

## CHAPTER 5

### RHYTHM IN MAREDI'S DRAMAS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we saw how Maredi communicates his ideas through the analysis of characters according to their cultural beliefs and the times in which they live. In this chapter our focus will be on the use of rhythm in drama. Some authorities believe that a good dramatist uses rhythm as a device to achieve dramatic effect.

The *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1995) defines rhythm as “a pattern of regularly recurring events or actions.” In extending the abovementioned definition, *Readers Digest Southern Africa Word Power* defines the term as “a regular repeated pattern of sounds, stresses or beats in music, etc.” What we find common in the above definitions is that in order to have rhythm there should be a pattern that is created by the repetition of events or actions.

Kathleen George (1980: 4) gives Richard Boleslavsky's definition of rhythm as:

“the orderly measurable changes of all the different elements comprised in a work of art - provided that all those changes progressively stimulate the attention of the spectator and lead invariably to the final aim of the artist”

The term “measure” as used in the context of the above definition means to perceive, feel or understand. It therefore refers to the ability of the audience or reader to see, hear or feel the changes in a work of art. For example, events, actions and dialogues are some of the elements in drama.

George goes on to give the ideas of one French aesthetician called Raymond Bayer on

the subject of rhythm. Bayer's discussion indicates that rhythm is a force that captivates the spectator or reader and works emotional changes upon them. Bayer therefore asserts that if a piece of art does not cause an emotional change on the reader or spectator then that work of art cannot have rhythm in it. Bayer, according to George, uses the expression "pulses of alternate storm and calm" as aesthetic objects that express emotional change on the reader/spectator. (1980: 5). George however prefers to use the words "tension and release" as substitutes for Bayer's "storm and calm." Other theorists, like Roger Sessions, according to George, also discuss alternating tension and release. As far as alternation is concerned, Sessions explains

"The basic rhythmic fact is not the fact simply of alternation, but of a specific type of alternation with which we are familiar from the first movement of our existence as separate beings. We celebrate that event by drawing a breath, which is required of us if existence is to be realized. The drawing of breath is an act of cumulation of tension which is then released by the alternative act of exhalation (1980: 5).

George continues to give also Suzan Langer's explanation of rhythm in drama. Langer uses the heartbeat and breathing in human physiology as the alternating tensions and relaxations which are examples of body rhythm to describe rhythm in drama. The point that Langer wants to bring home is that the reader's curiosity can be aroused and cause suspense to encourage him/her to read listen or watch further. At the end of the dramatic action, the reader's tension is released when the action is completed and thus fulfilling his/her expectation.

To clarify the interdependence of tension and release Langer uses the following analogy:

"As we release the breath we have taken, we build up a bodily need of oxygen that is a motivation, and therefore the real beginning of the new breath." (1980: 7)

Langer uses the cycle of the heart and the respiratory system to explain alternating tensions and relaxations of rhythm in art. When the heart is in the state of systole that is, when it contracts it expels blood and alternates with the relaxation, or diastole, when blood is flowing into it again. In other words diastole prepares and gives way to systole and vice versa. These alternating processes are interdependent and continue in the same rhythmic pattern. The diastole is the preparation of a new event (the systole) by the ending of the previous one (diastole). This explains that every event in a play grows out of what precedes it and, as they continue, they give coherence to the plot. Langer's description therefore puts emphasis on the "theory of preparation" (1980:7). She maintains that one action should lead to another in order to have a complete rhythmic pattern. To substantiate her analogy of the taking in and release of breath, Langer continues to say,

"Rhythm is the setting-up of new tensions by the resolutions of former ones ... but the situation that begets the new crisis must be inherent in the denouement of its forerunner" (1980: 7).

Of most importance in drama, is that the action precipitated at the beginning should continue and be related to what happened before and be concluded in a satisfying manner. This also explains to us the importance of a cause - effect patterning in a work of art in order to show the relationship of events in the story.

Levitt, again, quotes John Dewey as saying that rhythm is :

"... ordered variations of changes. When there is a uniformly even flow, with no variations of intensity or speed, there is no rhythm. There is a stagnation of unvarying motion. Equally there is no rhythm when variations are not placed. The change not only comes but it belongs; it has a definite place in a larger whole... There is no rhythm of any kind, no matter how delicate and no matter how extensive, when variations of pulse and rest do not occur." (1971: 67)

*The New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus* (1991: 421) defines 'variation' in musical context to mean "repetition of theme or melody with various embellishments". It also defines it as "alternation". Of great importance in rhythm is therefore the changes that are brought by particular patterns of repetitions. If there is no variety in the pattern employed in the story line then there is no rhythm and the work of art becomes dull. The expression "pulse and rest" is synonymous to 'tension and release'. Both expressions imply a pattern of opposites which alternate. These opposites belong to the story because they are produced by its content.

## **5.2 REPETITION OF VERBAL STRATEGY**

By strategy it is meant the use of a skill to achieve a purpose. Verbal strategy is therefore the skill of using words in order to give a clear meaning of the speaker's speech. George (1980: 27) says that the repetition of verbal strategy refers to some motivated behaviour on the part of character or characters - a way of proceeding to get what they want.

### **5.2.1 Mošwang wa Matuba**

In Act 1 scene 1 Matlakale is still in bed very early in the morning. He is awakened by the crows of a cock and remembers that Kodi, his son, promised the previous night that he would wake up early when the cock crew. Realizing that Kodi is still asleep Matlakale says,

*"E mošemanyana yo, ge a be a mpotša gore o tlo swara kgogo molomo ..."* (1982: 1)

(This boy, when he was telling me that he was going to hold the cock by its mouth...)

In the same scene the same expression appears twice but with little variations. The three phases then appear as follows:

*“... ge a be a mpotša gore o tlo e swara molomo”*

(...when he was telling me that he will hold it by its beak)

*“...ge o be o mpotša gore o tlo e swara molomo”*

(... when you told me that you will hold it by its beak)

*“... ke re ke tlo e swara molomo” (1982: 21)*

(... I said I will hold it by its beak)

All three verbal strategies vary in that in the first one Matlakale is by himself and conveys the promise his son made the previous night. The subject concords “a”, “o” and “ke” in expressions 1, 2 and 3 respectively bring about minor variations: “a” and “o” both refer to the same subject, “*Mošemane*” (boy). The second “a” in the first expression appears in the high tone to indicate that the person referred to is not within the sight of the speaker. Expressions 2 and 3 show Matlakale’s aggressive temper. Kodi, on the other hand, is submissive. Kodi wants to impress his father that he is old enough to go out and hunt wild animals. His father does not have confidence in him. The dialogue between Matlakale and Kodi creates a situation of conflict. In the third expression Matlakale puts emphasis on the fact that Kodi is the one that made a promise and not him. Kodi is prepared to prove his manhood. There is variation again in the dialogues between Kodi and Matlakale. Matlakale is aggressive and Kodi is submissive. In this way, the rhythm in their dialogues changes.

Matlakale’s aggressive attitude recurs when police officers come to raid his house. He confronts them forcefully and even promises to set his dogs on them. He angrily says,

*“Hee! Hee! Hee! Kodi! Tlogela dimpša tšeo tša ka di dire*

*modiro wa tšona. Ke di ruetše ona, di dišitše motse wo wa Makgata. Ke eng di homotše? Ba sepetše baisa bale?”* (1982: 24)

(Hey! Hey! Hey! Kodi! Leave those dogs of mine to carry out their duties. That is why I rear them, they are watching over this homestead of Makgata. Why are they quiet? Are those guys gone?)

In the same scene the same verbal strategy appears again. Matlakale is not afraid of the police and will not let them do as they please in his own house. He repeats,

*Hee! Hee! Kodi, o tlo fapana le nna lefšega tena! (O retha petlwa ya gagwe). O rakelang banna ba ba gaMakgata? Ke badiši ba motse wo. (Ba mo hlaba ka thotšhe). E! Mošaa! kganthe diphoofole tše di sa le fa? Goba ke ba bangwe?* (1982: 24)

(Hey! Hey! Kodi, you will be at logger-heads with me you coward! (He swings his battle axe). Why do you chase those men of Makgata away? They are the guards of this homestead. (They flash the torch in his face) Hey! Boy! Are these animals still here? Or are they different ones?

The recurring statements where Matlakale refers to his dogs as the guards of his homestead and also the repetition of his aggressive behaviour create rhythmic patterning in this play.

George (1980: 72) mentions “monologue” as the device that provides rhythm in a work of art. She says that characters are often “provoked” to initiate speeches by means of which they intend justifying their emotions and attitudes to themselves. According to George, the repetition of monologues as verbal strategy can be rhythmic because their recurrence, the buildup to them, and what happens subsequently form part of the patterning in the impetus of a play. This implies that monologues also belong to the play because they do not occur accidentally. They are part of the narrative and also help in its development. To

set the monologue in motion, Matlakale first recognizes Kodi's promise that he would wake up early the next morning. On discovering that Kodi was still asleep, Matlakale in his first monologue reproaches his son. In the second one he criticizes Kodi for not doing the perfect job in the sheep kraal and also, in the same scene, another monologue recurs where he still censures his son's indolent behavior. Matlakale's monologues are a strategy to expose Kodi's shortcomings. They are moreover a ploy to justify his constant attack on Kodi. On the other hand, Matlakale has the right to complain because his attitude is provoked by Kodi's shortcomings. When looking at the monologues mentioned above we realize that they follow a particular pattern. First, Kodi commits a blunder and it is this very mistake that sets his father's own monologue in motion. In scene three, the third monologue recurs when Matlakale discovers that it is late and Kodi has not poked the sheep into the kraal yet. This monologue also follows the pattern of the first two. In his monologues Matlakale's intention is to satisfy himself by exposing his son's blunders in order to show how much better he is than him. When criticizing the poor job he did in the sheep kraal, Matlakale displays his worth in the following monologue

*"... Ge e ka be e sa le rena, re sa itirela, o re go ka be go eme mahlahlapana a?" (1982: 4)*

(...If we were still strong, doing everything on our own, there would not be such loose and lousy items here)

In scene three, another monologue is provoked by the response of Lehlelelele, Matlakale's wife, when her husband wants to know where his bag of dagga could be. Lehlelelele's reply causes the recurrence of Matlakale's attitude of denigrating other people. In this monologue he generalises about women folk by saying,

*"Ke ona mokgwa wa basadi. O re ka bea se, ba se šuthiša, eupša ba go botše ge ba se ba šuthiše selo". (1982: 17)*

(It is typical of women. You put something here, they remove it, but will tell you they have not moved anything).

The comment about dagga in this monologue forms part of the play for we notice in later scenes how characters got into trouble because of it. This monologue also follows the pattern of the preceding ones. All the monologues, as verbal strategies, together with the pattern they follow, are rhythmic. In all the monologues discussed above, Matlakale's aggressive character recurs. The verbal strategies of the monologues are appropriate in the play because they are what permit them to form a pattern that leads to the final action.

### **5.3 RECURRENCE OF RELATIONSHIP AND REVERSAL**

Levitt discusses recurrence and reversal as the elements that produce rhythm in drama. There can be recurrence of words, phrases and motifs in a play. By reversal it is implied, for example "a change in fortune; a sudden or unexpected change of circumstances or situation" (1971: 67). Dietrich (1969: 429) says that reversal takes place when the protagonist's expectation is not fulfilled.

Recurrence however does not necessarily imply word-by-word repetitions. The intention of such repetitions is to advance the action of the plot and for rhythmic effect. According to Levitt "the rhythm issuing from recurrence creates an identifiable pattern or "beat" which conditions the audience to expect certain events, while adding force and meaning to other events which have already taken place" (1971: 67).

#### **5.3.1 *Mošwang wa Matuba***

The first encounter between Matlakale and Kgobalale is in Act 1 scene 4. Kgobalale wants to befriend Matlakale with the aim of eliciting information from him about where "*Mošwang wa Matuba*" is to be found. Another recurrence of

their relationship is in Act 4 scene 1 when Kgobalale lies to Matlakale that he is expelled from work. The individual relationships between these two characters are different in that they occur in different contexts. The second recurrence of the relationship between them creates a pattern where we anticipate that Kgobalale is going to achieve his goal. In another recurrence in scene 2 Matlakale takes Kgobalale to the actual place where dagga is grown and they also reach Masellane's place. The scene where Kgobalale is introduced to Masellane, the dagga dealer, incites a fresh curiosity. We become eager to see what the fate of Masellane will be. Kgobalale has all the evidence and in scene 4 of the same act, Masellane is arrested after five bags are found in his house. With all the evidence in hand, the reader is convinced that Masellane is faced with a long-term jail sentence. The following is another recurrence of cross-examination but this time it is about dealing in dagga:

*Mokgonane: Mola molatong go ngwadilwe gore o mo swere ka mekotla ye mekae ya lebaki?*

*Moloto: Ye mehlano, kgoši.*

*Mokgonane: Mo tafoleng o laetša mekotla ye mekae?*

*Moloto: Se se laetšwago kgoro mo ke sešubana sa leo ke le ntšhitšego moo mekotleng ye mehlano.*

*Mokgonane: Potšišo e re: "Mo o laetša kgoro mekotla ye mekae?" A ke ye mehlano? Fetola, "Ee"; goba "Aowa!" (1982: 130)*

Mokgonane: What is reported on the charge sheet about the number of dagga bags you found in his possession?

Moloto: Five, my lord.

Mokgonane: How many bags do you show on the table?

Moloto: What is shown before court is a handful of what I took from the five bags.

Mokgonane: The question says: "How many bags do you show here to the court?" Are they five? Answer "Yes!" or "No".

This interesting cross-examination arouses the reader's curiosity. Mokgonane's

expertise changes both the reader's and Masellane's expectations. The police officer's mistake makes Masellane walk out a free man and thus creates a reversal of expectation. Levitt then explains this kind of situation by saying, "Reversal promotes change by violating expectation" (1971: 68). Kgobalale's efforts to get Masellane arrested are futile. Although he manages to get all the information he needs about where "*Mošwang wa Matuba*" is grown, he cannot succeed in supplying the court with tangible proof regarding the breakthrough in his investigation. His first relationship with Matlakale gives us hope that dagga dealers will be brought to book. From the outset he has been able to build his case carefully. Step by step we are prepared to expect Masellane's incarceration. Kgobalale's visit to the senior personnel in the police department in the earlier scenes convinced us further that Masellane's elusive gangs will soon be jailed. The unexpected happens when the court is not convinced that Masellane is guilty, and, accordingly, this constitutes a reversal.

#### **5.4 RECURRING WORDS, PHRASES AND MOTIFS**

We have already learnt that repetition, whether it be of words, events, phrases, etc, forms a pattern that will impart meaning to the whole story. The arrangement and concatenation of words in a work of art keep the scenes moving. As the scenes move there is progression. One progression gives rise to another. It is the progression that leads us to the final aim of the artist. Some authors carefully choose words and sentences and arrange them to form rhythmic dialogues. Repetition of words, phrases and motifs is therefore the rhetoric device of effective writing. What follows in this is the analysis to show how Maredi conjures up rhythm by repeating words, phrases and motifs.

##### **5.4.1 Mo go fetileng kgomo**

In Act 1 scene 1 the stage directions explain that Sebotse has a letter which she must deliver to her mother, Malegelegele.

Sebotse: (*Mmakgomo o leka go mo amoga lengwalo*) ... o a aketša, o a nthumula, o ntlhothola lengwalo le.

Mahlako: *Ke lengwalo la mang?...*  
*Tliša lengwalo leo mo ngwanešwane!*  
(*Sebotse o neela Mahlako lengwalo*) (1968: 8).

Sebotse: (Mmakgomo attempts to take the letter from her) ... she is lying, she is teasing me, she snatches this letter from me.

Mahlako: Whose letter is it? Bring that letter here my sister. (Sebotse gives Mahlako the letter)

When the three sisters arrive at home, Mmakgomo reports to their mother Mmalegelegele:

*Mmakgomo: Mahlako o swere lengwalo la gago...*

*Malegelegele: Lengwalo la ka ngwanaka?*  
*... o dumediše pele o mpotša ka tša lengwalo... Bjalo gona iša pele o mpotše ka tša lengwalo* (1968: 9)

(Mmakgomo: Mahlako has your letter...

Malegelegele: My letter my child?... greet first before you tell me about the letter... Now tell me more about the letter)

It becomes evident that the word “*lengwalo*” (letter) recurs several times in this scene. The repetition of this word provokes the reader’s curiosity regarding the possible contribution of the letter to the action of the play. This letter introduces us to the unresolved problem between brother and sister, Moshabane and Babuni. Moshabane owes Babuni a cow. The letter was to inform Namane and his wife, Malegelegele that Babuni, his sister, were to go via their place before the three of them attended a wedding at Gareagopola.

When analyzing the dialogue of the three girls we notice that there is a consistency in the way the stage directions report Mmakgomo’s intention of grabbing the letter.

“... o leka go mo amoga lengwalo ...” (1968: 8)

“...she attempts to grab the letter from her)  
and

“... o leka go mo hlothola lona gape” (1968: 8)

(...She tries to snatch it from her again)

Maredi in the above stage directions, has applied parallelism as the rhetorical device of forming repetition. The arrangements of words as laid out follow the same pattern and are therefore parallel to one another. However, a change is recognizable in both sentences in the case of the words, “*amoga*” and “*hlothola*” and “*lengwalo*” and “*lona*”. The device of parallelism is evident because “*amoga*” and “*hlothola*” are both verbs that appear in the same place in both sentences and they both denote a similar effect which is to grab or snatch from.

The first progression which leads to the tension between Mahlako and Mmakgomo is a guide that directs to the second progression, the tension between Mmakgomo and her mother. The second progression repeats words that relate to those in the first progression. In this repetition Maredi creates rhythm. After the tension between Mmakgomo and her mother where she was admonished about her irritating and strange behavior (trying to snatch the letter from her sister), Maredi takes us back to the subject of the letter. The letter is now given to its owner, Malegelegele, and a change is realized when the tone of the characters’s dialogue changes. The tone of the dialogue changes from losing temper (Mahlako loses temper because of Mmakgomo’s behavior) to curiosity (the girls are curious to know where the letter comes from), from giving moral advice (Malegelegele advises Mmakgomo that a decorous behavior is a mark of good breeding) to curiosity again (Malegelegele wants to know the contents of the letter. This repetition of words and phrases causes a rhythmic dialogue.

In another example: repetition of phrases can be discerned as emphasizing

Namane as a custodian of his own traditions. He does not have time for Christian religion. He wants traditional procedures to be observed at all times. Another rhythm is brought by the following parallelism contained in Namane's dialogue that portrays his anger:

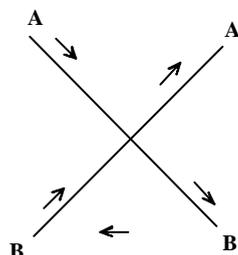
*“Ke boletše, ke boletše, ke feditše. Re sa itsheba pele mo, re tlo ba fetola ge re feditše. (O lebiša lentšu go Phogole.) Ba begele Phogole! Ke feditše ge ke realo. (1968: 64).*

(I have spoken, I have spoken, I have finished. We are still caucusing here, we will reply them after we have finished. (He directs his voice to Phogole.) Report to them Phogole! By saying that I have finished.)

The arrangement of parallel verb stems in the first statement has a rhythmic effect. We also notice that the verb stem “*feditše*” appears at the end of some statements above.

It becomes interesting, however, to notice that “*feditše*” in the sentences appears to have different connotations. In the first instance, it connotes that he does not want to indulge in any discussion of the topic in question. In the second phrase, it implies that a reply will be given after their caucus, whereas the last “*feditše*” connotes that Namane has made a final decision. Through this repetition Namane wants to set the record straight that he does not tolerate people who shun their tradition.

Maredi also creates repetition called “chiasmus” or “antimetabole” (1987: 229). Edgar V. Roberts et al say “This pattern is designed to create vividness through memorable repetition. The pattern is ABBA, which can be arranged graphically at the end of an X;” (1987: 229)



sentences that show a pattern of “chiasmus” or “antimetabole” (1987: Roberts et al say “This pattern is designed to create vividness through memorable



The following statement by Babuni is an example of such a pattern:

A                      B                      B                      A

*Setho ke Sedumedi gomme Sedumedi ke Setho*

(Culture is Christianity and Christianity is Culture)

Maredi uses different versions of the phrase quoted above which all indicate the relation between African tradition and Christianity. Examples are:

*“Rena re tseba Sedumedi e le selo sa lerato le leago, gomme se kwana le tshepedišo ya segagaborena”*(1968: 49)

(We know Christianity to be something that has love and creates unity, and it is compatible with our traditional ways)

and

*“Sedumedi se nyakana le go dira go loka, e sego fo dira maraga”* (1968: 80)

(Christianity requires that you do good, and not trash)

All the above phrases are repeated several times in this play to point out that there is harmony between Christianity and African tradition.

Babuni’s dialogue with her brother, Namane, contains different phrases which are later observed in subsequent scenes as motifs that emphasize the role

played by cattle in African society. The angle from which Maredi wants us to view the importance of cattle in African society is marriage. Cattle were traditionally used for brideprices by people. In African tradition, a cow is therefore seen as a binding factor for it creates new families and relations after two people marry. It is then on the basis of this fact that Maredi repeats the same maxims to show that traditional people regard cattle with respect.

Namane demeans the dignity of his wife by constantly referring to her as “... *o tllile ka kgomo...*” (She is here because of a cattle ritual) angers Babuni and she responds thus:

*“O re o tloge o lemošiša gore motho yo o reng o tllile ka kgomo ke mang? Afa o a lemoga gore o nyetšwe ka dikgomo tša tatagorena, Mmotlane, a nyalelwa go ba mmago rena? A o a lemoga gore ge o mo šohla, o šohla mmago rena, gomme o epa tatagorena? A o a lemoga gore o re belegetše tatagorena, yena ye o reng o gogetše ka mafuri bjalo ka ngwale? Gopola, go šohla ngwana yo o šohla tatagorena, gomme le dikgaetšedi tše tša gagwe, tše o di reetšwego rena, ge di ekwa bohloko le rena re kwa bohloko. Le rena dikgaetšedi tša gago, re nyetšwe magorong a mangwe, gomme le wena o ka se rate ge o ka kwa mehla ye re hlabja ka mantšu, kgaetšedi, o nape o lahle, le letšatši le tee go se ke gwa ba gwa hlwe go etšwa molomong wa gago gore: “o tile ka kgomo”. Lentšu leo ga la loka, ke lerumo pelong ya yo mongwe le yo mongwe yoo e leng mmagobatho, gobane mosadi ge re tlo re ke mosadi, o swanetše go be a nyetšwe ka kgomo...yona modimo o nko e meetse. Ke eng se se ka e kakang? Mo e fetileng e tliša leago, mohlala wa yona ga o timelele, ga o ome. Bjalo ka ge o ntseba ke le kgadi, o tsebe yo (o šupa mogadiboagwe) ge e le mmawešo, go sego bjalo badimo ba ka se go robalele, gotee le rena dikgadi. Gomme ga ke tsebe gore ke eng se se ka go lokelang ge dikgadi di ka se go phuthollele mahlong, tša bolela le bona gore ba go robalele.” (1968: 19)*

(Are you sure you know who the person that you say was here because of a cattle ritual is? Are you aware that she

was married by our own father's cattle, Mmotlane, and was married to be our mother? Are you aware that if you despise her, you despise our own mother, and thus make a mockery of our own father? Are you aware that she is a mother to a son named after our own father, the very one you say is confined to the backroom like a female initiate? Remember, to make a mockery of this child, you make a mockery of our own father, and these sisters of his, that are named after us, when they are hurt we also become hurt. We, your own sisters as well, got married by people belonging to different clans, and you too won't be happy if you discover that we are emotionally abused. My brother, you better stop this now, not ever again should the utterance "she is here because of a cow" come from your mouth anymore. Those are bad words. It is like a spear in the heart of anybody who is the mother of the people, because for a woman to be regarded as a real woman, then she should have been married by a cow... the god with a wet nose. What can be equated with it? Where it has passed there is conciliation, its track does not disappear, it does not get dry. As you know that I am the aunt, you must know that this one [she points at her sister-in-law] is our own mother, if not so the ancestors will never give you peace of mind, as well as we the aunts. Then I do not know what will go right with you if the aunts are not satisfied with you, in order that they may liaise with them [ancestors] to give you peace)

Babuni's speech has all the phrases that show identical structures and motifs which summarize the important role cattle play among African people. The parallel arrangements of the phrases... "*o a lemoga...*" (are you aware) and "...*o mo šohla, o šohla,*" (if you make a mockery of him, you mock...) are rhetorical and rhythmical because they serve as flashbacks to show that the present situation, that is, Namane's marriage to Malegelegele is a result of the past situation, his father's own cattle that were used to marry his(Namane's) wife. In this way Babuni's words relate step by step to all the past steps taken to marry Namane's wife. This shows how subsequent events grow out of the preceding ones and thus forming out rhythm. The phrases "*o tlile ka kgomo*" (she is here because of a cattle ritual), "*modimo o nko ye meetse* (ancestor with a wet nose), "*mo e fetilego e tliša leago*" (where it has passed it brings conciliation) and

“*mohlala wa yona ga o ome*” (its track does not dry up), “*dikgadi di ka se go phuthollele mahlong* (if aunts are not happy with you) and “*badimo ba ka se go robalele*” (ancestors will not give you peace), are all motifs that recur not in subsequent scenes of this play only, but also in *Mošwang wa Matuba* and *Lapa ke mosadi*. As motifs, all the repeated phrases are rhythmic because they appear in different scenes that keep the action of the play moving forward.

In Babuni’s speech, Maredi also employs another rhetorical device Roberts calls “cumulation or “accumulation”. Roberts explains thus,

“The device is therefore a brief way of introducing much information, for once the parallel rhythm of the buildup begins, readers will readily accept new material directly into the pattern. The device thus acts as a series of quick glimpses or vignettes, and vividness is established through the parallel repetition” (1987: 229).

The repetition of “*afa o lemoga...*” (are you aware) therefore shows the buildup of events in that Malegelegele was married in order to become the mother of her sisters-in-law. After marriage she gives birth to children who will be named after her sister’s-in-law and that is why Babuni says she was married to be their own mother. Malegelegele’s son is also named after her father-in-law and hence Babuni’s utterance that she (Malegelegele) also bore their own father. The repetition of “*... ge o mo šohla, o šohla...*” (if you make a mockery of ...) also forms an incremental pattern in that seeing that Malegelegele’s son is named after her father-in-law, then this son of hers is the father to her husband and his brothers and sister and this boy therefore deserves the respect due to a father figure. Since Namane does not respect his mother (his wife in this context), as the woman who has borne his father (his son Sefako in this context) it means he does not respect his own parents. Some of Namane’s daughters are named after his own sisters. Namane’s own daughters are therefore his own sisters. Any father’s sisters are respectable people among African people. If Namane mocks

his father he automatically mocks his own daughters who are his sisters. His daughters are named after his own sisters. If Namane's sisters are not happy then the ancestors will also not be happy and will then turn their backs on him. This mathematics is interesting and builds a rhythmic pattern as it shows the cause-effect pattern. Through this buildup of details the reader can arrive at the meaning of the whole play.

#### 5.4.2 Lapa ke Mosadi

Some recurring phrases in this drama do not create rhythm. Such phrases do not cause the reader to expect anything to happen in the following events. Recurring phrases serve to connect individual phrases to make a whole. In Act 2 Scene 1, Maakopi arrives at Mmanakedi's place. Mmanakedi does not recognize her and she asks her

*"Kootse ke tlo re mme ke mang?"* (1997: 23)

(By the way who will I say mom is?)

When Ntlatleng, Mmanakedi's husband comes home he finds Maakopi and asks his wife

*"Kootse, mmagoBakgaga, ke tlo re ke mang?"* (1997:24)

(By the way, mother of Bakgaga, who will I say you are ?)

Although this time the phrase is varied in that it is now Ntlatleng asking the question, it does not contribute to the growth of the play because the story would still flow evenly without the recurrence of it. In Act 2 Scene 3 Maakopi meets MmaMotla at a church conference in Witbank. MmaMotla asks Maakopi the same question,

*“Kootse ke tlo re ke mang? (1997: 30).*

*(By the way who will I say you are ?)*

This phrase becomes monotonous and stagnant and therefore no rhythm is realized and the story diminishes in tension.

In return Maakopi also uses the same statement to respond to the same question mentioned above. Her responses are

*“Ga ke holofele o ka ntseba” (1997: 30)*

*(I do not think you can know me)*

and

*“Ga ke holofele o ka ntshwara gabotse” (1997: 59)*

*(I do not think you can remember me well?)*

The repetition of the same response also does not make any contribution to the development of the play.

In Scene 4, for example, Maredi repeats the same statements unnecessarily. In this scene Thema arrives at his new school where he was to be in standard 4 (now grade 6). Makuse, one of the boys at school asks Thema the standard in which he is going to be. Thema replies

*“Ke tlile go tšea Mphato wa bone” (1997: 35)*

*(I have come to study for standard 4)*

The literal meaning of the above extract is “ *I have come to take standard 4*”, hence Makuse’s sarcastic response:

*“Mošaa...! O tlile go tšea Mphato wa bone?...Hee...!*

*Mathaka...o re o tlile go tšea mphato wa bone...*  
(1997:35).

(“Boy...! You have come to take Standard 4?... Hey...!  
Guys... he says he has come to take standard four...)

The repetition mentioned above has nothing to do with the plot of the story. The incident in which Thema meets one of the teachers and the principal could have been summarized by the directions instead of the unnecessary repetitions as laid out in this scene.

In this text Maredi uses phrases used in the books he wrote before. The term “...  
*le re majakane ao.*” (1997: 6,7) is also found in *Mo go fetileng kgomo*.  
Other terms also used in previous books are

“...se re iše melekong”  
(...do not lead us into temptations)

and

“ke latela tsela ya Sepedi yeo e kwanago le puku ya  
mangwalo a makgethwa”

(I follow the route of Sepedi which agrees with the writings  
of the Scripture)

which are also found *Mo go fetileng kgomo*.

In Act 3 Scene 1 the expression,

“Lentsu la kgadi ga le tshelwe ....” (1997: 46)

(The kgadi’s words are not to be taken for granted),

is also used in *Mo go fetileng kgomo*.

The title of the book, “*Lapa ke mosadi*”(A woman is the harbour of a household),

is repeated many times in this dramatic work. Although African culture endorses this maxim, Maredi's story does not really demonstrate it.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

Some authors carefully choose words and sentences and arrange them to form rhythmic dialogues. Repetition of words, phrases and motifs is therefore the rhetoric device of effective writing.

The right order of events is important in the unfolding of the story. One action should lead into another in order to have a complete rhythmic pattern. It is of course this flow of related events that beat out a rhythm in a play. A good dramatist uses rhythm as a device to achieve dramatic effect. Although Maredi's plays have illustrated to us uses of rhythm, he has a tendency of repeating scenes which are not tied to the rest of the play. In Scene 4, the dialogue between Maakopi and Evangelist Mosehle is repeated when Maakopi explains the same story to her sister-in-law, Tebogo. This is the event the reader is familiar with as portrayed in Scene 3. This repetition becomes monotonous and stagnant and therefore no rhythm is realized and the story diminishes in tension. This kind of repetition does not help in the growth of the story. Such scenes are in fact irrelevant and therefore not rhythmic. Repetition is therefore a unifying factor. The pattern of action is most important because this action is begun by the preceding scenes. This pattern must therefore be continued and concluded in order to produce rhythm in drama.