

**A DISCUSSION OF B N TSEKE'S  
POETIC ART FORM**

by

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**SUBMITTED IN PART-FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**MAGISTER ARTIUM**

**IN THE**

**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

**AT**

**VISTA UNIVERSITY**

**SUPERVISOR: PROF SR CHAPIOLE**

**OCTOBER 1993**

**SOWETO**

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

My gratitude goes to Professor S.R. Chaphole who kindled my love for poetry. Until I registered for "Aspects of Poetry" as one of my M.A. course work courses, I was not confident or knowledgeable enough to handle a topic in any aspect of poetry.

I would like to thank Professor Chaphole for the guidance he gave me throughout my research. He was always prepared to avail himself whenever his assistance was needed. He was always encouraging and this enabled me to continue with this work. Professor Chaphole is a supportive supervisor who has the ability to show students their mistakes without making them feel inferior.

Secondly, I would like to thank Mmathabo Molobi for typing my work so neatly. She was prepared to sacrifice her time in order to complete my work as she also had other commitments. She worked under pressure and this enabled me to present my work within the prescribed time. Mmathabo was always polite even though she was always under pressure because of the work load she is expected to complete within a particular time.

I would also like to thank BN Tseke. He never felt offended about questions posed to him. His work has opened my eyes. Through his work I have realized how nepotism can hurt those directly involved.

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I would like to thank my family as they never complained about my neglected duties as a wife and mother. They gave me the support I needed in order to complete this work.

Lastly, I would like to thank my colleagues who were always encouraging me to go on with this project.

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D E D I C A T I O N

To my parents Masoga Abraham and Masotlho Mirriam Maupye.

D E C L A R A T I O N

I declare that:

**"A DISCUSSION OF BN TSEKE'S POETIC ART FORM"**

is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.

M. A. Kekoa

S U M M A R Y

Poetry is an art form beyond other genres. It is superior because it is tied up with deep feelings. "It is an outflow of powerful feelings". Poetry is by and large, differentiated from prose by a mark of greater specialism. African poetry is twofold; viz. traditional poetry and modern poetry. Traditional poetry is derived from Africa; and modern poetry is developed largely from the west.

A brief statement on Northern Sotho poetry was given attention. The abilities of Tseke as a poet were briefly discussed. Tseke's poems were divided according to themes and poetic forms. Russian Formalism as a literary theory was looked into. Imagery as a poetic device was discussed under headings such as: figures of speech, senses used to evoke images and repetition. Tseke's language was discussed to show his ability to coin new words. Structure as a poetic device included headings such as: structure of poems, what brings structural agreement between stanzas and elements which contribute to the achievement of unity in poems.

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## CHAPTER 1

### 1. Introduction

In this work specific attention will be given to Tseke's poetic devices. The four volumes Therešo ke ya mang (1977), Hlatse ke mang? (1983), Maremegokgo Seatleng se (1986) and Moletesekuba tseleng ye (1988) will be referred to at all times. Poetic types such as the sonnet, elegy, satire, epic and praise poems will be given specific attention. Poetic devices such as form, repetition and imagery among others, will be studied from the four volumes. Poetry as a genre will be given some attention. Since Tseke is an African poet distinguishing features of the two types of African poetry will be discussed. Tseke writes Northern Sotho poetry and this work is a discussion of Northern Sotho poetry.

#### 1.1 Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to promote poetry as an aspect of literature. Poetry is as old as mankind, but has not been given the attention it deserves by readers. In Northern Sotho there is a limited number of works on this aspect of literature. It is necessary to analyse poetry in such a way that readers should be able to interpret poetry for themselves. Interpretation and understanding of the message will lead to appreciation and enjoyment of poetry.

Love for poetry can be instilled through analysis. Lack of love for poetry is evident especially in black schools. Teachers and students at high school would gladly avoid poetry if it were not compulsory for first language students. Northern Sotho academics should give more attention to this genre.

Poets convey messages which cannot be communicated in everyday language, yet it is important for such messages to be understood by readers. Readers can only interpret the message conveyed through poetry by understanding and appreciating poetry. Reading poetry should at all times be a pleasurable experience. Tseke as a poet has the ability to shed further light into this experience.

## 1.2 What is Poetry?

It is very difficult to give a cut and dried answer to the question raised in 1.2 above. Various scholars have given their different views on the definition of poetry. In this work definitions of scholars such as Pretorius, Brooks and Warren, Finnegan, Davis and others will be taken into account in an attempt to define the concept poetry. According to Pretorius (1989:1) the word poetry is derived from the Greek word poiesis. This Greek word originates from poiein which means to make. Pretorius goes further to cite scholars who define poetry as 'imaginative passion'. Poetry is an aspect of literature which has existed from

the time of the human race and survived from the shadowy pre-history times up to now. It is a superior art form because it is tied up with deep feelings.

Brooks, Pulser, Warren (1975:327) say poetry is the verbal expression of the imaginative view of the world, and such views may involve and fuse all sorts of responses, from sensations and general perceptions to the general ideas.

Brooks and Warren (1976:6) on the other hand, say poetry focuses on the feelings and attitudes, it is concerned with the massiveness, the multidimensional quality of experiences. It can be said to be a responsive evaluation of our experiences as it extends our own limited experience by means of evaluation.

Through imagination, the reader's or audience's senses of the physical work are sharpened. Poetry deepens our senses of the emotional, intellectual and moral implications of the human situations and actions. Dawson (1985:1) says poetry is a kind of literature which is quite different from novels because a poet uses language in a different form. Poetry as art, makes us feel what it means to be alive in the world as well as what it feels to be in love, to hate someone or to be consciously stricken. Poetry is the means through which powerful emotional experiences can be shared by the poet and the audience. Gill (1985:4) says poetry is both a specially made object and an important

form of communication between people. Some events can only be conveyed to the audience or readers through poetry. Davis (1986:79) says poetry is a feat of style by which a complex of meaning is handled all at once. Poetry succeeds because all or most of what is said or implied is relevant. It differs from practical messages, which are successful if and only if we correctly infer the intention. This art can be said to be "an outflow of powerful feelings" as it is concerned with life but not cut off from life. Here powerful feelings are arranged in a particular pattern. According to Brooks et al (1975:329) poetry works by suggestions, connotation and not merely denotation of words and is full of unexplained images, comparisons, similes, metaphors and symbols. On the other hand Finnegan (1992:83) says poetry is by and large differentiated from prose by being marked by greater specialism. In the olden days the most specialized genres of poetry occurred in association with the royal courts. Poetry and patronage could not be separated. Poetry can be said to be a generic term for the collective body of compositions called poems. These compositions show great beauty or nobility of language. According to Pretorius (1989:1) the poem has revealed some aesthetic experiences or other. The content of a poem differs from purely 'informative' reports in that words chosen cause a certain effect, atmosphere or emotion.

Brooks et al (1976:14) say all poems are fictional, even poems that profess to be autobiographical for the voice of

the poem is inevitably a creation. Davis (1986:79) says the meaning of a poem may certainly be a personal one, in the sense that a poem expresses a personality or state of soul rather than a physical object. A poem does not come into existence by accident as the words of a poem come out of a head and not out of a hat.

According to Jakobson the structure of poetry is explained in terms of selection and combination. Selection is based on equivalence, similarities and dissimilarities, synonymy and antonymy. On the other hand combination is the built of sequence based on continuity. Davis (1986:52) says poetry is a special way of thinking, it is precisely, a way of thinking in images, a way which permits what is generally called 'economy of mental effort', a way which makes for 'a sensation of the relative ease of the process'. Pretorius et al (1988:28) say the popular classification of African Poetry is twofold viz. traditional and modern poetry.

### 1.3 Types of Poetry

African traditional poetry and modern poetry play an important role in the lives of African people. Both types are important and no type should be overemphasised at the expense of the other. The two can be distinguished by various features. The first distinguishing features to be discussed are those of traditional poetry.

1.3.1 Traditional Poetry

Traditional poetry is derived from Africa. Initially it was in an oral form. According to Finnegan (1992:167) there is a great variety of religious poetry in Africa. There are hymns, praises, passion songs and oracular poetry. Pretorius et al (1988:28) say traditional African poetry mainly comprises oral poetic compositions which form an intergral part of specific national ceremonies. These poetic compositions were recorded and this led to the birth of preserving oral literature. Traditional poetry is highly descriptive. All events are clearly marked. If a poet recites about the birth or burial of an important person, all details will be piled up. The language of traditional poetry is highly figurative. Various figures of speech are used to explain different events. Actions are indicated by figurative language such as simile. Movements of warriors may be compared to swift movements of a leopard or tiger. A metaphor can be repeated in various lines of a poem to emphasize bravery of a hero or the beauty of a woman depending on the subject that is being praised. According to Pretorius (1989:60) the narrator in traditional poetry becomes involved in the subject matter. Rhythm forms the backbone of African traditional poetry. Rhythm is seen as the speed with which a poem flows. Important factors which determine rhythm in

poetry are: caesura which can either be full pause or half pause. There is also internal and terminal caesura which play an important role in the determination of rhythm. Length also plays an important role in the flow of a poem. Traditional poetry was specifically meant for the ear and therefore the appearance/form of a poem is not an issue. It can be said that adornment is not a prime pre-occupation for composers or poets of oral poetry. As traditional poetry was meant for the ear, the mind played an important role. For one's mind to be able to function effectively, interjections such as 'Agee .... Iiii ...' are used to enable one to remember the following lines. Thought is crucial in orality. Traditional poetry is by and large characterized by the absence of stanzas. In cases where stanzas are employed, irregular and regular stanzas are used. Even though stanzas are observable in traditional poetry, each stanza has a complete thought. A stanza with only three lines will have a complete thought. Thought is emphasized in each stanza which moulds itself into a bundle. Unlike in modern poetry rhyme is absent. Traditional poetry is very spontaneous, as Wordsworth would say.

Traditional poetry is highly repetitive. Repetition of words, phrases and lines gives the poet the chance to recall some facts about the praised object. Various poetic features are used to emphasize ideas expressed by the poet. Perfect parallelism and parallelism by linking

are employed. These poetic devices aid the memory as they help the poet to recall coming lines.

### 1.3.2 Modern Poetry

Distinguishing features of modern poetry will be discussed briefly. Modern poetry is from the west and can be easily recognised by its poetic form. Western techniques include the use of rhyme schemes and others. The influence of western poetry led to the creation of modern praise poems. According to Pretorius (1989:80) the term modern praise poem refers to poetic creations which have originated as written poetry by identifiable persons and whose themes relate to heroism or praising. One of the points which make modern poetry differ from traditional poetry is the fact that it does not originate as oral creation. Modern poetry cannot be said to be descriptive as it includes poems like lyrics which are more musical. It can also be distinguished from traditional poetry by language usage. Everyday language is used, but it is used in unfamiliar ways. Defamiliarizing devices are also employed by modern poets. Rhythm does not play a crucial role. This is due to the structural artistry that is observable in modern poetry. Modern poetry is specifically meant for the eye; therefore adornment is a prime pre-occupation in its composition. Arrangement of lines should be pleasing to the eye. Stanzas have regular lines. Poetic

compositions have lines with similar endings. Various rhyme schemes can be identified. Some poems have the exact number of lines.

All sonnets have fourteen lines. All sonnets can be divided into two parts; the octave and sestet, some have three quatrains and a couplet. A poem with thirteen or fifteen lines cannot be called a sonnet. All sestets have six lines and this is prescriptive. Words and concepts are selected very carefully and this goes well with what Jakobson says about selection and combination. African languages differ from western languages and this makes it difficult for African poets to meet all requirements of modern poetry.

#### 1.4 A Brief Statement on Northern Sotho Poetry

The discussion of aspects of Northern Sotho poetry can be regarded as literature review with specific reference given to poetry. This brief discussion will enable the reader to realize Tseke's ability as a poet. Northern Sotho poetry developed like all other African languages poetry. It started with orality and moved on to modern poetry. Poems that have characteristics of both traditional and modern poetry are classified as modern poetry. In cases where examples are necessary, they will not be taken from volumes written by Tseke as his volumes will be given specific attention in chapters three, four and five.

1.4.1 Northern Sotho Traditional Poetry

Praise poems were rendered orally. Usually such poems had a purpose as they were directed at particular individuals or groups in a particular society. Pretorius (1989:54) says in most cases the original creator of a traditional "sereto" is unknown. It is also possible to have more than one praiser in the same poem. Praise poems are known as 'direto' and are a pure form of national art. Therefore the meaning of a praise poem is limited to a particular nation, time and place. Northern Sotho poetry was published for the first time in 1935. The first collection of traditional praise poems were written by Phala D.M. and the title of the volume is 'Kgomo 'a tshwa'. Serudu (1991:84) says various characteristics of praise poems such as the use of compound words and symbols are observable.

Two types of praise poems found in Northern Sotho are the traditional praise and the modern praise poem. An example of a traditional praise poem is taken from 'Lesiba la bokgomo' written by Tseke S.N.

Nkharakhara

Kgomo e a tsha!

E gangwa ke mang?

E gangwa ke nna Nkhakhara dikgopo-di-mabala  
nama ya mošifa sepalela dibatana.

(The cow is burning!

Who will milk her?

She will be milked by me Nkhakhara with colourful  
ribs

Hard muscle that which cannot be easily destroyed  
by beasts)

The first three lines are the introductory part of the older praise poem. Only people brave enough will start their self praises by these words. Pretorius (1989:82) cites Mashabela's possible interpretation of the introductory formula of the older praise poem. The possible interpretation is as follows:

The stem '-tshwa' (to spit) is a poetic corruption of 'swa' (to burn).

The cow's udder is on fire with abundance of milk and is restive and not easy to milk, only experienced milkers would manage.

Since the cow is experiencing some pain only brave and experienced milkers can milk it. When actions of the poet are associated with Mashabela's deduction, the poet or hero should be brave and

experienced enough to be involved in the actions. The poet or hero should have the ability and power to defeat the enemy he is faced with. In 'Nkharakhara' the poet compares himself with a tiger, his actions and deeds are full of power and bravery. What is being praised is clearly made visible to the reader. Serudu (1991:64) says another characteristic of the praise poem is the use of the copula. In 'Nkharakhara' the use of the copula is evident in these two lines:

Ke wa gata-le-palela melamo le mešogo ya dilepe  
Mo ke hlabilego ...

The reader can visualise the wildcat that is indestructable while its actions are evident.

The traditional praise poem can also be identified by the frequent use of compound words.

'dikgopo-di mabala' (colourful ribs)  
'sepalela' from the stem '-pala' (indestructable one)

The use of compound words contributes to the flow of the poem.

Pretorius (1985:55) cites Guma's classification of

South Sotho poetry which is to a large extent also applicable to Northern Sotho. The classification is as follows:

A Songs

B Praises

### Songs

Songs are further sub-divided into various categories. Traditional songs form an integral part of the traditional poetic heritage. They also form an important basis for modern poetry. Pretorius et al (1988:29) say the traditional praise songs in African Poetry have a specific function, they pay compliments. During war times the praise singer will render a praise song honouring the returning soldiers. Aspects such as imagery, parallelism, allusion, developing thoughts play an important role.

Different types of songs can be distinguished. There are action songs and ceremonial songs:

- i) **Action songs** are known as 'letšema'. They are usually sung by workers so that they should not feel the hard labour they are faced with. This group of people is not remunerated but are

offered food and drinks. The work is done out of free will. These actions promote good social relations.

- ii) **Dance songs** are known as 'kiba, dinaka, mogobelo'. In 'kiba and dinaka' songs are accompanied by drums and other musical instruments. They are a means of recreation. Men are members of these dance songs. The leader is called 'molokwane' and the group is disciplined. Up to the present day, men are still engaged in such songs. Even in urban areas one can still find men engaged in such songs. 'Mogobelo' songs are not accompanied by drums.
- iii) 'Mararankodi' are **dance songs for women**. Such songs are a means of recreation for women. Songs are accompanied by drums. A whistle is sometimes used to give a sign for the change in style while dancing. Singers always form a circle with the drum beaters in the centre.
- iv) **Children's songs** are usually sung by young boys and girls engaged in various activities. Boys sing such songs while minding their father's cattle and girls while minding their brothers and sisters.

More categories can be distinguished.

Ceremonial songs are usually sung at specific ceremonies. They are directed at particular groups or individuals and even objects.

- i) **War songs** are usually sung during war times especially when the warriors return and the enemy has been defeated.
- ii) **Burial songs** are sung at memorial services and on the day of the funeral. Songs will vary according to the status of the deceased.
- iii) **Prayer songs** are sung when requesting something from the ancestors. During draught seasons, people will request rain from the ancestors. There was always an individual who knew how to request rain and certain actions had to be performed. Young children were involved as they moved with elders who are no longer fertile throughout the country performing certain rituals. In the Northern Transvaal Queen Modjadji was the rain maker. Those who were faced with draughts sent people to her and their problems would be solved.

- ii) **Initiation songs** - these songs are not to be sung anywhere else especially in the presence of those who have not gone to the initiation school. They were sung at specific times and places. It is taboo to sing them anywhere and any time.

There are many more types of ceremonial songs. Serudu (1990:47) says songs have functions. Some bring happiness, some sorrow, some comfort.

### Praises

- i) **Initiation Praises** - they are usually self-praises in claiming adulthood. A new name acquired during training will be made known to the public. The older name will be discarded or be used by adults or those who went to the initiation school at the same time. Acquired names for boys are: Lesiba, Madimetja and others; while acquired names for girls are: Raisibe, Mokgaetše and others.
- ii) **Animals and birds** - such praises depend on the relationship of the poet and the animals. One whose clan has acquired the name 'crocodile' will select words carefully when praising crocodiles. To such a poet, a crocodile is not

something ugly.

- iii) **Natural elements** - a mountain which is used as a hiding place during war times will be praised by people living next to it. A river which provides people and their livestock with water throughout the year will be praised by those living near it.
  
- iv) **Divining bones** - they are usually praised by witch doctors during prediction situations. Sometimes they are used in situations where causes of problems need to be identified. Serudu (1990:34) gives praise names such as Mohlakola and morero.
  
- v) **Chiefs and warriors** - specific praise names are given to chiefs and warriors as individuals or in groups. Such praises are recited at specific rituals. They vary from individual to individual, group to group and from situation to situation. Figures of speech play an important role in praising of individuals, groups of people and objects.

The emergence of modern poetry is marked by the creation of modern praise poems. Serudu (1991:62) distinguishes the older praise poem and the modern praise poem by their different characteristics. Pretorius (1989:80) says in the exploitation of traditional poetic genres by modern poets, an important category of poems is distinguished namely, prototypes. Modern praise poems were not collected from specific clans or tribes.

Pretorius et al (1988:42) say modern poems have a mixed character. Though the mixed character is evident it is necessary to distinguish certain types of poetry according to their main characteristics for discussion purposes.

The different types of poems in Northern Sotho are:

- i) lyrical poetry;
- ii) epic poetry; and
- iii) didactic poetry.

Poetic forms observable in Northern Sotho are:

- i) the sonnet;
- ii) the satire;
- iii) the elegy;
- iv) the ballad and others.

As characteristics of a traditional praise poem were explained, it will be important to explain characteristics of a modern praise poem. An example is taken from Masola's volume 'Maatla Mpulele'.

### Lehloyo

Lehloyo selosebe se tsebja ke ba kgale  
Lona le lwantsha batho le ditshabatshaba  
Lona seepolla tsa ngwaga wa tlala  
Lona sedudisa batho ka rago le tee

(Hatred

Hatred bad thing known by older people  
That which causes conflict between people and  
nations  
That which reveals long forgotten events  
That which causes people to panic)

The above praise poem does not start with the old formula. It is evident that hatred is not praised. Emphasis is on what hatred does to people. The message conveyed to the reader is clear. Masola coined various words such as 'seepolla' (that which undigs), 'sedudisa' (that which unsettle), 'selosebe' (bad thing) to emphasize evil deeds

caused by hatred. Compound words are used to emphasize the message conveyed to the reader.

#### 1.5 Tseke as a Poet

Button Nonyane Tseke was born in 1947 at Nchabeleng Village in GaSekhukhune. He lost his mother Mohwelasagagwe Seshego Mahlako at the tender age of eleven in 1958. He was fortunate enough to have a father like Mmaswi 'a Ngwato 'a Phogole who brought him up. He cannot be said to have been a deprived child as he had a chance of attending high schools such as Ngwana Mahube and Bopedi-Bapedi. He is married. He served as secretary for the Babina-Kgwete tribal authority. He also worked for the Department of Chief Minister of Lebowa. Presently he is employed by Lebowa Education Department. Tseke is regarded as one of the best poets in Northern Sotho. This has been proved beyond reasonable doubt as his volume **Hlatse ke mang?** was awarded the E.M. Ramaila Prize in 1985. Tseke's poetry has impressed important people like Prof Serudu of UNISA. His poems are also included in *Seshegotheto* edited by Serudu.

Tseke's milieu had an influence on his poetry. He grew up in a vicinity where rich language was used on a daily basis and this enabled him to coin new words and employ out of the ordinary compound words with four parts. Elders in GaNchabeleng were well informed in various cultural aspects and his relationship with them educated him. His

involvement as secretary for Babinanare exposed him to various situations. As he had served as one of the 'bakgomana', he had the chance of perceiving various individuals. Some individuals were not treated fairly. Leaders 'indunas' also discriminated against people. As one of the 'bakgomana' he discovered how the status of human beings played an important role in the passing of judgement. Money played a dominant role. He also learnt more about those who feel that they deserve to be rulers of a country even though it was not their birth right. His poem 'O diša bjang?' exposes how leaders discriminate against people. Poems like 'Go wa mošatešate, Mongmabu ke mang?', 'Tša bogoši le borena', clearly show Tseke's knowledge of such aspects. Tseke's environment enabled him to pass correct judgement about people's actions in leading and ill-treating people. He can distinguish clearly between kingship and leadership. His involvement with the Lebowa government also exposed him to various situations.

Tseke has the ability to predict future events. If one can analyse the poem 'Moletesekuba tseleng ye' and compare it with the present situation one will realize that indeed we are moving in circles. We always meet a deadlock instead of reaching a solution. This line 'Di tla ba tša ja le menotosane' (They will even eat poisonous grass) has meaning for the present situation. The volume which contains this poem was published in 1988. It seems as if he predicted that in the near future cattle will eat poisonous grass.

Indeed people are dying like cattle which ate such grass. People are killing each other without valid reasons.

People are actively involved in political activities but the problematic situation is still unsolved. Tseke says it is possible to go up to the year 2000 without reaching a solution. At the same time if one can analyze the last two stanzas of "Mongmabu ke mang?" one can compare its events with the present situation in the country.

The two stanzas may also symbolize the events between two political organizations. The African National Congress and The Inkatha Freedom Party are engaged in various activities. An observer can easily detect enmity between the two. Though the poet speaks about cold war which eventually leads to civil war, the two are still engaged in cold war which may eventually lead to civil war if intervention or change in attitude does not take place. Presently there is no winner or loser. The poet says "Mme bobedi di bakišana ya thaga pheta" (the two parties regard themselves as true leaders of the country). But it has not been proved through elections who the leader is.

Tseke has the ability to create different images about the same object on the same page. The two poems "Ntlo ye" and "Ye ntlo" evoke different images. "Ntlo ye" creates positive images whilst "Ye ntlo" creates negative ones. Through his poetry a reader can easily become aware of

Tseke's likes and dislikes. Images about "Ye ntlo" show Tseke's dislikes and if one can compare this poem with "Sala ka khutso mogwera" and take events that took place on that specific day on 23 June 1982 at half-past eight one may conclude by saying he regards liquor as an enemy. He dislikes shebeen houses.

Through his poetry one would realize that he believes in God and ancestors. Poems such as "Ntlo ye, Dinku ntwengkgethwa, Dinku sedibeng, Mabonemašapo, Go badimo bešo", show his thorough knowledge about Christianity and the ancestral world.

Tseke who lost his mother at a very tender age, has experiences of a child who missed motherly love. Though he may not have experienced pain and suffering to such an extent, he did miss motherly love. His ability to affect the emotions of the reader in "Sello sa tšhuololo" (The pleading of a parentless child) shows that he did miss that motherly love. From the poem one can even come to the conclusion that as a grown man he still wishes that his mother was still alive so that he could have a chance of pleasing her by showering her with presents. Tseke has the ability of writing about death. He has written the longest epic in Northern Sotho up to the time of my investigation. "Maremegokgo seatleng se' (The wheel of retribution) has eighty one pages. Tseke has thorough knowledge of modern life. The poem "Barei ba kubu bodibeng" (Horse betting) is

a typical example of modern life practised by black people. People expect to be rich within a short space of time. They rely on horse betting with the hope of winning lump sums but do not know when luck would strike.

Tseke has experiences about various aspects of life. The one hundred and ten poems cater for various spheres of life. Tseke has the ability to employ various poetic techniques to be fully discussed in later chapters.

CHAPTER 2

2. Russian Formalism

2.1 Introduction

Russian Formalism is discussed in this work in order to make the reader aware of the contributions of the Formalists in the analysis of poetry. Secondly, the Formalist approach is used here as the basis that will inform the analysis of this effort.

Russian Formalism is one of the literary theories which enable the students to expand their knowledge about literature in an organized way. Davis (1986:45) says Formalism entails an attempt to analyze literature not by its identifiable or natural content, but consistently by its form - how it is constructed and how it functions so as to have meaning in the first place.

Stephens et al (1987:2) define Formalism as a text centred (intrinsic) theory, it deals with techniques and forms of the individual literary text, with the text as a unified identity which can be studied and analyzed in its own terms. Chaphole et al (1992:9) say Russian Formalism is generally viewed as the basis of modern literary theories. It is regarded as one of the earliest attempts to make the study of literature an autonomous and specific principle.

Ryan et al (1982:5) say Russian Formalism has a good claim to being the most influential critical-theoretical school of this century. Swanepoel (1990:10) says the formalists focussed their attention on the literary text as a work of art, in reaction to the biographical and moralistic interpretation of previous generations.

Russian Formalism originated in Russia and this term was used by its opponents, and it had a derogatory meaning. Ryan et al (1982:15) say though its origins are diverse and as with any intellectual movement not precisely determinable, Formalism may be conveniently dated from the founding of the Moscow linguistic Circle in 1915 and the founding of the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (OPAJAZ) in 1916. The movement remained active up to about 1930 when it came under heavy pressure from the Soviet authority. Though it became under heavy pressure, its influence had already spread to countries outside the Soviet Union. It only flourished for about fifteen to twenty years but it gave rise to major critical movements such as the Prague Linguistic Circle headed by scholars like Roman Jakobson.

Ryan et al (1982:15) say Rene Wellek has offered a useful if necessary a somewhat oversimplified division of the Formalists' endeavour into three phases. The three phases identified by Wellek will be discussed briefly.

### The First Phase

The initial or first period is regarded as the years between 1915 and 1921. At this stage the scholars started as small discussion groups and later two strong groups emerged, and they set out to redefine the basis of literary studies. The two groups were engaged in the task of self-determination. Ryan et al (1982:18) say even from the beginning the formalist drew a distinction between the poetic and the practical use of language. Ryan et al go further to say this period is marked particularly by the strong polemical tenor of much Formalist writing notably that of Victor Shklovsky who chaired the Opajaz.

### The Second Phase

Ryan et al (1982:15) identify this period from others as a phase of remarkable expansion in which Formalists identified and examined a whole complex of critical issues. Some issues were modified whilst others were dropped off. The second period can be regarded as the years between 1921 and 1928. In 1924 the Formalists came under political scrutiny as it took place within a period of Russian Revolution. Trotsky had grudgingly accorded Formalism a minor role in literary analysis. Trotsky described their methods as dangerously narrow and limited. The Prague Linguistic Circle emerged during this period.

### The Third Phase

This period is regarded as the years between 1928 and 1935. It is a period of dissolutions. The movement was suppressed and it was not accommodated. Its members who were not prepared or able to conform were silenced. Swanepoel (1990:11) gives basic reasons why Formalism became unacceptable to the Stalin regime. Formalism was playing down the link between literature and society. Though its members were silenced their views became known to the west. Their views became known in the late 1950's when their work became available in English and French.

#### 2.2 Founders of Formalism and their Contributions

Founders of Formalism and their contributions will be discussed presently. Davis (1986:45) says Russian Formalism was the work of two groups of critics, the Moscow Linguistic Circle and OPAJAZ. The Prague Linguistic Circle continued with the good work after the two groups were disbanded because of the official soviet condemnation. Chaphole et al (1992:10) say the prominent scholars amongst those who were regarded as founders are Roman Jakobson, Victor Shklovsky, Eikhnebaum, Osib Brik and Tynyanov. Many scholars later contributed to the development of Russian Formalism. Three of the earlier scholars' contribution will be discussed briefly. The three are among those who contributed to poetry. This work is about poetry,

therefore the work of those who contributed to this genre will be given attention.

### 2.2.1 Roman Jakobson

Jakobson was among those who headed the Prague Linguistic Circle. Davis (1986:21) says Roman Jakobson's move to Prague School in 1920 was to have a decisive impact on the course of literary scholarship in Czechoslovakia. His ideas had immediate relevance to literary analysis. Jakobson's literary studies like those of his contemporaries try to identify a claimed mimetic relationship between form and meaning.

Ryan et al (1982:46) mention one further useful concept that enters modern criticism from Jakobson and the circles with which he associated in Moscow and Prague. In its first form the concept is what Jakobson calls "the dominant" which according to him may be defined as the focussing of component of work of art, it rules, determines and transforms the remaining components. Jakobson also contributed to structuralism with his communication model in which he distinguishes six basic elements. Swanepoel (1990:17) gives the six basic elements as: an addresser, addressee message context, code and a contact. An addresser sends a message to an addressee, to be understood the message requires a context, a code fully or partially common to both the

addresser and the addressee and finally a contact.

Ryan et al (1982:42) say the literary studies of Roman Jakobson, like those of Ohmann characteristically try to identify a relationship between form and meaning, Jakobson's studies have been carried out on a more careful though out theoretical basis. Jakobson in collaboration with other scholars has done a number of what are intended to be exemplary analysis of the relation of form and meaning in poetic texts of various languages. Jakobson's influence has come through his more general essays such as those on metaphor and metonymy as antithetic principles in structuring of discourse.

#### 2.2.2 Osib Brik

He is one of the prominent scholars who contributed in the establishment of Formalist literary theory.

Brik's findings were delivered in a paper in 1920. By this time his contemporaries had examined a wide range of poetic devices. Poetic devices were: alliteration and rhyme to a larger rhythmic-semantic structures. Brik argues that the line is the primary rhythmico-syntactic unit, therefore a study of the rhythmico-syntactic configuration of verses should begin with the lines.

Brik investigated the language of poetry, drew and systematised a substantial portion of which is available in English as "Contributions to the study of verse language". Swanepoel (1990:11) say as for poetry, Brik discovered the central significance of verse in line he called rhythmico-syntactic word combinations. Ryan et al (1982:18) say Brik argues that the words in line have combined according to a definite rhythmic law and simultaneously, according to the laws of prose syntax.

### 2.2.3 Victor Shklovsky

He was one of the leaders of OPAJAZ. Shklovsky and Eichenbaun had strongly influenced the structuralist poetics of narratives. Ryan et al (1982:17) says Shklovsky, whose endlessly fertile and innovative if not always disciplined mind led him so often to open up new territories that others had to map and settle while he rushed on to yet newer lands. In the early phase of Formalism he was able to give comprehensive statement in an essay which should have been translated as "Art as a Device".

Ryan et al go further to say it is in devices of "defamiliarization" that Shklovsky locates the literariness of literary texts, among them the "making-strange" of familiar acts and objects by taking them out of their ordinary context or by describing them as if

they were seen for the first time.

Davis (1986:15) says "Art as Technique" is Shklovsky's central theoretical statement and one of the primary documents of Russian Formalism. In his theoretical statement he attacked the then current esthetic theories about the essence of art. Shklovsky defined a field of literary activities in which linguistically based devices create an experience more complex and possibly less coherent.

Russian Formalism as a literary theory has its premise and basic principles. The Formalists wished to develop a scientific theory of literature which includes the scientific methods of studying literature. They wished to shift from the scientific methods used prior to their emergence. Scholars had to find ways and means in order to be able to formulate systematic methods. They were confronted with various questions. The ability to answer the posed questions such as "What is literature?" would enable them to obtain their goal of developing a scientific theory and scientific methods.

Scholars who developed Formalism were linguists. Earlier on it was mentioned that the first group involved were members of the Moscow Linguistic Circle and the Prague Linguistic Circle. Chaphole (1992:11) says the Formalists therefore defined literature not according to

whether it is functional or imaginative, but because it uses language in unfamiliar ways. To the Formalists literature is a kind of writing which represents an organized violence committed on ordinary speech. Literature transforms and intensifies ordinary language, deviates systematically from everyday speech.

The fundamental Formalist premise is the study of literature in terms of its language usage which is regarded as a systematic transformation of everyday language. The Formalists are concerned with the structure of language in literature in terms of linguistic law. To the Formalists a difference exists between literary language and ordinary language. Everyday language is used for communication purposes and literary language draws attention to its own formal features. It is concerned with interrelationships among linguistic signs rather than making intrinsic references.

To the Formalists the study of literature should not be aimed at the communicated message but at observing the artistic features of language. Literature's primary aim is to estrange or to defamiliarize language. The Formalists also wished to study literature in order to make it an autonomous whole.

### 2.3 The Three Levels Identified by Formalists in the Analysis of Poetry

The Formalists discovered scientific methods of analysing literature. The discovered methods enabled them to analyze genres such as prose and poetry. The discovered methods were directed at the text itself and the author and meaning of the text were not taken into account. The reality on which the text was based, was ignored. According to Formalism, the analysis of poetry covers three levels:

### The First Level

This level deals with phonic texture. Chaphole et al (1992:18) define phonic structure as the analysis of poetic sounds. According to the Formalists, poetry is determined firstly by its sound combinations. Poetry should be analyzed in terms of its phonic elements. A poet violates the rules of practical language by foregrounding its sounds.

Phonic techniques such as alliteration, assonance, metre and rhyme and other phonic sounds have an effect on poetry. Study manual goes further to say, by foregrounding its phonic elements poetry creates music. The employment of poetic devices have an effect on pronunciation as it is impeded. Three of the listed phonic techniques will be briefly discussed.

### **Alliteration**

Pretorius et al (1988:32) define alliteration as a process by which a consonant sound or consonant sounds are repeated in one or more lines of poetry to obtain a particular sound effect. Alliteration is regarded by some scholars as a form of rhyme. Brooks et al (1976:254) say in poetry of the old English period the device alliteration was regularly used for the purpose of establishing a verse scheme. Alliteration is in fact sometimes called front-rhyme. Presently it is rarely used in verse according to any particular scheme. Most scholars use it to give a line or a group of lines a greater unity to support musical effect or to emphasize the words alliterated. Modern African poets can also employ this techniques effectively.

### **Rhyme**

Pretorius (1989:25) gives Shipley's definition of rhyme, namely the repetition of identical or closely similar sounds arranged at regular intervals. Various forms of rhyme can be identified. Examples of forms of rhyme are: end-rhyme; internal rhyme alliteration; assonance and other forms.

Brooks et al (1976:523) define rhyme as a constant factor in all uses of language. rhyme serves usually to bind lines together into larger units of compositions. Pretorius et al (1988:40) define rhyme as an important

formative element which allows for the determination of specific poetic units.

### **Assonance**

Pretorius et al (1988:33) say assonance occurs when specific vowel sound is repeated in one or more lines of poetry. At times this poetic is also found in modern African poetry. Brooks et al (1976:254) define assonance as that which may be called interior rhyme, depending on the identity of vowels in accented syllables. Pretorius (1989:24) cites Cuddon as saying assonance is sometimes called vocalic rhyme which can be defined as repetition of similar or closely similar vowel sounds usually close together to achieve a particular effect.

### **The Second Level**

This level deals with syntax. Syntax is word combination that creates rhythm in poetry. To the Formalists the second determining principle of poetry lies in its sentence structures. Poetry should be analyzed in terms of its rhythm. Words are combined in such a way that they violate syntax found in ordinary speech, therefore it is important to analyze this word combination, as poetic word combination is different. Poetic sentence structure is explained in terms of how laws of rhythm in poetry set up tension between different principles of word combination.

For one to have full understanding of poetry phonic and syntactic principles should be used together on this level. An analysis of poetry should be concerned with that which makes a poem poetry, i.e. the devices which make it different from ordinary speech. As poetry is analyzed in terms of its rhythm, this poetic device will be briefly discussed.

### **Rhythm**

Pretorius et al (1988:38) say rhythm is one of the most important components of traditional, and some modern African Poetry. It creates an atmosphere in a poem. Hot temperedness and anger may be created by a fast rhythm and a slower rhythm may create an atmosphere of sadness. Rhythm is determined by a metrical pattern resulting from the arrangement of rhythmic units within a verse.

### **The Third Level**

In this level poetic analysis deals with semantics, defined as the collateral meaning of a word simultaneously. Poetic language differs from ordinary language in its semantic content. What a word means in everyday language has a different meaning in poetic language. The specific idea communicated in everyday language by a particular word changes when used in poetry. A secondary meaning is created in poetry. The second meaning create ambiguity.

Ambiguity has defamiliarizing capacity.

All levels of poetic analysis are as closely connected as they are concerned with the defamiliarizing capacity of a poem. The Formalists are interested in this differential function.

#### 2.4 The Linguistic Model of Jakobson

When Russian Formalism was suppressed, Jakobson moved from the Soviet Union. He went to different countries and continued with the analysis of literature. He analyzed various aspects of literature. As a linguist his field of study covered a broad spectrum. In his various works he analyzed various aspects such as folk-tales, poetry and others.

Jackson (1991:70) says in America he founded the linguistic establishment sunk in the most vulgar period of behaviourism. To Jakobson, this was less than welcoming as he was already a distinguished scholar. Jakobson prepared lectures in French on sound and meaning. He was a great linguist and creator of the distinctive feature theory in phonology. After some time he also did some work on metaphor and aphasia, as well as on folk-tales and on the analysis of poetry. He delivered various papers at conferences. Jackson (1991:71) says linguists and Poetics, his paper for the style in Language Conference at Indiana

remains perhaps the most influential paper in linguistic stylistics that has yet been written. Jakobson made his own multifarious achievements to show that the possibilities were really there. Levi-Strauss had an influence on Jakobson as the latter also had an influence on the former. This influence led to constructive analysis of literary texts.

The splitting of the phoneme can be regarded as the most important achievement of the twentieth century. Jakobson split the phoneme which was the atom of linguistics. According to Jackson (1991:72) Jakobson's point is that the phoneme is not the unanalysable smallest unit of language, and the contrast between one phoneme and another is not the contrast between one unanalysable unit and the other. It is possible to isolate all features which distinguish one phoneme from the other. When a phoneme is pronounced several acoustic features are combined. According to Jakobson, a phoneme is a bundle of distinctive features, and it is the distinctive feature that is the smallest unit of language. Jakobson has another criticism of a phoneme. To him a phoneme differs from all distinctive units. It is unique among signs in that it has a signifier but not signified. Jackson (1991:74) says one cannot therefore generalize from it to other signs. The obvious interpretation of his position is that a phoneme is not a sign at all. The whole phoneme question was later transformed by the coming of Generative Grammar.

Jackson (1991:74) says Jakobson in *Fundamental of language* (1956), speaks of the axis of combination and selection. Jakobson claims two types of linguistic disorders. The first is similarity disorder. Similarity disorder corresponds to loss of control of the substitutive axis of the language - the paradigmatic axes.

The other is called contiguity disorder. This disorder corresponds to a loss of control of syntagmatic axis - chaining and sentence construction. Jackson (1991:78) says Jakobson rather grandly unites the principles of psycholinguistic pathology and those of literary criticism just as in an early part of the same book he had united phonemics with the order of acquisition of language and its loss in aphasia (mental disorder, often due to brain damage affecting the use of language).

Jakobson also analyzed poetry. Poetics is concerned with rules and principles governing poetic compositions, treaties on poetry. Part of his famous 1960 "Closing Statement" also puts forward a view of poetic language. Jefferson (1991:56) says in speaking of the literary text as a functional structure, the Prague school stressed its effect as a totality, through the interaction of all its constituent parts including subject matter. In his "Closing Statement" Jakobson does not explicitly reject this view but speaking as a linguist he insists that the difference between poetic and non-poetic texts can be

purely explained in linguistic terms.

To Jakobson and his contemporaries, poetics deals primarily with the question "What makes a verbal message a work of art?" Ryan et al (1982:47) say behind the notion or foregrounding of poetic device lies a conception of literature which developed in Moscow Circle and Prague school aesthetics. Since any element is capable of acting as a device the functions of poetics is, by foregrounding previous background elements. Jefferson (1991:56) says Jakobson proposes a different empirical linguistic criterion for the definition of poetic function. The poetic function projects the principles of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. This, in fact, is parallelism. One of the aspects included in the "Closing Statement" is that in poetic language relationships of equivalence or similarity not only concern absent items, but also become dominant factors in the verbal sequence. According to Jakobson every linguistic message is the product of a double process. The act of selection among items not present in the message but associated in the code and combination of the items selected into sequence is one of contiguity. In another conference paper entitled "Poetry of grammar and grammar of poetry" individual poems in six different European languages were analysed. The relationship of equivalence and contrast was considered in the analysis. The relationships of equivalence described by Jakobson include

at least two different types of structure. Jakobson's poetic analyses are mostly concerned with establishing the mere presence of relationships of equivalences and only to a small degree with discussing their significance. Jefferson (1990:60) says more fundamentally, he suggested in the "Closing Statement" that they were the means whereby poetic message focuses attention on itself and thus in accordance with the Prague school theory.

According to Jakobson, in poetry not only phonological sequence but in the same way any sequence of semantic units strives to build an equation.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. Classification of Tseke's Poems According to Types and Themes

#### 3.1 Introduction

It has already been mentioned in 1.4 that it is difficult to classify poems as they share various characteristics. Poems share characteristics such as themes, structure and other poetic techniques. Sometimes a slavish imitation or simulation of traditional poetic types are evident in modern poetry. A poem may be classified as a sonnet and have the characteristics of a satire. At the same time a praise poem may have the characteristics of an ode. According to Pretorius et al (1988:29) a praise poem can be said to be a combination of an epic and an ode. A praise poem can be said to be a modern praise poem; but have some characteristics of a traditional praise poem. A poet is not restricted to a number of themes, because themes suit any type of poem, therefore poems are only classified for the sake of investigation.

#### 3.2 Classification of Poems According to Types

In the classification of Tseke's poems various aspects will be taken into account. The structure of a poem distinguishes it from others. All poems with fourteen

lines are called sonnets. Praise poems are distinguished from other poems by their poetic form. There is always a praised object or person. Praise names are given and ideas vary from stanza to stanza. An elegy is distinguished from other poems by its theme which is always death. A satire is known by the employment of sarcasm and irony. Criticism is evident in a satire. An epic is known by its length and is always characterized by the narrating of events. Poetic devices enable a reader to distinguish a particular poem from others.

Five types will be looked at. The five types are: praise poems, sonnets, elegies, satires and an epic.

### 3.2.1 Praise Poems

Tseke has written modern praise poems. Pretorius (1989:80) calls such poems prototypes. He goes further to say prototypes are modern N.Sotho poems which are thematically and structurally a slavish imitation or simulation of traditional poetic types and originate as poems written by individuals. Tseke is influenced by Matsepe but does not slavishly imitate him. Matsepe's language is highly figurative while Tseke uses everyday language in unfamiliar ways. Elaboration on Tseke's language usage will be fully discussed in 4.5. In Tseke's praise poems emphasis is not on the praised object but on the theme. Tseke has also adopted

Matsepe's style of addressing the praised person. The title of the poem is sometimes in an address form. Such poems are: "Go namanetona yaka, Go lerato, Go wa mošatešate, Go Raditladi" and others.

Tseke's praise poems do not start with the original formula of such poems. The N.Sotho original formula of:

Kgomo e a tsha!

E gangwa ke mang?

E gangwa ke nna.....

(The cow is burning!

Who will milk her?

She will be milked by me ..."

is not used. Tseke's poems are not restricted to human beings only. Other objects are also praised. Various praise names are given to praised objects and praised people. When bees are praised in "Therešo ke ya mang? (Who is telling the truth) they are referred to as "Bašomi ba bolo" (dedicated workers). The school in GaSekhukhune is given the praise name "Bokgoba-mahumo" (collected wealth).

Tseke is a modern poet, but the structure of his praise poems is not consistent. It varies from poem to poem. Though his praise poems are divided into stanzas, they always have regular and irregular stanzas. Most of the

poems in "Therešo ke ya mang? (Who is telling the truth) are divided into regular stanzas. Some poems like "Letswele la Rasephiri" (Rasiphiri's fist) are not divided into stanzas.

Bašomi ba bolo

Kgorong ya Mmampobe go theoga dikwankwetla  
Go tsupologa diroto sebušwa ke kgoši ya mosadi  
Go dumedišanwa ka ditšu le menatla  
Ke tsona dihulong sehloka tshele le bomenemene  
Batshepegi ba mmaseagela-motse-dithabeng

(Dedicated Workers

In the court of Mmampobe descends strong men  
Hardworkers ruled by a queen emerge  
They greet each other with wings and feet  
The trusted ones who built their homes in mountains)

From the above stanza the reader will realize that emphasis is on the theme and not bees as the praised object. Their characteristics and good relations are made known to the reader. Even though they are ruled by a queen, when summoned to the royal court they came in great numbers and in a happy mood. They are energetic and full of life. Their social life is made known. They shake hands and are loyal at all times to their leader.

The underlined words show the personality trait of bees.

Stanza two describes the happy mood in which bees work. They start their work early in the morning and the weather is favourable. Male bees called "masogana" enjoy their work as they sing harmoniously while working. Their movements are full of life. Stanza three is about the actual actions of the day - the collecting of honey. Bees collecting honey are portrayed as hardworking. Even though they do not have hands to carry they use their mouths, wings and shoulders. The manner in which honey is collected emphasizes their good social relations. Human beings cannot accept food collected in the same manner. Activities of bees are very impressive. The arrival of "masogana" (young men) is marked by jubilation of those who remained at home. They are met with jubilation by Mahloko's children the queen without a crown. The word "matsoga ka melodi" (Those who wake up in happy mood) expresses the happy mood of bees. Unlike human beings they never feel despondent. Bees do not use iron and hammer but are still capable of storing honey in a secure place.

The theme is briefly discussed to show that in a modern praise poem, emphasizes is on the importance of a theme and not the praised object.

Go lerato

Waka moya o go gopotše

O hlologetše sa gago sefahlego boreletšana

O nyakana le wena rato Lerato nkutshadi ya Thabakgone

O nyoretšwe wena mošidilodi wa mašošo a moya waka

(To Love

My spirit is thinking of you

It is longing for your smooth face

It searches for your love Lerato from Thabakgone

It seeks you the massager of my wringled spirit)

Longing for the beloved one is expressed by the employment of words such as "gopotše" (Thinking), "hlologetse" (Longing), "nyakana" (Searching), "nyoretšwe" (Thirsty). This longing can only be alleviated by receiving a photograph from Lerato. The distance between the lovers can be shortened by the arrival of a photo.

The loving one spends sleepless nights because he is experiencing loneliness. The loneliness is emphasized by the use of the phrase "peace had forcefully left my mind". After leaving him forcefully, peace caused the loving one's spirit to float aimlessly like an eagle without a destination. The tone of the poem changes. The characteristics of love are made known to Lerato. If

Lerato can know the characteristics of love she will know how to handle it. Love is appreciated. It is regarded as something delicate, without boundaries but so forceful that it is not afraid of anything. Nothing can stand in its way or hinder it on its way. No boundaries can be set as nothing can stop love. Emphasis is on the theme and not the praised object.

### 3.2.2 Satire

The person praised reveals human weakness. Irony and sarcasm are used in such poems. The author is not forced to use both figures of speech equally in the same poem. One figure of speech may be dominant in a particular poem. Pretorius et al (1988:44) define a satire as a poem incorporating the element of satire, that is, criticism folly or vice. Serudu (1991:74) says a satire is a poem in which a poet humiliates and exposes human weakness. A title of a poem can also be related to the contents of a poem where human weakness is revealed.

O diša bjang?

O diša bjang wena modiša wa mohlape

O hloma bjang ge o dula tša bonku ka marago

Afa, ruriruri seo se ka thabiša mongmehlape?

(How do you take care of your flock

Why do you practise nepotism  
Really really can that be pleasing  
to the owner of the flock?)

In the above stanza the poet is exposing the human weakness of leaders. The leader is referred to as "modiša" (shepherd). This shepherd is supposed to be well trained for his duties, but he acts like one who never was trained. A leader is supposed to treat people equally but in this case nepotism is practised. The use of the phrase "o dula tša bonku ka marago" (You practice nepotism) clearly shows that people are treated according to their wealth and background. As a leader who made an oath before he is annointed, he was supposed to treat people equally and he is not supposed to be questioned about his deeds. The leader also causes conflicts between married men and their wives. The extensiveness of conflict is expressed by the word "thulantšha" (Causes Conflict). It is ironical for the leader who is supposed to bring peace and act as mediator to cause conflict among his people. The poet uses sarcasm in stanza two. The leader is openly questioned about his oppression for poor people. He expects the impossibilities to be possibilities. Irony is also used to show the willingness of people who could resist oppression. Men are referred to as "bokgapa tša mpshikela (strong and boisterous men). Such men could come together and make their leader aware of his faults. It is ironical for such men to allow a leader to fall in love with their wives.

Ge o le modiša wa badiša  
Gona gopola la badiša leswao kholofetšo  
Wa mohlape modiša o ikgafe tseleng ya kholofetsano  
O di diše ka sa mmadišidiši  
O thibele bopholophoko phuti tša malala  
O di buše, o di bontshe ya mmapale tsela.

(If you are a shepherd of shepherds  
Then think of the shepherds' oath  
Your flock be on the road of hopefulness  
Look after it correctly,  
Stop it from meeting bad friends  
Control them, and show them the correct way).

Sarcasm is evident in the above stanza. If the leader is a shepherd of shepherds then he should be able to rectify his faults. At the same time the poet doubts the ability of this leader and reminds him of the oath undertaken. The leader is advised on how to overcome human weakness. The poet no longer questions the leader's ability but gives him some guidelines on how to bring about justice. It is the responsibility of the leader to drive the society towards a better way of living. The leader should act as an overseer and be able to teach the society the correct ways of living harmoniously with each other.

The frequent use of irony and sarcasm in "O diša bjang"

has brought human weakness to the fore. The poem is full of criticism and this makes it to be regarded as a satire.

Mong mabu ke mang?

Mong mabu ke lena bana ba mokgalabje

Mang ke mang lena bana ba tšiekgalaka

Yena yena ke mang, gobane ga go poo pedi šakeng.

(Who is the owner of the soil?)

Who is the owner of the soil children of the old man

Who is who you children of the black nation

Really, really, who is who as there can be no two rulers in one country)

Human weakness is expressed. Everybody would like to be a leader and this leads to the posing of the question "who is the owner of the soil?" the poet would like to know the real leader. The use of "mang ke mang" (who is who) exposes the poet's criticism of human behaviour. The real leader should come to the fore as no country can be ruled by two leaders. "Mongmabu" (owner of the soil) in N. Sotho refers to a king and it has always been known that a particular wife should produce a king; even though people know the real king they always claim to be kings. At the same time the poem is politically

inclined. There is a lot of confusion. Every political party would like to be regarded as a ruling party. Various events occur at different times. Each initiator of these events wishes to be recognised. Various eras are given names such as "Lehlabula" (autumn) and "bošigo" (night). Political parties are given names such as "boRaditladi".

Each political party is given the chance of being dominant. It will promote itself by promising people good things and sometimes be engaged in activities which will make people afraid of them. If people are afraid of them they will not oppose anything they do. No party will rule permanently. Another era will emerge and a particular party will be dominant. Time will also run out for the ruling party and another era with new leaders will emerge. Individuals regard themselves as leaders. Places are given names such as "lešoka" (forest). Two political parties stay in the same place but cannot share power. Instead of living harmoniously with each other, each party would like to be dominant and cannot share power with the other one. People wish to be what they are not and would never be that they wish to be.

Conflict leads to war. In the last stanza the poet addresses black people. It is about the situation between two leaders who are engaged in civil war. War is intensified, blood is flowing, it is gushing from big

wounds. The ironical part of it is the fact that there is no loser or winner but the fighters cannot stop fighting. The poem is full of human weakness. The poet presented a situation where blood is shed because of leadership conflicts. The last stanza also show human weakness. The poet does not refer directly to leaders of a country. Throughout the poem, the poet use irony and sarcasm. Human weakness is exposed throughout.

### 3.2.3 The Sonnets

All sonnets have the same structure. Sonnets are not divided into stanzas. All sonnets have fourteen lines. There are English and Italian sonnets. The father of the English sonnets is William Shakespear and the father of the Italian sonnets is Petrarch. Tseke has written a large number of sonnets. Sonnets written by this poet do not have all the characteristics of European sonnets. Serudu (1991:71) gives reasons why in N.Sotho sonnets cannot be exactly like European sonnets. The length of N.Sotho words differ from those of English and Afrikaans. Serudu goes further to say the length problem also makes it difficult for the poet to formulate a line with five jambuses. Pretorius (1989:94) says it should be noted that metrical pattern in N.Sot6ho poems is not determined in the same way as in European poetry. Tseke's sonnets are characterised by the external and internal structure. They all have fourteen lines which can be divided into an octave and a

sestet. At the same time some can be grouped into three quatrains and a couplet. According to Serudu (1991:71) in the first part, the octave, the poet narrates or explains an event and the second part is related to the actual situation experienced in life. It is possible to distinguish different sonnets in Tseke's poetry.

An English sonnet will be analysed first:

An English sonnet consist of three quatrains and a rhyming couplet. Rhyme in "Ntlo ye" (This house) is initial rhyming. It is difficult to classify some of Tseke's poems as English sonnets because some do not have rhyme schemes. It is not often easy to find final rhyme schemes in Tseke's poetry. Tseke is also not forced by any rule to employ all poetic devices found in the English sonnets. Though final rhyming is not evident in the sonnet to be analysed it does have some characteristics of a sonnet. Its structure meets some of the characteristics laid down and has fourteen lines:

Ntlo ye

1. Ntlo ye ga se mantlwantlwane selo sa bomapimpana
2. E apere kganya e a galalela
3. Go yona mekopa le mesetlaphala ga ya swanela go  
tsena

4. Ge e se fela g e e ipona molato godimo ga bja moya  
bofokodi
5. Ntlo ye ke sebothata sa boMosamariawakgaugelo
6. Ke šaka la bokarakhulu dinku tša go gata ka boya  
bophelong
7. Le nyaka tšonatšona nku tša tumelothata sekgereša  
dithaba
8. Gobane ge e le bophiri bona ruriruri ke a le botša
9. Ba itshwaretše megohlo sa koša ke lerole
10. Ye ntlo ga se lepatlelo, la matlampulele
  1. Ke sedibakgolo sa mohlape wa mengmehlape
  2. Go sona go nwa nku tšeo di nyoretšwego Lentšu
  3. A sona meetsemoya ke makgonatšohle
  4. A fodiša bohloko bja kgoteleditlaišego pelong tša  
bahlaki

(This House

1. This house is not a playground for small children
2. It is embraced in holiness
3. Evil doers are not supposed to enter this place
4. Unless they repent and acknowledge their faults
5. This house is a fort for the good Samaritans
6. This kraal belongs to kind people who never sin
7. Real believers are needed by this kraal
8. Because evil doers really, really I am telling you
9. They are living in a vacuum, they are not aware  
of other events
10. This house is not a playground

1. It is a big Well where God's flock go
2. They drink to their satisfaction the word of God
3. Its spiritual waters can heal all sorts of ailments
4. It heals emotional and spiritual problems of the poor

The first quatrain is clearly distinguishable from the rest of the sonnet. It describes the church as a holy place which should be respected. It is a place where children should not play. The actual meaning of the quatrain does not refer to children but adults who are not Christians. Line four complements line three by saying that evil does may only enter this holy place when they repent. The second quatrain is also distinguishable from the remaining six lines; but the eighth line is closely tied up with the ninth line. The second quatrain refers to the church as a fort of good Samaritans. It is also referred to as a kraal in which hyenas will not feel comfortable. Pretenders are referred to as hyenas. The third quatrain is closely tied up with the second one as the eighth line flows into the nineth line. Two views are brought to the fore. Firstly the reader is made aware of those who got to church to go to impress their friends who do not understand the word of God and the meaning of hymns. The second view about this building is that people cannot while away their time in it. Those who feel that it is a resting place would not benefit

spiritually.

The couplet brings about a new image. In the three quatrains the poet concentrated on the building and its activities. The last two lines narrate the value of sermons which heal people physically, emotionally and spiritually. The sermon is referred to as "meetsemoya" i.e. "meetse" (water) satisfies people physically and "moya" (spirit) satisfies people spiritually and emotionally. "Meetsemoya" can heal any infection irrespective of its intensiveness.

The couplet has a rhyming sound. The two lines start with: A ....

A .....

The Italian Sonnet

This type of sonnet is divided into two parts. The two parts are an octave and a sestet. The poem to be discussed has no formal rhyme scheme.

Tsa bogoši le borena

1. Bogoši bjo ke bja magoši boSekhukhune le Marota
2. Ke bja mošatešate wa sešatešate
3. Ke bja bomorwa Modise badiša ba ditšhabatšaba
4. Ba lopantšwe le bjona go tloga badimong

5. A bona madi ke a šego, ba šegofaditšwe ko Yolešego
6. borena bjo ke bja Mna Sebakaborena
7. Ke bja boMmagohlomela baisa hlaadithata
8. Bo na le lešata, lehloyo le lehufa
9. Gobane go le lešaka go bewa ya kgomo ...
10. Bo thopša ke boMmakwepea baji ba dibete tša  
dibatane
11. Bogoši bjo ga se borena
12. Borena bjo ke hloya ya bogoši bja magosi
13. Ka gona tša bogoši le borena di a fapana
14. Ke ditshwantšo di bjalo ka mokopu le lerotse

- (1. Kingship is for kings the Sekhukhune and Company and  
Marota
2. It belongs to the real royal court
3. It belongs to son of Modise shepard of nations
4. They were blessed by their ancestors from birth
5. They have royal blood, they have been blessed by  
the Holy one
6. Leadership belongs to Mr Sebakaborena
7. It belongs to Magohlomela and company, hard nuts  
to crack
8. It is noisy, full of jealousy and hatred
9. Because in this kraal the bull annoints itself ....
10. It is annexed by brave men Mmakaipea and Company
11. Kingship is not leadership
12. Leadership develops from kingship
13. Therefore, kingship and leadership differs

14. They differ like chalk from cheese)

The octave does not have a fixed rhyme scheme but creates a different image from the sestet. The poet brings confusion experienced by people to the fore. People do not know the difference between kingship and leadership. The first line says:

Bogoši ke bja magoši boSekhukhune sa Marota  
(Kingship belongs to the Sekhukhune's of Marota  
class)

Sekhukhune is known as a chief not a leader. Kingship cannot be acquired as all kings have royal blood; they have been blessed by their ancestors. Leaders are referred to as "boMmakaipea" (Those who anoint themselves). The deverbative is derived from the verb stem "ipea" (putting oneself in a particular position). Leadership is acquired as it is not inherited. Leadership belongs to "bosebakaborena" and "boMmagohlomela". The first compound word means those who fight for leadership and the latter means those who become engaged in activities in which they are not supposed to. The octave is concluded by the characteristics of leadership.

The sestet is about actual life situation. In life kings are coronated as kingship is inherited. Ancestors have

blessed them. Those who wish to annex kingship end up as leaders and not kings. Leadership is inferior to kingship. Leaders are subordinates of the chief at all times. Kingship is compared with pumpkin and leadership with a melon.

#### 3.2.4 An Elegy

An elegy is a poem in which the poet mourns the death of someone he was very close to. Such a person played an important role in the life of a poet. The person may be a relative or a close friend. The poet describes his sorrow and bereavement. An elegy can also be about death itself. The manner in which death strikes unexpectedly can be described. The cruelty and bereavement caused by death can also be described. Tseke does not refer to death as "death". In one poem death is referred to as "mahlatša a meso" (Events of the day) and in the other he refers to it as "Motseta wa badimo" (The messenger of the ancestors). Various titles are used when death is referred to.

Mahlatša a meso

(The events of the day)

The title of the poem expresses the poet's feelings. News received on that particular morning cannot be easily accepted. The news have shattered the poet's life that

is why they cannot be easily assimilated or swallowed. The word "mahloko" (sorrow) is a greeting for the bereaved family. In N.Sotho when one visits the bereaved family one does not say "thobela, re a lotšha" (Good morning/day). The use of the word "Mahloko" (sorrow) shows that the visitor sympathises with the bereaved family. The synonyms "mahloko, mahlomola, masetlapelo" mean sorrow or bereavement. They are used to emphasize pain experienced by those who lost their loved ones. Death is something that comes unexpectedly but the poet accepts that it was God's wish. Death is compared with spilled water, broken clay pot which cannot be stitched like a calabash. Death is natural, and it is natural that people should die. Death does not only inconvenience members of the family but the society has also lost a useful member. The striking of death can lead to an uncontrollable situation where adults cry out openly and do not feel ashamed of crying. The funeral services are also catered for in this elegy. The poet bids Toki farewell. The poet was very close to Toki who suddenly passed away.

Motseta wa badimo (The messenger of the ancestors)

This poem is about death itself. Different names are given to death. Death is referred to as unexpected visitor, dark cloud, dark shadow and thunderstorm. Sorrow caused by death varies from individual to

individual. Death is regarded as something that does not discriminate between individuals. It strikes anywhere any time. Members of the family can all be called to higher services at the same time. Where the whole family dies, the poet calls death "maswielela" (sweeper who never leaves any dirt behind). Death's cruelty is also made known. Death is personified when the poet says "Bošoro bja lerumo la gagage bo kgaola matswalo" (The cruelty of your assegai is shocking). Pain caused by death is compared with one caused by a sharp assegai and leads to shock. Death even defeats men. They are also deeply affected by death and their facial expressions show how deeply they have been touched. Death affects men, women and children. Though death is cruel, ancestors use it as a messenger. Death snatches beautiful people and beauty disappears with them. Death started long ago. Even Adam in the garden of Eden was eventually snatched by death. Up to now, death is still actively involved. It strikes every now and then. Death is regarded as something in conflict with life.

### 3.2.5 An Epic

Pretorius et al (1988:44) say in epic poetry, the story element is the most important criterion. Kreuzer (1955:232) says the story must be a single story, structurally unified, there may be any number of digressive episodes, but these must be structurally

related to the story, whose main forward movement remains dominant in the poem. Pretorius et al go further to say under epic poetry we also distinguish the ballad.

An epic can be said to be a long narrative poem. Pretorius (1988:107) says in modern context narrative poems have also been composed as written creation. In an epic a story about different characters is narrated. An epic can be basically regarded as poetic creation because of the use of poetic devices but can be analysed as part of Northern Sotho narrative art creations. Serudu (1991:60) says an epic is a long narrative poem in which characters and events are mentioned. The events of an epic are not complicated because it is a poem. If events can be complicated like in novels, the poem will be too long. It is possible to distinguish main characters from others. A character symbolizes something. In an epic, a symbol is always evident. N.Sotho poets have written a number of epics. It seems as if Tseke's epic "Maremegokgo seatleng se" (The wheel of retribution) is the longest as it has eighty one pages. The characters Phele and Thelele symbolize justice and injustice respectively. In some cases themes of epics centre around love, passion, disaster and death. Tseke's epic is analysed in order to show the reader that it meets the requirements of an epic.

"Maremegokgo seatleng se" (the wheel of retribution)

which literally means the mixture of saliva and tears spitten in this hand is sub-divided into twenty six chapters. The twenty six chapters can also be regarded as digressive episodes and are structurally related to the story. Each chapter has its specific narration but they all form one complete unit. The structure of this poem will be fully discussed in chapter 5. In Northern Sotho when one says "ke tshwela mare seatleng" (I spit on this hand) it means that one whom these words are directed at, will be doomed for the rest of his life. At the same time it is also believed that if one shed tears "rothiša dikeledi" (shed tears) because of a particular individual's deeds, that person will be doomed for the rest of his or her life. If one intentionally causes pain, the spitting of saliva and shedding of tears will affect his live. A combination of both tears and saliva lead to intensified doom which will lead to tragedy.

In the poem "Maremegokgo seatleng se" (The wheel of retribution) various events are narrated throughout. Thelele and Phele met and become lovers. Phele conceived and Thele claimed that he is not responsible for her pregnancy. The matter is taken to the royal kraal where elders try to solve this matter. Thelele refused responsibility and the matter was postponed until the birth of the child. In Northern Sotho we always say "re tla bona ka namane" (the child will be the decisive factor). If the child looks like the man or some of his

relatives, then it is his child. It is also surprising that, in most cases such babies look exactly like their fathers. In the case of Thelele and Phele, Ntshebeng, the baby was a replica of the father.

After the birth of the child, Thelele was summoned to the royal kraal. He did not turn up. Young men brought him to the royal court by force. Though the baby looked like him, he still refused responsibility of fathering the baby. He even pretended to be having a fit in order to prove that he is not the father. While people were surprised by his faked fit, he stood up and ran away. After this incident, Phele silently made an oath by spitting saliva and it mixed with tears in her hand. The ancestors accepted her plea and Thelele's life was from that moment doomed.

Line seven of chapter thirteen is the expression of how Phele made an oath. At the same time line eleven and twelve expresses how people like Thelele bluff themselves into believing that they are cleverer than others, forgetting that the wheel of life is at some point going to turn against them. Thelele son of Mathaithai moved from a frying pan into the fire by leaving his country. He moved from place to place. He was always unfortunate. The spitting of saliva and shedding of tears moved with him. He was even arrested for theft. He met and settled with Legolehubedu. They were lodgers

at Rosemaria's place. Thelele bought new furniture and the girlfriend disappeared with everything he owned. He moved to Makotopong where he met Mmalehu. They were blessed, and Mmalehu gave birth and the child died suddenly. After some time Mmalehu conceived again. They were blessed with a healthy baby who also died unexpectedly. Mmalehu conceived again this time she delivered a stillborn, For the fourth time Mmalehu conceived but this time she miscarried. Thelele went to a witchdoctor who told him about "maremegokgo" (Saliva and tears) of a particular lady. Unless Thelele asks for forgiveness from this woman, nothing will be good for him. He parted with Mmalehu and went back home. His mother was already dead. He went to stay with his father and stepmother but the parents were not prepared to accept him because of what he did to Phele. Thelele went to the chief's kraal and he was badly treated because of what he did to Phele. Life was so unbearable that he decided to commit suicide. Tragedy followed him until he met his death.

Events in this poem are narrated to show the reader that "Maremegokgo" meets the requirement of an epic.

### 3.3 Classification of Tseke's Poems according to their Themes

In poetry the theme is regarded as the main idea of the poem. Poetic devices functioning in the poem contribute

towards the developing of a theme. Sometimes, it may be difficult to interpret the theme of a poem because of it being complex. Various themes can be observed in Tseke's poetry. It is possible for poems to share the same theme but events or actions may vary from poem to poem. This is also applicable to Tseke's poetry and this will be discovered in the analysis of various poems. Brooks et al (1976:208) says as far as poetry is concerned, an idea is worthless unless it is dramatized in the poem. It is also important to note that the theme of a poem amounts to a comment on human values as an interpretation of life. It should be borne in mind that no attitude or interpretation will invalidate a poem. Some words do not mean the same thing to all people. Sometimes an experience of something related to the theme of the poem may colour the interpretation of that particular theme. Brooks et al (1976:272) go further to say in order to come to terms with the essential theme of a particular poem the reader should pay maximum attention to imagery. Tseke did not only experiment with new poetic forms, he also covers a broad field of themes. From the 109 short poems and one epic, various themes have been catered for. Themes include: education, money, love, personality traits such as bravery and jealousy, death, marriage, leadership conflicts and religion. Religion is subdivided into three categories. The three categories are: Christianity, ancestral world and Greek gods. The listed themes will be given attention in this work. They are not the only themes covered by Tseke.

Peoms sharing the same idea are analysed as follows: in the case where more than two poems share the same theme, only two will be given attention. Under personality traits two poems will be given attention. One poem will cater for jealousy while the other will cater for bravery. Poems related to religion will be analysed according to their sub-categories. One poem per sub-category will be analysed.

3.2.1 Poems sharing the theme "love" will be discussed below

La Dikeledi go Marangrang (Dikeledi's complaint to Marangrang)

The first three stanzas will be briefly discussed before the analysis of the fourth stanza.

Marangrang is exposed of his deceit and this exposure will give the jilted lover peace of mind. Marangrang is addressed as a womanizer. The two met at high school and were close friends. The jilted lover learnt many things from Marangrang and this made her to have confidence in him. Stanza four is about how the deep rooted friendship developed into a love affair. At first the young woman did not want to lose a bosom friend, but Marangrang's ability to express himself convinced her. The love affair resulted in pregnancy. Marangrang fooled the young woman by sending his parents to make marriage arrangements. Promises were

not kept as Marangrang moved to big cities and never came back. Love brought unhappiness to the jilted lover.

#### Lerato (Love)

At first love is addressed as something very precious to those who have experienced it. It is compared with diamonds. Characteristics of love are made known to the reader. Love is compared with death as it strikes unexpectedly. One cannot say I want to fall in love today. Love can bring both happiness and unhappiness. The beloved one may also experience rejection without prior notice. Love can also cause hatred between people. Love also has various personality traits. Personality traits include pride and being sure of itself. Love is seen as someone who discriminates between people as it brings happiness to others and unhappiness to the unfortunate ones.

The two poems "La dikeledi go Marangrang" (Dikeledi's complaint to Marangrang) and "Lerato" (Love) share the same theme "love" but the contents differ. In the first example the young woman suffered because of love. She was promised love which brought her unhappiness, precious as it may be. Individuals are mentioned. In the second example no individuals are mentioned. Deeds of love are made known to the reader. Love is regarded as an instrument that can bring happiness and unhappiness to different people at the same time. These are not the only poems with love as a

theme.

3.2.2 Two poems sharing the theme death will be discussed below:

Motseta wa badimo (The messenger of ancestors)

Death is addressed as a messenger of ancestors who snatches happiness unexpectedly. Death is symbolised as a dark cloud overhanging above all living beings, therefore no living being can defeat or trick death. Death's cruelty is exposed to readers. No specific names are mentioned and those who were affected by death are not mentioned. Death is regarded as an uninvited visitor who strikes at all human beings.

Sello sa tshuololo (The plea of a parentless child)

The name of the person claimed by death is made known to the reader. It is a woman who has passed away and leaves a small boy who is parentless. In N. Sotho "tšhiwane" refers to a child with one parent, while "tšhuololo" refers to one without both parents. Death deprived the young boy motherly love experienced by other children. He moves from place to place as relatives take turns in bringing him up. Various ways in which death claim the family members are explained. Some died during the war, it is possible for the father to have died during this time. Some were killed

by colera and some by other ailments. Events caused by death makes the young boy lose confidence in the ancestors. The young boy's experience about child abuse are clearly made known to the reader. Pain caused by whipping turns the boy into a stubborn person. The young boy curses the day on which he was born. As a grown up he wishes his mother was still alive so that he could give her all the good things.

When the two poems are compared one will realize that in the first poem cruelty is stressed. Death has power over all living beings. Individuals are not mentioned. In the second poem individuals are mentioned. The reader's emotions are affected because of pain and suffering experienced by the parentless boy. The personality of the dead woman are made know to the reader.

### 3.2.3 Education is the next theme to be given attention.

Sealogane (The graduate)

"Sealogane" is graduate. The graduate's name is not mentioned. He obtained his secondary education at Bethesda college of Education. Up to the late sixties colleges in the Northern Transvaal catered for academic and professional qualifications in the same institution. The new name for Bethesda is Kwena-Moloto College of Education. The graduate received the junior and senior degrees in

South Africa. His research project for a Masters degree was don abroad. The graduate is only interested in the acquiring of univeristy qualifications only.

Bakgobamahumo bja Sekhukhune (Collected wealth of Sekhukhune)

It is about the establishment of a tertiary institution. The geographical position of this institution is clearly stated. Education is regarded as wealth that cannot be taken from the individual who acquired it. Students at this instittution are free to choose streams they wish to follow. Illiterate people are invited to the institution and adult education is also catered for. Involvement of students at this institution will lead them to civilization and responsible adulthood. The large number of registered students do not affect the running of the institution. All those who receive education at this particular institution are knowlegeable. Religious teachings are also catered for. Age limit is not considered.

The first poem "Sealogana" (graduate) is about a particlar individual who has acquired various university qualifications. The graduate's name is not mentioned and the benefits of being educated are not mentioned. The second poem is about an institution. Individuals are not mentioned. The benefits of being educated are mentioned. The institution caters for various qualifications.

Education is regarded as wealth.

### 3.4.2 Personality Traits

In the analysis of personality traits jealousy and bravery will be given attention. In this case reference will be made to two poems, one dealing with bravery and the other with jealousy.

Thamaga ya Mafonko<sup>†</sup>

This is a praise poem and ideas are grouped according to stanzas. The first idea presented to the reader is the personality of the praised person. The praised person is addressed as "Thamaga ya mafonko", the word "thamaga" means wild cat and "mafonko" means nostrils. The praised person regards himself as a tiger because of strength and bravery. The second idea presented is the confrontation of the tiger with the leopard. An argument between the two leads to a fight. The strong and brave tiger defeats the leopard. The other idea presented to the reader is how ordinary people feel unsafe in the presence of the tiger. The last idea is about war which erupted between the tiger's clan and the other country. The tiger was the leader of warriors. Death smelled. Warriors on the side of the enemy were defeated. All were killed. The tiger was never defeated throughout his life. Bravery is displayed throughout the poem by this

particular individual. A tiger symbolises bravery and the praised person's deeds also symbolized bravery.

### Tseba

"Tseba" (jealousy) is regarded as something that can be acquired by individuals. It becomes rooted in one's heart and affects the life of its victims. Jealousy causes conflict between people as its victims never appreciate. Jealousy is man's greatest enemy. Its victims lead a haphazard life as they are drastically affected. It has power to claim victims within different societies. Jealousy does not discriminate between people, as people of different races, colour or creed are affected. Religious beliefs cannot be said to be stumbling blocks for jealousy.

The two personality traits cannot be compared as they are not similar though they are both destructive.

### 3.2.5 Religion

Religion will be discussed under three sub-headings. The first sub-heading to be discussed is Christianity.

Dinku ntwengkgethwa (Sheep in a holy fight)

Christianity is expressed throughout the poem. Members

of different churches such as Zionist, Methodist, Anglican, Apostolic, Lutheran and Roman Catholic are addressed. Members of the Zionist church are encouraged to remain hopeful while members of the Methodist church are told to remain faithful. Members of the Mother's union are encouraged to remain faithful and attend church services. Church leaders should not panic when ever they are faced with difficulties. All followers are promised eternal life provided they remain faithful and hopeful in difficulties.

Go badimo bešo

"Go badimo bešo" (to my ancestors) expresses the relationship of the poet and his ancestors. He is not happy about the ill-treatment by his ancestors. The poet wonders what might have infuriated them because he sticks to their rules, even his children are named after them. The poet would like to know if he has wronged them in any way. If his parents have wronged them, then to err is human. The poet is expected to honour the ancestors by offering them a white goat. This expectation causes misery as the poet does not have goats. His late mother "Ngwato a Ngwato" (Ngwato of Ngwato) should act as mediator. "BoMogologadi" (Mogologadi and company) should bless him as he needs peace in his mind.

The last category is about Morpheus the Greek god of

dreamers. Morpheus descends at night and leads various dreams to their various places. In their dreams, people are promised silver and gold. Various expectations are fulfilled in dreams. People are led to greener pastures. Those who have never been truly loved experience true love in dreams. Towards dawn dreams come to an end. Some become disillusioned and some become shocked when they realize that it was just a dream and not reality.

The sub-categories cannot be compared as they differ vastly.

#### 3.2.6 Money matters

In the poem "Tshwaatshwaa" (Money) money is regarded as the key to greener pastures. All people love money. Money has two sides. One side brings happiness, the other brings unhappiness. The more money you have, the more you want. Money causes owners to spend sleepless nights. The rich are never satisfied with the money they have, they spend sleepless nights counting their monies. The poor also spend sleepless nights wondering where to get money from. The modern youth is also affected by money. It brings conflict between friends. Money affects justice. Through money law breakers walk free in the streets.

Tša Mabele le Mabejabejane (Genuine and forged money)

This poem is about real and forged money. All bank notes were genuine until the establishment of rands. Monies of different countries i.e. American Dollar, Italian lire and South African Rands are genuine. Coins are also regarded as genuine. The five rand note, ten, twenty and fifty bank notes consist of genuine and forged money. These notes can be easily forged by printers, and therefore people should watch out for such money and be able to distinguish between genuine and forged money.

When two poems are compared one will realize that in the first poem money is an instrument that can bring happiness and unhappiness. Money affects emotions and justice. In the second poem the reader is told about money of different countries. Bank notes presently circulating in South Africa consist of genuine and forged money. No specific events caused by money are mentioned. "Mabele" (crop) is genuine money and "mabejabejane" (mixed crops) is forged money. No specific names are given in the two poems.

### 3.2.7 Marriage

"Ke be ke le gona" (I was a witness), this poem is about a wedding feast but has been classified under marriage.

Before the wedding feast, the African Culture of paying "lobola" was catered for. The poet acted as mediator

before the wedding day. Various people were formally invited. The chief, mediator, priest and people in the village witnessed the wedding feast. Food and drinks were given to all.

The mediator was there when the couple moved to their new home. The mediator helped them prepare their new home. After some time conflict struck. The new born baby causes conflict. People claim that the new born baby is fathered by somebody else other than the husband. This child is referred to as "ga se ya saka le" (it does not belong to this kraal). When conflict erupts the mediator is no longer invited. He relies on the grapevine. Everybody supports the husband, but the poet doubts this as the Almighty is only one who knows.

Go namanetona yaka (to my male-calf)

This poem is about advice given on marriage. The father advises his son on marriage. The son should take time to know everything about life. The father regards marriage as a heavy cross. The son's future will depend on the discussion with his father. Marriage has advantages and disadvantages. It is regarded as an object that can easily trap young men. Many have been taught a lesson by rushing into marriage. Only capable men can stick to marriage.

In the first poem on marriage, marriage has already taken place. People witness the wedding feast. After some time the couple experience marital problems. The mediator is no longer invited when the couple is faced with problems. The cause of conflict is known. In the second poem advice is given to a son, where the son is warned, not to rush into marriage, as those who do rush into marriage end up faced with difficulties which may lead to the separation of the married couple.

3.2.8 Township life as a theme will be discussed below:

Modern life is discussed under township life. Life style of people in urban areas and people in homelands differ. People living in townships do not change their lifestyle when they move to homelands whereas those in homelands change their life style when they move to urban areas.

La tšhwenegatšanaputswa thuding (An old female baboon in a corner)

The young man from the homeland meets and marries a township young woman. Rosemarie leads a modern life and does not change her life style when she moves to the homelands. Her in-laws disapproves of her life-style. All women wear traditional clothes but Rosemarie wears modern clothes. According to her in-laws's view of life,

she has no respect for them or her husband. She is expected to respect her husband and be his slave like other young women in the village. Rosemarie is regarded as a bully and her in-laws wish their ancestors were still alive so that they should witness their daughter-in-law's deeds. Rosemarie returns to the cities before she could be taken to the initiation school. Rosemarie brought township life to the place where it was not appreciated.

Ye ntlo (This house)

"Ye ntlo" (This house) is an example of a house where township life is practiced. It is a typical shebeen house where evil deeds are practised. During the day the shebeen house is frequented by drunkards and evil men. Those who regard themselves as bosses visit this house at night, are merciless killers who enjoy killing. Such people kill others without a valid reason. They do not value life. Money plays an important role as the shebeen queen never runs out of liquor.

In the first poem, modern life is practised at a wrong place. Rosemarie is seen as an outcast; as she is the only one who leads a modern life. Whilst in the second poem, township life is practised in the correct place. Those who visit the shebeen house believe that they are cleverer than those who do not. The shebeen has lost its

dignity while the rural areas visited by Rosemarie was affected by her visit.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. Imagery

#### 4.1 Introduction

Imagery is a poetic device employed by poets in their different works of art. Pretorius cites Cuddon (1980:322-323) as saying the word imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thought, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extrasensory experience.

Moleleki (1988:66) says the existence and significance of imagery as a literary communicative device has been an acknowledged fact. Pretorius (1989:31) cites Cuddon (1980) as saying the terms of image and imagery have many connotations and meanings. Presently it is difficult to give a cut and dried answer for the definition of the terms image and imagery. Ntuli (1984:150) say imagery can range from purely denotative descriptions to highly figurative ones.

Cohen (1973:51) says the term imagery is vital to the study of poetic style and should be used to include both images and figures of speech. According to Ntuli (1984:152) the effective use of imagery is responsible for the success and endurance of a poet's work of art. Imagery as a term

covers a broad field. Pretorius (1989:31) cites Cuddon (1980) as saying many images are conveyed by figurative language. It is possible to use imagery in literal and figurative language. Moleleki (1988:66) says imagery is literal when images are taken in their natural or strict meaning. Imagery is figurative when the meaning is the extension of the image presented. Moleleki (1988:66) includes repetition in imagery as he says it evokes imagery as well. Ntuli (1984:150-205) handles imagery and repetition separately.

Figures of speech play an important role when imagery is used figuratively. It is also possible to use proverbs and idioms as vehicles of imagery.

According to Moleleki (1988:120) the poet's imagery is related to the existential situation of his fellow human beings. It is possible to identify a predominant imagery in a poet's work of art. Imagery as a literary communication device may be used to express disapproval of actions within a particular society. Through poetry protest and disapproval of such actions is possible. Imagery is the tool through which unity of all created things is recognised.

Tseke employed imagery as a poetic device. In the employment of this literary communication device imagery has been used literally and figuratively.

The title of the poem 'Mahlatša a meso' from "Moletesekuba tseleng ye" is an example of imagery used figuratively. The title as used by Tseke refers to 'The events of the day'. Events of the day come with bad news of death. Such news will not be easily accepted by their receivers, the main idea of comparing death with 'Mahlatša' (that which has been vomited) is to express the unbearable pain of being forced to swallow what has been brought up. It shows the unbearable pain experienced by those who lost one of the family members.

The title of the poem 'Barei ba Kubu bodibeng' (Fishers of hippopotamus in a pool) is another example in which imagery has been used figuratively. The deverbative noun 'barei' (fishers) refers to people involved in horse betting. 'Kubu' (hippopotamus) refers to race horses while 'bodibeng' (pool) refers to various race courses.

The idea of using the above words is to stress the fact that horse betting is a tricky game. The difficulties encountered by those who bet horses is compared with those who wish to fish a hippopotamus.

In the example below imagery is used literally. The word 'moletesekuba' (cul-de-sac) from 'Moletesekuba tseleng ye' makes the reader aware of the fact that a dead lock is always encountered whenever changes are to take place within a country. People move in circles without finding

solutions to their problems. Confusion is evident at negotiating tables throughout the years and such a situation may go on until the year 2000.

Tseke's imagery can be related to his existence with his fellow men. Events or actions in the poem 'Na lefase o lebile kae' (Earth, where are you going) stresses what Tseke is experiencing. The peaceful land is gradually turning into a battlefield. Violence is dominant. Respect is long dead and buried. Young girls are rushing into motherhood and loose morals are no longer criticised. Imagery is used to express the disapproval of events taking place.

Imagery in 'Mongmabu ke mang? (who is the owner of the land/soil?) is associated with human experience. The fight between those engaged in leadership conflict is disapproved of by Tseke.

Figures of speech are also employed to evoke images. This aspect will be fully discussed in 4.3.

#### 4.2 Senses used to evoke images

Images are conveyed by language usage. Moleleki (1988:65) says images are mental impressions that symbolize in various ways the things and qualities of the external world in which we live. Images may appeal to more than one sense

at the same time. According to Moleleki (1988:67) when an image appeals to more than one sense at once, it also refers to one sense in terms of another sense, creating what is referred to as synaesthetic imagery. There are different views regarding the conveying of images. Pretorius (1989:31) cites Cuddon (1980) as saying many images are conveyed by figurative language. Ntuli (1984:154) says wrong selection of words can bring an image that was not desired by an author. When the poem 'Umamina' is analyzed by Ntuli (1984:154) the beautiful shape of a mamba's head and neck is compared to that of the beautiful and shapely Mamina. Instead of arousing admiration and affection, it generates fear and revulsion. Many connotations and meanings attached to this term will not be given attention in this work.

Cuddon (1980:323) indicates that an image may be visual (pertaining to the eye); olfactory (smell); tactile (touch); auditory (hearing); gustatory (taste); abstract and kinaesthetic (pertaining to the sense of movement and bodily effort). The writer is free to draw images from various fields. There is no law restricting the writer from various fields. There is no law that restricts the writer to a particular field from which to draw images. The use of images stimulates the reader's mind.

Moleleki (1988:68) says the use of images gives one a glimpse into the workings of the writer's mind. Some

images are better understood when viewed against the socio-political-cultural backdrop. This statement does not mean that when the writer's work of art is viewed against such backdrop, his field of drawing images is limited. The use of this poetic device by Tseke will be analysed according to categories identified by Moleleki in the analysis of Maphalla's poetry. Some sub-categories will not be discussed as the two poets are unique individuals and so is their work of art. The two categories are:

- i) images associated with human experience; and
- ii) images associated with nature.

Moleleki further sub-divided the two categories; but in this work the sub-categories will not be mentioned.

Tseke has the ability of evoking different images about the same object. Images drawn from various poems revealed Tseke's likes and dislikes.

#### 4.2.1 Images associated with human experience

Images associated with human experience relate to various aspects such as pain and suffering, ancestral word, Christianity and leadership conflicts. The listed images are not the only ones in Tseke's work of art. They will be discussed in this work.

The two poems 'Ntlo ye' and 'Ye ntlo' are about the same object 'ntlo' (building). The two appear on the same page in the same volume 'Moletesekuba tseleng ye'. Different images about the object 'ntlo' are conjured up in the reader's mind.

Ntlo ye

E apere kganya, e a galalela  
(It is in brightness, it is holy)

The use of the words 'Kganya' (brightness) and 'galalela' (holiness) conjure up in the reader's mind a picture of a building glittering in brightness. Silence is dominant. Only certain people have the right to enter the building. The building is dignified and people passing by should not enter this building without soul searching first. The holiness of the building is made evident. Images evoked about this building are related to Tseke's religious life.

In 'Ye ntlo' the use of the demonstrative 'ye' (this) before the noun 'ntlo' (building) gives the reader negative impressions about the building.

The use of the word 'moagokgoparara' (big building) conjures up in the reader's mind a very big ugly building. The phrase '... go bobola tsa semana dinose'

(the humming of a swarm of bees) conjures up in a reader's mind a picture of two images at the same time. A large number of people making a lot of noise is pictured in the reader's mind, visual and auditory images are created for at the same time. Images evoked about this building are related to Tseke's dislikes. A shebeen house is a place where loose morals are practiced and the poet disapproves of it.

Mongmabu ke mang (Who is the owner of the soil)

Images evoked in this poem relate to leadership conflicts. The phrase 'ga di lwe ntwaputšane di tsene ntwengkgomo' (They are not engaged in cold war but in civil war). The use of the words 'ntwaputšane' and 'ntwengkgomo' build up in the reader's mind a real war situation where the two parties are using arms. The phrase 'madi ke lelungung' (blood is gushing out) evokes two types of images in the reader's mind. The gushing out of blood from big wounds is a combination of the visual and kineasthetic images. The reader's body contorts in convulsion at the sight of gushing blood.

Mobjadi

Images created in this poem relate to unhappiness experienced by some people in their married life. The use of the phrase 'ke lomile ke mpša ya ka' (I was bitten by my dog) implies that pain and suffering is intensified

by the fact that my own trusted dog has bitten me. Pain experienced by the sufferer is compared to a dog's bite. In this case a reader who was never bitten by a dog will not have the same picture in his mind than the one who was. Pain evoked in the reader's mind will vary from person to person.

Another example where experience is needed for the creation of a clear picture in the reader's mind is:

'Mabonemašapo' (Divining bones)

A wele ...

A rakaletše ...

(They are fallen ...

They sit in different positions)

The use of the phrase 'A wele ...' appeals to the auditory senses, whilst 'a rakaletse...' appeals to the visual senses of the reader. A picture of divining bones is conjured up in the reader's mind. The word 'rakaletse' gives a picture of divining bones thrown at random in order to predict properly. The bones are in different positions. Some are lying on their sides, some are facing down and others facing up. Each position predicts a specific event or has a particular meaning. The slogan 'a wele ...' is used to honour the bones so

that they can predict properly. Auditory images are evoked in the reader's mind. Images evoked in the reader's mind will vary from person to person depending on experience.

#### 4.2.2 Images associated with nature

Images associated with nature relate to landscape, thunderstorm and ants. The three are not the only images associated with nature; they are the only ones to be discussed in this work.

Motse o gona mmotong

Images evoked in the reader's mind relate to landscape. Two different types of images are evoked in the readers mind. The visual images differ. Images created during the day differ from those at night.

Mosegare o tagafatšwa ...

Bošego o panypanyiša ...

(During the day it is brightened

At night it nictitates ...)

The word 'tagafatšwa' stresses the brightness which implies beauty. The village is beautified by its geographical position and the sunshine. Street lamps referred to as torches beautify this village at night. A picture of a beautiful place, beautified by colourful

street lamps is created in the reader's mind. The colourful street lamps nictitate throughout the night. The nictitating of street lamps makes this village to look different from others. In the same stanza two different visual pictures are created in the reader's mind.

#### Letsete

Visual and auditory senses are appealed to. The auditory is also superimposed in the kineasthetic images. The use of the words 'befile' (ugly), 'mosito' (sounds), 'kidimetsa' (sounds made by thunderstorm) and 'mororomelo' (sounds at the end of the thunderstorm) conjure up the reader's mind, visual and auditory superimposed in kinaesthetic because of fear caused by sounds. The dark clouds which are said to be ugly can also cause fear. Such clouds always bring bad news. Dark clouds accompanied by thunderstorm intensifies fear. A move in the evoking of images changes from fear to happiness. Towards the end of the poem fear caused by the striking of lightning is replaced by happiness.

La tlatša lethabo ...

(It brought happiness)

A picture of happy people is conjured up in the reader's images. Visual images are evoked. Happiness goes hand in hand with noise. One can even form a picture of

auditory images when people are making sounds of jubilation.

Bašomi ba bolo

The use of the words 'tšupologa' (emerging), 'diroto' (hard working people), 'dumedisanwa' (greeting) and 'lerato' (love) conjure up in a reader's mind visual picture of an exciting meeting of bees. The words 'opela' (singing), 'mokgoši' (sounds) and 'mekgolokwane' (jubilation) conjure up in the reader's mind a mental auditory picture of jubilation.

The good social relations of bees are emphasised by various images evoked in the reader's mind. Word selection enables the reader to form a picture of a society without conflicts.

#### 4.3 Figures of Speech

Figures of speech are regarded as vehicles that convey imagery. Various figures of speech are considered in terms of poetic styles employed by writers.

Cohen (1973:51) says only five figures of speech are worth to be considered in terms of poetic style. These five are: allusion, simile, personification, metaphor and symbol. Moleleki (1988:66) cites the listed principal figures of speech by Heese and Lawton, but he does not restrict

himself to the listed figures of speech. Ntuli (1984:154) follows Heese and Laston's suggestion of considering simile, metaphor, personification and symbolism under imagery; and treat each figure of speech at a time. In this work Ntuli's work will be used as a guideline. Each figure of speech will be treated at a time.

Serudu (1991:95) says euphemism, simile, irony, sarcasm, personification and metaphor are frequently used by writers. Figures of speech such as metonymy, oxymoron, hyperbole and ellipsis are often used to convey images.

Figures of speech used by Tseke are discussed below:

#### 4.3.1 Simile

When simile is used to convey images an explicit comparison is made between two different scenes, actions and objects. The compared things are usually compared by using comparative conjunctions. Pretorius (1989:39) says traditionally the simile is defined as the explicit comparison. One specific characteristic which the two have in common is compared. The compared things differ in other aspects except for one. Ntuli (1984:153-154) says simile can be used unsuitably. Instead of bringing the desired image it brings a different image. Therefore similes should be carefully chosen.

In Tseke's work of art three instances are distinguished. Tseke who is from Sekhukhuneland uses the comparative conjunction 'boka' in the place of 'ka ka' used by writers from Northern Transvaal.

Morpheuse

Boka maseana wa ba tataiša mafulong a matala

(Like new born babies you guided them to greener pastures)

Dreamers are compared with new born babies. A new born baby is hugged closely to the mother's breast at all times. The hugging makes the child to feel secure and can venture into the unknown world. Dreamers are treated like new born babies by the Greek god of dreams. They are content in their dreaming and don't worry about anything in their lives just like babies.

Go Lerato

O akaletše, o phaphasela boka lenong marung

(It has arisen, it is soaring like a eagle in the sky).

The spirit of the loving one is restless. It is compared with a soaring eagle which moves aimlessly in the sky. The loving one is longing for his lover and cannot have a peace of mind. His emotional life is compared with an eagle which soaring aimlessly without a destination. The

peace of mind is regarded as a destination, and that can only be possible if the two lovers can meet.

It is also possible to use 'wa' (as), as a comparative conjunction.

Seshego

O bone Seshego se gaketse wa monyadiwa wa sebjalebjale

(See Seshego glittering as a modern bride)

The colourful street lamps are said to glittering like jewellery worn by a modern bride. The lights create a very beautiful picture and such beauty is compared to that of a beautiful bride wearing genuine jewellery.

The most common comparative conjunction in Northern Sotho is 'bjalo ka' (like). Common as it might be, Tseke employs 'boka' (like) most of the time.

Bahlakodi

Bjalo ka lešaba la ditšhoši, bahlakodi ba theogetše  
(Like an army of ants, robbers are working)

The large numbers of robbers is compared to an army of ants.

Comparison in the employment of metaphor is not explicit as in Simile. Serudu (1991:95) says metaphor is a shortened form of simile as the comparative conjunction is left out. Pretorius et al (1988:41) say in the case where metaphor is employed words are used to indicate something different from the literal meaning. Pretorius (1989:32) says traditionally metaphor can be regarded as implied comparison. Van Staden (1980:28-48) discusses several forms of metaphor (personification, irony) which are traditionally regarded by some scholars as forms of imagery. Different approaches and definitions are given by various scholars but such aspects will not be discussed in this work. Sometimes it may be difficult for the reader to deduce the relationship between compared objects. In N.Sotho metaphor is sometimes identified by the use of 'ke-' the copula. Kunene (1971:37) says metaphorical eulogues identify the hero with phenomena of nature, very often the metaphorical name is used with regimental name 'moji'. Ntuli (1984:160-161) cites ideas of various scholars about the concept metaphor. Ntuli uses a number of sub-categories in Vilakazi's poetry.

Ke moji maswielele mametša ditšhabatšhaba

(I am the eater, sweeper-swallower of nations)

The implied meaning is extended. The killer compares himself with a sweeper. One who sweeps never leaves dirt

behind. In this case the killer never leaves members of the enemy group surviving. As a swallower, one cannot swallow part of the chewed food in the mouth and leave others by mistake. The killer also never makes a mistake of leaving survivals during the war. All people should die. Various nations are compared with dirt (that which needs to be swept) and food (that which should be swallowed).

Motseta wa badimo

O moeng sethagola lethabo ...

Leruleso seaparela diphedi ...

(Visitor you snatcher of peace ...

Dark-cloud overhanging over all living beings)

Death is compared with a visitor in the first line. Some visitors bring good news, some bring bad news. The visitor who brings bad news is compared with death. Death is also compared with a dark cloud overhanging over all living beings. Dark clouds are always associated with thunderstorm which brings unhappiness as it destroys at all times. At the same time pain caused by a sharp assegai is compared with pain experienced by the mourners.

4.3.3 Personification

Personification occurs when non-persons display human characteristics. Serudu (1991:95) says in praise poems personification is used by some poets to emphasize the importance or value of the praised object. Pretorius (1989:42) says some scholars regard personification as a sub-form of metaphor. As a means of poetic utterances personification is inherently part of traditional praise poems about birds and animals. Specific unique strategies are observed in regard to the creation of an image. When an animal and a person are compared intentional ambiguity is often evident. Pretorius (1989:42) go further to say one specific strategy of ascribing human characteristic to an animal is to adapt the animal's name to correspond with the name of a person.

Bašomi ba bolo

Masogana a opela ...

(Young men singing...)

'Masogana' is a noun belonging to class six. Only human beings can be called masogana. Bees are regarded as young men who are strong and healthy. Young men are expected to be energetic at all times irrespective of the hard labour they are doing. Bees have the

characteristics of hardworking, energetic, healthy, young men. 'Batshepegi' (the loyal ones), is derived from the word 'tshepega' (loyal) It is a deverbative noun belonging to class two. Class two is exclusively for human beings. Bees are personified when addressed as 'batshepegi' (loyal ones).

Sounds made by bees are called 'mekgolokwane' (jubilation). Only human beings are capable of making 'mekgolokwane'. Bees cannot articulate sounds such as 'Iiii!, Šatee!', Jubilation sounds can be articulated by human beings, therefore bees are given characteristics of human beings.

Na lefase o lebile kae?

(Earth, where are you going)

The earth is addressed as a person. The subject concord '-o-' is used for nouns in class one reserved for human beings only. The correct subject concord for 'lefase' is '-le-' which is used for nouns in class five and caters for human being, animals, birds, fruits and other objects. Lefase is also addressed as 'wena' (you). 'Wena' is an absolute pronoun used for human beings.

#### 4.3.4 Symbolism

When this figure of speech is employed objects are

compared. One object is usually associated with the other. Pretorius (1989:44) says the word symbol is derived from the Greek word 'symballein' which means to throw together. Its noun 'symbolon' can be regarded as a mark, emblem, token or sign. Pretorius further cite Cuddon (1980) as saying a symbol is an animate or inanimate object which represents or stands for something else. The symbolic meaning of a poetic word is at all times determined by its poetic context. At the same time it is possible for the symbolic meaning of a word to be interpreted differently by readers and listeners. Pretorius (1989:45) cites Heese and Lawton (1988) as saying traditional symbols are long established by a process of general consent. Symbolic meaning of poetic words will not be discussed under sub-headings.

### 'Ntlo ye'

The word 'kganya' brightness symbolises holiness. In this context brightness does not symbolise a bright future, happiness or beauty. It symbolizes the holiness of the church building and purity of members of the congregation. 'Mekopa' (cobras) symbolise evil doers, non-believers or those who pretend to be christians. The word 'nku' (sheep) symbolize Christianity. All individuals visisting this building show signs of meekness which is one of the characteritics of Christianity.

## Ye ntlo

The phrase 'semana sa dinosi' (a swan of bees) has been used differently by Tseke. The phrase in this poem symbolize a group of evil doers, loafers who spend most of their time drinking. In the poem 'Bašomi ba bolo', bees symbolize hardworking young men who lived in the olden days. Bees in 'ye ntlo' symbolize loafers. The context of the word determines its symbolic meaning. 'Ditau' (lions) always symbolize bravery. But in the poem 'ye ntlo' lions symbolize merciless killers who are not associated with bravery. The ruthless merciless killers do not have reasons to kill others. They are drunkards who do not even work.

### 4.3.5 Hyperbole

In the use of hyperbole the situation or condition is exaggerated. Serudu (1991:91) says the use of hyperbole as a figure of speech is to bring the intention or theme of the poem to the fore. Cuddon (1980:316) defines hyperbole as a figure of speech which contains exaggeration for emphasis. Kunene (1971:152) says a legitimate and effective use of hyperbole can be marred by the incogruous metaphor used in the poem.

"Mahlatša a mešo"

The title of the above poem could have been "Di tla le meso" (News or events of the day). Death is something painful but is also acceptable. Tseke exaggerate by regarding death as "mahlatša". A dog's death cannot be said to be something out of the ordinary which can be regarded as 'mahlatša'.

The line in stanza seven is also exaggeration.

Ge e le nna ke lomeletšwe gapilione ge e balwa ga dikete

(As for me I have been bitten billion times when counted in thousands).

Tseke claims that if loss was not abstract and could be counted, his loss would be counted in billions counted in thousands. Tseke's loss of a dog is exaggerated.

Mmamonyadiwe

Le ge o befile go feta sa sebe sefahlego

(Even though you are uglier than sin's face)

Mmamonyadiwe's ugliness is exaggerated. She is ugly but not uglier than sin's face. Sin is something abstract and evil and Tseke has never experienced or seen sin's face. It is an exaggeration to claim that one is uglier than sin's face.

4.3.6 Oxymoron

Serudu (1991:98) says this figure of speech is a combination of irony and sarcasms. Two situations or events are used to bring about a contradiction.

Ke be le ke gona

The above poem contains an example of two situations which bring about contradiction. A contradiction is evident between the first part and the second part of the poem.

In the first part, from the arrangement of the marriage, the wedding feast, and when the couple moved to their new home, witnesses were formally invited. The chief, the priest, the mediator and other people were there as witnesses. When conflict starts because of a new born baby, people are no longer invited formally. The mediator who played an important role in the arrangement of the marriage relies on the grapevine. The mediator concludes by saying:

Naa ntle ga Yogodimo ... hlatse ke mang?

(Who except One-high-above ... who is the witness?)

O diša bjang?

This poem contains both sarcasm and irony. The leader is accused of nepotism. His activities are questioned. This line:

Ge o le modiša wa badiša

(If really you are a shepherd of shepherds)

is sarcastic. The leader is supposed to be trained for his activities, but is questioned about his performance. He is even reminded of the oath he made before he was annointed. Leaders are expected to do their work properly. There is a contradiction between what leaders said when they made an oath and what they actually do. It is also ironical to say this and do the opposite of it.

#### 4.3.7 Metonymy

The new name is given to a situation, event or object.

Go mamanetona yaka

The son is not called "morwa" but a new name has been coined. The coined name is 'namanetona' (male-calf). Throughout the poem the son's title is 'namanetona'.

Moji

The killer changes his name to 'moji' (eater). The acts of killing are called sweeping and swallowing. The later calles himself sweeper and swallower of nations.

#### Mobjadi

The praised person calles himself 'mobjadi' (farmer). He could have used his clan name in the place of 'mobjadi' (one who sows). Activities in marriage are regarded as the act of ploughing. Children are called seeds. Marriage is seen as a field which needs to be cultivated. 'Mobjadi' fails in the act of ploughing, seeds that grew up did not bring him happiness. His marriage was not a success.

#### 4.3.8 Ellipsis

Serudu (1991:100) regards ellipsis as a figure of speech employed by various poets in Northern Sotho. Ellipsis is used to express surprise or the unexpectedness of a situation or event. Ellipsis can also be used to emphasise pain expererenced by someone.

Mahlatša a meso

Mahloko ... (line 1)

(Sorrow ...)

Seo se ilego se ile ... (line 24)

What has gone is gone

Ellipsis emphasizes pain experienced by the owner of the dog. In line one, instead of saying "Mahloko go lena" the poet could not say '... go lena' (.. to you). Pain experienced at that moment made it difficult for the poet to utter the succeeding words. 'Mahloko' is also used as a greeting to the bereaved family. Instead of using the daily greeting phrases such as 're a lotšha' (Good morning/day) or 'thobela' (Good morning/day) the word 'mahloko' is used.

Mabonemašapo

A wele ...

(They are fallen ...)

The thrower of bones is surprised by the position of the divining bones. What is being predicted is unexpected and confusing. The word 'kgakantšhane' (confuser) is used to emphasize surprise and confusion brought about by the divining bones.

#### 4.4 Repetition

Repetition is a poetic technique observed in poetry. African and western poets employ this technique for various reasons in their work of art. Pretorius et al

(1988:31) say repetition technique forms an intergral part of African poetry. Serudu (1991:87) says repetition of stems, words or phrases is employed in the place of rhyme schemes because of the CV structure and the limited number of vowels in some languages like Northern Sotho. Kunene (1971:157) says from various illustrations of poets one can see repetition patterns on exactly the same lines as those found in heroic poetry. Ntuli (1984:189) says a poet who uses much of parallelism is influenced by 'izibongo' (poems).

Types of repetition are:

- i) alliteration which is a process by which consonant sounds are repeated;
- ii) assonance which occurs when specific vowel sounds are repeated in various lines of poetry; and
- iii) parallelism which is also a repetition technique which can be divided into two sub-classes.

Ntuli (1984:189) cites Cope who distinguishes between perfect parallelism and parallelism by linking. Perfect parallelism repeats the idea with different words. Kunene (1971:159) says parallelism of thought without corresponding repetition of lexical elements is also found in poetry. This type of repetition is called parallelism by synonym and symbol. Parallelism by linking advances the idea by means of an identical word or root or stem.

Kunene (1971:68) discusses parallelism under four sub-headings:

- i) parallelism of thought through the repetition of words and phrases;
- ii) parallelism of thought through the re-statement of ideas by synonyms and indirect references;
- iii) parallelism of grammatical structure through the repetition of syntactical slots; and

Kunene (1971:68) says one can distinguish between aesthetic, unaesthetic and monotonous repetition. Aesthetic repetition is desired by all readers. In such repetition words and phrases are repeated while additional ones are brought in as "incremental" phrases. Patterns that emerge from repetition depends on the strategic positioning of affines and incremental elements.

#### 4.4.1 Perfect Parallelism

This poetic technique repeats the idea with different words. Some times such words may have the same meaning and sometimes units in the poetic lines may contradict each other. The contradictions may be in antonyms or in general sense. Ntuli (1984:189) gave a good example where some units contradict each other in the poem 'uthingo lwekwazi'.

Tseke employs words with the same meaning to advance the idea:

Go lerato

O hlologetše ...

O nyakana ...

O nyoretšwe ...

(It longs ...

It searches ...

It desires ...)

The idea of longing for the beloved one is advanced by the use of synonyms. The verbal stems appear on the same position in the poetic lines. The subject concord '-o-' also appears at the same position in the three poetic lines.

The impossibility of seeing his beloved is expressed by the use of synonyms.

O akaletše ...

O hlaelela ...

(It overhangs ...

It is out of reach ...)

Literally, the above words are not synonymous. The manner in which they are used by the poet makes them to be regarded as synonyms.

The two words are synonyms as one who is overhanging has not reached his desired destination. One who is out of reach does not have the ability to get that which he desires.

Molodi wa thaga

The beautiful sounds made by singing birds are advanced by the use of

mmino (music)

molodi (melody)

Ntuli (1984:192-200) examined different kinds of linking. Ntuli employed Cope's synthesis method. At the same time Kunene's linear approach was taken into account.

#### 4.4.2 Parallelism by Linking

Different types of this type of linking are as follows:

##### Vertical linking

Ntuli (1984:192) says in this type of linking a word in

first line corresponds almost vertically with the one in the second line. This may occur at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or at the end (final linking).

Go Raditladi

Vertical linking occurs at the end of the two lines. It is brought about by the repetition of the word 'lefase'.

Mme ge o ka ntlosa go le lefase

O tla nkhumana ke go letetse tlase ka fase go lefase

(If you can eliminate me from the earth

You will find me waiting for you down below the earth)

The idea of the impossibility of eliminating someone from this earth is advanced by the repetition of the word earth. If one kills somebody, one will meet them after one's death. The two words are morphologically the same, semantically the same and their use is the same.

Vertical linking is also observable at the beginning of the two poetic lines.

Raditladi na mmraditladi ke mang?

Raditladi na tladimothwana ke mang?

(Raditladi who is raditladi's mother?

Raditladi who is raditladi's child?)

Raditladi's origin is unknown and the uncertainty about his origin is advanced by the repetition of the word Raditladi. the two poetic sentences also cater for vertical linking at the end of the sentence. The use of the word mang? also brings about vertical linking.

### Oblique linking

Kunene (1971:78) says oblique linking occurs when one part of a poetic line in the first line is repeated in the second line but occupies a different syntactic position in the latter line. Ntuli (1984:195) says this type of linking is common in 'izibongo' (poems). One word in the first line occurs in a different position in the second line.

O diša bjang?

Ge o le modiša was badiša

Gona gopola la badiša leswaokano

(If you are a sheperd of sheperds  
Then think of the oath you made)

In the first line the word 'badiša' (shepherds) can be said to be the sixth word. In the second line it can be said to be the fourth word. They appear at different positions.

#### 4.4.3 Refrain

Moleleki (1988:57) defines refrain as a repetition of a phrase, a line or series of lines at the same point in each stanza throughout the poem. Ntuli (1984:200-201) defines refrain as a line or portion of it which is repeated at regular intervals. Ntuli observed that some poet's refrain do not occur in exactly the same way in the whole poem. A refrain may be used with variations according to the effect he wants to achieve in that particular poem. Tseke uses refrain with variations.

Na lefase o lebile kae? (Earth, where are you going?)

The phrase 'na lefase' (Where earth) is found at the beginning of the last lines of the first and second stanza. In the third stanza the words 'naa' (where) and 'lefase' (earth) are separated by the word 'wena' (you). In the last stanza the phrase 'naa wena' (where are you) is separated by the word 'ruriruri' (really, really). The phrase gradually increases from the third stanza.

It started as 'na lefase ...' (where earth...) in the first and second stanzas. Then it increased. In the third stanza the phrase 'na wena lefase ...' (where are you...). The last stanza the phrase included 'ruriruri' (really, really). Na ruriruri lefase ..... (where really, really, are you earth) is found in the last line of the last stanza.

Tseke's refrain is not consistent but as Ntuli said a refrain can be used with variations to suit the poet's intentions.

#### 4.5 Language usage

Finnegan (1992:57) cites Doke's literary resources of Bantu languages by saying great literary languages have a heritage of oral tradition which has influenced the form of the earliest literary efforts. Language usage by various writers is influenced by various aspects. Orality, and former writers have an influence on modern writers. Study manual (1992:1) says literature uses language in peculiar ways. The literal meaning a words may change and new meaning created. There is also a shift in poetry language. Initially good poetry language had to be highly figurative. Modern poets use everyday language in unfamiliar ways. Study manual (1992:11) defines language usage as a systematic transformation of practical language. It should also be assumed that opposition exists between poetical

language and everyday language.

Tseke's language is not highly figurative but has the ability to use everyday language in unfamiliar ways. Words lose their literal meaning. Tseke's work is not full of proverbs and idioms. Tseke's ability to employ and select words correctly enabled him to compile good poetry volumes. Tseke has the ability to coin new words and compound words consisting of four different words. Tseke's environment i.e. place of birth, peer, school, church and society contributed to his rich language. Tseke was born in a place where good rich language is used on a daily basis. Standard Northern Sotho is derived from three dialects in the Eastern Transvaal. If Tseke's dialect is not among the three dialects then its proximity to the three dialects had an influence on his language usage. Tseke's environment enabled him to form the out of ordinary compound words.

### Compound words

Leetomoya

This poem is about a dream where one is about to be called to higher services. Though the dreamer woke up the following morning he recalled what he witnessed in the dream. He regards death as 'setlimelelatshadikamegolo' (that which tightens a

woman's throat) the compound word consists of four parts. The four parts are 'setlimelela + tshadi + ka + megolo'. 'Setlimelela' (that which holds tightly) is a deverbative noun derived from the verb 'tlimelela' (holding one tightly by the throat). The noun '-tshadi-' (female gender) '-ka-' (the instrumental prefix) and '-megolo' (throat) is a noun belonging to class four. Death strikes by holding people tightly by their throats so that they suffocate and die.

#### Molodi wa thaga

The poem is about different types of music and dances. The poet calls some dances 'thulamabotokamesela' (bumpjive). The compound word consists of four parts. The four parts are: 'thula + mabota + ka + mesela'. 'Thula' (hit) is a verb, 'mabota' (walls) is a noun, '-ka-' is an instrumental prefix and 'mesela' (tails) is a noun. In this context 'mesela' is used in the place of buttocks. In the same poem something may be famous and after some time it phases out. Things which come and go are called 'bjanyanabjatsela' (grass growing along the road). The compound word consists of three parts 'bjanyana + bja + tsela'. 'Bjanyana' (small grass) is a noun, 'bja' (of) is a possessive and 'tsela' (road) is a noun. Different types of compounds are observed in Tseke's work. Some have four parts, some have two, some have three.

Coined words

Tseke coined new words in his volumes.

Go namanetona yaka

The son is addressed as 'namanetona' (male-calf). In Northern Sotho the son is addressed as 'morwa'. Tseke also calls grandchildren 'dipeu' (seeds). As the same time calls his son 'mobjadi' (grower of seeds).

Tšhwaatšhwaa

Money is called tšhwaatšhwaa because of sounds made by money in one's pocket. Coins and notes makes noise when one touches them especially in a pocket. Money is also called 'mabele' (crop). Forged money is referred to as 'mabejabejane' (mixed crop).

La tšhwenegatššanaputswa thuding

The daughter-in-law is called 'namatshadi' (female calf) and elderly women who give advice to young women are called 'boselayangwetši' (counsellors of the bride).

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. Structure as a Poetic Technique

Tseke employed various poetic techniques such as structure, repetition, imagery and others in his poetry. The structure of his poems distinguishes them from African traditional poems. Repetition techniques are employed in order to emphasise certain ideas in a poem. Repetition of words within a part is part of structure. It contributes towards the achievement of structural unity. The use of figures of speech in a poem creates different images in the reader's mind. Though Tseke employed poetic techniques derived from western poetry, he used his own style in the sub-division of his poems into stanzas with eighteen lines. In this discussion, attention will also be given to this question: What brings the structural agreement between stanzas?

#### 5.1 The Structures of Poems Written by Tseke

Firstly structure of poetry will be given attention before specific attention can be given to Tseke's poems. The structure of traditional poetry and modern poetry varies. African traditional poetry was initially rendered orally, therefore it could only be made accessible to the audience by listening to recitals of various poets. Modern poetry is characterised by its form as it appears on a piece of

paper and its sound effect. When one sees a poem one can identify aspects related to sound. Pretorius (1989:32) distinguishes that which can be perceived physically by the eye and the ear. Through the eye one can become aware of:

Spacing;

Grouping;

Punctuation; and

Blank space.

Aspects which can be perceived through the ear are:

rhythm (metre);

rhyme;

intonation; and

repetition techniques.

The form of a poem can also be called its structure. The structure of a poem can be said to be the manner in which various parts of a poem are arranged. This arrangement of various parts led to the change of structure or form of traditional poetry to modern poetry. African poets, Tseke included have been influenced by various western poetic techniques. Structure of poems in modern poetry differs from that of traditional poetry. Poems are divided into stanzas.

Kunene (1971:53) says the terms verse and metre should be avoided because of the usual connotation they have for those acquainted with European poetry. To Kunene, the word

paragraph should be used in the place of verses and stanza. In this work the word stanza will be used. It is important to give different views of scholars about the concept stanza and verse.

Pretorius (1989:16-17) cites views of Cuddon, Cloete and Groenewald. According to Cloete, a verse is not determined by visual elements only, but by factors such as sound and syntax. A verse is therefore a formally structured division of a poem. On the other hand Groenewald says the verse boundary is determined mainly by internal arrangement of rhythmic units. According to Cuddon the stanza in European poetry was traditionally characterized by a certain number of poetic lines. Four lines was the most common and more than twelve lines was uncommon. Tseke's poetry is characterised by stanzas with two lines and sometimes he exceeds the number twelve.

One can distinguish the difference between poetic line and a verse; one can also distinguish the difference between a verse and a stanza according to Pretorius' view. When poetic lines are repeated more than once on a piece of paper, one can speak of a verse. Pretorius (1989:17) says a unit bigger than a verse is called stanza; and this is actually the paragraph of a poem. From the above views one may come to this conclusion:

- i) Poetic lines form verses; and

- ii) Verses are smaller than stanzas;
- iii) A paragraph or stanza is a unit bigger than a verse;  
and
- iv) Both verses and stanzas are characterized by a certain  
number of poetic lines.

Poems not sub-divided into stanzas are as important as those divided into stanzas. Tseke's poems vary from volume to volume. Most of the poems in "Thereso ke ya mang" have been sub-divided into regular stanzas. Sonnets belong to modern poetry but they have not sub-divided into stanzas; but they are a specific structure which makes them belong to modern poetry. Pretorius et al (1988:30) say due to the fact that praise poems were rendered orally, the sub-division into stanzas of course, never existed. It is possible, however to distinguish stanzas according to the grouping of ideas and the breathing processes which aid the memory. Traditional poetry laid a basis for modern poetry, but there are N.Sotho poets, Tseke included, who write what Lenake calls "free types". Pretorius (1989:108) cites Lenake's explanation of the prototypes. Thematically and structurally these poems show influence of traditional poetic genre. Six poems falling under this category are: "Segatakaboya, Letswele la Rasephiri, Dibuatšhwene, Bathomarumeriti, Moletesekuba tseleng ye and Leetomoya". Their structure will be discussed at a later stage in this chapter.

Tseke has grouped various poetic lines into regular and irregular stanzas. Regular stanzas are characterized by the equal number of poetic lines throughout the poem. Irregular stanzas are characterized by their inconsistent number of poetic lines throughout the poem. At the same time one cannot call the sub-division of "Maremegokgo seatleng se" stanzas or paragraphs because of the large number of poetic lines. The first "chapter" consists of 121 poetic lines and the last one which is "chapter" twenty six consists of 113 poetic lines.

The structure of sonnets will be given attention first. Sonnets are identified by their structure. They all consist of fourteen lines. Though sonnets are not subdivided into stanzas one can easily determine the different ideas presented within this framework. Pretorius (1989:94) says the sonnet is characterized by an external and internal structure.

The internal structure is outlined as follows:

- i) A sonnet is a framework consisting of fourteen poetic lines;
- ii) Poetic lines are arranged according to a specific metrical pattern and rhyme scheme - this is not observable in Tseke's work but can be observed in the works of other Northern Sotho poets.

Aesthetic thoughts of a poet are expressed within this defined framework.

### The external structure

The external structure consists of two parts. The first part can be regarded as an image or experience and the second part can be called an application or an interpretation of an image in the first part. When the Italian sonnet is analysed in terms of this internal structure, the first part consists of eight lines and it is called an octave. The second part consists of six lines and it is called a sestet.

An example of the structure of an Italian sonnet is discussed below.

Barei ba kubu bodibeng (Fishers of a Hippopotamus in a Pool)

The **external structure** of this poem meet the most important requirement i.e. the fourteen poetic lines. It is divided into two parts. The first part, octave is supposed to have a fixed rhyme scheme. The second part of "Barei ba kubu bodibeng" does not have a fixed rhyme scheme like those of other Italian sonnets. Pretorius (1989:94) says it should be noted that the metrical pattern of Northern Sotho poetry is not determined in the same way as in European poetry. At the same time there is no formal pattern in the number

of syllables per poetic line in the above sonnet.

**The internal structure of "Barei ba kubu bodibeng"**

This sonnet consist of two parts. Tseke present an image or experience in the first part. This experience is interpreted in the sestet.

The experience is as follows: In the image Tseke describes people involved in horse betting at a particular race course. All are very quite as they are busy scanning various newspapers for tips. People bet with different amounts of money. Those who can afford bet with a thousand rand and those who cannot afford bet with the minimum about of fifty cents. In the first part people are actively involved and confident that they are going to be winners. A turning point occurs from poetic line number nine. The activity has stopped. Only the announcer's voice is heard. Jockeys tried their best. People panic. The moment has arrived. People scratch their heads, kthey are no longer confident. The race comes to an end. Some are happy - some are disappointed because of the outcome of the race.

**The internal structure of an English sonnet**

Development takes place in the three quatrains. A climax is reached, and a turn commences. The thought is summerised in the couplet. An example of an internal

structure of an English sonnet is discussed as follows:

In the first twelve poetic lines. Mohlasodi the praised person starts as a kind person who is very generous at all times. The motive of being generous is aimed at winning people's confidence. His nickname "thandabonge" mislead people and they readily accepted him. After winning people's confidence he frequently visit their homes, looks carefully at valuable items which he could steal. From line nine Mohlasodi makes plans on how to steal the valuable items. In places where goods cannot be stolen or where goods are not valuable, Mohlasodi would go to the extend of taking even cents from defenceless women. Mohlasodi's actions takes a turn. "Le tibiliki ya mosadi wa mmamonyadiwe o moyafatsa" (You even take cents from women).

In the couplet Tseke summarizes Mohlasodi's way of life. Mohlasodi is a thief who lives by stealing from various families. Mohlasodi is addressed as one who lives by using his hand wrongly.

The analysis of poems with regular and irregular stanzas is given attention in the next paragraph.

The use of regular stanzas varies from poem to poem. It has already been stated at he beginning of this chapter that most of the poems in "Therešo ke ya mang" consist of

regular stanzas. Not even a single poem in "Moletsekubu tseleng ye" consist of regular stanzas. In "Moletesekubu tseleng ye", poems sub-divided into stanzas all consist of irregular stanzas. Of the thirty seven poems in "Hlase ke mang?" only three poems consist of regular stanzas and they are all characterised by five poetic lines.

Tsabe is a poem sub-divided into regular stanza. All the stanzas are characterised by three poetic lines. These poems and those to be analysed at a latter stage will show that a stanza has a complete thought irrespective of the number of lines grouped together to form a stanza.

Tsabe

The praised person regards himself as a descendent of the cat family.

In the first stanza the thought presented is about Tsebe's origin. Tsabe's appearance is envied by monkey's.

In the second stanza, the thought presented is about Tsabe's movements. Even though Tsabe can do something humiliating he will always walk confidently. His movements are dignified. The use of stanzas enables Tseke to arrange ideas in such a way that a reader gets a clear picture of his aesthetic thoughts. The use of stanzas enables the poet to arrange ideas in such a way that the reader can put them

in chronological order.

"Ke be ke le gona" (I was present) is a good example where the reader can arrange events according to their order. The idea of the wedding feast leads to another thought where the married couple first stay with the in-laws then later moved to their own house. By staying together for some time leads to the birth of a new born baby. The birth of a new baby causes conflict between the married couple.

"Lesogana la Leolo" (Young man from Leolo) consist of irregular stanzas but all stanzas have complete thoughts irrespective of the irregularity of the number of poetic lines.

The first stanza consist of two poetic lines.

"Kiti! Kutu! kiti! Tu.... u.... u....!

Naa, kgakgatha ya dikgageng o etala kae?

(Where, strong men of the mountains are  
you visting?)

The thought presented in line one is about the terrifying sound made by the thunderstorm. The sounds are followed by complete silence. Then after some time the thunderstorm is addressed as "Lesogana la Leolo" (The young man from Leolo) is questioned about his destination.

This stanza has a complete thought.

The destination of the thunderstorm is made known to the reader in the succeeding stanzas. Though the thunderstorm never replied to the posed question, its deeds reflected its destination. The poet's thought are displayed throughout the poem.

"Monwana wo" (This finger)

This poem consists of various poetic lines in various stanzas. The stanza with the limited number of poetic lines characterised by four poetic lines upto eighteen poetic lines. Advice given in the four poetic lines is as valuable as advice given in the eighteen poetic lines.

Advice given in stanza three with four poetic lines is as follows:

Human beings are given advice about their behaviour. They always keep secrets as a way of protecting others and this lead to spending sleepless nights because of kept secrets. Human beings should take examples from birds who never keep secrets.

In the last stanza, advice is given to black people. They should learn to tell the truth at all times. They should stop misleading the modern youth. Correct information to

be given at all times. Information contained in the statement in inverted commas should be avoided "the finger next to the thumb on the right hand is used to point at witches". Such information should no longer be told to children. Fingers should be fingers and toes should be toes. The two statements bring structural agreements between stanzas.

The structure of liberated poems is discussed below.

Here the number of poetic lines varies from poem to poem.

"Moletsekuba tseleng ye: (Cul-de-sac on this road)

This poem has sixteen lines. One may confuse it with a sonnet especially the internal structure. This poem does not meet the basic requirement of the external structure. When the internal structure of a sonnet is used as a guideline one may divide "Moletsekuba tseleng ye" (Cul-de-sac on this road) into two parts. The internal structure of a sonnet is used as a guideline in this work.

The first eight lines brings a different image or view from the last eight lines. In the first eight lines Tseke describes a situation in which people find themselves. Even though various people have tried ways and means of solving the problematic situation, no change comes to the fore. People never learn from previous events. People

never take precautions. Tseke takes a turn in line nine. He poses a question "E ile mengwaga ya bo 1800" (Gone are the years of 1800) In the next line he gives an answer to his question:

(These years has gone with  
its misfortunes and luck,  
Presently the years of 1900  
are about to follow the past years.  
It is about to go with its  
luck, pain and sorrows.  
It should give chance to  
the year 2000 which will  
Also move in circles  
like the years before it.)

One can easily confuse this poem with an Italian sonnet, but the number of poetic lines disqualifies it from that classification. At the same time one cannot call this poem a praise poem. It does not have the characteristics of a praise poem. It is also liberated from formal features of prototypes. It does show some influence of the traditional poetic genres.

"Leetomoya" (Imagined Journey)

This poem consist of thirteen poetic lines. The first five poetic lines are closely connected. The poetic word "Ehu!"

separates the thoughts presented in the first five lines.

The thought in the first part is about a dream. The dreamer visited the land of those who had been laid down to rest. The interjection "Ehu!" reflects the tiredness experienced by the dreamer because of the long journey. In the last part, which consists of seven lines the dreamer shares his experience. What was seen is made known to the reader. The experience of the dream is regarded as something which holds one tightly by the throat.

"Leetomoya" (Imagined Journey) is also liberated from the formal features of prototypes. Its first part may be regarded as an image or experience and the second part be the interpretation of the experience. Unlike in the external structure of a sonnet, the word "Ehu!" creates a different situation from those of sonnets. The physical space where events occur is in the dreamland. In the second part events unfold within a certain atmosphere. What was seen or witnessed in a dream was quite frightening.

The structure of other liberated poems will not be fully discussed. Their external structure, i.e. the number of poetic lines will be written next to each title.

- i) Segatakaboya has twenty poetic lines;
- ii) Letswele la Rasephiri has twenty three poetic lines;

- iii) Dibuatshwene has twenty seven poetic lines; and
- iv) Bathomarumeriti has twenty seven poetic lines.

**Free types** are all from "Moletesekuba tseleng ye"

The structure of "Maremegokgo seatleng se"

It has already been mentioned in chapter one that Maremegokgo is an epic. "Maremegokgo seatleng se" is a narrative poem. Pretorius (1989:109) says a narrative poem tells a story. As an epic is a narrative poem, it will be important to explain how narration of events takes place. The narration of events takes place on the narration level. The narrator has no access to events and he does not have eyes. The narrator relies on the eyes of the focalizer in order to be able to narrate events to the reader. "Maremegokgo seatleng se" appears on a narrative text. Events in this poem occurred on the story level before Tseke could write them down. As soon as the events were written on a piece of paper they moved from the story level to the text level. The narrator who is on the narration or third level depends on the eyes of the focalizer on the second or text level. It is then that narration of events takes place.

"Maremegokgo seatleng se" has been sub-divided into twenty six divisions. The number of poetic lines varies from "chapter" to "chapter". The division of this poem into

units larger than stanzas enables the reader to arrange or group ideas chronologically one.

With the framework of twenty six "chapters" appearing in a volume with eighty-one pages, Tseke presents various ideas to the reader. Ideas within this framework may be regarded as the internal structure of the framework. A climax is reached when Thelele becomes a defeated man and decides to end his life. Ideas in the first three chapters will be made known to the reader.

The first thought presented in the first sub-division

Tseke presents Phele's beauty to the reader. Her beauty attracts the opposite sex. Thelele is among those who were attracted to Phele. On their first encounter Thelele was not brave enough to approach her. Thelele made plans on how to draw Phele's attention. He spent sleepless nights thinking about ways and means of approaching her.

Thoughts presented in the second sub-division

On their second meeting, Thelele is confident enough. He had made plans on how to approach Phele. Phele was inexperienced in love affairs and Thelele easily convinced her. Phele was affected by this love affair, she changed from a good child to one with loose morals. Her mother was disturbed by this change in her daughter.

The thought presented in the third sub-division

The love affair flourished and this led to Phele's pregnancy. At first Phele is not prepared to tell the truth about her condition, but her mother realized that she is pregnant because her symptoms could be easily identified by any experience woman. Relatives were summoned, they were given all the information by Phele's mother. Her uncle threatened her and Phele told the truth about her condition.

It will not be possible to discuss all the chapters but a summary of events following and the last two "chapters" will be discussed.

Although the new born baby looked exactly like the father, Thelele claimed that he is not responsible for Phelele's pregnancy and he decided to leave his country for greener pastures. Tears shed by Phele had an adverse effect on his life as his life was never pleasant. Thelele was punished by God for what he did. He settled with different women and whenever they were blessed with babies, they would always pass away suddenly. Thelele went to witchdoctors and was always told about "Maremegokgo" (the wheel of retribution) which literally means the mixture of saliva and tears spitten. The same thing occurred, the second woman could conceive but her children died. He went to another witchdoctor who told him exactly what the previous

one had said. Thelele wandered from place to place but never found happiness.

"Chapter" twenty five

Thelele and Mmalehu are not happy because of their misfortunes. Mmalehu secretly approaches a witchdoctor as he wanted to know what brought death to her house. She was told of Phele's "maremegokgo" because of Thelele's dirty tricks. After this discovery Mmalehu separated with Thelele.

Ideas in the last "chapter"

Thelele has no alternative but to go back home. He was not welcomed since his mother had already passed away. He was regarded as a burden. Starvation force him to go to the chief's kraal and there also, no one was happy to see him. Life for him was unbearable. Line 54 of the last subdivision brings about a change in Thelele's life. He decided to end his life, when his body was found it was beyond recognition as it was now food for eagles and rats, the only means of identification was his old coat.

The given examples are used to show how Tseke employed structure as a poetic technique. The form of his poems vary from poem to poem.

## 5.2 What brings structural agreement between stanzas?

It is vital to have structural agreement between stanzas. Ideas in different stanzas should be grouped in such a way that structural agreement is maintained. Structural agreement enables the reader to view the poem as a complete thought. The analysis of a structure of a poem does not necessarily mean that when various parts are perceived separately then structural agreement becomes affected. Various aspects lead to structural agreement between stanzas. Aspects found within the framework of a poem contributes to structural agreements. Aspects such as spacing play an important role. In spacing of ideas a specific atmosphere created may be reflected in its structure form. Aspects which leads to the creation of an atmosphere are: rhythm, parallelism, an interchanging of short and long sentences and others. Parallelism can either be perfect parallelism and parallelism by linking.

Grouping of ideas in various stanzas lead to structural agreement within the framework of a poem. If a poem consist of the same number of poetic lines in each stanza. throughout the poem it has structural agreement between stanzas. In most cases, the use of a refrain in the last line of a stanza emphasizes the structural agreement between stanzas. Pretorius et al (1988:58) say if all stanzas consist of the same number of lines, and the last lines of each stanza are identical, then structural

agreement between stanzas is obtained.

Tseke has examples of poems with the same number of poetic lines. Tseke never makes use of refrain in his four volumes except in "Naa lefase o libile kae" (Earth, where are you going?) and the last lines are not identical only phrases are identical. All Tseke's poems have structural agreement even though a refrain is not employed.

5.3 The elements which contribute to the achievement of unity in poems.

The central theme in the poem leads to the achievement of unity in the poem. Refrain is used as a uniting element. The concept related to the central theme also leads to the achievement of unity in the poem.

The poem "Ke be ke le gona" (I was present) is a good example where various elements contribute to the achievement of unity in the poem. Marriage is the central theme of this poem. From the first stanza to the fourth stanza, ideas are centered around the central theme of marriage. The first chapter is about the wedding feast, the second is related to the marriage arrangements, the third stanza is about the establishment of a home by the newly weds whilst the last stanza is about problems faced by the married couple. Everything is centred around the central theme marriage.

Concepts and customs which are intergral parts of the traditional Northern Sotho culture are evident in each stanza. Firstly in Northern Sotho, many people are invited to attend the wedding feast, food and drinks will be given to all. This goes hand in hand with events in stanza one, in the second one, Northern Sotho culture is practiced when a mediator is involved in marriage arrangements. Parents of the couple are not directly involved in these arrangements, thus both sides must have mediators. The groom's aunt plays an important role as no arrangements can be made without her - the concepts "mmasegwana" (The mother of the bridegroom) and "rasegwana" (The father of the bridegroom) are used. In Northern Sotho the lady to be married is called "sego sa meetse" (calabash to be used for drinking water). The use of "mmasegwana" and "rasegwana" refers to the lady's parents. Such concepts lead to the achievement of unity in the poem. They are related to the central theme marriage.

The above aspects relate to structural unit of "Ke be ke le gona" (I was present).

Though repetition techniques contribute towards the achievement of structural unity in this poem, it will not be discussed in this work. This does not discredit the structural unity of this poem.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Literature has undergone various changes through the ages. African literature's pace of development is lagging behind those of western countries. Various scholars played an important role in the development of African Literature. Though this literature still has a long way to go, what has been done up to this century is competent enough to be regarded as scientific.

Poetry as an aspect of literature has undergone various changes. African traditional poetry laid a foundation for modern poetry. Modern poets borrow from traditional poetry in certain instances. It is possible for modern poetry to lead to another type of poetry as it happened with traditional poetry. Free or liberated forms of poetry may lead to another type of poetry in future.

Tseke is a modern poet who was influenced by former poets like Matsepe. Though he used his own style, Matsepe's influence is evident in some of his poems. Matsepe coined new words for individuals, objects and events and this is what Tseke has done in his work of art.

Tseke used words in such a way that they had a different meaning from their everyday language usage. Meanings of words are determined by the context where they have been used.

In the narration of events in "Maremegokgo seatleng se" (the wheel of retribution) one can easily distinguish between the three levels of narratology. One can distinguish the story level from the text level and the narration level. One can also distinguish between characters and actants. The six groups of actants are catered for in this epic. The narrator of events relies on the eyes of the focalizer on the text level. The third person narrator narrated events throughout the epic.

Events were not complicated as "Maremegokgo seatleng se" is an epic and not a novel. Poems were classified according to types and them for investigation purposes. It is difficult to demarcate a line between poems. One cannot classify poems in water tight compartments as they share various features. Themes in Tseke's poems cover a broad field of actual life situations. Tseke did not employ rhyme in most of his poems. It was used sparingly but this does not discredit him as a poet.

The structure of a poem plays an important role therefore, it should not be haphazardly structured.

Ntuli (1984:188) cites Sansom as saying that to create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme or rhythm. It is also a realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme or rhythm. The form of a poem is very important. Various features need to be employed in such a way that their use should lead to the creation of a correct form. The structure of a poem can distinguish it from other poems. Ideas of a poem are represented

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