets to the house is to kiss her mother. This is the first time she does this as a result her mother asks why she is kissed.

*Ecaweni utata umshumayeli ukhe wathi enye into efunekayo emntwini ukuze alingene izulu luthando, mama.*

(The Priest at church has told us that one other thing that is necessary for one to go to heaven is love, mother.) [p.150]

After that Nodita tells her mother about all the things she has heard and seen from the church, but she hides Maso's name. She voices out that she would like to go to church the following day. Suddenly Spido comes out of the bedroom very fierce and locks the door. He asks Nodita about her imprisonment and going to church without his permission. He vows to beat her today more than he used to do.

*Uyabona ke namhlanje ndiza kubethela ukuba ubhace kulo mzi uye ekuthandeni kwakho. Kudala uyigila imikhuba kulo mzi ndimana ukukohlwaya nje ndibuye ndikuxolele nje ngomntwana.*

(You know today I am going to beat you so much that you flee from my house to anywhere you like. For all the times you had offences in this house I used to punish and forgive you as a child.) [p.152]

Weziwe seems to have reached the highest peak about Spido's abusive behaviour, she stands up and defends her daughter this time. She does not care whether Spido kills her.

*Betha mna bhetele, mna ngqongqo yakho, uyeke umntwana lo.*

(Beat me instead , as I am your drum, and leave the child alone.) [p152]

The way Spido beats Weziwe on that day leaves Nodita amazed. Weziwe lies on the floor unconscious for a while until Nodita thinks that she is dead. Suddenly, Nodita changes from that child who has been scared just now, that child who has been asking for forgiveness from her father. She gains confidence and fills up with anger and grief for what has happened to her mother. She only thinks about her mother who is lying down there dead, killed by this man in front of her. She comes forward to fight Spido until her mother calls her and condemns what she wants to do. On hearing her mother's voice Nodita drops everything and tries to help her. Spido continues to beat Nodita but this time Nodita's concentration is on her mother's condition as a result she does not cry. Spido gets furious and goes to fetch an axe to finish her up. Nodita flees to Maso's house at N.U. 6, the only place that Spido does not know.

Spido chases after her. As he thinks that she is hiding in Khwalo's home, he goes straight there. Spido begs Khwalo to open but as he opens Spido grabs him and asks for Nodita at knifepoint. He gets Maso's house number and goes straight to him. Maso gets the message that Spido is coming through the telephone from Khwalo's wife. Spido is overwhelmed by Maso and leaves without Nodita though he states clearly that he is coming back. He does not believe that there is someone who can fight with him and beat him. For the second time he tries to claim his child but this time he avoids Maso's house and prefers to take her from the church. Even there, Maso teaches him a lesson and goes without her. This time he realises that

Maso is no match for him and decides to press charges against him through court of law. He wins Weziwe on his side knowing very well that Nodita will do and say anything that her mother tells her. He knows very well that Nodita loves her mother. Things go as he plans because Nodita testifies against Maso and the court rules that Nodita must return to her home and Maso must never come near her again. Spido leaves the courtroom with his family on his side talking and laughing. Maso on the other hand, feels betrayed by Nodita and vows to have nothing to do with Nodita even if her father beats her to death.

Due to his past experience, Spido's character has changed from being a warm-hearted father to being a monster. By his violent actions, he is defensive. Now that he is a mental case, his personality has changed into a bad and insensitive one. We notice a shift of character from a complex character to a stereotype. From the moment this story starts, Spido's character is flat incapable of change even when the situation demands it. His actions serve only one purpose, which is the perpetration of domestic violence, which includes child, abuse and woman oppression. To prove that, on the same night of the ruling Spido beats Nodita for leaving her home and stay in Maso's house. On hearing that Maso changes his decision and vows to help Nodita again. This time he is joined by Zuleka Myeko a lady teacher working with him, to whom he has proposed marriage. Zuleka is Spido's home girl, he knows Spido very well. She comes with the reason for Spido's abusive and aggressive behaviour. They report this case of child abuse to the social worker. The social worker follows all the necessary steps to free Nodita from her father's tyrannic upbringing.

As the process takes its course, Nodita frees herself from the bondage in a tragic manner. During the time of investigation the court rules that Nodita must stay with Maso and his wife. Without telling Maso or his wife Nodita visits her home after work to see her mother who is ill. On that night Spido kills Weziwe by strangling her. When Nodita discovers that her mother is dead, she is filled with anger and hatred towards his father. Nobody is going to stop her today from fighting Spido. Spido is very amazed at how well Nodita fights. He becomes tired and goes to his room to fetch an axe to finish her up.

*Uyabona ke, ndlavinindini yomntwana, lijonge uligqibelise namhlanje. Yifani nobabini zingcolindini zabangcatshi.*

(You see, you hooligan, today is your last day. You will die together, you traitors.) [p 220.]

In defence Nodita takes a knife on the table. As Spido charges towards her with an axe she sidesteps and stabs him twice to death. Maso and the neighbours are attracted by Nodita's screaming. After they notify the police Nodita is arrested. The court links Nodita's case with Spido's case. On hearing from the witnesses, and the lawyer from the social welfare department, Nodita is not jailed instead she is put in the custody of Maso and his wife. They vow to assist her in life by giving the type of education she wants. The Department of welfare promises to assist financially when there is a need. Nodita wants to study for a degree in social work when she passes matric. Nodita is fortunate enough to get some help while it is still early in her life otherwise other children who are victims of child abuse end up being criminals. They lose control of their lives just like Dudu whom she met in prison. After her parent's death Nodita leads a normal life. She ends up being a graduate, businesswoman and Vukile's wife.

Other characters outside this family are secondary characters whose role is to form a social setting that surrounds the major characters in which they can move. For example, the role that is played by Nodita's teacher Maso in the story is crucial. He becomes suspicious about Nodita's behaviour, and starts investigation about her upbringing. As a trained teacher, he soon depicts a problem in Nodita's family. He vows to help this child to overcome the problem she has. Therefore, Maso forms a strong base for the protagonist who is a minor. With the help of Maso, Nodita becomes strong enough to stand the opposition of her stepfather. When Spido chases Nodita we find that she has confidence in her teacher.

*Ngaphezulu nokuba wayenokuyifumana wayemthembile uMaso.*

(Above all even if he finds Maso's house, she has confidence in Maso.)

[p.156]

On the other hand, Spido, hates anybody who interferes in his family's matters. In fact, the narrator tells us that Spido becomes mad and even kills one who intervenes in his quarrel. We have seen an example when he almost killed Khwalo, whom he strangled in his house for only intervening while Spido was beating Weziwe.

Fortunately, Maso is also portrayed as a strong man so that it becomes not easy for Spido to defeat him when they fight. In fact, Maso has proved beyond doubt that he is not scared of Spido as he defeats him twice in the story. That is why Spido decides to fight Maso using the court of law. Using his skill of deceit he wins the case, but as he continues his habit the case is reopened. Unfortunately he dies before the trial resumed. Maso succeeds in liberating Nodita legally from her six years of abuse. After her parent's death, he helps her in moulding her life into a healthy and normal life style until she becomes independent.

Maso's personality is the opposite of his principal's. His principal, Mr Nguxe is a very selfish person who is only concerned with the well-being and the smooth running of his school. As a manager in his school, he is after perfection, as if he has never been trained. He does not want to accommodate any existence of a problem in his school. He almost succeeds in discouraging Maso from his mission of finding the root cause of Nodita's problem. He opposes opposition of Maso's actions, and aligns himself with Spido. In other words, Nguxe is a cruel and unfair parent to all his school kids because even other children might have problems but he ignores them all. He is a stereotype whose existence is to serve a particular purpose. He does not change no matter what the circumstances are.

Other characters that have played a crucial role in the story are all the members of the Khwalo family. This family represent a healthy and normal family. By taking Nodita to this family the author wants Nodita to see an example of a normal family relationship. In fact, even Spido could have learnt something from this family if he was a dynamic character. Even though Khwalo is very concerned about his business, he does not forget to consult his entire family whenever he intends to do anything.

Khwalo's wife is a very kind and observant woman. She soon observes that there is a problem in Nodita's life. She decides to create a warm and protective environment for her. She tries to convince her husband to be tolerant concerning Nodita's mistakes. She is keen to help her to get education just like her own children. Fortunately, her husband listens to her. Soon Nodita proves herself to be a dedicated young worker and Khwalo becomes very fond of her. MaDlamini has played an important role in Nodita's life. She has taught her many things that her mother has failed to teach her. She treats her as a child not as a worker. When she finds out about her problem, she encourages Maso to untangle Nodita from her problem, and also offers her assistance when he needs it.

Thozama, the youngest daughter in this family, is of the same age as Nodita. She soon becomes Nodita's best friend. Though she is the last born, she is not spoilt. She knows almost all the house chores as a result she becomes Nodita's teacher. Nodita is very keen to learn and also is a very fast learner. However, Thozama becomes very instrumental in providing Nodita with coping and adaptation skills in her work place. Within a very short period of time, Nodita feels at home, as she has mastered her duties. Thozama also becomes one of the witnesses to give evidence about Spido's abusive behaviour. Sometimes, when Nodita comes from her home with a problem, she discloses to her as a friend.

Thupeni, the young man who also works for Khwalo, is another character that has changed Nodita's personality. He trains Nodita physically how to fight in order to protect herself when she is in danger. He becomes satisfied about his course when Nodita stabs him by mistake and he lands to hospital. Nodita realises the importance of a fighting skill when Dudu and Thandiwe in prison attach her while she is arrested for stabbing Thupeni. If Thupeni did not teach her the fighting skills, she would have died in that day. But she ends up being respected and acknowledged as a friend by these two girls. Despite her victory, Dudu gives her some more tips to improve for perfection. Nodita takes note of her mistakes and learns through them. Therefore, Thupeni's role in the story is linked directly to the end of Nodita's suffering. He is the one who provided Nodita with confidence, and self-defence mechanisms.

I have tried to look at the main characters and the secondary characters in the novel *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* I will now move on and explore the techniques that are utilised by Mcimeli in portraying his characters.

### 3.3 CHARACTERISATION IN *KAZI NDENZENI NA?*

Characterisation in *Kazi Ndenzeni na?* intensifies the use of various techniques like dialogue, monologue or soliloquy, direct description, presentation of characters in action, environment and third person point of view. Mcimeli utilises these techniques interchangeable in his narrative in a very artistic manner. The novel is presented in a third person point of view. The narrator is not involved in action but is a mere reporter. The narrator reports every action that takes place and even goes beyond the limits of eyes. The narrator is omniscient, as he is also able to read the minds of the characters. For instance, when Nodita thinks about the way she is ill-treated by her parents, the narrator tells us all. We hear all the questions she asks herself ambiguous:

*Kutheni bethu' uyise' esithi xa embetha ambethe kangaka? Ambethe ade aphume igazi aze angamxoleli sele ecela uxolo? Kutheni bethu?*

(Why does her 'father' beat her in such a manner? To beat her until the blood comes out and not forgiving her even if she asks for forgiveness? Why is it so?) [p.9]

The reader has the answers as a result he feels pity for her. Nodita is a child who deserves to be protected from the abuse she gets from her stepfather but there is no one to protect her. Her mother is helpless. Though the narrator is omniscient, we are not given Weziwe's inner thoughts and feelings about Spido's abusive behaviour. She is so silent about this matter, in fact she suppresses her feelings until she suffers from heart disease at the end.

The narrator also reads the mind of Maso, Nodita's teacher who turns to be Nodita's rescuer. From the day Nodita starts a fight in his class, Maso decides to investigate about Nodita's background. He suspects that there is something wrong in her

upbringing until he finds out himself when Spido beats her in his presence. While he is standing in front of his pupils in the classroom he is deep in his thoughts:

*Ingaba bethu uyawenze ntoni uSpido kulo mntwana? Ngahle umbetheleu kuba makalale ngendlu, yiyo loo nto angekhoyo esikolweni ngale mini. Iza kuthiwani bethu le nto kaSpido yokusoloko ehlalele umntwana ngokumbetha? Njengetitshala akanakumyekela umntwana abulawe ngabazali bakhe ejongile.*

(I wonder what Spido has done to this child? May be he severely beat her, that is why she is not at school this day. What can be done to wean Spido from beating this child every time? As a teacher he cannot allow parents to kill their child while watching.) [p.63]

Maso's investigation comes up with the reason for Spido's sick behaviour. The plot Spido always referred to is at last revealed by Zuleka Myeko, who comes from Spido's village. At least some questions concerning Spido's behaviour are answered though they do not justify the damage he has caused to the innocent child, Nodita and her mother. The novelist wants us to know that the perpetrators of woman and child abuse are also victims of such offences. They suffer from psychological consequences of what happened in their lives earlier on.

Dialogue is one of the techniques that is used abundantly in this narrative. The use of dialogue creates a dramatic plot where characters speak for themselves. Direct conversation promotes originality and also attracts a lot of attention from the reader. For instance, the confrontation between Spido and Weziwe about Nodita in p 5 is eavesdropped by Nodita. She discovers from the conversation that her father is jealous of her. He forces her mother to choose the one she loves best between him and Nodita. She is shocked and demoralised to hear her mother saying that she loves Spido more than her.

We also see Spido's inhuman nature quite clearly when he is put in a dramatic situation. For example, it is unbecoming for a parent to shout at an excited child who

has achieved top marks from a test she has written at school as Spido does to Nodita in p 5.

*Nodita wenza ntoni? Awuboni ukuba siyathetha apha nonyoko? Uyifundiswe ngubani into yokuthi xa ufika abantu abadala bencokola ungenelele ngezakho izinto wena? Kutheni ingathi uya uqaqadeka ngakumbi nje? Ugragramme watsho uSpido emjamele uNodita.*

(Nodita what are you doing? Don't you see that we are talking with your mother? Who taught you to interrupt old people when chatting? Why are you becoming so delinquently more and more? Roars Spido staring mad at Nodita.) [p.5]

Direct speeches from the characters also reveal the character's personalities, their language use and what they think about other characters. For example, as Weziwe's feelings towards Nodita's abuse remain a secret, we notice that she aligns herself with her boyfriend in abusing her daughter as she uses abusive language in p30.

*Xokindini lomntwana! ...ndlavinindini yomntwana....siqaqadekindini somntwana..*

(You deceiving child!..you hooligan...you delinquent child.) [p.30]

She seems to promote Spido's brutal actions as she forbids her daughter from touching the food until her father comes and decides what punishment she deserves.

The novelists has also utilised direct statement about a character by another character. The statement given by Spido to Maso when Maso decides to visit their home to investigate about Nodita's misbehaviour is not true. He labels Nodita as a naughty and troublesome child. He tells somebody who knows Nodita very well as she spends much time with him at school. Maso could easily depicts that there is something wrong in this family. Spido also does the same thing in a meeting called by the Principal to resolve Nodita and Vukile's fight. The Principal tends to like

Spido, viewing him as an honest parent who does not shield his child when she has done something wrong.

*Uyabona ke, ayandixolisa amazwi alo mzali. Ubonakala engumzali ongqongqo emntwaneni, le nto ke ifunekayo. Ukuba unje lo mfo uyakulingena izulu ebaleka.*

(You see, I feel satisfied by the words of this parent. He looks like a strict parent to his child, which is good. If this man is like this, he will get into Heaven running.) [p.65]

Looking at the Principal's comment in context, one will soon discover that Spido's words suit him since he is also a man who lacks any care about the personal problems of his kids. The only thing he cares about is perfection in his school.

We also get false statement uttered by Spido when he recommends Nodita to Khwalo, the shopkeeper. Spido tells Khwalo and his family that Nodita knows almost all the household chores. When Nodita starts at work, she proves herself to be the opposite of what was said about her. She becomes lucky not to be fired by Khwalo.

Spido's skill of deceit also works for him when he wins Nodita back in court. Maso is found guilty for keeping a minor child without her parent's consent. They leave the court pretending to be a happy family. On the same night Spido beats them severely. In order to reveal Spido's background, the novelist uses another character who seems to know him very well. Zuleka Myeko, Maso's colleague who later becomes his wife, comes from the same village as Spido. She reveals his sad past, which affected him psychologically, resulting in this inhumane character. From these various statements by the characters, the reader can easily sift lies from the truth.

The episode when Nodita meets Dudu and Thandiwe in jail is a drama that serves to encourage Nodita to be optimistic in life. The fight she had with them forms a test match as she was Thupeni's student. After the fight Dudu remarks on her performance, which she always remembers when in action.

*Wathi sele emngena ngomsindo uSpido wakhumbula amazwi kaDudu wasesiseleni athi, "Xa usilwa musa ukuba nomsindo... Yingozi yakho leyo."*

(As she started fighting Spido with anger, she remembered Dudu's words from the prison when she said, "When you fight do not get angry... that is dangerous to you.") [p.129]

From the conversation she had with Dudu, Nodita learns a lot about how cruel life could be to innocent and vulnerable young people. She vows to help other children who are victims of parental abuse just like herself, Dudu and Thandiwe. She studies for the degree of social work.

Besides what the characters say in a narrative, characterisation is tightened by what the characters do. In some instances one may find that the character says something but in reality he does something else. In such cases the novelists implements the old saying, 'action speaks louder than words'. For instance, we realise that Spido convinces his family to act as a happy family in court, saying the opposite of what really happens at their home. Even the victim, Nodita turns against her rescuer. Since Nodita loves and respects her mother very much, she can do anything she instructs her to do. Therefore, Spido grabs the opportunity by telling Weziwe what they must both say in court in order to win the case.

*UNodita wenza into ayixelelwa ngunina, unina yena eyixelelwa nguSpido.*

(Nodita does anything her mother tells her to do, her mother in turn is instructed by Spido.) [p. 202]

He wins the case against Maso and Nodita comes back home happy, with her father pretending to have forgiven her. In her thinking things would be normal in her home. Surprisingly, her father returns to his habit on that same night. Maso is very shocked to hear the news from the neighbouring children.

*Intoni? Uthi kutheni Nolitha? Ubethiwe kwakhona?*

(What? What do you say Nolitha? Has she beaten again?) [p.194]

Even though Maso has vowed to take no notice about Nodita anymore, on hearing this sad news Zuleka convinces him to continue.

*Okukhona alufunayo uncedo lwakho laa mntwana kungoku...*

(That child is in dire need of your help right now.) [p.195]

Nodita is also presented in action when she fights Spido after she discovers that he has killed her mother. For many times in the narrative, Nodita has shown great anger towards her father's habit of beating her mother. She even voiced out that her father must beat her and kill her rather than touch her mother. At times she wanted to fight back, but her mother would condemn her attempt. Now her mother is dead and so she has to fight for her vengeance. She uses the expertise she has gathered from Thupeni and Dudu. At the end she stabs him to death.

*Bathi tha-a bonke ubuchule bokulwa awaye ebufundiswe nguThupeni.*

(She remembered all the fighting skills she learnt from Thupeni.) [p.219]

The expository method or direct description is also used in this narrative. In order to give us an imagined picture of his characters, the novelist describes the outer appearance of the characters. From Weziwe's description we get a clear picture of what she looks like and also what kind of a person she is.

*UWeziwe wayeyintombi entle kunene. Wayeligwangqakazi elithi chwishi, elinwele zinde zimnyama khaca nelimashiyi aqhamileyo. Wayeyintokazi eyaye inothando ebantwini nobuso bayo babusoloko bubengezela luncumo.*

(Weziwe was a very beautiful girl. She was a tall dark beauty, with long black hair and thick eyebrows. She was an affectionate girl whose face is always filled with smile.) [p.1]

We are not surprised to hear that Weziwe's dream about her future was to follow modelling, beauty pageants or to become an actress. She has the features and therefore could easily meet the requirements for such careers.

We also find her downfall plausible after she fell pregnant because such careers do not consider someone who has a baby. With no family support Weziwe's destiny is possible. The experience of hunger after the death of her husband also explains why she would rather die in the hands of Spido than leave him. The picture of a young beautiful and affectionate woman fades as her physical outlook changes totally due to daily quarrels ending in assaults by her boyfriend.

*Ubuso babutyofu-tyofu, izidlele zikhukhumele aza amehlo atshona, angathi ziinkanyezi ezi ezimana ukudanyaza xa kumnyama. Imilebe yomibini yayiziinduli ezazithe ukudumba oku zawatsho la mazinyo akhe angaphambili athanda ukuthi ntlubu ngokwawenja efileyo.*

(Her face and cheeks were swollen, and her eyes had sunk deep down flashing as she opened them. Both lips were also swollen forming hills and this caused her front teeth to protrude like that of a dead dog.) [p.59]

On the other hand, Nodita is described as a very thin young girl but her aggressiveness when she is angry cannot be associated with her physical makeup. Her personality trait shows that, though she is a young girl she has been emotionally inflicted with anger and hostility. When she is angry the spirit of hostility overwhelms her, she becomes powerful and violent.

*UNodita wayengasaboni nangamehlo, engaseva nangendlebe, engasazazi nokuba uphi na ngenxa yomsindo. Into eyaye iphambili kuye engqondweni yayikukuba makabethe uVukile ambulale.*

(Nodita could not see nor hear, not knowing where she was neither, due to the extent of her anger. One thing that was important in her mind was to beat Vukile to death.) [p.23]

We also get the background information from the direct description of Maso and his Principal in p 16. When Maso defeats Spido when they fight over Nodita, we believe it since we have been told about his past. Given the scenario, we get to trust Maso and become confident that he will defend Nodita from the brutality of her father.

*Ngokukhula uMaso wayekhulele kwa N.U.1 eMdantsane, ekhulele kuninalume. Wakufunda ke ukulwa ngeemela, amanqindi, amatye, amazembe nokukhaba ngeenyawo wayincutshe zade zathi iintanga zakhe uyiBoss yakwa N.U. 1 kuba wayeboyisa bonke abo alwa nabo. Wayeyingxilimbela yomfo eyaye ilingana twatse ngesithomo noSpido.*

(Maso grew up in N.U.1 at Mdantsane living with his uncle. He learnt to fight with knives, fists, stones, axes and kicking until he became perfect and his friends confirmed that he was a Boss in his area because he defeats all those boys fighting with him. He was a very huge guy with his height just the same as Spido's.) [p.16]

We also understand his Principal's behaviour in connection with Nodita's problem as we are already informed about his insensitive feeling with regards to children in his school.

*Kuye wonke umntwana weso sikolo wayeyinxalenye yabantwana beso sikolo bebonke, ngoko ke engenakujongwa okanye aphathwe ngendlela eyodwa engafaniyo neyabanye. Umntwana kuye kwakufuneka afane nabanye, enze njengabanye, aphathwe njengabanye qha.*

(To him all the children from that school form a bundle of school children, and therefore there cannot be special attention given to a particular child. According to him each child is supposed to be like others, do what others do and be treated like others, that's all.) [p.16]

That is a very naive thinking especially when it is from a person of his age, a family man who should have got experience of different personality traits from his own children. It is even worse when one considers his status, as a Principal of a primary school how could he become so insensitive towards small children? The direct description of these characters by the narrator forms one of the means to divulge character's personality traits and furnish us with explanation for their behaviour.

The last technique that is utilised by Mcimeli in character portrayal in his narrative, which will be explored in this piece of work is the effect of environment on

characters. As indicated earlier on, environment entails physical surrounding and also social contacts. The physical environment, which is Nodita's home comprises a healthy environment for the upbringing of any child. Weziwe is fortunate enough to be left with this asset by Mzoli, Nodita's father who passed away very early in their lives. She owns this four-roomed house, a home for their only daughter. Due to hardships Weziwe experienced after her husband's death, she accommodates a man she fell in love with. Spido is working and supports them and so he plays a fatherly role. The home is supposed to form security and provide warmth for everyone, but this is not the case with Nodita. At times she would feel like not going home. For instance, in p 11 after her father beats her she hides in the bush. She feels secure in her hiding place as a result she falls asleep.

*Zithe zakudamba iintlungu wasuka wabiwa bubuthongo walala ecaleni kwelo tyholo.*

(As soon as she felt less pain, she fell asleep.) [p.11]

She prefers to stay there until it is dark rather than go home. She is scared of her parents at home more than the wild animals or strangers she can meet outdoors.

*Wayesoyika ukugoduka kuba wayecinga ukuba uyise uya kumbulala akufika kowabo.*

(She was afraid to go home because she thought her father might kill her when she got there.) [p.11]

With regards to social relations, Nodita is very unfortunate to have a stepfather who is so cruel and hostile towards her, but the worst part of it, is to have a silent and unprotective mother. People who also prefer to be silent about the matter because Spido promised to kill anybody who tries to interfere surround her in the neighbourhood. Neighbours get used to this horrible life style of this young girl with no one bold enough to stand up for her when she is in trouble.

*Bathi bhenqe bathi chasi abamelwane, bahumzela behlunguzela iintloko. Kwakungekho wayenokuzinganga ambize uNodita abuze ukuba kutheni na kuba kwakusaziwa ukuba lowo akayi kubakho nguSpido owaye emthiye kunene umntu ongena nantoni na yomzi wakhe.*

(The neighbours came out and watched; grumbling and nodding their heads feeling pity for her. There was no one who could dare call Nodita and ask her the reason why she was beaten because they knew that Spido would deal with that one accordingly as he hated someone who interferes with his family matters.) [p.8]

The only person who seems to take courage to face and stop Spido's cruelty is Nodita's teacher, Maso. Maso is not afraid of Spido's strong physical makeup as he is of the same size. He is the only person that listens to Nodita and tries to console her. When she is with Maso, Nodita gets the warmth and security that is supposed to be provided by her parents. She remembers the olden days when both her parents used to love her promising to educate her until she becomes a teacher. But unfortunately, those days are over. The kind of relationship she has with them is unpleasant. The effect of this unpleasant relation between this young girl and her parents becomes evident when she attacks her class mate. The reason she gives for attacking Vukile is that 'Vukile has put his nose in matters not concerning him'; her father always utters quoting the words that when people try to intervene when he beats his family up. In other words, Nodita mimics the actions of her father, as all the children do. That is why parents must always try to behave in a just manner for the sake of young children. We have heard how Nodita vehemently overpowers Vukile as thin as she is, practising all the tricks from Spido's fights. Having done what is done almost everyday in her home, Nodita is surprised to find that by fighting with Vukile, she has done such a big thing, especially when she was punishing somebody who has violated her rights.

Psychologically, the unsound relation affects Nodita with her father. This becomes evident when we observe this young girl losing respect and having a negative attitude towards her father day by day. We also notice from her words that one day she will stand up and fight him. She has an urge to defend her mother who is beaten

up even when she is sick. She gains confidence from the fighting lessons she gets from Thupeni. She is emotionally distressed because of the wrath and hatred she has towards her father. Fortunately, Nodita's respect is not lost, as a result with the help of the social worker who has been working on her case, she is not sent to a rehabilitation centre for killing her father. Nodita starts leading a normal life with the help of the concerned people who tried very hard to liberate her from the oppression of stepfather.

### 3.4 CONCLUSION

Mcimeli's novel *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* is a sad story that reveals the atrocities women and children endure within their families. Caught within the patriarchal society and financial dependence, Weziwe becomes economically, socially and emotionally vulnerable to Spido's supremacy as a man, and that also affects her daughter directly. Weziwe lives with a man who had experienced something terrible in his past and never undertaken any therapy for it. In other words, Spido is ill psychologically, and those close to him become victims of the circumstance.

We notice the main characters in this novel developing through action from the beginning until the story ends in a tragic manner. Nodita starts the story as a helpless and harmless young girl who needs somebody to help her by liberating her from her stepfather's abusive beatings. As the story grows, she learns the hard way to endure the pain inflicted upon her. Later on we notice that she just stands with no tears in her eyes while her father is busy assaulting her. She is rather devastated at seeing her mother being hit by Spido and prefers that to be done on her instead. She ends up stabbing her stepfather to death in her mother's vengeance.

Spido on the other hand is driven by his psychopathic urge to defend himself from what happened to him in the past. The reader feels that his behaviour is possible as he is suffering from a mental disorder. He is lucky to get a woman like Weziwe who is afraid to report him as she depends on him financially. The experience of hardship, hunger and begging after her husband's death has taught her a lesson

that she would not forget. Despite Spido's unstable condition she would rather stay with him than go back on streets searching for food.

## CHAPTER 4

### CHARACTERISATION IN *UKHOZI OLUMAPHIKO* : SAULE N

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at Saule's (1996) novel *Ukhozi olumaphiko* which means the Hero or Champion, is about a young man, Mfazwe, who is a teacher by profession. Though Mfazwe is not so politically active and does not belong to any of the political organisations which are in fact banned by the government, he is very political minded. Due to the political influence he instils through his history lessons to the youth at school, the police harass him and they also arrest him. While in prison he is approached by the police to become one of the police informers then known as 'impimpi'. Mfazwe is very annoyed and refuses the offer. After he is released from prison, police make his life unbearable and he is forced to be a fugitive. He endures many hardships along the way until he becomes a cripple. He returns home as a hero but also as a victim of the oppression.

#### 4.2 CHARACTERS IN *UKHOZI OLUMAPHIKO*

Likewise, we are going to identify characters that play various important roles in the plot of *Ukhozi olumaphiko*, and look at their contribution towards the development of the main character/s. In other words, special attention will be paid on the development of the main character in his interaction with other characters.

Mfazwe is the protagonist in this novel. He plays a dominant part in the story as almost all the major events revolve around him. He experiences ups and downs in his life just like any person does. For instance, while studying at the university, Mfazwe learns a lot about the history and politics of his country, a country with discrimination and segregation laws. Though black people are the majority in this country, the minority white government oppresses them. Liberation movements are banned and the leaders are detained for indefinite periods in prison. Despite that situation, political violence and riots are taking a step forward. Police search for culprits.

Mfazwe is a teacher at Funda High School. As a history teacher, he has a tendency of getting deep into the political situation of his country when teaching. He condemns the oppression of black people by white government thus influencing the youth to be politically

minded. These teachings are not in the school syllabus and therefore they are against the principles of the Education Department and the government he is serving. His colleagues and his girlfriend, Nokuzola try to warn him not to be involve in politics but all in vain. For example, his principal, Zikhali tells him that he is playing with fire:

*He Mfazwe, uyayiqonda phofu le mfazwe uyiqhwayayo?*

(Mfazwe, are you aware that you are inviting a war?) [p.6]

Police get informed about his behaviour and despite the fact that he is not a political activist, he is arrested. He is told that he has broken the law and he is charged for inflicting political violence on students.

*Ndafika sendinesityholo esingaphambili sokunyola umbuso esweni, sendiphiwa igama lobuKomanisi*

(When I arrived there, I was accused of plotting against the government, and I was given a name Communist.) [p.7]

Mfazwe is very naive; he does not understand why he is arrested. He keeps on asking himself questions like 'why me?' of all the people, 'what have I done?'. Perhaps, one of the reasons why he asks these questions is the fact that he does not belong to any of the banned political organisations. Though this is the case, he himself admits that he likes to attend meetings organized by these organisations .

*Ndazibona sendimana ukuzifumana ndithe xhwa ndaza kuma ngemikhono kwimbutho zempi olwalusithi uninzi lu izikholisa ngezinto ekwakusithiwa azithethwa zingupoqo*

(I usually found myself deeply involved in meetings of political organisations that entertain themselves with the issues considered by many people as politically dangerous / delicate.) [p.5]

Instilling political violence to the youth together with his attendance of political meetings constitute enough reason for the police to arrest him. He falls under the category of those who are considered by policemen as knowing a lot, and many of them have been sorted out already. From now on, Mfazwe becomes the victim of the political struggle between the oppressed masses of his country and the minority white government. As he refuses the

bribe to become a police informer, policemen make his life hell. There are some few incidents that propel him to change his life style while in prison. Firstly, the way someone is beaten up by the police until he dies, shows the cruelty he has never seen. To hear the reason given by the police for this prisoner's death, makes him sick. He was there; he knows that the man is murdered.

*Ebomini bam andizange ndiyive loo ndlela yokubethwa komntu .*

(I had never heard such a way of beating someone in my entire life.) [p.8]

Secondly, he is very shocked and becomes angry to find out from one of the policemen that Mr Ntsipho and Mr Ndlela who are well-respected leaders in the community are police-informers. This secret makes him strong as he vows to reveal the truth one day.

*Ndandisendifunge ndagqiba ukuba imeko elolu hlobo andisokuze ndiyixolele, bona uNdlela noNtsipho kwakuza kwaziwana.*

(I had already made a vow to my self that I could never forgive the situation like this one, as for Ntsipho and Ndlela, we will see.) [p.19]

In this way Mfazwe is portrayed as a very strong personality. He is a realistic, complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional character. Considering his political stance, one would think that he will easily fall into the trap of the police by taking their offer. But, instead we find that he takes this offer as an insult, which in turn drives him to be a strong political activist. He is prepared to join the political struggle so as to fight them back:

*Ndatsho ndanento ethi mhlawumbi ndiya kutsho ndibe ngumKomanisi ongcono kunalo kwakusithiwa ndinguye.*

(I had something that told me that maybe I would be a better Communist than the one they say I am.) [p.16]

Friday, Ntsipho's son who is the real police informer turns the whole community against Mfazwe. Friday spreads the lie that Mfazwe is a sell-out as a result he becomes an outcast in his community. His home is burnt into ashes. His parents have fled to hide at Zihlahleni, his uncle's home. The most hurtful incident in his life is to see his girlfriend, Nokuzola sitting next to Friday in a meeting held inside the church hall. Nokuzola seems to believe what is said about him.

*UNokuzola wandithi krwaqu nje kwakanye, wajika ubuso wajonga kude. Baphela ubugagu kum, ndangenwa yintaka.*

(Nokuzola looked at me once, and turned her face away from me. I lost courage, and I was afraid.) [p.36]

Mfazwe is very disappointed. At least, Nokuzola is the only person he never thought would turn against him, and now she does. Even Rev Hlathi who is the chairperson in this meeting, is the person he trusts and cherish. Rev Hlathi knows very well what type of a person he is, but today he believes in such a scandal. This makes him to lose every inch of trust he ever had for anybody. This is evident in the decision he takes in that evening:

*Yandifikela ngaloo mzuzu into yokuba mnye kuphela umhlobo endinaye, ndim.*

(The thought that I have no friend other than myself came in at that moment.) [p 38]

After the community throws Mfazwe out of the meeting held in the church hall, the feeling of hatred overwhelms him. He also feels very angry, betrayed and blackmailed by the people of his place of birth. For all his life, he was known as a good man, an exemplary young man. He is a well-respected man and in turn shows respect to all ages of people. He remembers that other people used to praise him:

*Babekho ababede bathethe phandle besithi bayamqabuka umntwana weli xesha onembeko ngam lo.*

(There were those who even speak out that it is their first time to see a child of this generation with such respect.) [p.46]

What happened to those thoughts? Why is he all of a sudden treated like a dog? He has answers for these questions, Friday is the cause. But what makes him angry and full of hatred is to find that the whole community believe in what is said about him. Nobody seems to defend him or doubt what is said about him.

On the same night, Mfazwe narrowly escapes death. Friday and his friends search for him in Gaba's house wanting to kill him, but they miss him as he is hiding outside. Seeing that his life is in danger, Mfazwe decides to go and hide at his uncle's house at Zihlahleni. It is not easy to leave one's place of birth. Mfazwe experiences internal conflict concerning this

matter, as he hates to be seen as a coward. But on the other hand, he has no place to stay at Qaka, moreover the whole community believe that he is an 'impimpi'.

*Ndibaleka ndingakhange ndizame nokumthibaza lo mfo kumayelenqe akhe ... Phaya eholweni andizange ndenze nemigudu le ukubonisa ukuba andinguye untamnani .Hayi mandijike. Hay'bo, sendihambe umgama ongaka, ngekhe?*

(I have fled without trying to stop this man from his evil deeds...In the church hall I made no efforts to show that I am not a police-informer. No, I must go back. No ways, having walked such a distance, I can't.) [p.50]

Police make Mfazwe's life unbearable as they are always after him. Mfazwe reveals the truth to Rev Hlathi and on hearing it, he helps Mfazwe to skip the country. He joins the powerful army whose aim is to liberate the oppressed masses of his country . The journey to the country of his choice is very difficult and dangerous. Mfazwe's strong personality is portrayed when he persists in his journey even when the situation discourages him. But, sometimes he shows signs of uncertainty and doubt. Like anybody else, sometimes he would turn while on the verge of giving up. He is given strength and confidence by the thought of his homelessness. His dedication and perseverance is tested in the episode of the hunter who honestly advised him to discontinue his journey.

*Akukho ukusinda. Buyela apho ubuvela, uyeke le nto uyenzayo iza kukubulalisa ngezi zikhohlakali.*

(There is no way of escape. Go back to where you come from, and stop this thing you are doing, these cruel men will kill you.) [p.147]

Mfazwe is injured along the way to Mgazi, which is his destination. He becomes a cripple for the rest his life. After many years of struggle the government agrees to negotiate. Negotiations become the tool to liberate his country as the political situation in his country changes. The government releases all the political prisoners and the exiles return home. Mfazwe and many others return home, being victims of circumstances. His life style has changed altogether as he is now constrained in doing certain things in his life. For instance, in the beginning of the story we are introduced to him demonstrating to his son how to play cricket, forgetting that he has a limping leg.

There are other characters that play a very important role in the story. These characters constitute the social setting in which the protagonist floats. For instance, we have an antagonist which is the character that is opposed to the views and actions of the protagonist. In this novel, the policeman or the government is the main opponent in Mfazwe's life. Mfazwe changes his personality totally due to the police actions. He is harassed in his home in the early hours of the morning when the police come to arrest him. While in jail, a prisoner next to his cell is beaten to death by the police, after that they spread the lie that he has committed suicide. After that, Mfazwe is approached by one of the police to become their informer. This bribery annoys Mfazwe and as from then he vows to fight them back. When he is released he is shocked to find his home burnt into ashes. The police are indirectly involved in this incidence.

On the day he is released, the police offer him a lift to his home not knowing that they have their own reasons. Back home, Mfazwe is now given a new name, a sell-out 'impimpi'. He is very surprised to find the whole community turned against him.

*Igama lam lalingcole kuzo zonke iindawo nakubo bonke abantu..*

(My name was contaminated in all the areas and to everybody.) [p 46]

Even after he has left Qaka to hide at Zihlahleni, the police often make unpleasant visits to his uncle's house. Mfazwe does not like this, as he does not want to see his family getting involved in this feud. He is also worried about his parents, as they are very hurt after they witness their house being set alight.

On the day Mfazwe attends a funeral of a schoolboy, who is also a cousin to him, the police almost catch him. Mfazwe is the one amongst the few people who came back to finish the process of bereavement after the police disturbed the funeral by firing teargas at the crowd. However, the South African Police manage to make his life unbearable, as a result he prefers to flee from the country and become an exile.

The third character that we find in this novel is the tritagonist. As stated earlier on, the tritagonist may be negative if one perpetuates the conflict between the two opposing forces or may be positive if one is trying to narrow the gap between the opposing forces. We find that Friday is the perpetrator of conflict between Mfazwe and his rivals. Friday

seems to be behind Mfazwe's arrest. The police know a lot about Mfazwe, and this surprises him. He keeps on asking himself where they get such information.

*Ayento eninzi ayaziyo ngam ayengazange ayive ngam*

(They knew a lot about me, things they never got from me.) [p 13]

We know for a fact that Friday is the source of information. The same Friday who is working with the police turns the whole community against Mfazwe. Mfazwe is labelled as 'impimpi', and is made an outcast by the community. He also leads the group of youth when they set alight Mfazwe's home. He helps the police in blackmailing Mfazwe by bringing Mfazwe's clothes to the prison. Look at the reaction he gets from one of the prison warders in p 16:

*Wandijonga lo mfo ntshoo emehlweni engathethi, wandigibisela ngepasile, akugqiba wathi putyu phantsi, wandithuka ngenyoka erhubuluzayo. p 16 .*

(He was staring at me without saying a word, he threw a parcel to me, then he spit and insulted me calling me a crawling snake.) [p.16]

Friday is also the one who leads the crowd in the church hall during a meeting when Mfazwe is chased away.

*Ndigxothwe, ndabethwa esidlangalaleni.*

(I was thrown out and beaten in public.) [p.46]

On the night of that day, Friday comes to Gaba's house searching for Mfazwe. Mfazwe narrowly escape death on that night and that incident is the one that forces him to look for another place to hide. Mfazwe could not believe his ears when he heard Friday saying:

*Wugcinele uMfazwe loo mcinga, uyekane nemoto yabantu. Siza kusifumana wena esi sibhanxa setitshala.*

(Keep that match for Mfazwe, leave that car alone. We will eventually get that fool of teacher.) [p.46]

Mfazwe is left with no choice but to flee from his village of birth, not because he is scared of Friday but because he has no place to stay and also to save his life.

Besides the above-mentioned characters, there is a character in the form of a dog, which frequently appears in the story whenever Mfazwe is in danger. This unknown dog rescues Mfazwe whenever he is faced with a problem and miraculously disappears afterwards. The first time he meets this dog is when he finds his home burnt down and he notices its presence frequently afterwards, until it saves his life on his way to Mthontsi.

Lastly, there are various minor characters in this novel whose role is to fill gaps and after that they disappear without effect. For instance, characters like Ntsipho and Ndlela, who are the real police-informers, deceive people as they hold leadership roles in the community. They are well-respected persons as a result it is difficult for the people to believe that they could do such a thing. The police want such people, people who are capable of winning the confidence of the community quite easily. Mfazwe's neighbour, Gaba, appears only to give the explanation about what happened to Mfazwe's home. As Mfazwe's home is burnt down, Gaba as a neighbour accommodates Mfazwe for the night, which turns to be a nightmare for all of them. Mfazwe's uncle at Zihlahleni also appears to accommodate Mfazwe for a short period of time before Mfazwe decides to escape. His uncle together with his son is very supportive to Mfazwe. Rev Hlathi is a respected person as a church minister but he plays a role in the political struggle. Though Mfazwe is labelled as a police-informer, Rev Hlathi does not turn him back when he comes to his house. He gives him a place to sleep, but on the same night his house is attacked with a petrol bomb that fortunately does not blow out. We find that Rev Hlathi realises how Mfazwe's life is in danger and offers to help him to escape by referring him to the relevant person. Along his way Mfazwe meets the hunter whose role is very important considering the provision he gives him. In connection to this provision, we have another character Khonjwayo, who after starting a quarrel becomes insane when slapped by Mfazwe. We can only believe what happens to Khonjwayo by linking it to the hunter's medicine. All these characters play a very vital but limited role in the story.

In conclusion, Saule has managed to construct life-like characters very well. The novel itself reflects the social and political circumstances in our country at least ten years ago. His characters are round characters as they have complex behaviour and multi-dimensional thoughts. If we consider characters like Mfazwe, Friday, Ntsipho and Rev Hlathi, we find that they resemble people we know in real life. Most of the time, people cannot be predicted especially in political situations. During the time when this story starts, one cannot lay trust to anyone hence we find Mfazwe, a well-respected and dignified

teacher accused of being a police-informer. Nobody has courage to stand up and defend him because what is said about him could be true.

Mfazwe is portrayed as a dynamic character, his personality changes with changing circumstances. He is not portrayed as the master of all, his life is full of surprises. Though he ends up being a hero, he is also a casualty of the struggle.

#### 4.3 CHARACTERISATION IN *UKHOZI OLUMAPHIKO*

Saule portrays his characters in his novel, *Ukhozi olumaphiko*, through various ways such as first person point of view, direct description, character's actions and speech as in different forms like dialogue, monologue and what the characters say about one another. Naming is not artistically used as most of the names given to the characters do not have any specific meaning or significance to the character's personality traits.

The narrative is presented in the first person point of view. Mfazwe, who is the main character is also the narrator of the story. As the active participant in the story, he is not omniscient as he narrates only what he knows or witnesses. Sometimes, he narrates what he is told by other characters. This proves that he is only the narrator of the story but not the focaliser. He narrates what is focalised by someone else. For instance, on the night he arrives in prison he hears the police beating the prisoner next to his cell. Since he is not the focaliser, he does not know the details of what happens inside that cell. The policeman only tells him on the next day that the man is dead. On the day he is released in prison, he finds his home burnt down. Gaba, his neighbour, tells him what happened also, while he is in exile, he does not know what is happening back home. He only gets the information of what is happening at his village, Qaka, from Sipiwo and Thembekile, the young men who just joined the army coming from his village.

*USipiwo ufikele kum apha eMthontsi akuba ethubeleze ngempumelelo yena ukuwela imida ...Wafika wandibalisela yonke into , ethathela apho ndandigqibele khona.*

(When Sipiwo arrived at Mthontsi, after he successfully escaped and crossed the borders, I was here ...He told me everything, starting from when I left.) [p.182]

As he narrates from the restricted first person point of view, Mfazwe does not have access to the inner thoughts and feelings of the other characters. For example, Mfazwe is not aware that Nokuzola never stopped loving him. Ever since that day of the meeting, Mfazwe never made any contacts with Nokuzola. The sight of Nokuzola together with Friday makes him very sick as a result he ends their relationship without even finding out the truth about it. The first person point of view is used artistically in this story so as to keep us in suspense. Perhaps, what would happen if Mfazwe knew the truth about Nokuzola? Our story would not have ended the way it did.

Dialogue is used abundantly in this story. It is used with good effect as the characters speak for themselves. Dialogue is the medium through which bonds between people are established, sustained, developed or destroyed. For instance, in the first episode we discover from the dialogue between Mfazwe and his son that Mfazwe is a cripple. The novelist chooses not to describe him directly, he wants us to find out from their conversation. Whenever the narrator participates in an action, dialogue is used. We discover from the dialogue between Mfazwe and the policeman that the prisoner that was bitten by the police the previous night is dead. Also when one of the policeman approaches Mfazwe to become a police informer, we get that straight from their conversation. When Mfazwe gets the report from his neighbour, Gaba, dialogue is used.

From the use of dialogue, we also get to know what other characters think about a particular character. For example, while the community treats Mfazwe as an outcast, other people seem not to believe what is said about him. Sipiwo and his friend save Mfazwe from the police who wanted to arrest him. The conversation between Mfazwe and the policeman near Mgazi unfolds that the policemen do not all have the same feelings towards the political struggle. They let him go as a result he thinks that they want to shoot him in motion.

*Phuma, phuma uphel 'emehlweni.*

(Get out, get away from here.) [p.152]

The novelist to reveal the inner thoughts and feelings of the character uses soliloquy and monologue. For instance, monologue is abundantly used as the narrator tells us about his inner thoughts and feelings. This technique is a very important weapon that is usually

utilised to reveal the true self or real being of a character especially when there is a hypocrite in a story.

*Yandixelela ingqondo yam ukuba ukuya emadlakeni akuyi kufana nokubuya, ikho into eza kwenzeka. Le nginga yayiphenjelelwa kukuva ukuvungama kwamatshantliziyo njengokuba siqhuqha sidlula kwiinqwelo zotshaba nje.*

(My brains told me that there would be a difference when we proceed to the graveyard and when we come back. This thinking was evoked by hearing the activists roaring as we ran past the vehicles of the enemies.) [p.60]

Mfazwe decides to attend the funeral of the victims of unrest on that day he was released. He cannot believe his eyes when he sees Friday carrying Machule's coffin with the other youth. Mfazwe knows that Friday is deceiving the community. He talked to himself:

*"Usathana unamandla!"*

(The devil is powerful!) [p.60]

This becomes true when Friday disappears just before the police throw teargas and fire shots on the crowds. That is when Mfazwe decides to continue the process of bereavement with very few individuals that were left behind.

The novelist also uses the presentation of the characters in action which shows clearly the personality of a character. For example, we discover that Mfazwe is a cripple when he plays cricket with his son. He instructs his son on how to bat the ball but he demonstrates something else, because of the limping leg. Also we are not certain about Friday's opposition to Mfazwe until he is put in action. Friday organizes his friends to search for Mfazwe with the intention of killing him. His action of misinforming pupils and the whole community about Mfazwe is a clear indication of his opposition. Mfazwe has seen him misleading the crowd at a meeting held in the church hall, where Mfazwe is insulted, labelled as a sell out and thrown out of the hall.

On the day of the funeral of the schoolboy, Friday leads the crowds to the graveyard but disappears before the police fire teargas and rubber bullets at the crowd. This indicates that Friday knew beforehand about the plans of the police. Mfazwe is put in action as he continues to lead the remaining individuals to the graveyard to finish the process of

bereavement. In this way Mfazwe proves his innocence as a result people realise that he is not what he is labelled as. This is evident in their comments like the one made by the deceased father:

*Ukuba ibingeyiyo le mpimpi ngesingakhange sifihle namhlanje*

(If it was not for this informer we would not have buried today.) [p.64]

The word informer in this case is used ironically as it does not mean what it says. Other people realise that and start laying their trust on him again. They call Mfazwe to intervene saying:

*Nqanda Mfazwe, ungathini ukusishiya elutshabeni sitshabalala.*

(Intervene Mfazwe, how can you leave us behind ravaged by enemies.) [p.64]

Also to show that Mfazwe is dedicated to what he wants, he does not turn back even when the hunter discourages him in his journey. He wants to fight the unjust laws of his country.

The novelist also presents Nokuzola in action when she writes letters to Mfazwe to tell him that she still loves him. We know that Mfazwe never bothered to prove whether Nokuzola and Friday are really involved in a relationship. He just takes from what he has heard about her mother and what he has seen in the church hall. Why would Nokuzola agree to go to a meeting with Friday, sit next to him and not defend his name when accused of being a sell-out? Mfazwe keeps on asking himself that question and the only answer to him is that Nokuzola has betrayed him. He is fully convinced that this affair has been taking place for quite some time. He passes judgement before he makes investigations. Listen to his comment:

*Kanti kuhleliwe nje uNokuzola uyachwechwisa ecaleni. Ngale nto ndandiqinisekile*

(All along, Nokuzola is having an affair? I was sure of that.) [p.37]

To end her frustrations and to show her commitment to Mfazwe, Nokuzola commits suicide. Mfazwe finds out very late that he is wrong, he convicted an innocent victim. He is very sorry about what he has done to her.

*Andazi ukuba uxolo ndalubiza kangaphi na phambi kokuba inqwelo moya iyokuthi ngciphu eRhawutini*

(I do not know how many times I said I am sorry before the aeroplane land in Johannesburg.) [p.213]

Direct description of the character's appearance is also used in the story. The narrator's description of external appearance touches on many aspects like height, age, facial expression such as smile, colour of the eyes and hairstyle. Look at the interesting way he uses when introducing Nokuzola:

*Intokazi efanelwe ngumhlantla wayo ongaphambili, ibunzi elityhilekileyo, amehlo athe qabavu, intombi ekumila kunomfaneleko emzimba usakhulayo*

(A woman with a gap in her front teeth that suits her, an uncovered forehead, big eyes, a well structured young woman.) [p.9]

He also describes Khonjwayo very well as a result we get the picture of what he looks like:

*Indoda le yayikho inezoso, iyindutsuba eyondlekileyo ngathi lihashe lombaleko*

(The man was muscular, big and fit like a racing horse.) [p.202]

This description helps the reader to understand why Khonjwayo's behaviour after being hit by Mfazwe is questionable. How can such a big man fall on the ground after one slap on the face? It shows that Mfazwe owes this to the hunter's medicines.

The novelist also describes the appearance of certain places. For instance, he describes the village of Xhalanga as follows:

*IXhalanga yayingumthebelele onabe tswii welali esesigingqini. Ngelo xesha lasekuseni wawambathiswe yinkungu, izindlu zingabonakali. Umoya opholileyo wawuphephezela uvela emazantsi entaba .Phezu kwayo kwakuthe cwaka oku kusimanga, iinkwenkwezi zimana ukuwa nganye nganye .*

(Xhalanga is a village that is situated in a very flat area. During that early morning, it was covered by mist, houses could not be seen. There was fresh air coming from the bottom of the mountain. Above it, silence prevailed, with the stars falling one by one.) [p.49]

The role that is played by direct description is very important in narratives if it is used artistically. From the above example, the description of Xhalanga helps us to get a picture of the place. We also understand why the village is covered by mist in the early hours of the morning from the information we have got about its geographical setup.

Environment, both physical and human, is also used as an important way of portraying characters. As we know that Mfazwe's physical environment, which is his home, is burnt into ashes by Friday and other radicals, Mfazwe finds himself with no place to live. During that night, he decides to sleep over Gaba's house where he narrowly escapes death as Friday and his group want to finish him up. We find that Mfazwe's life is in danger in his village as a result he is forced to flee. He goes to his uncle at Zihlahleni. The physical environment has an effect in Mfazwe's destiny.

*Mandigoduke. Ndigodukele phi?*

(I must go home. Go home where?) [p.38]

Besides that, skipping the country is common among the politically active youth, many of them have gone already so Mfazwe is doing what is done.

The human environment also plays a very decisive role in Mfazwe's life. After his home is burnt into ashes, Ntsipho takes Mfazwe's parents to Zihlahleni, so Mfazwe has to go too. We also find that Mfazwe's decision to go to Zihlahleni is activated by the incident that happened inside the church hall. Mfazwe is thrown out of the hall as the whole community has turned against him, believing that he is a police informer. He is an outcast. Even Nokuzola, his girlfriend seems to have turned against him, as she is sitting next to Friday in the church hall. Mfazwe has no friends, family or community at Qaka, there is nothing that stops him from leaving the village.

Finally, the novelist has used symbols and images to reveal his characters. For instance, whenever Mfazwe is in danger, he is always rescued by an unknown dog, which miraculously disappears afterwards. Mfazwe first meets this dog when he discovers that his home is burnt into ashes. He also sees this dog on his way to Zihlahleni. It rescues him from the snake when he falls asleep while taking a rest under a tree. After that he sees the dog often, when he is in danger. This reveals that Mfazwe is safeguarded in his entire life

by what we believe to be ancestors. We believe that ancestors look after us, protecting us when in danger.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

Saule's novel *Ukhozi olumaphiko* deals with the individual representing the oppressed masses of this country. It is the epic of the struggle of the individual against oppressive government where there is no balance between its inhabitants of different races and where people are discriminated against the colour of their skin, race and creed. Characters in this novel are full of life. They act in the expected manner in almost every situation, but they are not so predictable. Unlike other novels of protest, Saule does not exaggerate any events or produce any propaganda. He utilises various ways of character portrayal all to a good effect. His story is presented in a first-person narrative which makes it very reliable and convincing.

## CHAPTER 5

### CHARACTERISATION IN *KODA KUBE NINI?* : NGEWU L-L

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated earlier on, the aim of this study is to find out whether characterisation is handled well in the novels of the 1990s. In this chapter we will look specifically at how Ngewu handles characterisation in his novel *Koda kube nini?* (1998). *Koda kube nini?* (How long?) unfolds disappointment and frustration of a section of our people in the black community especially the exiles, those who crossed the borders of this country during the Apartheid era, to fight for the freedom of SA underground. Their frustration results from unfulfilment of the high hopes and expectations they had about the new democratic South Africa that came into power in 1994. Given the scenario where change is minimal, the victims are forced to look for quick and short ways of getting money thus increasing the rate of crime.

As Zulu (1999:6) has pointed out, characterisation and plot are closely related in the sense that characters' actions determine the plot's movement. Ngewu has constructed his novel *Koda kube nini?* using plot of fortune which is characterised by developing or dynamic characters. However, in briefly outlining the plot, we find that the whole story is concerned with the criminal actions of a young man who left school while doing Std 7, during the 1976 uprising to join the military wing opposing the government though it becomes evident that his initiation is for a totally different reason. The primary reason for Themba to leave his country is to liberate himself from his fathers' oppression, that of helping him in chasing pigs around Nobuhle Township, which they slaughter and sell to get money. After 17 years in exile, Themba returns to a free country. The exiles return home with confidence believing that they have managed to free this country from the oppressive measures of the Apartheid Government. Themba is confident that he will get a job from the government and help his parents who are now pensioners.

When he finds out that things are not as he anticipated, he resorts to committing criminal offences like bribery, theft, murder, selling drugs in order to get money, torturing and

abusing his girl friend with the aim of getting information about a bank she works for. He is arrested and charged with some of the above offences.

## 5.2 CHARACTERS IN *KODA KUBE NINI?*

The central character in Ngewu's novel is Themba Hlumayo, the son of Mxhamfele, who lives in Nobuhle Township in Uitenhage. Themba is the cause of action in the story and the major events in the narrative revolve around him. As a young boy, we find him being tied up under his fathers' rule and custom of chasing pigs around Nobuhle Township which he slaughters and sells pork. The money his father gets, helps to supplement the small wage he earns from the municipality he works for. Themba hates this business very much as his friends laugh at him but there is nothing he can do about it until the political unrest in 1976 came into being.

*Kuthe kwakuvela olo qhankqalazo uThemba wafumana isebe lokubambelela, wahambela phezulu zisamphulukile iihagu esajongene nomcimbi womzabalazo. Izidube-dube zokukwaywa kwamagumbi okufundela ngabafundi zibonakale zisondeza inkululeko ekudala ijongwe enkalweni ngunyana kaMxhamfele. .*

(When the political unrest came, Themba used it as a scapegoat, as he engaged himself in the struggle, in that way freeing himself from the pigs. The campaign of boycotting classrooms by students was seen as a means of liberation from pigs that the son of Mxhamfele had always longed for.) [p.16]

It is now clear that as Themba joins the student's political movement in 1976, he has his own personal reasons. To prove that, we find that Themba has no problem with Afrikaans, instead he likes it. He does not speak a sentence without including an Afrikaans word. We even find out that during that campaign, while others were using the slogan "Freedom Now: Education Tomorrow!" Themba likes it when it is said in Afrikaans "Vryheid Nou: Opvoeding More." Besides that, the narrator tells us that Themba joined the liberation movement for his own benefit.

*Kwiindidi zenkululeko uThemba awayezijonge ngamehlo amnyama mhlawumbi ayikho eyayigqwesa umhlola wokusukelana nehagu ...*

(In different types of freedom Themba wanted, there is nothing more than to be free from chasing pigs.) [p.16]

Themba is constructed as a live and dynamic character who changes with circumstances. For instance, in order to be free from his father's rule, he engages himself in politics and that suits him. He becomes busy, addressing students in various schools. As police are arresting the student leaders, he is forced to skip the country. Skipping the country frees him completely from chasing pigs in Nobuhle.

*Kwizizathu ezenza ukuba afike kwisigqibo sokuba alityeshele ilizwe loMzantsi Afrika esona sona sasingundoqo yayikukohlukana neehagu.*

(The main reason for him to decide to leave his country, South Africa was to free himself from pigs.) [p.18]

To prove his hatred for pigs, Themba joined the Islamic religion in exile. He even changed his name to be Salaam Mohammed.

When Themba returns from exile, he is confident and full of hope that since he has fought and eventually freed this country, he will now enjoy the fruits of that freedom.

*Tata, bendiba ndiza kufika uncoma igalelo leembacu kumzabalazo wazo zilwela inkululeko.... Umsebenzi wona ndiqinisekile ngawo.... Ndiqinisekile ngesithuba sam emkhosini wokhuselo weli lizwe.*

(Father I thought I would hear you praising the exiles for the great job they did in liberating this country ... As for the job, I am definitely sure about it. ... I am definitely sure of my vacancy in the army.) [p.21]

After the 1994 elections, Themba's hopes are almost fulfilled when it is announced that all the soldiers from different liberation armies must report in Pretoria where they will fuse into one big army called South African National Defence Force.

Themba is hoping to get a better position in the army as a reward for the great work he did in liberating this country. For that matter, things have changed now, the army is no longer a South African Defence Force but a South African National Defence Force. He never

thought that education will count in getting a job as it is known that the freedom fighters left school very early to fight for the freedom that is enjoyed by everybody now. Besides, in exile they never got a chance to further their studies. He is shocked and humiliated to find out that he cannot get a better position in the army because of his low standard of education.

*Andinasiqiniseko samfundo ndinaso; kodwa yona into eqaqambileyo kukuba ndazenza idini ngokulwela inkululeko yeli lizwe*

(I do not have any educational certificate but what is definitely sure is the fact that I sacrificed my life by fighting for the freedom of this country.) [p.25]

To his surprise, he finds that inside the army nothing has changed. People who hold high ranks are still the Afrikaners who were leading the SADF. Soldiers from the military wings are undermined, seen as not having enough military knowledge as a result they are retrained. His ambition is stripped off by the things he sees and he is left demoralised.

*Enye into emmangalisileyo kukufumanisa ukuba yena noogxa bakhe bomzabalazo kusafuneka befakwe phantsi kwefuthe lokuqeqeshelwa umkhosi*

(Another thing that surprised him, was to find that he, and his colleagues from the liberation struggle still need to be retrained under the military service.) [p.23]

In this way Themba is portrayed as a realistic, complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional character. His behaviour resembles that of our neighbours and friends, for instance, when he gets the information from his white SADF colleague that because of his low standard of education, he does not belong there, he decides to change his bad attitude towards his superiors.

He shows great respect and innocence solely to secure his job as rumours for retrenchment have spread out. His colleagues notice his new behaviour and it annoys them. They make him an outcast. Themba's behaviour is well motivated and therefore plausible considering the responsibility he has, the current unemployment rate and his standard of education. This double shift he plays drags his self-confidence down to zero. He suffers from inferiority complex.

*Uthemba ebengonwabanga emkhosini eRhini kanti naxa agodukileyo ebengaluxhamli ulonwabo. Xa agodukileyo eyokuchitha impela-veki kwaNobuhle ebeziva ehlelelekile phakathi kwabahlobo bakhe*

(Themba was not happy in the army in Grahamstown and also when he had gone home to Nobuhle during the weekends he felt unhappy as he found himself inferior to his friends.) [p.26]

Unfortunately, Themba loses his job through retrenchment. He feels betrayed and blackmailed the government he fought for. His embarrassment is evident as he has no guts to tell his father that he is retrenched, instead he locks himself in his room for a month. All his hopes are doomed, and there is one thing he consoles himself with, that the real freedom is still yet to come.

*Tata, kungcono ndizivalele apha endlwini kunalaa manyala ndiwabone phaya emkhosini. Inkululeko iya kufika ngeny' imini yaye ngaloo mini akukho mntu uya kukuxelela ukuba ifikile kuba uya kuyibona ngamehlo akho nawe. Ayikabi yiyo le!*

(Father, it is better for me to lock myself inside this house than face those scandals in the army. Freedom will come one day and on that day nobody will tell you that it has come because you will see it with your eyes. This is not the one yet!) [p.28]

Themba at least gains his self-esteem when he visits Tyoksville, an area near his, made of dirty shacks. Looking at the situation in Tyoksville, he finds his problem and his life style far better than the problems and life style of the people living there. He vows to wake up and look for a job before his life could turn to be like the life of the people in Tyoksville. Themba finds a job from the Protection Unit Security System, where he is given a better position because of his experience as an ex-soldier in the army. Jonathan, the owner puts all his trust on him. He leaves him with the entire security system for days while he visits his new home in Plettenberg Bay. His job entails deploying security guards in various places. He is given instruction not to send a guard to one place for more than two weeks. It is in this job where Themba proves that he is greedy, lacks self-control and self-discipline. Some of the guards prefer to stay in one place which is convenient to them and they bribe Themba to make them stay. Themba makes this bribery habit a custom until other workers complain for being sent to awkward places for weeks. Themba ignores Lungile's complaint

and that is when the problem starts. Lungile informs Jonathan about what Themba is doing.

*Andimqondi lo mhlekazi uyintonga yakho esekhosi, ingathi unonyawo lwemfene.*

(I don't trust this manager of yours, there is something fishy about him.) [p.34]

At the Protection unit we find Themba's life in its peak. He has no financial problem.

One could not be told about that as the clothes he wears say it all. Though this is the case, Themba is not satisfied. He wants more money. This behaviour is common in many people dealing with money. He makes friendship with one of the guards Letsoetseng, a criminal from Lesotho, who has a girlfriend working as a teller in a bank. Themba's aim is to ask Letsoetseng's girlfriend to get him her friend who also works for a bank. His ultimate aim is to rob a bank so he needs help from someone who knows all. His greediness drives him to invite Letsoetseng to a home of an old lady who always reports her house to Protection Unit Security System (PUSS) when she visits her daughter in Knysna. Themba is interested in a BMW car in this house. As they succeed in getting the car, Themba instructs his friend to drive to Transkei where the colour of the car is changed. They also change the number plates and the disc. When they return to Uitenhage, Themba discovers that he has been fired from his job. From then his life changes completely.

*Bagqibe kwelokuba bahlangane ngorhatya ngeenjongo zokubonisanau kuba bangaxoza wuphi na umphini bezama iindlela zokuphila.*

(They decided to meet in the evening with the aim of discussing new ways of living.)

[p.39]

Themba resorts to criminal ways of getting money. He meets Nomabali, a young lady working in the bank, who falls in his trap. Themba shows no signs of love towards Nomabali. He wants her for just one purpose, to get information about the bank she works for. He could not resist as he asks for the information on the first day he meets her.

*Khawutsho singasibetha njani isithonga kulaa bhanki nisebenza kuyo njengokuba ingathi imali ivelile nje phaya?*

(Tell me how can we manage to rob that bank you work for as it seems to have a lot of money?) [p.42]

Unfortunately for him, Nomabali is not the type of person to easily give confidential information about her work to lovers. She prefers to give him her own money than giving him information about the bank she works for.

*Themba, ndiyasebenza yaye andinayo tu mna ingxaki yokuhlangabezana nawe nakwintoni na efuna imali.*

(Themba, I am working and I do not have any problem in helping you in anything you need.) [p.7]

There are many other incidents that take place in the story that proves that the relationship between Themba and Nomabali was never based on love. He ill-treats her in many atrocious ways and he even points a gun at her. Nomabali is aware that Themba does not love her and she would like to end their relationship but she is scared. Themba is not a type of person you can separate with, as you wish.

*ITshawekazi belirhalela ukuphuncula kuloo mgibe kodwa lingaqondi yaye lingaboni ukuba lingaphuncula kanjani na.*

(Tshawekazi would love to free herself from the trap but she does not think she can and also does not see how she can do it.) [p.48]

In reaction to his feeling of devastation, Themba develops anger and cruelty towards everybody. He beats Nomabali and sometimes promises to kill her. Nomabali is the only person close to him to whom he can express his anger and outrage. As a result she lives in fear as her life is in danger. She reveals her secret to Lungile, the policeman who has shown sympathy to her and willingness to help.

*UThemba andimthandi nakancinane kodwa ndiphantsi kwamakhamandela akhe ngenxa yokumoyika*

(I do not love Themba, not at all, but I endure his tyranny because I am scared of him.) [p.78]

In his personality, Themba also has a skill in deceit. When he is cunning, he plays as innocent as ever as a result people believe in whatever he says. He deceives other students in playing as if he is a political activist whereas he has other reasons in joining the political struggle. Also he successfully deceives the taxi man, Phakamisa, playing as if he does not have a problem in paying him the money he wants for his car, until he brutally stabs him to death. When he comes home with his shirt full of blood, he successfully deceives Nomabali as he tells her that he has spilt beetroot over his shirt while having dinner in Holiday Inn. This incident is the one that helps Themba when the police about his whereabouts are questioning Nomabali on this night of Phakamisa's death. Nomabali is fully convinced that on this day Themba had a dinner in Holiday Inn to celebrate his birthday.

*UNomabali uphendule ngelithi nokuba uThemba sisigwinta uqinisekile ukuba ngobo busuku bentlekele uThemba wayelele eDwesi kuba yayiyimini yokuzalwa kwakhe ... wayeye kufumana into etyiwayo eHoliday Inn eSummerstrand.*

(Nomabali answered that even if Themba is regarded as a murderer she is definitely sure that on that night Themba was with her in her room in Dwesi and as it was his birthday he had dinner at Holiday Inn in Summerstrand.) [p.71]

In a nutshell, Ngewu successfully constructed his protagonist to be human-like. His behaviour resembles the behaviour of many people we know in our lives. He is not a stereotype or archetype that is incapable of change even when the situation demands it. One thing that is evident about him is the fact that he has never been a real political activist, he has been following others, having another motive behind. The real Themba is an evil man, a liar, an opportunist, a criminal, and a murderer. He shows no signs of guilt after he has killed someone in a most gruesome manner; instead he threatens to kill another one, Letsoetseng.

*Ugqibe kwelokuba lowo uhlalele ukumhlaza nokumhlambela emhleba kwabakwantsasana ngokuzenza ipolisa elingahlawulwayo kufuneka azame ukwahlukana naye.*

(He decided that he must try to get rid of the person who seemed to work as an unpaid policeman informing the police about all the things he had done.) [p.69]

As it has been indicated earlier on, the protagonist does not exist in a vacuum but is surrounded by other characters who help to precipitate the action. In this novel, *Koda kube nini*, we have characters like Nomabali who is Themba's girlfriend, Letsoetseng, Themba's friend and Mxhamfele, Themba's father to form the social setting.

Mxhamfele is a father who knows his responsibility. He is also constructed as a life-like character. While he works for the Municipality, he finds his wage not enough to look after his family. As a supplement for the insufficient wage, he slaughters pigs that are deployed in their township. He sells the meat to the people living in shacks in Soweto. He is the one person that unintentionally drives his son, Themba away as his son hates this business. Now that he is old, he expects his son to look after them. As Themba returns from exile, he promises his father that he will get a better job from the new democratic South Africa he has fought for. He is an ambitious young man who is confident and always boasting about the part he has played in the liberation struggle. His father wants to leave Nobuhle and live in another place where there are no pigs loitering around. He pressurizes his son to get them out of Nobuhle as he promised. However, Mxhamfele continues to pursue his son even after this new government he trusted has disappointed Themba. His questions and comments are like a sharp pin that strikes him in his heart.

*Nyana, utheth' ukuba ayikafiki na lenkululeko yakwenza washiya ikhaya ishumi elinesixhenxe lonke leminyaka?*

(My son, do you mean the freedom that made you leave your home for seventeen years has not arrived yet?) [p.28]

I am sure it is these questions that pushed Themba away from his home and stay with Nomabali in Dwesi Township, as we find out in p 68 that:

*UThemba ebengenanto emdibanisa kakhulu nekhaya lakhe nabazali bakhe KwaNobuhle.*

(Themba had nothing much to make him to visit his parents at his home in Nobuhle regularly.) [p.68]

Mxhamfele plays a great part in the story, as he is responsible for some of Themba's actions in the story.

Nomabali is also another character that plays a leading role in the story. She accommodates Themba not knowing that she is falling into a trap. She knows Themba from their secondary school years and she was fond of him even then, so she easily falls into his trap.

*UThemba uthe akucela ukuncuma nam andazihlupha ngokuba ndibe ndimhlisa ndimnyusa kuba ingqondo yam ibisephantsi kweempembelelo zala Themba ndandimthanda ndimthembile.*

(When Themba proposed love to me I did not bother myself by giving him tough time since I was under the influence of that Themba I once cherished and trusted.) [p.78]

She loved Themba when she first met him but due to the treatment she gets from him, her love disappears. Her life is now overwhelmed by danger and fear. She is too scared to tell Themba that she no longer loves him and so they must part.

*Ndimoyika kangangokuba andiyazi ukuba ndingayiqala ngaphi na into yokumala.*

(I am too scared of him in so much that I don't know where can I start to tell him we must separate.) [p.78]

Nomabali is a victim in this story. She endures all the evil and violent acts Themba does to her because she is afraid of him. She eventually reveals her inner feelings to a young policeman, Lungile, who she fell in love with. She becomes pregnant with Lungile's child but miscarries the child after Themba beats her up. Lungile promises to help her in overcoming her problems. Her problems with Themba even affect her psychologically. She undergoes psychotherapy.

*Bakufika kuloo gqirha uye wahlala neTshawekazi isithuba esingangeeyure ezintathu elikhuthaza ukuba lithethe kwanto.*

(When they came to the doctor, he took three hours talking to Tshawekazi encouraging her to voice out everything that troubled her.) [p.85]

Nomabali is shocked and surprised to find that even Lungile is not different from Themba as he appears in court charged with criminal offences and dealings with drugs. She is so

unfortunate in life because even when she got pregnant for the first time while still a student, her boyfriend who was working as a secretary in her school disappeared. He never supported her. Also her father was unsupportive as he used to insult her for denting his name. When she gets involved again she engages herself with a cruel and evil man Themba. Also when she meets Lungile she thinks she has met someone who can help her in getting rid of Themba and love her. Unfortunately, Lungile is also a crook. What also surprises her is to see her son, Undoyisile in court also charged with dealing with drugs, accusing her of not maintaining him.

Lungile plays a role of antagonist though he is not so much after Themba. He meets Themba for the first time in the Protection Unit Security System. He holds a grudge against Themba as he has to resign in this job because Themba who was his senior did not like him.

*UThemba ebengayigqibi into ayibhekisa kuLungile engatshongo ukuthi, Ah Verder, jy dink jy is slim!" p 34.*

(Themba could not finish anything he says to Lungile without saying, Ah Moreover, you think you are smart!") [p.34]

Themba's words result from Lungile's complaint to him for not changing him from his work of place. Lungile is unaware at that time that Themba is doing business about changing the guards. When Lungile finds out, he decides to write a letter of resignation to the owner where in his reasons he reveals Themba's evil deeds. Now he works as a policeman. When Nomabali reveals secrets about Themba, he sees this as an opportunity for his revenge.

*Yothukele ngaphakathi inkewu yakufumanisa ukuba uNomabali uhlala nalaa Themba wayesebenza njengomnye wabalindi be Protection Unit Security System.*

(He was shocked to find out that Nomabali stayed with that Themba who once worked as a security guard in Protection Unit Security System.) [p.74]

He tries to get the evidence that links Themba with Phakamisa's murder so as to arrest Themba. Unfortunately, Lungile is not a strong and disciplined character because we find that he is also changed by circumstances to ride the train of corruption. Instead of seeing

Themba paying the price for being a corrupt, cruel and evil man, he is also swimming in the same pool.

Now that we have looked at the main characters of the novel *Koda kube nini?*, we will have to examine the methods that are used by Ngewu in portraying these characters.

### 5.3 CHARACTERISATION IN *KODA KUBE NINI?*

Characterisation in *Koda kube nini?* is enhanced by the use of third-person narrator, direct definition and indirect presentation. We will look at how the novelist has utilised these methods in character portrayal.

The narrator in the story is omniscient. He knows all, as he reports any aspect of action. He even goes into the minds of any of the characters involved in the story. The narrator is also a focaliser. When Nomabali raises her voice while speaking to Themba, who was forcing her to give him information about the bank she works for, Themba is not aware of Nomabali's motives but the narrator is able to read Nomabali 's mind and informs the reader.

*Uye waqiniseka ukuba uNonkosi unokuba ulele obentlombe wafana wanethemba lokuba uNomvula kungenzeka ukuba usahleli naloo mntu ahleli naye. Uphakamise ilizwi ngoku wathi, "Themba, ndiyakuthanda ubona nje!..." p 7.*

(She was sure that Nonkosi was fast asleep but with the hope that Nomvula might still be awake with a visitor. She raised her voice and said, AThemba, I love you! ...  
" [p.7]

The narrator also knows exactly why Themba joined the student's liberation movement though he managed to deceive other people. He can get inside the mind of the characters and reveal the innermost secrets they have.

*Izidube-dube zokukwaywa kwamagumbi okufundela ngabafundi zibonakale zisondeza inkululeko ekudala ijongwe enkalweni ngamehlo angenarhatyazo ngunyana kaMxhamfele.*

(The boycotting of classrooms by students was seen as a way of getting closer to the freedom the son of Mxhamfele always longed for.) [p.16]

The novelist also uses the technique of direct description of characters quite well in the story, which helps the reader to get a clear picture of the character concerned. When describing his characters he touches on aspects of physical appearance such as height, size of the body, facial appearance, age and the clothes one is wearing. For example, when he describes Mxhamfele, he gives us a picture of his external appearance.

*Ukungazixabisi kwakhe bekuntanywa ngakumbi luhlobo ebenxiba nga loobelumenza abe yinivathi evunyiweyo. Ezo mpahla azinxibileyo bezisoloko zibonakala ngokungathi zichithelwe ngamafutha yaye bezithi zakudibana nothuthu nothuli into kaHlumayo ibe yinyhuku-nyhuku emthuwasi eyothusa ngokungathi ibigquba eluthulini.*

(The way he devalued himself was evident in the way he dressed, which made him a well-known dirty look. The clothes he wore always looked as if fat had spilt over them, and when they met with ashes and dust gave Hlumayo an ashen appearance.) [p.14]

The description of external appearance above concentrates on factors that the character has a total control on. This implies that what the character looks like reflects his personality. The way Mxhamfele looks solely depends on him.

The narrator also describes Themba's external appearance in the story, where he focuses on changes on him due to the age.

*Wayemke eyinkwenkwana eze ngefuthe ebudodeni. Ukubuya kwakhe ngowe-1993 ebeyindodana ethe dlundlu, erhaphilili ziindevu urheme yaye sele ewahlanganisile amashumi amathathu anesibini eminyaka.*

(He left while he was still a young boy. When he came back in 1993, he was a grown up man, with dense beard as he was 32 years old already.) [p.20]

We also have Nomabali's picture as a woman who is not so pretty and whose structure of the body resembles that of man.

*Loo ntwanazana yayinguNomabali Manxoyi umntwana owayengumdasholwana ongaxeli nokuba kuyasa na. UThemba ... erhana ukuba udongwe olwalusezandleni zomDali ukudalwa kwaloo nzwakazi yayiludongwe olwalulungiselelwe ukubumbamadoda koko umDali wabumb`intombi ngolo dongwe laluthande ukuba ludaka.*

(That little girl was Nomabali Manxoyi, a child who had no signs of beauty. Themba ... suspecting that the material that was in God's hands at the time that girl was moulded was meant to mould men but God used the material to mould a woman, the material which looked like mud.) [p.52]

Perhaps, this description helps us to understand why Nomabali's love life is so dull. She had no other boyfriend after Undoyisile's father dumped her. Even though it is after 18 years, she still thinks Undoyisile's father might come back.

*Andimazi ukuba uphi ngoku kodwa njengomntu endinomntwana wakhe ndimlindele ukuba angafika nanini na apha. Uyise kaUndoyisile angathini akuva ukuba nditshatile?*

(I don't know where he is now, but as a person with whom I have a child I am waiting for his arrival at any time.) [p.50] (What would Undoyisile's father do when he found out that I was married?) [p.96]

When she always advises Nomvula Makhosini about her boyfriends, she acts as if she is without a boyfriend at her own will. The truth is that nobody proposes love to her. This becomes evident when she is taken up when Nomsebenzi organizes her for Themba. She is eager to meet this man. The way she dressed is stunning as she is described in p 40, so as to impress him. Look at the comment given afterwards;

*ITshawekazi beliziphuthumile liphum'izandla, liqhelezela ngokungaqhelekanga kwabaliqhelileyo kangangokuba kukhuphiswano loonobuhle belingawahlalisa phantsi amanenekazi nokuba mabini, mathathu.*

(Tshawekazi was completely stunning such that in a beauty contest she could beat two or three ladies.) [p.40]

From the description of the external appearance, especially those factors under the direct control of the character, we get to know the inner thoughts and feelings of the character.

For instance, Nomabali is so shocked and ashamed when Nomvula sees her with a man since she always preaches to her about how to live her life. She is afraid that Nomvula might know that she is not against her way of life as such except that she has got no chance. Nomvula on the other hand, shows no signs of shock except that she wears a smile on her face, and passes a message which annoys Nomabali, "What shall iron do when gold rusts?"

Besides giving us the direct description of a character, the novelist also uses dialogue to portray the characters. We find that there is an abundance of dialogue and a lot of action in this novel which give it dramatic quality. For example, right from the beginning we are presented with a hot conversation between the two characters Nomabali and Themba who are the main characters in the story. Through conversation we get to know the speakers and what they talk about. Themba's character is portrayed by Nomabali in the argument they have, as a result the reader becomes curious to hear his response to the allegations Nomabali puts forward. The narrator keeps us in suspense as instead of giving us Themba's response, gives us exposition where we get to know our characters better. The plot of this work is arranged in a way as to start with the future events and then follows the sequential order of events (dabc). This is known as 'flashforward', 'foreshadowing', 'anticipation' or 'prolepsis', which is a technique that attracts the reader's interest on how a particular event came to being?

When Themba admits that his purpose is to rob the bank and denies nothing from Nomabali's accusations, we begin to realise what kind of a character he is. Fortunately, we get the information from the horse's mouth, we are not taking it from somebody else. We are also definitely sure what kind of a person he is because the narrator tells us that at last he decides to disclose his secret. After what he does to Nomabali, we are so keen to know Themba's past. The narrator gives us his past.

Dialogue is also used to reveal how ambitious Themba is about his contribution in the liberation struggle of his country, for example, the conversations he has with his father.

The novelist also utilises soliloquy and monologue to reveal the inner thoughts and feelings of characters. For example, when Themba discovers that things do not go the way he predicted, he is too ashamed to talk to other people about it, rather he talks to himself.

On the day of his retrenchment, he talks quietly to himself showing his feeling of disappointment and embarrassment as he says:

*Alnene akukabi yiyo le! “*

(Really, it is not it yet!) [p.27]

Also as he moves around Tyoksville, he is shocked by the poor conditions people live in. He again reveals a feeling of disappointment by talking alone:

*“Le nto ndiyibonayo ngaba ithetha ukuba eli lizwe lizakufana twatse na namazwe ahlelelekileyo ase-Afrika?...Inene le, bekade ndingaqondi! Kusekude apho kuyiwa khona. Kanti kunje?”*

(Does it mean what I see here is a country that will look exactly like the poor countries that we have in Africa? Really, all along I was not aware! We still have a long way to go. Is it really how things are?) [p.30]

Themba also speaks alone when the police suspect that he has something to do with the murder of Phakamisa, the taxi man. He feels betrayed by Letsoetseng as he is quite sure that Letsoetseng is the only person who knows his involvement with Phakamisa.

*“Ndiyakrokra sendijikelezwa ngamapolisa nje ngulaa mnyophanisi womSuthu unguLetsoetseng.”*

(I suspect that, that lying Suthu man, Letsoetseng is the reason why I am being encompassed by the police.) [p.76]

The technique of soliloquy or monologue in the story is used when the character finds himself in trouble, with no one to talk to. Nomabali finds herself in trouble as she notices that Themba is not the person she thought he was. She has fallen into a trap and there is no turning back. She speaks quietly to herself:

*“Ndiye eliweni ndijongile? “*

(Must I go to the cliff though I see?) [p.46]

Though Nomabali does not agree when Themba wants to come with her to her room, Themba comes without her consent. As she feels bullied, she speaks quietly to herself:

*“Nomabali, ntombi kaManxoyi, uya kuze ubalise ngenye imini! Kumhla ndadibana nesimanga!”*

(Nomabali, Manxoyi’s daughter, you will tell one day! What I have here is trouble!)  
[p.51]

Besides what one says, one’s character may be presented through his actions in a direct presentation of events. One’s actions reveal his real being. Most of the time people say things they would not do hence the saying, action speaks louder than words. As a result, we tend to take more cognisance of action than what one says.

The story begins with dialogue between Nomabali and Themba. From their argument, we notice that Nomabali wants clarification on Themba’s strange actions. From what Nomabali has observed, Themba does not love her. Instead of showing love to her, Themba is a threat to her life. He is interested in robbing the bank Nomabali works for. Nomabali is therefore a tunnel through which Themba can go across. That is why Themba is always bothering Nomabali, he wants the full information.

*Indawo yokuqala, ndifuna undixelele iimfihlelo neenkukacha zala bhanki usebenza kuyo. Indawo yesibini, ndifuna ukwazi ukuba izitshixo zikavimba zihlala kubani kanye. Ukuba uvimba utshixwa ngecombination lock ndifuna undazise loo combination lock. Indawo yesithathu, ndifuna ukwazi usuku lweveki okanye usuku lwenyanga apho ukuphanga ibhanki kunganembuyekezo eninzi ...ndifuna ukwazi ukuba ndingenza njani na ukuze ndibaphambe baphambeke abaya bafo bagada ibhanki. Nazo ke izinto endizijongileyo kuwe Nomabali.*

(In the first place, I want you to tell me all the secrets and all the details of that bank you work for. Secondly, I want to know the person who keeps the keys of the safe. If the safe is locked by means of combination lock, I want you to tell me that combination lock. Thirdly, I want to know which day of the week or month can robbing the bank give best results ... I want to know how I could dodge those security guards that guard the bank. Those are the things I want from you Nomabali.) [p.5]

Themba decides to disclose his secrets now that Nomabali has asked, otherwise he has been planning with his friends for some time. Themba acts strangely, as Nomabali reveals that he just disappears sometimes.

*Andikwazi nalapho ubuye khona ixesha eli lonke kodwa ufika sowundibuza into yasebhankini. Phambi kokuba ulahleke ndabuya emsebenzini ndafika uhleli apha nemigulukudu owathi ngabahlobo bakho waza wandithundeza undibuza izinto ezandenza ndaziva ndidanile, ndibona ukuba undize okwebhokhwe igudl'udonga.*

(I do not even know where you have been all this time, but you come back asking me about the bank. Before you disappeared, I came from work and I found you sitting here with criminals whom you claimed to be your friends and you keep on asking me things that have made me to feel embarrassed, and I noticed that you approach me like a goat that rubs itself on the wall.) [p.1]

We also find that actions give us the real picture about someone from the religion Themba chose to follow while in exile, as a result of his hatred of pigs. The Islamic religion Themba joins is a proof that he wants to have nothing to do with pigs. We find that even though he has ceased to be a soldier, he never stops wearing the dress which is the Islamic attire. This is because Themba never stopped hating the pigs.

*Lukhe lwathi merhe uvalo lukaThemba akubona elo hlokondiba leehagu zakwaNobuhle. Uthe akufika kowabo wavuya akabi nakuzibamba akufumanisa ukuba uyise wohlukana nento yokuhluphana nazo ngenxa yokwaluphala kwakhe.*

(Themba was a little bit alarmed when he saw a large group of pigs in Nobuhle. When he arrived at his home he was so happy to find that his father had stopped his habit of chasing them due to his age.) [p.20]

Themba's act of murdering Phakamisa also proves to us that actions speak louder than words. Themba pretends to pay Phakamisa whereas he knows very well that he plans to kill him. We know that Themba is not working, and so he can not afford to pay R4000 rands. He decides to get rid of the debt by killing the man.

Nomabali is affected by the way Themba runs her life. We find her with a psychological problem. Even though she denies having a problem when asked by her colleagues at

work, her actions speak it all. She is taken to a psychiatrist for counselling and becomes better after some time, also with the help from Lungile, who is a policeman, and her boyfriend. He consoles her whenever she comes.

Lastly, in this story, one of the themes brought forward is lack of honesty and discipline among the characters. Almost all the central characters have this weak point. Themba has shown a lot of dishonesty and is undisciplined during the time he works as a chief security guard for Protection Unit Security System by accepting bribery. We also find that almost all the policemen are involved in criminal offences as a result law is not stressed. When one reports a criminal offence, they play hide and seek because they are involved. Nomabali is very alarmed when she finds out that Lungile, whom she has perceived as an honest, good man, is also breaking the law.

Nomsebenzi also finds out that Letsoetseng has been selling drugs for quite a long time at her place. She has never suspected any thing until she saw it one day.

#### 5.4 CONCLUSION

It is imperative to point out that the development of the main characters is affected or influenced by setting, which are the historical time and the social, economic and political background against which the story unfolds. Themba is a youth from a township who joins student organisation and becomes a leader. During that time, the policemen targeted the leaders and so Themba is forced to skip the country. After many years, political struggle comes to an end and the exiles return home hoping to get reward. As things do not go as smoothly as expected, Themba has to look for other ways of living hence his involvement in criminal acts. He has no educational certificates as he left school very early. Unfortunately, in order to get a job, one has to produce certificates. His behaviour is influenced by the situation he finds himself in. Listening to his words in p 44, one sees that he is full of anger, hatred and revenge:

*Asikho isisombululo esisiso nesinesongo esinokuba ngaphezulu kwesisombululo sokunika iimbacu amalungelo azo.*

(There is no real solution besides the solution of giving. Exiles their rights.). [p.44]

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

As I indicated earlier on that the aim of this work is to find out whether characterisation is handled well in the novels of the 1990s, I have realised that the four novelists I have looked at, that is, Mayosi, Mcimeli, Saule, and Ngewu have well succeeded in creating realistic, live, dynamic, complex and multidimensional characters and not archetypes or stereotypes who are incapable of change no matter what the circumstances are. Characters in most cases are full of life, and more human like. In three novels, *Iqhina lomtshato*, *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* and *Koda Kube Nini?*, we find actions and events that take place to be reasonable, possible and most of the time believable, while some events in *Ukhozi Olumaphiko* are hard to believe and their plausibility and possibility questionable. We will now deal with the findings on each novel.

In Mayosi's *Iqhina lomtshato*, if Sindiswa had not succumbed to Max's love after all Max did for her in the Casino at Mzamba, and the input she gets from Khwezikazi, we would find her character a bit strange and unreal. At the same time, the reader is well aware of her commitment to her boyfriend, Skhungo and so understands the situation she finds herself in. Her action of having two relationships is well motivated and is therefore possible especially with the other boyfriend not around. Her elopement with Skhungo is possible, as we know that Max's mind concentrated entirely on the preparations for their wedding. We also feel that their action is plausible looking at Max's selfish character and dominance in their relationship. This also explains why Max does not get support from Sindiswa's parents even though he has already paid lobola. They feel not respected and undermined by their son-in-law who prefers to organise for the wedding alone. Seemingly, Sindiswa's father only accepts the situation with the hope that it is her daughter's will. His action of accepting Skhungo's lobola to replace Max's is therefore reasonable. What matters to parents these days, is their daughter's happiness in their marriages. Gone are those days of forced marriages, when fathers were only concerned with wealth, at the expense of their daughter's entire lives. On the other hand, women have a right to say no when they feel that they are forced to a marriage, which would cost their lifetime.

With their love well motivated, we believe that the two lovebirds, Skhungo and Sindiswa deserve each other. Therefore, we support their happy ending in the story.

The presentation of these characters is enhanced by the third-person narration and the narrator's role in the story. The narrator can either be an active participant in the story he tells, or he can be a non-participant and a reporter only. In this novel the narrator's involvement is minimal as most of the time he is merely telling and reporting the story. The use of direct description of character's external appearance, inner thoughts and feelings and sometimes their personalities helps the reader to get a better understanding of the characters, and visualised image when necessary. The use of dialogue in abundance in the novel creates a high degree of drama in the story. The novelist has used it with good effect, to attract the reader's attention when characters speak for themselves. Characters are also presented through their action. Direct presentation of events cut matters short, instead of uttering many words. For instance, Max gives Sindiswa a present to show his love. Most of the time, we take cognisance of action more than what one says. For example, Sindiswa agreed to marry Max but we see her eloping with Skhungo. What are good triumphs over bad?

In his novel *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* Mcimeli also handles characterisation quite well as he also presents human-like characters. Spido's past experience without any therapy makes his sick behaviour possible and believable. For instance, if it was not for a mental disorder we would question his continuation of action on the same night he comes from court. In his sick behaviour, Spido is driven by the present situation that seems to resemble a pathetic situation that took place in his past years. As he was a victim because of ignorance and trust, he vows to stop the past from repeating itself. Given the scenario, where Nodita always talks about her teacher who loves her and praises her when she achieves top marks, encouraging her to study for a degree after matric, Spido is bound to be suspicious and furious so his behaviour is plausible.

Weziwe, as a positive tritagonist between her daughter and her boyfriend is caught in a difficult position. Given her past experience, Weziwe's urge to endure Spido's abuse is possible. As she has experienced rejection by her parents, she is trying by all means not to let history to repeat itself. She cannot afford to undergo such hardship again. Besides that, Weziwe is a product and a victim of African tradition and cultural patterns that confine women in the kitchen and encourage male supremacy. Growing up in a patriarchal society, she was indoctrinated to accept male domination. She is now passing the indoctrination to her daughter, who finds it unbearable. She lives her entire life suppressing her true feelings as a result she turns up to be an alcoholic, the only way to cool her nerves and

frustrations. She is not the kind of a woman who stands up in confidence and solves a problem. For example, she does not question Spido's state of mind because she thinks Spido is just full of jealousy and hopes that she will change one day. She dies in his hands and leaves behind a poor young girl whose life is at stake.

We are presented with a developing protagonist, Nodita, who unfortunately becomes a victim of child abuse while still a young girl. Watching this young girl suffering under the bondage of child abuse, struggling to free herself evokes a sad and unbearable feeling. The change in her attitude towards her father is inevitable considering the way he treats her. He ruins her life entirely, especially when he takes her out of school. With the fighting lesson she receives from Thupeni, the reader becomes suspicious of the ending like this. We feel pity for these characters as circumstances push them beyond the limit. They are all victims of circumstances.

The novel *Kazi Ndenzeni Na?* is characterised by the third-person narration with the narrator taking no active role in the story. The novelist prefers to reveal Spido's history by using another character who knows him very well. Before that, the reader had no clue of such an incident that affected Spido psychologically, though he might have doubts about his sanity due to his obsession about people involved in a conspiracy against him. He does not want to let us know that Spido has a mental disorder at the beginning of the story as we might lose interest.

Dialogue is used a lot in the story. This has drawn a lot of attention from the reader. To get the conversation straight from the characters compels the reader to be more involved in the story. Direct presentation of events is also utilised artistically in this novel. There is much action. Most of the time what Spido says is followed by action. For instance, in p 56 he hits Weziwe, and tells her that he is the head of the family; therefore they will do whatever he says. In p 31 before he beats Nodita, he swears to beat her severely. In p 56 he takes her out of school and finds her a job. He is a very active character, as he shows dedication in his mission of destroying the conspiracy against him.

Direct description of characters by the narrator is utilised in a minimal effect as most of the time characters are presented in dialogue and in action. The effect of environment on characters plays a vital role in moulding the character's behaviour and personality. The novel has a tragic ending. We will now look at Saule's novel.

Saule also handles characterisation in his novel *Ukhozi Olumaphiko* quite well, as we watch the protagonist developing. Mfazwe was not a politician but ended up being one due to the arrest and the label of being 'impimpi' in the community. This change in his behaviour is plausible and very possible. We also witness a change in his personality as he is driven too far by the situation. For instance, at first he was a well-respected person and paid respect to everyone too but in p 92 we notice him paying no respect to Mr Ndlela and others in a meeting. He is also aware of that as he says:

*...ndabe ndiqonda ukuba intlonelo kum iya inyibilika ngokunyibilika.*

(... being well aware that my respect has been melting bit by bit.) [p.92]

Mfazwe's love life also changes due to circumstances. As he suspects his girlfriend, Nokuzola to be in love with Friday, he has no choice but to let her go as Friday is his rival. We also understand his behaviour and regard it as normal. In reaction to what Mfazwe has done, Nokuzola commits suicide. Considering the fact that by that time she discovers herself to be pregnant, to end her frustration, we regard her action as reasonable.

Mfazwe's escape is also well motivated and therefore possible. But there are some events connected to his escape that I find hard to believe. For instance, when Ndima takes Mfazwe to the station, they come across a roadblock by policemen. As they approach the roadblock, Ndima gives him a piece of root from his pocket and instructs him to chew and swallow it, concurrently he tells him to wear a hat. One may ask what the significance of a piece of root is, if he has to wear a hat which definitely acts as a disguise? It shows that Ndima himself is not sure or does not truly believe that the medicine itself will make him invisible to the police, that is why he wants him to change his appearance. When they arrive, the policemen were amused by the shortness of Ndima in so much that nothing else mattered.

*Uthe akunikwa incwadi yakhe, wangena emotweni, akuhlala wamfutshane kwangaleya ndlela yakuqala, kwahlekwa ngakumbi, vu-um wangena endleleni.*

(When he was given his licence back, he got into the car, as he takes his seat, he becomes shorter and in the same way they laughed more, vu-u he rode.) [p.127]

We find that neither the medicine nor the hat had an effect in the event. It was negligence and incompetence on the part of the police.

We also encounter an episode that is hard to believe, when the policemen release Mfazwe after he was caught at Thongo. One may ask the possibility of such an act at that time. We have been kept in suspense after the conversation Mfazwe had with the hunter who spelled out how dangerous the route he took was. We expected an arrest which would mean an end to his journey or something worse than that, to be shot dead maybe. But, to be released like that, as if he is an innocent man, is a miracle. At least, Saule should have explained the motive behind this act.

Lastly, Mfazwe is portrayed as possessing supernatural powers in some instances like Khonjwayo's episode. When Mfazwe slaps Khonjwayo on his face, something strange happens as Khonjwayo becomes insane. It is hard to believe, unless we could attribute the behaviour as directly caused by the hunter's medicine.

The image of a dog is at least understandable since it is regarded as a symbol of hope. It is a common thing amongst people to have a symbol of hope. It could be anything, a bird for example. One tells by its appearance when something good or bad is going to happen. Other than these, characters are well presented.

Saule constructs his main characters in a fairly good manner. Mfazwe, the main character is also the narrator in the story. Mfazwe's active role in the story he tells makes the story very interesting and reliable. As he is one of the characters, Mfazwe as a narrator is not omniscient. This makes it reasonable as he cannot be everywhere. Sometimes he reports what is focalised by somebody else. Whenever Mfazwe becomes involved in action, dialogue is used. This promotes originality. We get the inner feelings and thoughts of characters from other means of speech like monologue and soliloquy.

Characters are also put in action so as to reveal their true personality. Actions speak louder than words. Direct description of characters appearance, and the surrounding world is also utilised with great effect. Both human and physical environment play a decisive role in this story. Mfazwe's destiny is facilitated by both of them. Lastly, characterisation in this novel is enhanced by the use of symbols and images, though they make the story a little bit unreal. The miraculous appearance of a dog that rescues Mfazwe whenever he is in

danger, reveals our traditional beliefs and our culture. We are a nation that believes in ancestors. Mfazwe's narrow escape with the help of that dog is evidence that proves their existence. Characterisation is therefore handled well in this novel.

In *Koda Kube Nini?* Ngewu presents live and dynamic characters. Themba, who is the protagonist is a developing character that changes with changing circumstances. As a young boy who is forced to help his father in chasing and slaughtering pigs in kwaNobuhle, Themba decides to join the political struggle that led to the 1976 uprising in Uitenhage. The intention is to keep himself busy. We find that his action is reasonable and believable. When he escapes and leaves his country behind due to the pressure from the police, he joins the military training with the hope that he will reap what he sows one day.

When he is turned down, having the responsibility of looking after his parents, he resorts to commit crime for a living. We witness a change in role because Themba is supposed to protect the citizens of his country by maintaining law and order. Given the scenario, we find his behaviour reasonable and possible. He feels that his dignity and his humanity have been destroyed in the way he is treated. He is left with nothing but disappointment, anger, cruelty, negative attitude towards life and an urge for revenge. We find his behaviour reasonable because even in real life we have got people who act in this manner when they are frustrated. Though Themba's intention to join the political struggle was not politically motivated, he did suffer for many years fighting for the liberation of his country.

In order to have access to the detailed information about the operation of the bank he plans to rob, Themba proposes love to Nomabali, who is a bank teller. He persuades her to give him details about that bank but in vein. Nomabali refuses to give him any information, instead she offers to assist him in his financial problems. Nomabali does not understand that Themba needs a large sum of money. We find that Themba ends up becoming a murderer. He does this in order to get himself and his friend Letsoetseng out of trouble as he is supposed to pay Phakamisa, the taxi man, the money to repair his car. He ends up in jail. Most of the events that take place in the story are reasonable, possible and believable.

With regards to Nomabali, we find that after a very long time with no lover she could not miss the opportunity of falling in love with Themba whom she knew from high school. She falls into a trap as Themba's love is conditional. Nomabali is very unfortunate as far as

love life is concerned. Firstly, her boyfriend dumps her after she has become pregnant. Secondly, her son becomes a hooligan. Now she becomes a victim of Themba's abuse and her relationship with him is based on fear. When she discloses her problem to a policeman, Lungile, he also takes advantage of her and falls pregnant with his child. We find it possible for her to miscarry after Themba beats her severely. Considering the way Themba treats her, it is also possible for her to be psychologically ill. The story ends up with all the secrets revealed, with Nomabali being shocked but with a piece of mind.

The portrayal of characters in *Koda Kube Nini Na?* is enhanced by the use of omniscient third-person narrator, whose participation is minimal. The narrator is capable of reading the minds of the characters, and therefore gives us their inner feelings and thoughts. For instance, the narrator knows the reason why Themba joins the political struggle, also why she joins the Islamic religion in exile. The reader then is at an advantage because he is not deceived by Themba's actions.

The use of direct description of character's external appearance is used with great effect. The reader has got the opportunity to imagine the character concerned. For instance, we have an imaginary picture of Mxhamfele, Themba's father, Nomabali and Themba himself. As one's personality is influenced by his external appearance and vice versa, the reader understands why Nomabali stays for a long time without a boyfriend. The advice she gives to Nomvula about love life is just a defence mechanism to her problem. Dialogue, monologue and soliloquy form another technique of characterisation that is utilised in this novel. Dialogue has created a lot of drama in the story, and that has attracted a lot of attention from the reader. The character concerned through dialogue confirms the information that we get from the narrator, soliloquy and monologue. The use of anticipation enhances characterisation more, as the reader's interest on how the event is reached is aroused.

Direct presentation of events by the characters is a good way of showing the character's true personality. For instance, even though Themba does not say it straight what he wants from Nomabali, she gets it from his actions that Themba is planning something with his friends. The things Themba does contradicts with the Islamic religion he pretends to follow. Though he wears the Islamic attire, he commits crime. He also deceives Phakamisa through his soft tongue and stabs him to death. This shows us that action speaks louder

than words. These techniques as used by Ngewu, are interchangeable and he applies them in an artistic way.

In all these novels events are influenced by the social, political and economic setting in which the story unfolds. Characters that are constructed are realistic and dynamic so as to represent people in the real life situation. In turn, characterisation is invented in such a way as to fulfil this objective. I therefore, contend that characterisation is handled well in the novels of the 1990s.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, M.H. 1993. *A glossary of literary terms*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Bal, M. 1985. *Narratology. Introduction to the theory of narrative*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Boulton, M. 1980. *The anatomy of drama*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited.
- Chatman, S. 1978. *Story and Discourse. Narrative structure in fiction and film*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Cohen, B.B. 1973. *Writing about literature*. Glenview Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Co.
- Dietrich, R.F. and Sundell, R.H. 1967. *The art of fiction*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Co.
- Dlali, M. 1992. *The depiction of space in four Xhosa novels*. M.A. dissertation. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Eagleton, T. 1983. *Literary theory; an introduction*. Great Britain: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Gray, M. 1984. *A dictionary of literary terms*. New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Grobler, G.M.M. 1995. Creative African-Language writing in South Africa: writers unshackled after apartheid. *South African Journal of African Languages*. 15(2):56-59.
- Hawthorn, J. 1992. *Studying the novel*. United Kingdom: J. W. Arrowsmith Ltd.
- Heese, M. and Lawton, R. 1994. *The new owl critic; an introduction to literary criticism*. Cape Town: Nasou.
- Henry, L. 1995. *The fiction dictionary*. United States of America: Story Press.

- Jafta, D.N. 1979. *A survey of Xhosa drama*. M.A. thesis. KwaDlangezwa: University of Zululand.
- Jafta, D.N. 1996. *Tragic expression in selected Xhosa literary works*. D Litt. dissertation. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Jefferson, A. and Robey, D. 1986. *Modern literary theory*. London: Batsford.
- Msimang, C.T. 1986. *Folktale influence on the Zulu novel*. Pretoria: Acacia books.
- Mtize, P.T. 1994. Tasks and challenges facing the indigenous literature in South Africa. *South African Journal of African Languages*. 14(3):128-132.
- Ntuli, D.B. and Swanepoel, C. F. 1993. *Southern African literature in African Languages*. Pretoria: Acacia books.
- Peck, J. and Coyle, M. 1985. *Literary terms and criticism*. Great Britain: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- Prince, G. 1982. *Narratology. The form and functioning of narrative*. Berlin: Mouton Publishers.
- Rimmon-Kennan, S. 1983. *Narrative Fiction; contemporary poetics*. London and New York: Methuen.
- Roberts, E.V. 1991. *Writing themes about literature*. New Jersey: Eaglewood Cliffs.
- Satyo, S.C. 1978. Traditional concept and literary conventions in Sinxo's works. M.A. dissertation. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Scholes, R. and Kellogg, R. 1966. *The nature of narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smiley, S. 1971. *Play writing; the structure of action*. New Jersey: Eaglewood Cliffs.
- Sirayi, G.T. 1989. *The Xhosa novel*. D.Litt Thesis. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Webster, R. 1996. *Studying literary theory*. London: Hodder Headline Group.

Wellek, R. and Warren, A. 1963. *Theory of literature*. Great Britain: Penguin books.

Zulu, N.S. 1994. *A comparative study of time in selected Sesotho novels*. Unpublished M.A. studies. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Zulu, N.S. 1999. *Uncwadi: African literature in the next millennium*; Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.