

**ART AND IDEOLOGY IN THE POETRY
OF K. P. D MAPHALLA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that:

*ART AND IDEOLOGY IN THE POETRY OF
K.P.D. MAPHALLA*

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



Yvonne Makhubela.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to:

My parents Setshwane and Stinkie Matlhatsi

and my two wonderful daughters

Mikateko and Masingita.

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I wish to record my indebtedness and appreciation to the following:

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Finally, I thank God the Almighty for giving me strength to persevere and complete this work.

SUMMARY

The main object of this study is to examine art and ideology in the poetry of K.P.D. Maphalla. The concern is to explore the contribution of ideology and craft to the ability of the poet to communicate effectively with the reader. In an attempt to reveal his art and ideology, detailed analysis will concentrate on those books that have much to offer.

We observe that Maphalla started writing his work during the time of social upheaval, a period of intense political activity and also a period of lively artistic activity. He gives a complete and correct account of an observed social reality.

In our analysis we looked at various poetic techniques that the author employed to defamiliarize his language and enliven his poetry so as to intensify interest in the reader. We also looked at how Maphalla deviates from the norm to make his work attractive to the eye of the reader or listener. All these, were achieved by examining three concepts namely: art, aesthetics and ideology.

No where in Sesotho literary studies has art and ideology in the poetry of Maphalla been done. This study will heighten the reader's appreciation of the poetry and sharpen their ability to evaluate better other literary works. This in turn could make possible contribution(s) towards further research and improvement in the quality of other genre(s) in Sesotho and hopefully, in other indigenous languages as well.

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION AND PURPOSE

1.2 SCOPE

1.3 METHODOLOGY

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Work done in Sesotho poetry

1.4.2 Work done in poetry in other indigenous languages.

1.5 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

If poetry is a special kind of genre with its special kind of value, how do we discover what it is and how do we demonstrate its value? One of the ways is to look at the art and the ideology that produces it. In order to encapsulate this, a true understanding of poetry requires coming to grips with both its content and form. As a unity of content and form, poetry appeals to the reader or listener by the weight of what it says (content) and how it says it (form). Ngara (1990: 15) maintains that if content is a complex interaction of historical and social factors, theme, ideas and ideological factors, then form or aesthetic dimension can be seen as that dimension of a poem which includes the linguistic structure, imagery, symbolism and sound devices. The degree to which the poet is master of form comes out in how effectively he or she is able to communicate with the reader. In other words, art which fails to communicate, however profound its content, is not good art.

This explanation serves to emphasize the fact that artistic communication takes place primarily in and through the aesthetic dimension and linguistic format. Whether or not a poem is going to communicate effectively, is determined largely by the poet's craft.

Eliot (1917) quoted by Daiches (1981: 158) says:

The poet has not a “personality” to express, but a particular medium, ... The poet’s medium is, of course, language, and all critics agree that poets use language rather differently from those who write simply to convey factual information.

1.1 MOTIVATION AND PURPOSE

The impact poets make on readers and on society, depends on the significance of what they say about social reality and how effectively they communicate their vision (cf. Mokhomo; Mqhayi; Serote). What they say about social reality depends largely on their social vision (authorial ideology) and how successfully they communicate that vision is largely a matter of the effectiveness of their stylistic stance (aesthetic ideology).

The purpose of this study is to explore the art and ideology in Maphalla's poetry. This will be done by looking at the various categories of ideology and the artistic ability of the poet to communicate with the reader. Aesthetics forms the bridge, the link between the two. For instance, when we read or listen to

the praises of Ngangelizwe, we cannot miss the bard's disgust when the young prince elopes with his uncle's youngest wife. The bard describes the prince in explicit sexual terms as "a bearded puffadder" (penis) and as "a spider covered in wool/hair" (vagina). This, entails the development of an aesthetic which can adequately account for both content and form in Maphalla's poetry.

1.2 Scope

Maphalla is a very prolific writer. Swanepoel, one of the prominent scholars, comments in a review on one of Maphalla's novels, TSHIU TSEO, that:

This prolific young writer has much talent (1984:61).

He has produced sixteen volumes of poetry to date. The contents of all of these sixteen books will form the basis of our data. However, since some of his books are stronger than others, detailed analyses will concentrate on those books that have much to offer. FUBA SA KA, KGAPHA TSA KA; SENTEBALE and NTETEKENG are some of his powerful productions.

This study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter, which takes the form of an introduction, provides the background to our study. We also look at the

studies conducted by other researchers. Lastly, we present a biographical sketch of the poet, Maphalla K.P.D.

Chapter two sets out to develop a theoretical framework which will provide the backbone of subsequent chapters. Art, and ideology in poetry will form the flesh of this chapter. We will also look at how art and ideology relate to literature.

In chapter three, we focus on the interface between oral and modern literature. We look at those oral techniques that Maphalla as a modern writer has exploited in his poetry.

The fourth chapter deals with art in Maphalla's poetry. We shall examine the artistic beauty we perceive in the presentation of his work. In an attempt to reveal his art and technique, we shall select suitable poems from his poetry and analyse them.

In chapter five, we examine the ideology of the poet as discovered in his poetry.

Chapter six concludes with an attempt to show the relationship between Maphalla's art and his ideology. We also reflect on possible future research.

Finally, we provide a list of all the sources consulted.

1.3 Methodology

The data will be derived from the texts themselves. However, we will also take a trip to interview Maphalla, since this will provide us with access to his ideology and thereby add lustre to our work.

1.4 Literature Review

Mertens and McLaughlin (1995: 9-10) summarize the purpose of literature review as follows:

- (i) The intent may be to summarize the extant research to inform the reader of what is known about the subject, that is, what research has already been conducted.

- (ii) A second important purpose is the identification of weaknesses or gaps in the current knowledge base. Literature review informs the researcher of the results of previously conducted studies. The review may be used to inform practitioners of successful practices, and it may also enable the researcher to identify the next logical step in the research chain.

- (iii) Literature review is a major resource to researchers. It is often necessary to return to the literature throughout the research to obtain information to help explain expected and unexpected findings. The researcher can be thought of as a problem solver. The problem is a gap in the knowledge base. To solve the problem, the researcher must establish an empirical information base from which to draw conclusions and make recommendations about the problem.

- (iv) The literature helps the researcher to construct a theoretical or conceptual framework. The framework becomes the standard for the proposed research, a statement of what the researcher expects to observe as the research project unfolds. It communicates expected outcomes, activities, or interventions necessary to achieve these outcomes, and resources that must be available to support the intervention. The conceptual framework further tells the researcher what information to collect, what should be measured to increase understanding about the problem addressed in the study.

- (v) In sum, the literature review serves many purposes. It establishes a historical perspective on the intended research and provides a vision of the need for additional research.

We now comment on studies that have been done in poetry written in the indigenous languages, with the purpose of achieving the aims mentioned above.

1.4.1 Work done in Sotho poetry

Moleleki (1988)

In his masters dissertation, Moleleki skilfully investigated three aspects of Maphalla's poetry: influence at work in his poetry; the nature and significance of imagery employed; and the theme of protest as conveyed through poetic aestheticism. He looks at two categories of influence, namely: indigenous and exotic. The former refers to influences that are typical of African tradition and the latter refers to all those factors that emanate from outside the African tradition. He believes that these have a role in shaping Maphalla's verbal style and as well as his world-view. He goes on to discuss images associated with human experiences and with nature. He also looks at protest as borne by Maphalla's poetry. This is discussed under two main categories: protest against contradictions of life and protest against injustices. He does not look at the theme of protest only but also the literary aesthetic qualities through which this theme is conveyed.

Lenake (1984)

In his thesis he describes and makes a critical evaluation of the poetry of K.E. Ntsane. His study is based on the subject matter and themes of Ntsane's poems. He further discusses communicative devices and poetic forms and structure in Ntsane's poetry.

Moeketsi (1985)

She wrote a review about Maphalla's poetry book, MAHOHODI. In her review Moeketsi looks at the various themes found in this volume. She mentions that the volume contains an assortment of subjects on day-to-day experiences of man and that the poet shows great honour for knowledge by dedicating a greater portion of this volume to poems on education, purposefulness and prosperity. She also touches on the style that Maphalla employs in his work. She examines how Maphalla uses imagery, end-rhyme and refrain in these poems. There is however, a concern about the occurrence of eye-rhyme in most of the poems, and that it spills his attempt at the implementation of this device.

Ngcongwane (1985)

He wrote a review on the same volume as Moeketsi, that is, MAHOHODI. He claims that Maphalla employs rhyme frequently, perhaps because it is

normally believed to be an essential feature of the structure. But, he reckons that Maphalla uses too many different patterns, and that those poems written without rhyme seem to be better in the exposition and reach. Ngcongwane maintains that the poet must try to use rhyme more sparingly.

Chaphole (1985)

In his review of Maphalla's volume FUBA SA KA, he points out that this volume expresses the poet's feelings. The poet writes about life, its pains and pleasures. Maphalla moans for freedom, that is, to be freed from bondage and be able to express himself freely without restrictions. He points out that Maphalla employs fascinating images in his poetry. Chaphole goes on to mention that various influences are at work in FUBA SA KA. Five of the author's poems have religious titles. Furthermore, there is influence from other writers like Mokhomo, Ntsane, Khaketla and Mofolo. He also comments on the western form that the poet has adopted, dividing his poems into stanzas and also attempting rhyme. Chaphole describes Maphalla as "a poet of vision and hope. His poetry looks far into the infinity of the future" (1985: 89).

Moloi (1968)

In his master's dissertation he conducted a comparative study of the poetry of Ntsane and Khaketla.

1.4.2 Work done in poetry in other indigenous languages

Moloto (1970)

In his doctoral thesis, he looks at the functionality of African poetry, and the structural analysis of Setswana poetry.

Manyaka (1995)

In his doctoral thesis, he looks at intertextuality and influence in Thobega's poetry. These two concepts are subsumed under the theory "Deconstruction" which informs us about the relationship between texts and writers themselves.

Mashabela (1979)

Mashabela in his masters dissertation points out that modern poetry has been influenced by oral tradition. Also, that myths, legends and folktales are discernible modes of expression in Matsepe's poetry.

Mogale (1994)

In his masters dissertation, he looks at factors which influenced Mamogobo's philosophy of life. He found that Mamogobo was highly involved in politics, hence, his theme of protest in his work.

Mseleku (1993)

He looks at the problem of assimilation through Dlamini's work of art, and how he deals with the criticism of self and the search for an identity. He also looks at the use of stylistic and poetic devices that the poet employs. Mseleku points out that Dlamini is also caught like many African writers in the tension of choosing freedom rather than responsibility. He asserts that Dlamini's poetry evokes catharsis which entails pity, fear, bitterness, disgust and severe pain as a result of self-enslavement.

Ntuli (1984)

Ntuli examines the various formatives of influences that played an important role in the poetry of Vilakazi. That is, the traditional Zulu literature, Western and religious influences. He looks into the types of poems Vilakazi wrote and the themes he handled. Ntuli also concentrates on the use of figures of speech and their effectiveness.

Nkumane (1995)

In her masters dissertation, she examines traditional and biblical influences prevalent in Buthelezi's poetry. She looks at intertextuality as a literary approach which highlights the influences of Vilakazi's work on Buthelezi. She also focuses on cultural forms that Buthelezi imparts through his poetry.

Milubi (1984)

In his masters dissertation, he looks at the theme of protest in Ratshitanga's poetry. He skilfully employs poetic techniques like repetition, rhyme, imagery and symbolism. He states that Ratshitanga reflects on the economic, political and cultural struggles of his own poetry.

Milubi (1988)

Here, in his doctoral thesis, he treats aspects of Venda poetry reflecting on the development of poetry from the oral tradition to the modern forms. He also discusses the theme of protest in poetry.

Wainwright (1979)

In his masters dissertation he discusses the praises of Xhosa mineworkers.

Saule (1989)

Here, Saule in his masters dissertation, considers Mqhayi's contributions to Umteteli Wabantu under the Pseudonym - Nzululwazi.

Qangule (1979)

In his doctoral thesis, Qangule looks at the study of theme and technique in the creative works of Mqhayi.

None of these works provide a full scale discussion of art, aesthetics and ideology.

We move on to furnish Maphalla's biography.

1.5 Biographical Sketch

Kgotso Peter David Maphalla was born in 1955 at Bethlehem in the Free State Province. He is the second child and the only son in a family of four. His father had been to school as far as Standard Eight (Junior Certificate). With limited education he had to do odd jobs to supplement his income. He died when Maphalla was eighteen. Maphalla's mother was also a labourer at the then Whites-only Bethlehem Hospital. She was a very committed Christian, which seems to have had a lasting impression on Maphalla.

His home life was one of long hardship from his childhood, accentuated by the meagre earnings of hard toil by his parents. Maphalla was forced to do piece jobs after school hours and during vacations in order to supplement the

family income. It is these menial jobs that opened Maphalla's door to work, life and to the South African situation.

The inferior position to which he has been relegated since an early age as well as the unfair and uncalled for ill-treatment is protested against, in disguise in some of his poems. For example, in "Ke ikopela tokoloho" (I am asking for my freedom/liberation).

**Nna ke ikopela tokoloho
Ho tswa mona ditlamong,
Nke ke rure sa serurubele;
Ke sese sa ditlhapi matamong.**

**(I am asking for freedom,
Freed from these chains,
So that I float like a butterfly;
And wiggle as fish in dams).**

Maphalla started school in 1962 when he was seven. A decade earlier the Government had passed the Bantu Education Act which laid down that, education be given in the mother tongue of the pupils. He went to Thabang Lower Primary School which his playmates could not attend because they were of a different ethnic group.

Maphalla proceeded to Impucuko Higher Primary School which mixed Sesotho and Nguni pupils. This confused Maphalla as to why he was separated from his Nguni peers in the first place, in the lower classes. This remained unanswered until later in his life. He proceeded to Tiisetsang where he developed a keen interest in Sesotho literature, especially the writings of K E Ntsane. It was here where Maphalla and three of his mates took a shot at novel writing. After matriculating in 1974, he proceeded to Tshiya College of Education.

Life at Tshiya presented Maphalla with experiences totally different from previous ones. At Tshiya, his teachers were whites whose values and disciplinary methods were foreign to him. Gone were his black teachers who could sympathize and identify with the problems and struggles of black students.

On completion of his H.P.T.C in 1976, he started teaching at Tshibollo High School in Qwaqwa the following year. He offered English and History to the Standard Nine and Ten classes. It was English literature, especially poetry, which quickly equipped him with a vehicle of self-expression of his bottled-up feelings in a learned way.

It was here where Maphalla started his writing in earnest, although initially he did not consider publishing his work. He transferred to Thabo-Thokoza High School where he taught Sesotho from 1981 to 1983 in his place of birth. It

was here where Maphalla's literary career crystallized. In 1983 he was appointed to the Chief Minister's office as secretary to the Qwaqwa Legislative Assembly. He retired in 1995 and concentrated on business.

Maphalla has since become one of the prominent poets in our language, South Sotho. But, besides poetry, he has tried his hand at other literary genres. To his credit, he has published sixteen volumes of poetry, five short story collections and two drama books. He has since published even an English novel called "A tale of two fathers".

A number of his books have earned him coveted awards, such as; Thomas Mofolo Award for four years in succession, Lesiba's Moilwa floating Trophy, literary award winner of M-Net (Sesotho section winner) and certificate as "best Short-Dramatist" by Radio Sesotho.

Since our study is about poetry, I find it necessary to list the names of the volumes I managed to lay my hands on:

Tsie lala	(1982)
Mahohodi	(1983)
Fuba sa ka	(1984)
Kgapha tsa ka	(1984)
Dikano	(1985)

Ditema	(1987)
Ntekeletsane	(1989)
Makgaolakgang	(1991)
Sentebale	(1991)
Ditlabotjha	(1992)
Ntetekeng	(1992)
Mphe Leihlo	(1993)
Pinyane	(1994)
Sentelele	(1994)

Maphalla's work has proved him an undoubtedly talented writer. Chaphole (1985) confirms this assertion and says:

Maphalla the poet, reigns with major Sesotho poets like Mokhomo, Kgaketla and the late Ntsane. His poetry is both imaginative and inspirational. May his feather continue to make legible marks onward so that the lost, the wanderers can read and discover themselves.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 ORIGINS OF ART

2.2 THEORIES OF ART

2.2.1 Art as Expression

2.2.2 Art as Creative Activity

2.2.3 Art as Vision or Intuition

2.2.4 Art as Significant Form

2.2.5 Works of Art as Imitations

2.2.6 Art as the Language of Emotions

2.2.7 Art of the Sublime

2.3 ART AND LITERATURE

2.4 IDEOLOGY

2.5 ORIGINS OF IDEOLOGY

2.6 WHAT IS IDEOLOGY

2.7 VIEWS ON IDEOLOGY

2.7.1 Ideology as world view: Level of Epistemology

2.7.2 Ideology as an action - related System of Ideas and Institution: Level of Politics and Economics

2.7.3 Ideology as false Consciousness: Level of Sociology

2.7.4 Total Ideology: Level of Religion

**2.7.5 Ideology as an "Imaginary" relation to one's Real
Condition of Existence**

**2.7.6 Descriptive, Pejorative and Positive meanings of
Ideology**

2.8 IDEOLOGY AND LITERATURE

2.9 THE ENVISAGED FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For a theory of literary criticism to be an adequate theory, it should give an account of the nature of works of art and provide the student of literature with a framework of analysis and a method of evaluation. (Ngara, 1990: 10)

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter develops the framework within which our critical appreciation of the poetry of **MAPHALLA** takes place. The concepts which underpin our analysis in the chapters that follow are **ART** and **IDEOLOGY**. It is therefore necessary that these concepts be reflected upon and defined at the outset. We shall also look at the various theories of the concepts mentioned and the role they play in the evaluation of literature.

2.1 ORIGINS OF ART

We are indebted to Adorno (1997: pp325 ff) for the following discussion.

The earliest surviving manifestations of art are not the most authentic, nor do they in any way circumscribe art's range; and rather than best exemplifying what art is, they make it more obscure. It needs to be taken into account that the

oldest surviving art, the cave paintings, belongs as a whole to the visual domain. Next to nothing is known of the music or poetry of the epoch; there are not indications of anything prehistoric that may have differed qualitatively from the optical works.

The most archaic artistic manifestations are so diffuse that it is as difficult as it is vain to try to decide what once did and did not count as art. In later ages as well, art consistently resisted the process of unification in which it was simultaneously caught up. Its own concept is not indifferent to this. What seems to grow hazy in the half-light of prehistory is vague not only because of its distance but because it guards something of the indeterminate, of what is inadequate to the concept.

The problem of origin echoes in the controversy over whether naturalistic depiction or symbolic-geometrical forms came first. Implicit in this question is the hope that it will provide what is needed to discern the primordial essence of art. This hope is deceptive. Hauser (1962: 1) opens his **Social History of Art** with the thesis that during the Paleolithic age naturalism was older: **The monuments of primitive art clearly suggest that naturalism has the prior claim, so that it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain the theory of the primacy of an art remote from life and nature.** The polemical overtone against the neoromantic doctrine of the religious origin of art is unmistakable. Yet this important historian straight away restricts the thesis of the priority of naturalism. Hauser, while still employing the two habitually contrasting theses, criticizes them as anachronistic: **The dualism of the visible and the invisible,**

of the seen and the merely known, remains absolutely foreign to Paleolithic art. He recognizes the element of undifferentiatedness from reality in the earliest art, as well as the undifferentiatedness from reality of the sphere of semblance.

In his *Conspectus*, Herskovits (1948) coherently argues that developmental theories that deduce art from a primarily symbolical or realistic principle of validity are untenable given the contradictory diversity of prehistoric and primitive art. The sharp contrast drawn between primitive conventionalism in the sense of stylization and Paleolithic realism isolates a single aspect. It is not possible to discern the general preponderance of one principle over another in earliest times any more than this could be done today among surviving primitive peoples, Paleolithic sculpture is said to be for the most part highly stylized, contrary to the contemporary realistic portrayals of the cave paintings. The art of primitive people today is just as complex; realistic elements have in no way suppressed fully stylized forms, least of all in sculpture. Immersion in art's origins tantalizes aesthetic theory with various apparently typical procedures, but just as quickly they escape the firm grip that modern interpretational consciousness imagines it possesses. Art anterior to the Paleolithic period is not known. But it is doubtless that art did not begin with works, whether they were primarily magical or already aesthetic. The cave drawings are stages of a process and in no way an early one. The first images must have been preceded by a mimetic comportment, the assimilation of the self to its other.

It is clear from the discussion above that the question of the origin of art is still shrouded in mystery.

2.2 THEORIES OF ART

Questions about the definition of terms such as **art** have led philosophers to try to formulate theories in order to explain the concept. For Rader (1973:1) art is interpreted in many ways. Among the primary concepts employed are play, imitation, beauty, emotional expression, imagination, intuition, wish-fulfillment, pleasure, technique, meaning, form empathy, abstraction and aesthetic distance. Weitz (1950) concludes that art is too complex and variable to reduce to a single definition. Rader adds that some writers use other words such as **communication** (Tolstoy), **objectification** (Santayana), **embodiment** (Whitehead) and **symbolization** (Langer and Arnheim). These are not alternatives to **expression** but are cognate terms. We shall now look at what the various theorists say about art.

2.2.1 Art as Expression

The theory of art as **expression** has had a wide following with diverse emphases. Carritt (1965), quoted from over forty representative aestheticians ancient and modern to illustrate the recognition that art as a creative process is the **expression** of mood, feeling or spirit. Langer (1953) claims that a considerable number of writers point out that an **expression** does not mean self-expression. But, as she puts it, the artist expresses not his own actual

feelings but what he knows about human feelings. The sceptic might still contend that art in no way implies expression, and this is true in some meaning of the word. But, if by expression one means the intentional making of objects with expressive qualities, then it is difficult to deny that art is a kind of expression. An artist expresses feeling, but not in the way a politician blows off steam or a baby laughs and cries.

She holds that works of art express emotions by standing for them, or representing them. A work of art is created to express its creator's ideas of immediate, felt, emotive life, to set forth directly what feeling is like. She asserts that works of art express vital import or what life feels like. The expressed is influenced by the artist's background of emotional conceptions, his individual sensitivity and his ways of articulating and projecting feeling. She believes Art feeling is expressed symbolically. What does she mean by symbol? She means any device that is used to abstract and conceptualize something (Langer, 1953:60).

Her second theory of art holds that works of art abstract aspects of the world around us or our own experience to enable us to perceive these aspects more clearly. She reckons that the point of creating a work of art, is to abstract sounds, shapes, or movements to draw our attention to them. She continues to say that works of art make us stop and take notice, notice how space looks, how time appears, what living is like. Art focuses on some aspects of the world or our experience. Langer asserts that works of art are different, they do not have material existence, while other things do (1953:47). She says the

appearances of such things as buildings and pots is abstracted from their material existence to consider them as works of art. She says each appearance then becomes a vision, a form or an image. She believes it is important to consider works of art as appearance or illusions. The purpose of illusion in art is to abstract the element of sensory appearance from the fabric of actual life and its complex interests, and creating a sheer vision, a datum that is nothing but appearances and is clearly an object only for sight (Langer 1957: 31). Illusion in art cancels the process of factual judgement which carries us beyond what is presented to our senses, and she says it is established by stylistic devices such as meter in poetry (1957: 34). She also suggests that works of art, in addition to being illusions, are **images**. She introduces this term as a synonym for illusion. Images are considered as the stuff of which imagination is made. She holds that imagination is not so limited, instead, images of sound, bodily movements and purposeful action also arise spontaneously in our minds. She believes that everything has an appearance and she calls this its **semblance**, that is, when an object consists entirely in its semblance, it is called **a merely virtual object or an illusion**. She claims that every realm of art has an illusion, which is created when the artist first begins to work. There is an immediate mental shift from the **real world** to the world of illusion, says Langer (1953:84). For Langer, literature creates the illusion of life in the mode of virtual past. A piece of literature uses structure, diction, images, names and illusions to make an image of life. Schiller (1954) also finds that semblance is important for art. It liberates perception and let the mind dwell on the sheer appearance of things. He holds that imagination is the power to distinguish semblance from reality, to abide with it in contentment and without deception.

For Firth (in Coote and Shelton, 1992:15) the term **art** in English indicates a conventional category of great diffuseness. It can refer to any patterned application of skill, from cooking or public speaking to a variety of graphic and plastic creation. He says historically, painting, sculpture, architecture, music and poetry (or literature in general) have been distinguished as **fine art**. Upon these fine arts in particular, the discipline of aesthetics - the philosophy of taste or the study of the conditions of sensuous perception - has been focused. Firth describes anthropologists as people who have looked upon art in many different ways. He cites Redfield as one of the anthropologists who sees art as an **enlargement of experience**. With a liking of analogies and with Spanish writings, Redfield cites Jose Ortega y Gasset's analogy of art as **a window upon a garden, a transparency through which one sees interesting human affairs** (an image probably derived from Leonardo da Vinci - Redfield, 1959:18-19; cf. Gombrich, 1960:299). But Redfield maintains that, with modern non-objective art there is no garden, the viewer has to find his own aesthetic meanings in what is produced. Firth sees art as part of the result of attributing meaningful pattern to experience or imagined experience. He also sees art as a product of human commitment, determined by man's social existence.

Collingwood (1964) understands art to be an immediate bridge between thought and experience. What art **says**, he argues is **beautiful**, and what art **means** but does not say, is **true**. Rendel also in (Coote and Shelton, 1992:16) defines fine art as having a capacity to touch men's thoughts and emotions, a quality which he equates with given pleasure. Art is also described as medium of communication, as in the organization and transmission of knowledge.

In the Encyclopedia Britannica (1992:594) art is regarded as the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments or experience that can be shared with others. The term art, may also designate one of a number of modes of expression. The arts, are divided into fine and liberal arts. The latter are concerned with skill of expression in language, speech and reasoning. The fine arts are more concerned with purely aesthetic ends or in short with the beautiful. Classification applied to the fine art establishes such categories as:

- literature (includes poetry, drama, story and so on)
- the visual arts (paintings, drawings, sculpture, etc).
- the graphic art (paintings, drawings, design and other forms expressed on flat surfaces).
- the plastic art (sculpture, modelling).
- the decorative art (enamel work, furniture design mosaic, etc).
- the performing art (theatre, dance, music).

The term art may further be used to distinguish a particular object environment or experience as an instance of aesthetic expression, allowing us to say, for example, that, **that drawing or tapestry is art** (1992:595).

Once again, Eaton (1988:29) cites Croce as one of the theorists who have thought of art as an **idea** in the artist's mind. He claims that art does not just express feelings, but it also expresses ideas of feelings. Since ideas necessarily precede any physical manifestation of them, getting the idea is **craft** and formulating the idea is **real art**. Expression understood in this way is a mental not physical phenomenon.

Dewey (1980) proposed another, kind of expression theory. He based his theory on a theory of experience. He says, artists provide us with experiences by producing structured objects or events that bring together various aspects of perceptions and organize them into coherent wholes. Experiences, according to Dewey, always begin with **impulsion** - needs or desires and continue as intentions. Expressions are reflective experiences not just actions in which one gives way for impulses. It entails purposefulness, a consciousness of action as a means to a particular end.

Rader claims that there is a considerable consensus among aestheticians that art can best serve as a mode of expression, and that it can best express the inner life of the psyche, such as mood, feeling and desire (1973:5). But, he claims that such an understanding puts too exclusive emphasis upon the subjective side of art, namely, the portrayal of the inner life. Instead, he prefers to characterize art as the **expression or embodiment of value**. Whitehead (1933) maintains that in art the concrete facts are so arranged as to elicit attention to the particular values which are realizable through them - the habit art is the habit of enjoying vivid values. Nietzsche (1966) is obsessed with the idea that all values may be questioned and that the goal of art, as of life in general, is the transvaluation of values. A **value**, on the other hand, is a quality that excites appreciation. Art, as value-expressive, springs from attitudes of appraisal. Bacon as cited by Rader (1973), writes this about poetry and says it applies also to all other arts:

**... It doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting
the show of things to the desires of the mind,
whereas reason doth buckles and bow the Mind
unto the Nature of things (In Rader, 1973:7).**

Values are expressed in the creative activity of the artist whenever he purposefully creates the objective occasion for appreciation.

Creative intentions and the expressive function of art involves ways in which artists hope to affect their audience. Claims about expressiveness can also be claims about feelings evoked when people experience works of art or claims about the works themselves.

2.2.2 Art as Creative Activity

According to Marx (1976) art is a creative activity by means of which man produces objects that express him, that speak for and about him. Art is a creation of a reality shaped by human goals. Marx outlines that art is an essential sphere of man. And, in his **Economic and Philosophic Manuscript** of 1844, Marx says:

**If, man is human to the extent that he is able to
raise himself above nature to become a human
natural being, then art is that activity through
which he elevates this specific capacity to**

humanize everything he touches. In other words, if man as a truly human being is above all a creative being, then art is one of the spheres wherein he realizes this creative power repeatedly and limitlessly.

He continues to say that, because art is a creation, it is always unique and artistic endeavours are always somewhat like adventures. Art is not only a reflection of reality, but a creation of a new reality. Marx says thanks to art, that reality of human or humanized objects created is extended and enriched and our relationship with reality is at once enriched and deepened.

It is mentioned that artistic creation has throughout its history followed two distinct fundamental paths: **cultured, professional creation** by specific individuals in whom artistic talent is apparently exclusively concentrated, and the **collective and anonymous creation** of the people. There is thus the history made up of a succession of outstanding artists who constitute a radiant constellation of vigorous individuals and there is history or art without names. This is dark and silent history which starts with primitive epics even further back with dances or songs which in prehistoric times accompanied man in his pain, fears, hopes, and which endures across the centuries and into the present, in different forms, but without losing their collective and anonymous character.

Marx and Engels (1975) show the highest respect for art as cultured, individual, and professional creation as demonstrated by their admiration for outstanding

exponents of such art (Cervantes, Shakespeare, Goethe, Herine). But, they show interest in the collective and popular creation, primarily as an expression of the creative capacity of the people, not as the subject of ethnographic research. It is said that while Marx and Engels exalt popular art, they are careful not to idealize it or set it up against art as individual creation. It is claimed that popular creation can definitely survive in rural areas, but can also exist in modern cities in the form of revolutionary poetry and songs as an expression of the class consciousness of people. Thus the people manifest their creative capacity in art.

Rice and Waugh (1992:19) assert that art exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to make the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. They claim that the technique of art is to make objects **unfamiliar**, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. Rice and Waugh make this statement that:

“Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important”. (1992:1a)

They make an illustration by citing Tolstoy (1946) who makes the familiar seem strange by not naming the familiar object. For example, Tolstoy **defamiliarizes** the idea of flogging in this manner:

“To strip people who have broken the law, to hurl them to the floor, and to rap on their bottoms with switches” and, after a few lines, “to lash about on the naked buttocks”.

2.2.3. Art as Vision or Intuition

MacColl (1931:11) says that Croce (an Italian philosopher) declares **art as vision or intuition**. The artist produces an image or a phantasm. He claims that art is often vulgarly limited to the art of painting only or to the graphic and plastic arts. But, even in popular use **artist** are more widely applied. For instance, he says **we are in one room only of the house, a very fine one, no doubt, but there are many in the mansion** (MacColl 1931:12). Music, which is not an art of vision lies outside, dancing also lies outside, architecture lies outside an art partly of vision but not of images. Poetry, though it deals with images by evoking them, is an art of sound, of music dealing with words. Art is regarded as **the ordering of doing and making for use and the ordering of expression for delight**. (MacColl, 1931:14).

Elton (1967:100) distinguishes two kinds of knowledge, namely, **intuitive** or **imaginative**, and **intellectual** or **conceptual**. Works of art are primarily examples of what he calls **intuitive knowledge**. He explains intuitive knowledge as a direct knowledge of individuals, including images. It is also active, in the sense that the knower somehow creates what he knows. Intuitions

are also understood to be like perceptions. He gives the example of **this river, this lake, this book** as intuitions to be contrasted with the concept **water**. His emphasis on the similarity between intuitions and perceptions is not so puzzling if one remembers that in his view any perception is an activity, both what we would call perception and imaginative activity are creative. An artist intuits and expresses feeling and his creative product becomes a kind of human language.

2.2.4 Art as Significant Form

Bell claims that the starting point for all systems of aesthetic must be the personal experience of a peculiar emotion, and the objects that provoke this emotion we call works of art (cf. Elton 1967:107). Bell explains that every work produces a different emotion. For instance, the kind of emotion provoked by pictures, sculptures, buildings etc., will not be the same. Bell claims that there is a particular kind of emotion provoked by works of art, and this is called the aesthetic emotion. He asserts that if we can discover some quality common and peculiar to all the objects that provoke it (aesthetic emotion), we shall have solved what he takes to be the central problem of aesthetics. Bell believes that we shall have discovered the essential quality in a work of art that distinguishes works of art from all other classes of objects. What is this quality? What quality is shared by all objects that provoke our aesthetic emotions? Bell claims that this quality is **significant form**. He says that lines and colours combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms, stir our aesthetic emotions. These relations and combinations of lines and colours, he refers to as **significant form**. Bell argues that it is the business of an artist to combine and

arrange these forms so that they shall move us. Lake argues that Bell's theory is a philosophical fabrication generated by a certain artistic prejudice, and claims that this theory cannot claim to be true or correct (Dickie and Sclafani, 1977:7).

2.2.5 Works of Art as Imitations

Plato argues that works of art are imitations or representations of objects and situations in the physical world. He claims that, since these objects and situations are themselves imitation of ideal forms which transcend the world that we see and hear about us, then works of art turn out to be imitations of imitations. It is noted that Plato is principally concerned with the status that works of art occupy in the realm of existing things. He often compares paintings, for example, to mirror images and illusions, making his theory **ontological** in nature. He believes that because they are imitations, works of art are inferior entities with respect to other existing things. He believes that some artists can represent things by imitating their shapes and colours and others do so by use of the voice. He claims that imitation is produced by means of rhythm, language and music. These, are used either separately or in combination. For example, he says the imitative medium of dancers is rhythm alone, unsupported by music, for it is by manner in which they arrange the rhythms of their movements that they represent man's characters and feelings and actions. He believes that the instinct for imitation is inherent in man from his earliest days. Man differs from other animals in that he is the most imitative of creatures and he learns his earliest lessons by imitation. We concur with

what Plato believes in, for example, a baby starts its life by imitating those around it.

Dickie and Sclafani (1977) say, Aristotle's work **POETICS** is probably the first in the history of art theory. His subject is the art of poetry in general and the art of tragedy in particular. For Aristotle (in Dorsch, 1965:33) mentions as a basis for his argument that the different genres of poetry should be differentiated by the nature of their imitation. It means that the situations, characters, emotions portrayed or evoked must strike us as true, so that this recognition of the model in the imitation gives us the pleasure. Aristotle follows Plato in his saying that poetry is imitation. Both claim that music is also imitative, and that imitation is natural to man from childhood. And also that it is natural for all to delight in works of imitation.

2.2.6 Art as the Language of Emotions

Works of art stimulate and trigger emotions. Literature may call forth definite emotions of despair or hope; melancholy or joy; laughter or dread (Tolstoy, 1946:119). Traditional representative paintings or sculpture may do the same especially if it has roots in one's culture. The same hold for music but music without the help of words or pictures is less likely to call forth specific feelings.

He asserts that art is an emotional language, a personal utterance addressed to the reader or beholder by means of which he grasps the emotion the artist has felt and makes it his own (In Stolnitz, 1965:6). Tolstoy (1946:120) says art

begins with a man feeling some emotions, and it fulfills itself when another man shares this emotion.

Tolstoy continues to say that in spite of mountains of books written about art, no exact definition of art has been constituted. And, the reason for this is that the conception of art has been based on the conception of beauty. He asserts that if the aim of any activity is merely our pleasure, and define it solely by that pleasure, our definition will evidently be a false one. He claims that this is precisely what has occurred in the efforts to define art. And, in the same way, beauty, or that which pleases us, can in no sense serve as the basis for the definition of art.

To exemplify his assertion, Tolstoy says to see the aim and purpose of art in the pleasure we get from it is like assuming that the purpose and aim of food is the pleasure derived when consuming it. Yet, the meaning of eating food lies in the nourishment of the body not of deriving pleasure. And it is the same with regard to art. He claims that people will come to understand the meaning of art only when they cease to consider it as a means to pleasure and to consider it as one of the conditions of human life. He says that viewing it in this way, we cannot fail to observe that art is one of the means of intercourse between man and man.

He suggests that every work of art causes the receiver to enter into certain kind of relationship both with him who produced, the art and with all those who simultaneously, previously or subsequently receive the same artistic impression.

Tolstoy says, by words a man transmits his thoughts to another, by means of art he transmits his feelings (1946:121).

He goes further and says that art begins when one person with the object of joining another or others to himself in one and the same feeling, expresses that feeling by certain external indications. He makes an example of a boy who experiences fear on encountering a wolf, relates that encounter; and in order to evoke in others the feeling he has experienced, describes himself, his condition before the encounter, for surroundings, the wood, his own lightheartedness and the wolf's appearance, its movements, etc. All this, if only the boy when telling the story, again experiences the feelings he has lived through and infects the hearers and compels them to feel what he has experienced, is art. The feelings with which the artist infects others may be very different - very important or very significant, very bad or very good, very strong or very weak. Tolstoy (1946:123) says:

To evoke in oneself a feeling one has once experienced, and having evoked it in oneself, then by means of movements, lines, colors, sounds, or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling that other may experience the same feeling - this is the activity of art. Art is human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external

signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings and also experience them.

He says thanks to man's capacity to be infected with the feelings of others by means of art, all that is being lived through by his (man's) contemporaries is accessible to him, as well as the feelings experienced by men thousands of years ago, and he also has the possibility of transmitting his own feelings and emotions to others. According to Tolstoy, an angry or sad author, when successful, actually makes the readers angry or sad. That is, if the artist's work is genuine art, then, one should feel the way the artist did when he made it.

Veron (1879) is also one of the theorists who believes that art is the expression of emotions. He believes that when emotions are expressed by gesture and rhythmic movement, such emotion produces the dance; when by rhythmic notes, it is music; when by rhythmic words, then it is poetry. He holds that art is the manifestation of emotion, obtaining external interpretation, by expressive arrangement of line, form or colour; by a series of gestures, sounds or words governed by particular rhythmical cadence. He claims that the merit of a work of art, whatever it may be, can be finally measured by the power with which it manifests or interprets the emotion that was its determining cause. He says:

“what we admire in a work of art is the Genius of the artist” (In Rader, 1973:53)

Ducasse (1963) is known as the foremost American champion of a theory of art akin that of Veron and Tolstoy. He sides with Veron and against Tolstoy in declaring that expression, not communication of emotion is the essence of art, and that when artistic communication does occur, it is not the raw emotion but its abstract image that is transmitted.

2.2.7 Art of the Sublime

Longinus (in Dorsch, 1965:101) states that the Sublime, wherever it occurs, consists in a certain excellence of language, and that it is by this that the greatest poets and prose writers have gained eminence. A lofty passage does not persuade the reader but takes him out of himself. The extent to which the reader can be persuaded is usually in his own power, but these sublime passages exert irresistible force and sways every reader. Skill in invention, lucid arrangement and disposition of facts are appreciated not by one passage or by two, but gradually manifest themselves in the general structure of a work. But, a Sublime thought well-timed illumines an entire subject and in a flash reveals the whole power of the reader.

A question arises whether there is any art which can teach sublimity in writing? For Longinus **the sublime is born in man, and not to be acquired by instruction; genius is the only master who can teach it** (Sesonske, 1965:77).

Genius is taken to be innate, it is not something that can be learnt, and nature is the only art that begets it. It is said that a writer can only learn from art when he is to abandon himself to the direction of his genius.

If any work is submitted to the judgement of an acute critic, fails to dispose his mind to lofty ideas and the longer he reads it, the less he thinks of it, then there is no true sublimity. But when it is impossible to distract the attention from it takes a strong and lasting hold on the memory, then we may be sure that we have lighted on the true sublime.

There are five principal sources from which sublimity is derived, and beneath these sources lies a common foundation, the command of language. The first and the most important is the ability to form grand conceptions. The second is the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotion. These two elements are regarded as largely innate, while the remaining are the product of art. That is, the proper formation of the two types of figures, figures of thought and figures of speech, the dignified expression which is subdivided into the choice of words, the use of imagery and elaboration of style. The fifth cause of sublimity which embraces all those preceding is majesty and elevation of structure. To sum the whole discussion of sublimity, it is mentioned that whatever is useful or needful lies easily within man's reach Longinus (in Dorsch, 1965:108).

Kant (1963) regards the sublime and the beautiful as two species of the aesthetic judgement. He argues that for sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small. He suggests beauty should

be smooth and polished, the great rugged and negligent; beauty should not be obscure while the great ought to be dark and gloomy; beauty should be light and delicate, and the great ought to be solid and even massive. He believes that **the beautiful** is what pleases in the mere judgement, and that **the sublime** is what pleases immediately through its opposition to the interest of sense. He suggests that the sublime does not really exist in nature, has no objective status, and that its domain is the mind.

Achebe (1975) insists that art is, and was always in the service of man. He claims that our ancestors created their myths and legends and told their stories for a human purpose. They made their sculptures in wood, stone and bronze to serve the needs of their times. They created their works for the good of that society. Achebe explains that he uses the word **good** in the sense similar to that which God at the end of each day's work of putting the world together saw that what he had made was **good** (1975:19). According to Achebe, art is good and useful. For instance, it is also intended to serve a basic human need, like when the cavemen drew pictures on the rocks of animals they hoped to kill in their next hunt.

2.3 ART AND LITERATURE

Art is absolutely essential in literature. It is a creative activity in which an author expresses what he knows about human life and his experiences in life. Art is the projection of the writer's inspiration, imagination, emotions, preferences, appreciation or sense of values. Art expresses and cultivates feelings. It makes

articulate the whole of human values. All these are expressed artistically in the form of words. In literature we look at the art the writer has employed to distinguish and to make his work appeal to the reader or listener. He employs art as a medium of communication, as a factor in organization and transmission of his knowledge. Art is beauty, that beauty is recognized by the enjoyment it gives through literature.

Now we shall focus on the next concept in our work, namely, **IDEOLOGY**. Ngara (1985:21) says art has a particular relationship with ideology. This relationship, is not the same as the relationship between science and ideology. While science gives us knowledge of reality, art makes us **see** and **feel** reality. Althusser (1969) confirms this assertion that:

What art makes us see, and therefore gives to us in the form of "seeing", "perceiving" and "feeling", is the ideology from which it is born, in which it bathes, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes.

We will now set out to explain the concept **ideology**, as it is one of the salient concepts in our analysis of the work of Maphalla.

2.4 IDEOLOGY

Ideology is a difficult term to define satisfactorily, but it generally conveys the sense of a collective representation of ideas and experience as opposed to the

material reality on which experience is based. A number of scholars have addressed the term IDEOLOGY from different points of view and with varying emphases (cf. de Tracy 1804; Althusser 1969, 1971; Marx and Engels 1975, 1986; Soyinka 1976; Marx 1976; Selinger 1976, 1977; Eagleton 1976, 1991, 1994; Ngara 1985, 1990; Leatt et al 1986; Irele 1981; Hawkes 1996).

For Leatt et al (1986:274)

“The meaning of a term is its usage in ordinary language”.

Following this expression we shall try to look at the different views and comments suggested by various scholars on the notion of ideology as well as tracing briefly the early history of the concept.

2.5 ORIGINS OF IDEOLOGY

According to Williams (1977:55) the concept **ideology** did not originate in Marxism and is still in no way confined to it. Yet, it is an important concept in almost all Marxist thinking about culture, and especially about literature and ideas. He believes that it is more to the point to return the term and its variations to the issues within which it and these were formed, that is, to the historical development.

Williams (1977) claims that **ideology** was coined as a term in the late eighteenth century by the French philosopher **Destutt de Tracy**. It was intended to be a philosophical term for the **science of ideas**. Its use depended on a particular understanding of the nature of ideas which was broadly that of Locke and the empiricists tradition. Thus ideas were not to be and could not be understood in any of the older **metaphysical** or **idealist** senses. The science of ideas must be natural science, since all ideas originate in man's experience of the world. For de Tracy, ideology is part of zoology, and says:

"We have only an incomplete knowledge of an animal if we do not know his intellectual faculties. Ideology is a part of Zoology, and it is especially in man that this part is important and deserves to be more deeply understood"
(Elements d'ideologies, 1804:15)

Bonaparte, in Hawkes (1996:55) points out that de Tracy's **ideology** neglects to examine **the laws known to the human heart and of the lessons of history**. As he says, this science reacts against both the idealist notion of a **priori** concept and the possibility of historical determinism. He claims that these reactions bespeak the legacy of Locke and Condillac, the two most important influences of de Tracy's thought. His reading of these thinkers led him to believe that there were no innate ideas, all thought is being derived from

sensation. On the other hand, he thought that nothing exists for us except by the ideas we have of it, because our ideas are our whole being, our existence itself.

De Tracy suggests that to avoid the sceptical position would be to analyse the process by which our minds translate material things into ideal forms. This area of study is opened by Condillac under the leadership of de Tracy, and it is given the name **Ideologie**, that is the science of ideas. Ideology thus originates as a **meta-science**, a science of science. It claims to be able to explain where the other sciences come from and to give a scientific genealogy of thought. De Tracy's ideology traces ideas through sensations, to their roots in matter. It emphasizes more strongly the movement, the process through which human beings interact with their material surroundings. De Tracy is thus able to claim that **ideologie** achieves a momentous philosophical breakthrough, by transcending the ancient oppositions between matter and spirit, things and concepts. Then, Kennedy (1978) observes that de Tracy is led in **two opposite directions, that is, towards an idealist conception of error and sensationalist conception of truth**. Kennedy further explains that while the sensations we get from external objects are reliable and accurate, the ideas which these sensations produce in our minds may be wrongly arranged and therefore lead us to false conclusions.

It is mentioned by Althusser (1969) that Marx takes up the term fifty years later and gives it a quite different meaning. He describes ideology as:

the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group.

However, Marx takes his earliest intuitions further and formulates a theory of ideology. In his book **The German Ideology** (1986), he offers an explicit theory of ideology. In the German Ideology, ideology is conceived as a pure illusion, a pure dream. All its reality is external to it. Ideology, then, is for Marx:

an imaginary assemblage, a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the 'days residues' from the only full and positive reality, that of the concrete history of concrete material individuals producing their existence (Eagleton, 1994:100).

With this brief discussion on origins, we move on to look at what other theorists say about this concept ideology.

2.6 WHAT IS IDEOLOGY?

For Adorno (1973) ideology is essentially a kind of **identity thinking, erasing difference and otherness at the level of the mind as commodity exchange does at the level of material.** For the American sociologist Seliger (1977), ideology is best seen as a set of action-oriented beliefs, whose truth or falsehood conservatism or radicalism, is quite irrelevant. Mannheim (1991), by contrast sees ideology as essentially antiquated forms of thought out of sync

with what the age demands. Once again, Mannheim shares with Weber the concern to establish a sociology of knowledge. At its centre, Mannheim locates the study of ideology as a neutral, value-free science. He distinguishes between three different concepts of ideology: a **particular ideology** that constitutes only a part of an opponent's thought; a **total ideology** that determines the whole of an opponent's thought; and a **general ideology** characteristic of anyone's thought (In Leatt et al, 1986:270). For Lukacs (1971), ideology is a **genetic** affair, its truth is to be located in the historical situation from which it springs.

Solecki, in Makaryk (1993:558), states that ideology is as slippery a term in criticism as it is in social sciences. He claims that some critics assume that a text reflects or embodies to some extent, the ideologies prevailing in its society. They (critics) define ideology either descriptively as an explicit sharing of certain attitudes, values, assumptions and ideas or evaluatively as a covert means of social oppression and exploitation. In the latter context, ideology is taken as a means perhaps the dominant one, by which a society maintains its economic and political status quo.

Soyinka (1976:61) indicates that ideology is something dispensable, extraneous, contingent or external. It is imagined that one's attitude to art determines one's attitude to ideology, when in reality it is one's ideology which shapes one's art. Cabral (1969) considers ideology to be the outdated and inappropriate form in consciousness of a specific system of productive relations ripe for restructuring. He points out that ideology comprises all the dominant

ideas, philosophical, artistic, moral, legal and religious which have become a mental obstacle to such restructuring. He concludes that ideology is not something we can escape so easily. It is inherent and internal to all our thoughts and actions. It need not **speak itself** but **reveals itself** in the form of word and deed.

Soyinka further claims that **literary ideologies** are responsible for **asphyxiating the creative process** (1976:63). He allows the writer a **social vision** but not a literary ideology. By the latter term he means a set of rules which lead to **predictability, imaginative constraint, and thematic excisions**, whereas by **social vision** he means something which directs one to the extension of experience.

What we make of the descriptions cited here is that, different meanings of the term ideology are identified. Therefore, from here, we move on to look at how the various theorists perceive the term ideology.

2.7 VIEWS ON IDEOLOGY

Eagleton (1994:15) says that theories of ideology are among other things attempts to explain why it is that men and women come to hold certain views, and to this extent examine the relation between thought and social reality. However, that relation is conceived as reflection or contradiction correspondence or dislocation, inversion or imaginary construction. These

theories also assume that there are specific historical reasons why people come to feel, reason, desire and imagine as they do.

2.7.1 Ideology as World-view: Level of Epistemology

Ideology is understood at this level as an organic system of ideas that interprets reality from one specific perspective. For example, Nationalism interprets the world from the vantage point of the nation. The identity of the nation creates symbols, which produce solidarity and enable people to understand their being-in-the-world. Leatt et al (1986) assert that such an understanding of ideology is neutral and universal. That is, every human being has his own ideology which constitute his symbolic universe.

2.7.2 Ideology as an Action-related System of Ideas and Institutions: Level of Politics and Economics

On this level ideology is known as those world-views that have a political and economic outlook. Ideology is understood as an action-related system of ideas and institutions intended to change or defend an existing socio-economic order. Leatt et al (1986) distinguish between political ideologies (like Nationalism, Marxism, Racialism, Liberalism) and economic ideologies (like Capitalism, Feudalism, Socialism). These ideologies present a specific analysis of the present social order, then relate it to a future ideal and desired state. This is achieved by maintaining the present order, or by changing it or by replacing it with the new order.

This level is said to be universal. Everybody is involved here, whether consciously or unconsciously in a particular political and economic ideology. Leatt et al (1986) claim that we are born into a specific political or economic ideology before we can consciously confirm or correct it. We grow up with this ideology and it reflects our class, origin and position in society. Our class and origin and position in society express the vested interest in maintaining or changing the present order. For instance, it is natural for the black elite in South Africa to be committed to black consciousness as opposed to racialism because of the discriminatory laws.

They also differentiate between ideologies of the dominant classes and ideologies of the dominated classes. They note that in South Africa the most important political ideologies of the dominant classes are racialism, nationalism, Afrikaner liberalism and the ideology of the national security state. The economic ideology of the dominant class is capitalism. Then the political ideologies of the dominated classes in South Africa are black nationalism in various expressions, black consciousness and Marxism. Then, they suggest that it can be argued that the most important economic ideology of the dominated classes is one form of socialism.

They say Gramsci and Althusser have pointed out that ideologies are not simply systems of ideas but they are embodied in social institutions like political parties, schools, churches, the army and the media.

2.7.3 Ideology as False Consciousness: Level of Sociology

This level is said to be presenting Marxian understanding of ideology. That is, it is more restricted and applies only to certain ideologies as understood on the previous two levels. Leatt et al (1986) claims that ideologies as **false consciousness** distort the truth, consciously or unconsciously. Such ideologies are found within dominant groups. **True consciousness** is an ideology that represents the interest of justice and liberation for the total community.

Marx (1986) also understands ideology as **false consciousness**. He says that it is false because it is unconscious of its real function. He also sees ideology as a back-to-front picture of how things are. For instance:

“Ethics” makes people’s action appear dependent on absolute moral principles, whereas they actually reflect their class conditions and interests. In “Politics” the state grants its citizens certain rights, whereas it is the people who grant the state its powers. In “history” there is a belief that great men and ideas decide the course of events, whereas events in economic and social conditions shape ideas and determine historical importance. (In Leatt et al: 1986:209)

Lukacs (1971) also develops the notion of ideology as false consciousness. He claims that ideology is false because it is partial, incapable of grasping the total meaning of society and history. Lukacs prefers the term world-view to ideology, and tries to relate particular world-view to class outlooks. He contrasts the false consciousness of world-views with the true consciousness of the proletariat, which transcends all particular class standpoints.

2.7.4 Total Ideology: Level of Religion

Leatt et al (1986) assert that when ideology becomes a total ideology it degenerates from a symbol to an idol. A symbol discloses the world, an idol veils it. A symbol liberates while an idol oppresses. A symbol invites participation and stimulates creativity, an idol needs absolute domination and remains poor for it excludes the totality of the richness of truth (1986:284).

In ordinary usage **ideology** usually means **political doctrine, system of ideas or way of thinking**. According to Selden (1989:153) Marxists use **ideology** as a comprehensive term to cover social consciousness such as areas of religion, education, economy, social relations and culture. Marxists argue that ideology always represents the values of a particular social class and it is based on its economic interests.

2.7.5 Ideology as an “Imaginary” Relation to one’s Real Condition of Existence

According to Eagleton (1994:87) Althusser is the leading French Marxist philosopher of his day. He develops his theory of ideology as an **imaginary** relation to one's real conditions of existence. He states that ideology is not a conceptual representation of the world, but the way we live that world at the level of the unconscious. He believes that ideology is like the air we breathe which makes possible our sense of existence as human subjects. He continues to say that ideology is closely related to what is called **common sense**. He also conceives ideology as the imaginary ways in which people represent to themselves their real relationship to the world.

Gramsci (1971) and Althusser (1971) regard ideology as necessary in any society for it is through ideology that men are formed, transformed and equipped to respond to the demands of their conditions of existence. 'Man is an ideological animal' (Althusser 1971). Both authors look upon ideology as more than a system of ideas that simply reflects the economic conditions of a society. Ideology is embodied in social institutions such as the school, church, family and political party. They believe that in these institutions people are socialised into organic systems of behaviour and belief. For Gramsci (1971) (Western Marxist), ideology is not an illusion but a lived relation which has a material existence of its own. He adds that what counts is not the truth or falsity of an ideology but its function and efficiency in binding classes together in positions of domination and subordination. Althusser (1971) distinguishes

between ideology and science. While ideology treats individuals as subjects, thereby expressing their relationship with the real conditions of existence in an imaginary form, science investigates subjectless structures. He maintains that historical materialism is the science of ideology, it investigates the function of the dominant ideology. He makes an important distinction between the **repressive state apparatuses** (police, army, courts) that work primarily by force and secondarily by ideology, and the **ideological state apparatuses** (public and private schools, churches, family, political parties, trade unions, media, cultural institutions in fields of literature, arts and sports) that work primarily by persuasion and secondarily by force. He describes ideology as closely linked to the problem of state power and class domination. He maintains that **no class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its "hegemony" over and in the ideological state apparatuses.** Gramsci (1971) has little to say about the originality of the ideology concept, since for him it is subsumed under the more encompassing notion of **hegemony**. Hegemony for Gramsci suggests the varied techniques by which ruling classes secure the consent of their subordinates to be ruled. Althusser incorporates some aspects of Gramsci's concept of hegemony into a theoretical synthesis.

2.7.6 Descriptive, Pejorative and Positive Meanings of Ideology

Guess (1981) has suggestive reflections on the concept ideology. He distinguishes between what he terms **descriptive, pejorative and positive** meanings of ideology.

(a) Ideology in the descriptive sense

Guess (1981) maintains that the term **ideology** is used in many different ways, due to the fact that theorists have propounded theories of ideology in the course of trying to answer very different questions.

He mentions different research contexts within which theories of ideology have been developed. The first of the three research programs is the **program of an empirical study of human groups** called "anthropology". He maintains that there are various things that one might wish to study about a given human group. For instance, one might study biological properties of a group, the cultural or socio-cultural features (kingship system, religious and scientific beliefs, artist traditions, values, etc) of a group. Thus, for any given human group we can undertake to describe the salient features of its socio-cultural system and how they change over time. In the course of this kind of empirical inquiry, socio-cultural sphere may be subdivided into different parts for further study. Thus, Marxists distinguish between (economic) base and (ideological) superstructure. Guess (1981) continues to say many anthropologists prefer to distinguish technology, social structure and ideology. Then, a theory of ideology arises in the course of pursuing the project of describing and explaining certain features or facts about human social groups. The ideology of the group will be more or less extensive. It will include such things as the beliefs the members of the group hold, the concepts they use, the attitudes and psychological dispositions they exhibit, their motives, desires, values, works of arts, religious rituals, gestures. He claims that he will call ideology in this very broad sense **ideology in the purely descriptive sense**. In this broad rather unspecific

sense of "ideology" every human group has an ideology. Ideology in this sense does **not** comprise **only** those beliefs, habits, attitudes, traits, the members of the group share. But, human groups contain variety, diversity and conflict.

An ideology in this descriptive sense will contain both discursive and non-discursive elements (Eagleton, 1994:262). By discursive elements, Eagleton means such things as concepts, ideas, beliefs and by non-discursive elements things as rituals, attitudes, forms of artistic activity, etc. He makes an example to clarify their use.

If one examines the religion of a group, one might discover that the performance of a particular ritual plays an important role. For instance, the role Baptism play in Christianity. If the ritual is particularly important to the agents then they will not lack a term for it. The religion is part of the ideology of the group, the ritual is a non-discursive element of the ideology.

Ideology of a group can often seem to mean the world-view or world-picture of the group. But this notion is not identical with the notion mentioned above namely, ideology in a descriptive sense. The **ideology of a group in the purely descriptive sense** comprises all the beliefs members of the group hold, but of course not all the beliefs the members of a group hold belong to their world-view. By an **ideology in the sense of world-view** then is meant a subset of the beliefs which constitute the ideology of the group.

The last descriptive sense of ideology is considered by Guess (1981) as **ideology in the programmatic sense**. This sense is related to the sense in which the term **ideology** is used by Bell. Bell calls an ideology a **way of translating ideas into action** and defines **total ideology** as an **all inclusive system of comprehensive reality, it is a set of beliefs, infused with passion, and seeks to transform the whole of a way of life**. He concurs with Mannheim (1991) on this notion of total ideology.

So, Bell's total ideology is:

- i) a program or plan of action
- ii) based on an explicit, systematic model or theory of how the society works
- iii) aimed at radical transformation or reconstruction of the society as
a whole
- iv) held with more confidence (passion) than the evidence of the theory.

For Guess, (a) and (b) of Bell's total ideology will be suitable to explain an **ideology in the programmatic sense**.

(b) Ideology in the pejorative sense

The second research program within which a theory of ideology may arise is a program of criticism of the beliefs, attitudes, and wants of the agents in a particular society. The basic use of the term ideology in this program is a negative, pejorative or critical one. Ideology is delusion or false consciousness (Eagleton, 1994:267). For Guess, the term ideology is used in pejorative sense

to criticize a form of consciousness because it incorporates beliefs which are false or has a tainted origin.

2.7.7 Ideology as a Symbolic System

Geertz (1973), cited by Eagleton (1994:279), is a distinguished American social anthropologist who implicitly dismisses a Marxist conception of ideology as false consciousness or the expression of political interests. Instead, he argues for a broad understanding of ideology as a **symbolic system** which allows individuals to orientate themselves in relation to their social world. Ideology for Geertz is a form of cognitive mapping which emerges into being at the point where traditional or taken-for-granted values and motives break down or come under challenge. It is at such points of historical crisis that ideology is at hand as a set of persuasive discourses to provide men and women with alternative, more conscious understanding of the social order and their places within it.

Geertz (1973) continues to say that science and ideology are critical and imaginative **works** (that is, symbolic structures). Science and ideology are different enterprises, but not unrelated ones. He claims that ideologies do make empirical claims about the condition and direction of society, which is the business of science (and, where scientific knowledge is lacking, common sense) to assess. He says that the social function of science vis-a-vis ideologies is first to understand them; what they are, how they work, what give rise to them and to criticize them, to force them to come to terms with reality (Eagleton, 1994:291).

2.7.8 Ideology as a Mobile Disunified Field

Frow (1986), as described by Eagleton, is one of Australia's foremost cultural theorists. He draws much from a semiotic or discursive theory of ideology. Such a theory refuses the Marxist notions of ideology as a **world-view determined by the economic base or as the collective consciousness of a class subject**. He sees ideology as a **mobile, disunified field in which discourse and power configurate in different ways** (Frow, 1986:61-67). Frow suggests the following requirements for a working theory of ideology.

First, that ideology does not assert a relationship of truth to falsity, but concern rather the production and conditions of production of entities within the field of discourse.

Second, that ideology does not deduce the ideological from the structure of economic forces or from the class positions of real subjects of utterance.

Third, that it not be an ontology of discourse, deriving effects of meaning from formal structure, but rather theorize the multiple and variable limits with which relations of power and knowledge are produced.

We further note that the various theorists hold different views about ideology. Ideology is also viewed and understood differently as used within different contexts. We now examine what other theorists say about ideology and literature.

2.8 IDEOLOGY AND LITERATURE

According to Ngara (1990:11) ideology refers to:

that aspect of human condition under which people operate as conscious actors. Ideology is the medium through which human consciousness works. Our conception of religion, politics, morality, art and science is deeply influenced by our ideology. In other words, what we see and believe largely depends on our ideology, ideology being the medium through which we comprehend and interpret reality. Reality itself exists objectively outside our consciousness and independently of any particular individual, but how one sees and interprets it depends in part on one's level of ideological development.

He claims that the above cited definition of ideology will serve as a starting point. Proceeding from the concept of ideology as the medium through which human consciousness works, he singles out three categories of ideology which he suggests to be crucial in the criticism of African literature; the **dominant ideology, authorial ideology and aesthetic ideology.**

He explains these categories of ideology as follows. By **dominant ideology** is meant the beliefs, assumptions and sets of values that inform the thoughts and actions of people in a particular era. He notes that Althusser (1971) says ideology of a ruling class is projected through **ideology state apparatuses** (ISA) such as the religious (ISA), the educational (ISA), the political (ISA), and the cultural (ISA) which includes literature and the arts. Ngara claims that most poets were subjected to heavy influence of the various ideological state apparatuses.

Therborn (1980) as cited by Ngara (1985:108) says:

Ideology refers to that aspect of the human condition under which human beings live their lives as conscious actors in a world that makes sense to them to varying degrees. Ideology is the medium through which this consciousness and meaningfulness operates.

Ngara aligns himself with Therborn's understanding of ideology, as a medium through which human consciousness operates.

Ngara continues to say that a poet may adopt a moderate or radical nationalist standpoint or even display symptoms of what has been called the **colonial mentality**. In a situation where there are competing ideologies, a writer will

project his own ideological stance. Whatever stance the writer adopts will be referred to here as his **authorial ideology**. That is, authorial ideology determines the poet's perception of reality. Whether or not a poet presents an accurate analysis of social reality, whether or not a poet presents a view of society characterised by false consciousness, depends largely on authorial ideology.

Aesthetic ideology refers to the literary convention and stylistic stances adopted by the writer. Eagleton as cited in Ngara (1985:108) sees aesthetic ideology as a complex formation constituted by a number of levels, namely **theories of literature, critical practices, literary traditions, genres, conventions, devices and discourses**. Also literary movements such as romanticism, modernism, realism and formalism are aesthetic ideologies. A poet or writer may operate within the broad parameters of literary movements, for instance, Romanticism which cuts across various literary conventions like the sonnet form, the lyric and the ballad.

Literature cannot be reduced to ideology, but it has a particular relationship to it. Ideology signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world which is the kind of experience literature give to us. In literature, ideology serves as the medium through which human consciousness operates. Some literature embodies to some extent the ideologies prevailing in its society.

It seems the term ideology has a diversity of meaning which has been highlighted in our discussion. Ideology can be understood as used within

different contexts. Ideology can also have a religious, political, economic or sociological outlook. Our study will focus on the type(s) of ideologies professed by our author Maphalla.

2.9 THE ENVISAGED FRAMEWORK

We set out to look at Maphalla as a poet and at his work. We have attempted to explain the two concepts, namely, ART and IDEOLOGY that inform our analytical framework which will, in turn, provide the backbone for subsequent chapters.

Our approach will first look at the interface between oral and modern literature, followed by a discussion of art and finally ideology.

CHAPTER 3

THE INTERFACE BETWEEN ORAL AND MODERN LITERATURE

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 INSTANCES OF THE INTERFACE

3.1.1 Adaption

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CHAPTER 3

THE INTERFACE BETWEEN ORAL AND MODERN LITERATURE

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In our discussion of the interface between oral and modern literature we shall consider both forms with the view to look at some of the elements that have been taken over from the past into the present. In this regard Guma points out that:

A people's past is its spiritual heritage, and as such, it should not only be nursed and nurtured, but preserved and jealously guarded for all times. This is because of the stability that it provides, for without it, a nation is like a tree without roots, liable to be blown over by the gentlest of breezes. (1977:1)

In the following pages, an attempt will be made to examine the various ways in which Maphalla as a modern writer has been influenced by the inter-relation that exists between the two literary forms. Finnegan (1992: 3) points out that oral literature is not an aberrant phenomenon in human culture, nor a

fossilised survival from the far past destined to wither away with increasing modernisation. In fact, it is a common occurrence in human society, literate as well as non-literate. Kunene (1977:1) like Finnegan, believes that oral and traditional literature is a survival of an indefinite past from which it was handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Oral literature has essentially circulated by oral rather than written means in contrast to written literature. Its transmission, composition or performance are by word of mouth and not through reliance on the written or printed word. Cope, quoted by Pretorius (1982: 31), notes this contrast and says:

Traditional literature differs from modern literature not only in that it is oral, but also in that it is essentially the product of communal activity, whereas a work of modern literature is the result of individual effort and bears the stamp of its author.

The characteristic of oral literature being transmitted by oral means seems a straightforward yardstick for differentiating oral from written (modern) literature. Okpewho (1992: 17) observes that in most African Universities and other institutions, oral literature is studied not only for its own sake but also in the context of its relationship to modern literature. This is justified in two ways.

Firstly, there has been much effort on the side of modern writers to collect and translate texts from their people's oral traditions, as a way of advertising the greatness of their indigenous cultures. Okpewho mentions various writers, for example, Thomas Mofolo who through his story of Shaka inspired the poet Mazisi Kunene to publish the texts of greater epic narratives about the war leader in a notable edition, **EMPEROR SHAKA THE GREAT (1979)**.

Secondly, traditional oral literature is studied side by side with modern literature because many modern writers consciously borrow techniques and ideas from their oral traditions in constructing works dealing essentially with modern life. Okpewho (1992: 18) believes for instance that, these writers would like to feel that even though their societies have changed drastically from what they were several generations ago, there must be certain fundamental elements in their oral traditions that they can bring into their portraits of contemporary life. Finally, it seems the study of traditional oral literature may be of assistance to modern writers to understand who they are, the value of what they do and what steps they can take to improve their work.

The continuous adoption of literary forms and stylistic elements from traditional oral literature is a heritage at the disposal of the current generation of writers. Jahn (1968: 282) finds that the present generation of writers has the heritage of western literature, of African protest and of African oral literature. He believes that History will shed its light on the present. In both forms of literature there is an elementary condition of formal training whereas informal training seems to be the rule among oral artists.

3.1 INSTANCES OF THE INTERFACE

Oral literature has a continued vitality for modern society. The modern writers have tried to promote this vitality. Okpewho (1992: 293) believes that there is an increasing tendency on the part of modern writers to identify with the literary traditions of their people in terms of both content and technique. They demonstrate that traditional culture is not obsolete but relevant for the articulation of contemporary needs and goals. We shall examine the various ways in which Maphalla has made his contribution toward the vindication of traditional culture, starting with an example from Khaketla.

3.1.1 Adaptation

Modern writers have made an effort to adapt the oral tradition to more or less contemporary needs and outlooks. There are various ways of adapting to the changed outlook. For instance, translating the old texts in stylized language and techniques is one way of adapting to the changed outlook, finding new subjects and new contexts for the old forms is another. A good example of this form of adaptation is the Sotho writer B M Khaketla's description of a train (Kunene 1971: 149-151). The writer's closeness to the traditions of his people may be seen in the fact that he has chosen the language of praise to describe the object. He is very free in his use of eulogies. Let us look at the opening

lines of this poem.

**Tjhutjhumakgala, -nthwan'a - Makgowa,
Mohala wa tshepe, wa kgomo e ntsho,
Ha e le wa kgole e ka o kgaola!**

**Ke yona Mmamosi, maloeloe,
Lehlanya, Serwala-katib'a - towane,
Sebaka-mehodi hodimo le sele,
Sefehla-maru meya e kgutsitse,
Re sale re se re aperwe ke botsho;
Mosi o tlolo, ditlhase di qhome,
E b'e ke telema e jeswa ditlhaka.**

**(Tjhutjhumakgala, beautiful thing of the Whiteman,
There's a steel rope tethering this black bovine.
As for a woven rope, he would break it!**

**It is, indeed, the mother-of-smoke-that-trails behind.
A madman, Wearer-of-a-towane-grass-hat,
Creator-of-fog even while the skies are clear
Churner-of-clouds even while the winds are still,**

**Leaving us covered with blackness,
Smoke billows up, and sparks fly,
As when a bonfire is fed with dry reeds).**

Okpewho (1992: 302) comments that Khaketla like the praise poets of the oral tradition, tries to mix the heroic portrait of the train with a tone of subtle protest. The significant thing here, is the way an object of modern technology is described. Khaketla remains attached to the Sotho tradition of poetic eulogy and actually addresses the non-living object just as if it were animate.

He chooses to treat a modern subject as a way of demonstrating the adaptability and the continuing relevance of the Sotho tradition.

A similar achievement is recorded by Maphalla in his poetry. He is very much a praise poet. He consciously or unconsciously employs heroic poetic styles and features to his poems. Let us look at the poem **fonofono** in his collection entitled **PINYANE**. He describes this object of modern technology in the language of praise and condemnation. The poem says:

**(1) A qapile Makgowa ke le jwetse,
Hara meleko a qapile fonofono,
Fonofono ke pula, matlopotlopo
Fonofono ke qaka, mahlopha-a-senya.**

**Fonofono ke mopholosi wa ba tsietsing,
Fonofono e kgaola mosepedi maoto,
Empa fonofono e jere makatikati,
Le ditshebo dia fofa ka fonofono.**

**Fonofono ke moleko ke o jwetse,
Ntho ena e katolla kgoro di katetswe,
Nna le hoja ke sa tshabe Makgowa,
Ntho ena ya bona nkabe ke e fothola.**

(Whites have invented, let me tell you

**In the midst of temptations, they have invented a telephone,
The telephone is rain, it is thick, heavy showers,
The telephone is the problem, the annoyer-and-destroyer.**

**The telephone is the rescuer of those in troubles
The telephone spares one a long walk,
But, the telephone carries many lies
Even the gossips take place through the telephone.**

**The telephone is the temptation, let me tell you,
This thing opens entrances that are tightly closed**

**If I was not afraid of the White man
I would root out this thing of theirs).**

In this poem, Maphalla tries to stay as close as possible to the poetic features of praise poems. He refers to this object of modern technology, **fonofono** (telephone), respectively as the rain, the thick heavy showers, the problem, the annoyer-and-destroyer, the rescuer, the temptation. All these are metaphorical names created for the object on the basis of the features that the poet finds in it. The poet, throughout the whole poem, highlights the good and the bad features of the telephone. It helps people to communicate easily with others far and near. He describes it as a means of transportation of gossips while on the other hand of useful information. The first stanza is marked by hyperbole. The telephone is likened to rain and not just to a pattering rain but to thick heavy rains. The reader can perhaps be surprised and start to ask questions like; how can a telephone resemble heavy showers of rain? Definitely, this type of reaction evokes certain emotions in the reader that he finds himself curious to read further in order to obtain answers. Maphalla tries to stay as close as possible to the forms of his oral tradition. He demonstrates that there are enough resources in his indigenous traditions for him to use in the treatment of this modern object. He shows the continuing relevance of his tradition to his modern way of writing.

Maphalla has imbibed some interesting ideas from Southern Sotho mythology. He has borrowed consciously from the stock of tales available within the Sotho oral narrative tradition. He shows a unique skill in choosing some aspects from oral narratives to create exciting expressions for his poems. We can see this indebtedness in the content of the poem **Titjhere Tsiame** of his book **SENTELELE**.

(2) **Kgwedi ya Loetse, kgwedi ya ho thothokiswa kgafetsa,
Kgwedi e ntle ya ho bolediswa motjhaotjhele;
Ke bolela kgwedi ya ho ratwa ke bafo le marena;
Kgwedi ya tla e pepetse Basotho kakapo.**

**Ka lapeng ha Mmantsubise ho hlongwe lehlaka,
Re hlile ra bona ka bomme basadi ho fereselaka,
Ra bona ka banna ho bobotheha ba hetla kgafetsa,
Hore kajeno ho bitohile mohale wa marumo Kweneng.**

**(The month of September, the month to be repeatedly praised,
The beautiful month to speak continuously about,
I mean the month loved by commoners and chiefs,
The month came with a great man for the Basotho.**

**In the home of Mmantsubise a reed has been planted.
We actually saw from the hustle and bustle of women
We saw men with smiles curiously stirring about,
That today a brave warrior has been born).**

In the first stanza, the poet showers the September month with praise. A great man is born during this month. This stanza introduces us to the second stanza which starts by saying **Ka lapeng ha Mmantsubise ho hlongwe lehlaka** (In the home of Mmantsubise a reed has been planted). This expression reminds us of the belief that according to the Sotho tradition, the Basotho originated from a place called Ntswana-tsatsi, that is, the place where the sun rises. According to Guma (1977: 4) this place is said to have been surrounded by tall reeds, as a result, a reed is usually erected outside a hut in which there is a new-born baby. This place, Ntswana-tsatsi is a mythical place whose exact geographical location is unknown, except for the fact that it is in the direction from which the sun rises. This first phrase of the second stanza is one indicator of the traditional sources that Maphalla has adapted to more or less contemporary needs and outlook.

Maphalla tries to stay as close as possible to the forms of his Sotho tradition. We guess that he mainly wants to demonstrate that there are enough resources in his indigenous tradition for him to use in the treatment of any

subject. The poet exploits elements of content and technique taken from the oral literary tradition. We now look at Maphalla's craft and artistic expression in exploiting these techniques. We shall examine some of the interesting features, for instance, repetition and imagery.

3.1.2 Repetition

Poetry has a greater richness and a greater concentration. It is more evocative, more emotive and more memorable. These qualities are achieved by use of imagery reinforced by repetition in various guises. Although imagery is the essence of poetry, its effectiveness is greatly increased by the careful use of repetition. Repetition also contributes the aesthetic necessity of form, which gives unity and completeness to a poem. Repetition is no doubt one of the most fundamental characteristic features of oral literature (cf. Cope 1968; Moloji 1968; Kunene 1971; Finnegan 1977;; Okpewho 1992;). Kunene maintains that repetition may be aesthetic, it may also be unaesthetic and monotonous. An unaesthetic repetition is described as one that repeats what has just been said, in exactly the same words. By contrast, in aesthetic repetition, selected words or phrases are repeated while additional ones are brought in to advance the narrative or to attain emphasis. Such repetition creates suspense, it makes for sustained curiosity through the expectation of a new or surprise element. Maphalla uses much of repetition in his poetry.

This is probably the influence of **dithoko** (praise poems).

In many texts in which writers make a determined effort to impress their readers with the diversity of their wisdom, there is an abundance of information which bestows upon the texts a certain sense of fullness. Much of this fullness of effect is achieved through the repetition of a key word or phrase in a variety of settings, as in this poem **Tswela pele!** from the volume **SENTEBALE**.

(3) **Nnake, mamela ke o eletse,
Menyepetsi ha e fihle kajeno;
Ha o Ila, o Ile o kgutsa,
Le ha moya le maikutlo di kgathetse,
- Tswela pele!**

**Hara mathata le maima
Hara mefokolo le ditshokelo,
Hara mekgathala le ditshotleho,
O se ke wa nyahama;
- Tswela pele!**

Hara malwetse le matshwenyeho,

Hara disono le ona makatikati

Hara dillo le yona mefehelo

O se ke wa nyahama

- Tswela pele!

Hara difefo le dikgohola,

Hara mafifi le bonkantjana;

Le ha metjha e sa bonahale,

O se ke wa nyahama;

- Tswela pele!

(Sentebale 10)

(Listen my sister, let me advice you,

Tears do not start today,

When you cry, cry and stop sobbing.

Even if the spirit and the feelings are tired

- Move on!

Among hardships and tribulations

Among weaknesses and threats,

Among weariness and troubles,

Do not be discouraged

- Move on!

Among sicknesses and worries

Among troubles and also contradictions

Among complaints and also sighing

Do not be discouraged.

- Move on!

Among storms and heavy rains

Among great darkness

Even if directions are not visible

Do not be discouraged

- Move on!)

Through this poem Maphalla gives a moral lesson that life is full of ups and downs. In life we need to persevere and move on even if things are difficult.

We find the repetition of the key word in a variety of settings. The initial word **hara** is used at the beginning of the first three lines of the middle stanzas, then followed by new different phrases. Here, the sense of fullness and variety is achieved in no small measure. This initial word is employed to introduce the various situations that we experience in life and also to

emphasize the fact that even if we experience difficult times in life, we should not despair. The last two phrases **o se ke wa nyahama** and **tswela pele** are repeated at the end of each stanza mentioned above to bring to the attention of the readers that perseverance contributes to success and that there is nothing on earth that comes easy.

Repetition is also employed, sometimes profusely to mark a feeling of excitement or agitation whether in the sense of utmost delight or deepest anxiety and fear. We may look at one of the numerous instances that we have in which Maphalla pays tribute to Chief Mopeli of Qwaqwa.

**(4) Ho wele sefate se seholo lapeng la Lepanya,
Ho wele sefate se seholo lekgotleng la Bolata,
Ho wele sefate se seholo lekgotleng la marena,
Ho wele sefate se seholo mmusong wa Basotho;
Ho wele sefate se seholo setjhabeng sa Rantsho.**

**O phetse le marena le bafo Morena Mapeka,
O phetse le dinatla tsa kgale, dikonokono;
O phetse le dikwakwariri qhoku tsa ho bolelwa,
O phetse le dikgalala, o phetse le dikwankwetla,
O phetse le dikakapa, dikgabane tsa sebele.**

(Sentelele 18)

**(A huge tree has fallen in the family of Lepanya,
A huge tree has fallen in the clan of Bolata,
A huge tree has fallen in the circles of royalty,
A huge tree has fallen in the kingdom of the Basotho nation,
A huge tree has fallen in the nation of Rantsho.**

**He lived with chiefs and ordinary people Chief Mapeka,
He lived with brave and very strong men,
He lived with well-known, powerful stewards.
He lived with brave men, he lived with tough men,
He lived with great men, real outstanding men).**

Here, the writer is anxious to express his feelings about the loss of this great and prominent figure of the Basotho nation. The prominence comes from the basic metaphor in the first stanza, contained in the repeated phrase **Ho wele sefate se seholo**. Repetition in itself does not create poetry, but it is simply the handmaid of imagery, which is the essence of poetry. The poet addresses Chief Mopeli as **sefate se seholo** which is the richest and the most concentrated image of description. This image gives an air of dignity and grandeur to the Chief. The repeated phrases found in the first and the second stanzas are extended with other new phrases which give a variation of non-repeated units and have a heightening effect. The repeated phrase **O phetse**

le in the second stanza symbolises the variety of personalities that the King lived with. He touched the lives of royalty, ordinary, prominent and notable people. The repetition that the poet employs, promote the epic flow and development in a poem. Moloji (1968: 70) writes;

The repetition of word(s) in the preceding and succeeding lines comes automatically and unconsciously. Traditional baroki found this technique effective and our modern Southern Sotho poets somehow cannot free themselves of it completely.

Maphalla employs words in ways that are specially unique. He never hesitates to use repetition for effect and to bring out precisely the meaning he intends to convey to his readers. This can be illustrated by the following stanza from his poem entitled **Basotho re a rapela**.

**(5) Modimo, boloka Basotho le bosotho,
A ko boloke setjhaba le botjhaba;
Sitsa Basotho ka kgotso le kgutso,
Fatsheng lena la bontatarona.**

(Sentebale 23)

**(God, protect the Basotho nation and bosotho,
Please, protect the nation and nationhood,
Provide the Basotho with peace and calmness;
In this land of our fathers).**

Here, there is recurrence of words which have more or less the same meaning. In line (1) and (2) the words **Basotho**, **bosotho** and **setjhaba**, **botjhaba** are used with different prefixes to highlight the different meaning implied. The thoughts or ideas are repeated without at the same time repeating the exact word. The focus in this example is a plea to God for the Basotho and the Sotho heritage. The poet is also concerned about peace and calmness among the Basotho nation. At the level of phonology, the poet exploits classes of sounds at different points in the horizontal pattern and interrelates them. For instance, in line (3), there is semantic and sound relation between the words **kgotso** and **kgutso**. We find recurrence of rough velar sounds **kg** and soft sibilants **ts** which produce contrasting sound effects. Alliteration (consonant harmony) are well represented in this verse. There is something pleasant about these sounds of words. We enjoy them and they create an atmosphere of serenity, the tranquility that the poet yearns for. Another example of such repetition is found in the same volume. It reads as:

**(6) Ba babe le bona ba batle,
Diithati le tsona dikgwahlapha
Ha le kodumela la bophelo,
Tsohle ke mouwane, di a feta.**

(Sentebale: 9)

**(Those who are ugly are also beautiful,
The egotists and also the negligent,
When life falls away,
All is haze, it passes.**

In the first line of this example we find the repetition of the bilabial sound **b**, and the words **babe** and **batle** are semantically related. They are antonymous and occupy the same parallel position. Without thinking of the meaning, one can find pleasure from this first line, primarily because of sound values of the words. Here is another interesting example from **SENTELELE**.

**(7) Bobedi re ba Modimo moratuwa
Ramasedi o moholo, o a phela
Le ha dikgukguni di ka kgukguna le ka kgitla
Dira tsa rera merero, tsa rala meralo**

- O wa ka ke wa hao

Bobedi re ba Modimo.

(Sentelele 42)

**(The two of us, belong to God my love
God is great, he is alive.
Even if the prowlers prowl at night.
The enemies plan their devices, set up snares,
- You are mine, I am yours
The two of us belong to God).**

The recurrence of similar sounds draws the ear of the reader to the sweetness perceived in sounds. The sound effect referred to here, consists in the repetition of the velar sound **kg** and the trill sound **r** in lines (3) and (4) respectively. The alliteration in these lines heighten the closeness of the bond between these lovers and gives effect to the strength of the relationship. Maphalla heightens the poetic quality of his poems by using alliteration. Swart and Pretorius (1982: 32) say:

**We may enjoy poetry as absolute music
- we may enjoy it not as meaning
anything but as a succession of
beautiful sounds or impressions.**

In Maphalla's poetry we also find repetition of a line or lines at regular intervals. This type of repetition is called a refrain. Refrains of poetry can help to mark off the ideas contained in the poem. An example is found in the poem **Le re hapile**.

**(8) Fatshe lena nnete le re hapile,
Ke mona re lelera sa nku di lahlehile;
Re bafo ba meleko le ditakatso,
Re a qhwebeshana, ha ho kgotso -
Hobane ruri, le re hapile.**

**Fatshe lena nnete le re hapile
Dikate tsa lona ruri di re qetile
Re se re le ditsheretshere, mauthwauthwana,
Phading sa lona re tjee ka dikonyana -
Hobane ruri, le re hapile.**

(Fuba sa ka: 35)

**(Certainly, this world has captured us,
Here we are, roaming like lost sheep.
We are slaves of temptations and lust
We are quarrelling, there is no peace -
Because indeed, it has captured us.**

**Certainly, this world has captured us,
Its damages have destroyed us.
We are now stupid and helpless people,
Being whipped, we are like lambs
Because indeed, it has captured us).**

The artistic technique that strikes the reader at the outset is the regular structural pattern. The stanzas commence consistently with the refrain **fatshe lena nnete le re hapile**. This refrain introduces the main idea contained in each stanza. It also helps in the development of the successive lines in the poem. Whenever we read this line we imagine all the factors in life that can capture us, and genuinely make us forget who we are. The refrain found in the last line lends emphasis to the main idea introduced in the first line of each stanza. It also provides some continuity in the poet's ideas.

Maphalla often uses his refrain with variations according to the effect he wants to achieve in that particular poem. He endeavours to hang his imagination on certain key phrases or words which he uses repeatedly in situations which are nearly similar. Here, the reader picks out the patterns of meaning that run through the poem and arrives at some sort of linguistic account of what the poem is about. Let us consider the following examples to illustrate the use of this device.

**(9) Nteseng ke qethe masodi, menyepetsi
Ke tsetselele fatshe la ntate le a timela
Kgabane ba maobane bo ile le metsi
Jwale seilo metseng ke sa phohomela.**

**Nteseng ke qethe masodi, dikeledi,
Ke tsetselele puo eso ya Thesele,
Kajeno e koletswe le ke bengahadi,
Jwale mabewana a antse kgonong disele.**

**Nteseng ke qethe masodi, dikgapha,
Ke tlerole sa modulaqhowa qhoweng;
Dinatla ke tsena di tela matsapa,
Baena ba bile ba thobetse sekgoweng.**

(Fuba sa ka: 18)

**(Leave me alone that I may pour out my tears,
Cry for my father's land it is disappearing,
The beauty of yesterday has passed with water,
Now lamentation is excessive in the village.**

**Leave me alone that I may pour out tears,
Cry for my language of Thesele,
Today it is driven away by my lords,
Now the calves are without milk.**

**Leave me alone that I may pour out tears,
Let me shout like a person who is at the top,
Here are strongmen renouncing hunger,
My brothers have even gone to the urban areas).**

In this poem, the first line of each stanza is repeated although with some variation. Variation is achieved through the use of different words at the end of each refrain, like **menyepetsi**, **dikeledi** and **dikgapa**. These words have a clear semantic connection. They all imply **tears**, although the word **dikeledi** is more general and commonly used in everyday language. While the words **menyepetsi** and **dikgapa** are more intense. The coherence of these words contribute to the structural unity of the poem and permits and extension of the idea mentioned in the first stanza. Through these words in the refrain, the poet expresses his deepest concern about his father's land. His repressed feelings reveal themselves by accumulation of such words with closely similar meaning.

In another example, the poet yearns for freedom and gives vent to his indignation by piling synonymous words. The concern expressed by the refrain at the beginning of each stanza, is contained in the various words that the poet has employed. For example, this poem **Ke tsetselela tokoloho**.

**(10) Nna ke labalabela tokoloho,
Ke lakatsa ho thakginya sa lesele letsweleng;
Nna ruri ke labalabela tokoloho,
Ho sutha maimeng ana a ntikileng.**

**Nna ke tsetselela tokoloho,
Ke rata ho thala sa namane lepatlelong;
Nna ruri ke lakatsa tokoloho
Ho kgaba le ka botjha dikopanong.**

**Nna ke lakatsa tokoloho.
Ke tle ke rure sa ntsu sepakapakeng;
Nna ka nnete ke labalabela tokoloho
Ke tle ke tsanyaole sa tswere mohlakeng.**

(Fuba sa ka : 53)

**I yearn for freedom,
I wish to kick like a child sucking from the breast,
I, certainly, crave for freedom,
To get out of these troubles that surround me.**

**I cry for freedom,
I want to jump like calves in an open place,
I, certainly, cry for freedom,
To be proud of.**

**I desire freedom,
So that I may fly like an eagle in the sky,
I, truly, cry for freedom.
So that I can sing like a bird in the field.**

In the above stanzas, each refrain consists of these words **labalabela** (yearn), **tsetselela** (cry) and **lakatsa** (desire). These words clearly indicate the overlapping of the same concern expressed, and unify the stanzas of the poem. Boulton (1962: 91) says:

**... it is that in which the refrain changes
slightly for each verse through keeping**

some repetition. This is perhaps more satisfying to the modern mind, because it is more logical and also gives us a small surprise each time.

We appreciate the artistic ability with which Maphalla handles his repetition. He relies heavily on repetition as a device not only to achieve emphasis but as well as to promote unity and development in the poem. Maphalla also employs much of parallelism in his poetry. This is probably the influence of dithoko.

3.1.3 Parallelism

A number of writers have addressed the concept parallelism (c.f Guma 1967; Cope 1968; Kunene 1971; Cuddon 1979; Swart and Pretorius 1982; Okpewho 1992). As a result, we understand parallelism as a device whereby writers bring together ideas and images that may seem independent of one another. There are various kinds of parallelism realized in Maphalla's poetry. Let us examine those cases of parallelism in which the same words or phrases are used but simply transposed in the succeeding lines. This type of parallelism is called oblique - line repetition pattern. Let us consider the following, examples to illustrate this device.

**(11) Kamehla fatsheng lena re ditlamong,
Tlamong tsa moya le nama, bophelo.
Fatsheng lena motho ka mong
O tlamong tsa ditihoko le ditabatabelo.**

**Nna ke labalabela tokoloho,
Tokoloho ya matswabadi le mefufutso;
Nna ruri ke lakatsa tokoloho,
Fatsheng le la kwano ha ho na kgefutso**

(Fuba sa ka: 53)

**(Everyday in this world we are in chains,
Chains of the spirit and the flesh of life.
In this world everyone
Is in chains of poverty and desirables.**

**I yearn for freedom,
Freedom from blisters and perspiration,
I genuinely yearn for freedom,
In this world there is no rest).**

In the first instance here, parallelism consists in the transposition between adjacent lines of identical units. The word **ditlamong** at the end of line (1) of the first stanza, starts the second line, although, it is used without its prefix. But, the basic idea is the same. It flows from the first line to the second line. The progress of thought between these lines is evident. There, are situations, however, where one or more lines intervene between an occurrence and subsequent repetition thereof, giving what might be called broken or interrupted or discontinuous repetitions. For example, the phrase **Fatsheng lena** in line (1) of the first stanza, starts the third line. These repetitions promote development in the poem as they introduce new information into the poem. The poet expresses his feeling that people live in bondage, do not enjoy the freedom of living. This, is echoed in the repetition of the appropriate word **tokoloho**. The last word in the first line of stanza (2) is again employed to start the second line. This also lends emphasis to the main message of the poem.

Parallelism becomes more exciting and striking when the change is not in the positions of words within the structure but in the senses or meanings assigned to them. This type of parallelism is called semantic parallelism. A beautiful example may be seen from the volumes **NTETEKENG** and **NTEKELETSANE**.

**(12) Tsamaya hle nako, tsamaya
Utlwa le lebitla le ntse le bitsa;
Le re tlong lona ba kgathetseng,
Tlong le tle phomolong e sa feleng.**

**A ko tsamaye hle, nako tsamaya,
Dihora tsa hao di fupere maima;
Metsotso ya hao e kakasitse mathata,
Metsotswana ya hao e kwetlile mefehelo.**

(Ntetekeng : 25)

**(Pass, oh time! pass,
Hear the grave that is calling,
It says, come to me, you that are weary,
Come to eternal rest.
Please, oh time! pass,
Your hours are loaded by troubles;
Your minutes have clutched many hardships,
Your seconds have grasped tribulations).**

In this poem, the poet talks about time which refers to a clock. He addresses time as though it is a human being. He employs words which carry the same

idea at the end of each line of the second stanza. Apostrophe and semantic parallelism are blended together to give a clearer description of the circumstances. In the second stanza, there are semantically 'parallel lines' whose ideas and relationship are developed in the three consecutive phrases **di fupere maima, e kakasitse mathata and e kwetlile mefehelo**. The poet tries to show the intensity of problems that exist within a period of time. He divides time into hours, minutes and seconds to illustrate the complete consumption of time by these hardships.

In the next example, semantic parallelism occurs in the same line and also in the parallel lines of the same verse. Maphalla acknowledges the wisdom of God in the following manner.

(13) **Le ha nna ke fokola, ke se na matla,
Ke le seeshana ho natla tsa lefatshe;
Le ha ke fetoha ha meya e foka,
Nna Modimo wa ka ke sekwankwentla.
Le ha ke le sethoto, ke le tlatsetlase,
Ke reilwe semaumau ke bahlalefi;
Le ha ke bitswa tsheretshere le ke baena,
Nna Modimo wa ka ha se sethoto.**

(Ntekeletsane: 26)

**(Even though I am weak, I do not have strength,
Being a person of no importance to strong people of this earth.
Even though I change when wind blows, My God is strong.**

**Even though I am called a fool, a stupid,
I am called an idiot by the wise people,
Even though I am labelled an imbecile by my brothers,
My God is no fool).**

Line (1) of the first stanza contains two phrases **nna ke fokola** and **ke se na matla** which project the same idea of not having strength. And, also in line (1) of the second stanza we find that there is semantic parallelism of the words **sethoto** and **tlatsetlatse**. In the second and third lines reference is made to **an idiot** and **an imbecile** respectively. These words have a similar sense of meaning although in different degrees. They are blended beautifully together in a true poetic harmony. The poet tries to express his concern about people who ridicule and undermine others. But, he believes and trusts that God is always available to help his people.

Okpewho (1992: 83) believes that parallelism as a repetitive device, is a tool of pleasure and of convenience. On one hand, there is a touch of beauty in the skill with which the writer employs one set of words against another

without altering the central idea. On the other hand, there is a real need for a balanced framework which will order the vast amount of information harbored into a set of harmonious relationships. Then, parallelism is, like repetition the soul of both oral and modern literature.

3.1.4 Piling and association

Writers strive by all means to impress the readers with the depth and variety of their wisdom. It is perhaps true to say that fullness, not economy, of expression is a fundamental virtue. One way in which this fullness can be achieved is by piling or coupling one detail or idea to another so that the whole poem builds up to a climax. Piling can take the form of the last detail in one line of the poem becoming the first detail in the next. Repetition is a basic ingredient in the device of piling. Let us examine the following poems:

**(14) Kamehla fatsheng lena re ditlamong,
Tlamong tsa moya le nama, bophelo,
Fatsheng lena motho ka mong
O tlamong tsa ditlhoko le ditabatabelo.**

(Fuba sa ka: 53)

**(Everyday in this world we are in chains,
Chains of the spirit and the flesh, of life,
In this world everyone
Is in chains of needs and aspirations.**

In this example, we find successive lines of the poem built up in such a way that the second line borrows an element from the previous one. The word **ditlamong** is repeated at the beginning of the second line, and it moves the poem forward. This linking promotes, epic flow and development in the poem.

In the poem **K.E Ntsane**, Maphalla has exploited this device with maximum effect. He has organized this poem in convenient patterns that will make it possible for the imagination of the reader to keep the sequence of the poem intact. Let us look at the following stanzas:

**(15) Basotho, theang tsebe ke le bolelle taba,
Taba ya kgeleke ya maikutlo, kgalala;
Kgalala ya kajeno le maobane, Kemoele,
Kemoele e mosootho, nyoronyoro la Mmantsane.**

**Ntsane, nka pene o kume *makumane*,
Makumane a dikgalala tse kang *bokokobela*,**

Kokobela o kile a mphatsa tlhaka qholong,
Qholong e ntse e le kgoramedi tlhaka ya boqhalaqhala.

Ntsane, ha o ka re tlohela re ka sala le *maswabi*,
Maswabi a ka aparela bana ba Basotho ba kajeno;
Kajeno re ka hloka motsedisi wa maikutlo, *mmusapelo*
Mmusapelo ho rona le ho bona *bao batho*.

(The Basotho, listen, let me tell you the news,
The news about an expert of feelings, an icon,
The poetic icon of today and yesterday, Kemoele.
The dark brown Kemoele, beloved of Mmantsane.

Ntsane take your pen and write pieces
Pieces (of writing) of artists like Kokobela
Kokobela once scarified me on the bottom
On the bottom an eternal mark.

Ntsane if you can leave us, we can remain in grief,
Grief can affect the children of the Basotho of today,
Today we can be without a comforter, Mmusapelo,
Mmusapelo to us and to them *bao batho*.)

The mind of the writer works more conveniently in an associative way. Maphalla is creative, he seeks ways of linking ideas together. He shows his traditional wisdom and his brilliant creative imagination by incorporating titles of Ntsane's collection into his creative work. In stanza (2) and (3), Maphalla employs words similar to titles of Ntsane's books in an interesting manner. This is an unusual practice. It becomes very exciting for a reader who knows Ntsane's books, who is able to associate the message of the poem to what he knows. The linking of words in successive lines is presented in an appealing manner. Maphalla eulogises the poet Ntsane for his outstanding work and captures the beauty of his (Ntsane) work by linking one element to another in a progressive chain. Ntsane's books referred to here are, Makumane, Maswabi, Mmusapelo and Bao batho. Kokobela is the name of the main character in of the novel Nna Saijene Kokobela.

It seems Maphalla finds satisfaction in employing this device. He cannot free himself from using it. It is a weapon he uses to express and emphasize his ideas effectively, as in this stanza.

(16) Ha o botsa o botse nna, ke ne ke le teng.

Ke ne ke le teng mokgoping wa ao mabewana;

Ao mabewana a ho phatswa ka naka le thata

Naka la puo le morethetho, bokgalala.

(Sentelele : 45)

**(When you ask, ask me, I was there,
I was there in the midst of those true men,
True men pierced with a strong secret drug;
A secret drug of language and rhythm).**

This stanza is rich in piling. The first line ends with the same phrase that begins the second line. The second line also ends with the word **mabewana** which starts the third line. And the idea contained in the last phrase of the third line is found at the beginning of the last line. This piling and association of the same phrases is very striking and holds the attention of the reader.

Very much like repetition and parallelism, piling and association provide the writer with patterns of pleasure as well as development of the work. Thus, in spite of new interest and the inevitable changes of outlook consequent on the passing of the old order, the literary form of oral traditional praise poetry still flourishes. In however modified a form the ancient praises still bring inspiration and a formal mode of literary expression to the modern artist. We shall now look at another device, which is imagery. Look at how words are employed to paint mental pictures that appeal to our feelings and our understanding.

3.1.5 Imagery

It is not our intention to present a full scale discussion of imagery here. Moleleki (1988) has discussed imagery in Maphalla's poetry with unusual skill and superior ability. Instead we shall look at imagery as it is presented in volumes that were published after 1988. In our discussion we shall pay attention to simile, metaphor, symbolism and allusion. The existence and importance of imagery as a literary communicative device has long been an acknowledged fact (cf. Fogle 1962, Adams 1971, Burton 1974, Heese and Lawton 1975, Cuddon 1980 Coles 1985).

Ngara (1984: 24) also, maintains that an image conveys vivid meaning and appeals to the senses in such a way that its effect strikes us and gives us pleasure. A poet employs an image to try to stimulate the readers or listeners to see, hear or touch objects that he is describing. In addition to what imagery entails, Coles (1985: 95) says:

It conveys word pictures. Imagery evokes an imaginative, emotional response, as well as a vivid, specific description

3.1.5.1 Simile

It is fundamentally through comparison that a writer tries to make a meaningful communication to the readers or listeners. This device is particularly common in praise poems. According to Cohen (1973: 51) a simile makes a direct comparison between two elements and is usually introduced by **like** or **as**. In South Sotho this comparison is introduced by the conjunctives **jwalo ka se ka** and **sa**. In our discussion, our analysis and interpretation of Maphalla's imagery will be situated in the context of the images. Every image gains its clarity and significance only from its context. Let us look at the following examples as put by the poet Maphalla:

**(16) Ke tla o romella dipalesa;
Tse bonolo seka mahlo a hao;
Ha o di boha o tle o bososele,
O hle o be motle le ho feta maoba.**

**Ke tla o romella dipalesa
Tse tshehlana sa nyooko ya tlhapi;
O tle o tsebe rato la ka ke bodiba,
Le tebile le ho feta lewatle.**

**Ke tla o romella dipalesa nnake,
Ke tla o romella dipalesa o sa phela;
Palesa tsa lebitla ha di re letho,
Di semumu jwalo ka lona lebitla.**

(Sentelele : 38)

**(I will send you a bouquet,
As tender as your eyes,
When you look at them you should smile,
So that you become more beautiful than yesterday.**

**I will send you a bouquet
As yellow as a bile of a fish;
So that you understand that my love is a deep river.
It is even deeper than the sea.**

**I will send you a bouquet, my dear one,
I will send you a bouquet whilst you live;
Grave's bouquets are valueless,
They are as speechless as the grave itself).**

The poet expresses his feelings and love by presenting a woman with a bouquet. He is strongly attracted to this woman and so carried away with admiration that he describes her beauty by using similes. In line two of the first stanza, he compares the flowers to the humble and tender features of the woman's eyes. In the second line of the second stanza he expresses the same sentiments and compares the beauty and brightness of the woman to the yellow colour of the bile of a fish. In lines three and four he employs another powerful imagery, hyperbole, where he describes the love he has for this woman. He exaggerates his feelings and expresses his love to be deeper than the sea. One imagines how big the sea is to be compared to this love. This image expresses the power of love that the poet is describing. It overflows and creates waves in his heart which excites him and he is unable to withhold his feelings. In the last stanza, the repetition of the phrase **ke tla o romella dipalesa** gives an emphasis of the feeling and appreciation he has towards this woman. The last line summarizes all, it expresses the significance of presenting someone with a gift while one is still alive. He uses simile to achieve an excellent description of flowers given when a person is dead. He describes them as valueless and speechless, because a dead person cannot appreciate the beauty and the message they present. In the poem **Leihlo la Modimo**, the poet explains the greatness of God's eye as follows:

**(17) Leihlo la Modimo le jwang
Ha le bona kganya lefifing?
Moo batho re bonang botshohadi
Lona le ka bona bosweu bo jwalo ka lehlwa.**

(Sentelele 51)

**(How is God's eye
For it sees light in darkness.
Where mortals see the darkest darkness.
God's eye can see whiteness as snow?)**

The beauty of this stanza is born out by the all omnipotent eye of God, which can see through the darkness. The artistic angle of this poem is portrayed by the contrast we find in these words **kganya** and **lefifing**. The greatness of this eye is found in the image employed, where the brightness and whiteness is compared to the snow. Maphalla employs this image extensively in his work to draw a vivid picture of what he wants to convey. In the poem **O nthatela eng**, he says:

**O nthatela eng hle nnake,
O kgothatswa ke eng ha o ntjheba;
Disene tsee o tla re ha o di bone,**

Tse kang heke ya polasi ya Leburu?

(Ntetekeng: 47)

(What endears you to me sister,

What is it that attracts you when you stare at me;

Don't you see these toothless gums

Which resemble a Boer's gate?)

Here Maphalla introduces simile in the last line with a conjunctive different to those mentioned earlier in our discussion. This is exciting, because it explains the creativeness that the poet puts into his work. We imagine how the image appeals to the feeling and understanding of the reader. The reader turns to think of this person whose toothless gums are compared to a Boer's gate. He gets a vivid picture of this person and concludes that love has no bounds. In the next illustration the poet describes **moleko** (troubles) in a peculiar way. The poet is poetic, his descriptive touch is vivid and is presented in a beautiful manner with the use of personification. He says:

(18) Moleko ke ona o mphekgenya,

O nkisa hodimo le tlase, o a ntshufula;

O befile sa tau, o a nkgarola,

Moleko ke ona o nteteka!

(Ntekeletsane : 16)

**(Here's trouble troubling me,
Tossing me from pillar to post
You are vicious as a lion, you maul me.
Here's trouble pounding at me!)**

The poet personifies troubles and gives an explicit description of what they do to him. Personification is described by Adams as:

Another figure of speech related to metaphor, in which either an inanimate object or abstract concept is spoken of, as though it were endowed with life or human attributes or feelings (1971: 325)

Personification is inherently part of traditional praise poems and Maphalla exploits it to address various invisible concepts or objects as if they were capable of hearing and understanding. In line three, he compares the trouble's anger to a lion. It is quite clear that a lion is one of the most fearful and dangerous animals we know of. The reader actually imagines this ugly situation which is created by the trouble's viciousness. Maphalla's language is exciting and appeals to the reader.

Metaphor is another figure of speech exploited by Maphalla.

3.1.5.2 Metaphor

This technique is particularly common in traditional praise poems. Cohen (1973: 52) defines metaphor as:

A direct or indirect substitution of one element for another. The substitution leads you to the process of association.

On the other hand, Untermeyer places metaphor above simile when he says:

A metaphor is usually more effective than a simile because it makes an instant comparison and imaginative fusion of two objects without the use of explanatory prepositions (1968: 225)

It is clear that when the writer uses metaphor, he translates the qualities and association of one object to another in order to make the latter more vivid in the reader's mind. For a more forceful use of the metaphor, let us consider this poem **Ke motle ke mobe**.

(19) "Nna ke motsho, ke motle

Ke semomothela le nna hara ditjhaba;

Le ha di kopane palesa tsa lefatshe

Le nna ke shweshwe ha ke belaele".

"Nna ke motsho, ke motle

Ke twadi, ke benya seka kgauta;

Le ha a ikeme mabenyanane a lefatshe

Le nna ke senakanngwedi ha ke thothomele".

"Nna ke motsho, ke motle

Ke a boheha, ke kganya seka lefatshe;

Le ha di teane dinaledi tsa lefatshe,

Le nna ke mphetlalatsane naleli ya meso."

(Sentelele: 10)

(I am black, I'm beautiful

I am also a fat and pretty person in the midst of people,

Even if they came together the flowers of the earth

I also, am a lily I don't doubt it.

I am black, I'm beautiful

I am a pearl, I glitter like gold;

Even if glittering things of the earth are prepared

I also, am a glowworm, I don't tremble.

I am black, I am beautiful

I am admirable, I shine like the sun;

Even if the stars of the universe are together

I also, am a morning star, an early morning star).

The above lyric conveys through its crowded imagery the deep sense of concern about beauty. The poet exalts personal beauty in an excellent manner. The first striking instance is the recurrence of the phrase **Nna ke motsho, ke motle**, which accentuates the feeling or idea of beauty that the poet tries to express. This phrase attracts the attention of the readers or listeners. In the first stanza, the image of the poet's beauty is represented by these metaphors **semomothela** and **shweshwe**. The poet describes the beauty he is referring to, and the reader starts to imagine this elegant, good-looking person who resembles a lily flower. The poet, further employs metaphors in line two and line four of the second stanza and also line four of the third stanza to support the description given in the first stanza. The poet associates the beauty of this person with the brightness that these images

twadi, senakan ngwedi and mphetlalatsane reflect. A morning star reflect beauty and brightness in the sky in the morning, hence the poet employs this image to emphasize the idea of beauty. The force of metaphors in line two of the second stanza and line two of the third stanza can be seen in the further use of the similes **se ka kgauta** and **se ka letsatsi** respectively. Here the images compare further the beauty and brightness of this person to gold and the sun. The reader turns to admire the beauty that the poet refers to through this perfect choice of words. They give a vivid picture in the minds of the readers.

Let us look at the other example from this volume **Ntekeletsane**. Here the concern is based on life. A powerful description of what life entails is conveyed in this poem.

**(19) Mamela, bophelo ke mofufutso ngwanaka,
Lefatsheng bophelo ke ntwā e kgolo;
Le hara dintwa ke bolela ya dibono,
Ntwa e mpe, ntwā ya kgumamela.**

(Ntekeletsane: 11)

**(Take heed my child, life is perspiration,
On earth life is a great battle;**

**Even amongst all battles, I mean an ugly one,
An ugly battle, a fierce battle).**

In the first line, life is associated with perspiration, that is, life requires full commitment. In order to survive and succeed in life, a person has to believe in hard work, there is nothing that we can obtain free in this world. Through this poem, the poet acknowledges that life is not an easy road but a fierce battle. To win this battle, a person has to sweat very hard and do things for himself. Hence, there is a well-known Sotho proverb which confirms what the poet says about life. This proverb reads as: **Phokojwe ho phela e diretse** (A jackal that is full of mud, survives). It implies that only a wise man can live on this earth, that is, being lazy will make a person poor but hard work will make you rich. In another poem from this volume **Sentebale**, the poet reiterates his concern about life, and says:

**(20) Satalla o sa phela,
O tshware le ka meno;
Bophelo ke lempetje,
Bo fetoha le letsatsi.
(Sentebale: 40)**

**(Hold firm whilst you live
Hold even by your teeth
Life is a chameleon
It changes with the sun).**

In this poem, the poet translates the qualities of the chameleon to "life". In real life, we know that a chameleon has the ability to change colour according to its surroundings. This metaphor that the poet has employed here, explains it fully what life is all about. Life has ups and downs. It can bring fierce winds of troubles and one becomes in pain and misery. On the other hand, life can bring happiness and satisfaction. Hence, in life a person has to take heed and prepare for the future. For another powerful image, let us examine this poem **Ntetekeng**. Here, Maphalla explains the difficult times and situations that we as people go through. Death in the family can bring misery to the children. Here is Ntetekeng in this poem, experiences hardships after the loss of his parents. One day he manages to get food, but, on other days he spent sleepless nights without anything to eat. The poet employs a beautiful metaphor to explain the situation of this character.

**(21) Ntetekeng o ja a sa kgese letho,
Ntetekeng le masapo o se a kokona;
Kajeno Ntetekeng o robetse ka tlala,**

Ka tlasa nko kajeno ha a kenye letho

(Ntetekeng: 6)

(Ntetekeng feed on anything without scorn,

Ntetekeng nibbles even at bones;

Today Ntetekeng slept without food,

Below the nose, today, he feeds nothing).

The poet gives an excellent description of Ntetekeng's mouth. Instead of using the common and usual word **molomo** (mouth), he deviates and chooses an unusual but appealing phrase **ka tlasa nko**. When the reader reads this last line, surely, he pauses a while before he makes out what the poet actually means. Immediately he understands the phrase, he becomes amused and starts to imagine this area below the nose described by the poet. It is fascinating to read or listen to such poems. It is the variety and combination of these metaphors that add life to the poems.

3.1.5.3 Symbolism

This is another device which occurs as much in oral as in written literature. According to Okpewho (1992: 101) a symbol is a concrete or familiar object that is used in reference to, or as an explanation of an abstract idea or a less

familiar object or event. It is a useful means of conveying certain important truths about human life and the problems of existence. Swart and Pretorius (1982: 41) say that the act of standing for, can be understood as symbolism.

Sometimes the distinction between some of the figures of speech is not quite clear. Nowotny (1968: 64) tries to make a distinction between metaphor and symbolism by outlining the ways they work, he says:

With metaphor, the poet talks about object X as though it were Y; he uses Y-terminology to refer to X.

With symbolism, he presents an object X, and without necessarily mentioning a further object, his way of presenting X makes us think that it is not only X, but also is something more than itself - some Y.

X acts as a symbol for Y. (1968: 64)

Ntuli (1984: 176) says that in other words the poet need not say that X stands for Y, but when we read the poem we feel that we cannot stop at the literal level. Something invites us to see further significance in what is presented to us. But, as readers, it is our privilege to make our own interpretations which are likely to be influenced by our individual background and inclinations. So, they are likely to be varied. There are different ways in which symbolism is

expressed in Maphalla's poems, as the following illustrations will show. In the poem **Titjhere Tsiame**, the poet gives praise to an outstanding teacher on his birthday. Let us look at the skill he employs to describe the birth of this teacher.

**(22) Kgwedi ya Lwetse, kgwedi ya ho thothokisa kgafetsa,
Kgwedi e ntle ya ho bolediswa motjhaotjhele;
Ke bolela kgwedi ya ho ratwa ke bafo le marena;
Kgwedi ya tla e pepetse Basotho kakapa.**

**Ka lapeng ha Mmantsubise ho hlonngwe lehlaka,
Re hlile ra bona ka bomme basadi ho fereselaka;
Ra bona ka banna ho bobotheha ba hetla kgafetsa
Hore kajeno ho bitohile mohale wa marumo kweneng.**

(Sentelelele: 44)

**(The month of September, the month to be praised repeatedly,
A beautiful month to extol continuously
I am referring to the month loved by commoners and chiefs,
The month came carrying on its back a great man for the Basotho.**

**In the home of Mmantsubise a reed has been planted,
We actually saw from the hustle and bustle of women.
We saw men with smiles curiously stirring about,
That today a brave warrior of Kweneng has emerged).**

In the first stanza the poet describes the month in which the teacher was born. In the last line of the stanza, the poet visualises the month as a person who carries a great hero on his back. That is, a month as an inanimate thing is made to do what is normally done by human beings. This image elevates the status of **kgwedi** to that of a human being who is capable of carrying safely, a great man of the Basotho.

In the first line of the second stanza, we find the phrase **ho hlonngwe lehlaka** (a reed has been planted) and **ho bitohile mohale wa marumo** (a fighter emerged or has been born) in the last line. The expression "to plant a reed" arises from the Sotho custom whereby a reed is stuck over the door of the house or hut in which there is a nursing mother of a baby of the age from birth to about two months of age. The reed serves two purposes: Firstly it announces to whomsoever it may concern that there is a new baby confined with its mother in the house. Secondly, it warns those who are, by custom, prohibited from entering such a house, not to do so. The symbolic reference to a birth in the above used expression is followed immediately in the last line

by a direct reference. Thus, the idea of birth is repeated, while the words are not. The full significance" of this image **lehlaka** depends on the understanding of its symbolic nature in a specific culture. We can only appreciate to the fullest if we see its connection with some aspects of the Sotho culture. In the past, people used to respect a house where a child was born, at least for a certain period until the baby had some resistance. It is unlike today where life is taken very easy and culture is not longer adhered to the fullest.

In another of Maphalla's poems, the poet appeals to God not to forget him, to remember him even during hard times and the use of symbolism is captured in the following stanza:

**(23) Sentebale, oho sentebale,
Ha o tshwaya ba hao, sentebale;
Le mohla letsatsi lela la kahlolo,
Ha o kgetha dinku ho dipodi -
Sentebale.**

**(Don't forget me, please don't forget me,
When you mark your people, don't forget me;
Even that day of judgement,
When you choose the sheep from the goats -
Don't forget me).**

The concern that the poet expresses here is the wish to be amongst the chosen few. This serious wish is contained in the repetition of the word **Sentebale**, which puts emphasis on his plea. Then, in the fourth line he employs two distinct images **dinku** and **dipodi** to describe the different types of people referred to. These images are employed as symbols for good and for bad respectively. The poet deviates from using the usual and common words. Instead, he employs these words with a powerful and effective implication, with **dinku** symbolising a good, meek or timid person and **dipodi** symbolising a bad, foolish person. A reader who is not conversant with the language, might be confused at the use of such words. Maybe, the reader knows the literal meaning of these words. Hence, it will be fascinating for the reader immediately he discovers the idea implied.

One other example from **Pinyane** shows how skillfully symbolism can be employed in a vivid description. It reads as:

(24) Mmadiatheng ruri o o bakile moferefere,

O qabantse baena, o ketotse malapa;

Le metswalle ya popota e se e nyemotsana

Ka ba la tjhefu ya leleme la Mmadiatheng.

Marena a ke le thuseng le kgalemeleng ka thata,

Le kgalemele ka thata, le phephethe bohata,

**Bohata ba leleme la Mmadiatheng ke tjhefu,
Ke kgodumodumo le ka se qeta setjhaba.**

(Pinyane: 74)

**(Mmadiatheng, indeed you have caused trouble,
You caused brothers to quarrel, you broke down families,
And even genuine friends just look at each other
Because of the poison of Mmadiatheng's tongue.**

**Chiefs, please help to reprimand strongly,
Reprimand strongly and blow away deceit,
Deceit of Mmadiatheng's tongue is a poison,
It is a monster, it can destroy the nation).**

A clear description is given in the first stanza of what this woman's tongue can do to the people. The last line contains the image that the poet uses to portray a clear picture of the evil that this organ can transmit. This image **tjhefu** symbolises the bad things that a tongue can do or spread. In real life, we know that poison is dangerous, it can cause death amongst the people. The same idea is carried over to the second stanza, where the poet pleads with people in the upper ranks to help stop this disease that the tongue is spreading. Deceit in the last line is referred to as **Kgodumodumo** (a

monster) which is dangerous to the nation. **Kgodumodumo** is a very large imaginary beast, usually conceived to have a frightening appearance. Now, we can imagine the extent of destruction that the tongue can cause if people with abusive tongues can be ignored and not stopped. This image **Kgodumodumo** is an image borrowed from imaginative literature such as folktales. It stands to reason that it is used as much in oral literature as in written literature.

Let us examine the following poem:

**(25) Ithute ho bala motho dikahare,
Buka o e bale o e kgutlela;
O e bale o bala mela dipakeng,
Thuto ya nnete e ho motho sefubeng.**

(Sentebale: 4)

**Learn to read a person inside,
Read a book repeatedly,
Read it, and read between the lines,
True education is in a person's heart).**

Here the poem talks about the inner feelings of a person. The poet employs the image **buka** (book) in the second line to symbolise feelings.

He uses a book because we can repeatedly read it from outside to inside.

Hence, a person's feelings are associated to a book. It is very interesting to note that you can read a person just like a book while he is not. This image implies that a person's feelings are extremely deep, and to know a person thoroughly you should give yourself time. A book consists of several pages which take some time to read. A person also, experiences different feelings within himself, hence we talk of different moods that we find in people. There is a saying that **motho o ke ke o mo qete** (You cannot always predict a person).

Another image is evoked in this poem **Ba kgutlile!!**. This image will be better understood when viewed against the socio-political background. I remember during my interview with Maphalla, we spoke about this poem. My concern was based on the message contained in the refrain **Rona re ne re setse re alositse mabitla** (We had remained behind to look after the graves). I could not understand how on earth could people look after graves. His response was very simple, that, our brothers had gone to exile and here at home we were left behind to take care of remaining families, old and disabled people. Then, suddenly something opened up, I stopped him from explaining further. I could make up what the poem is all about. The poem consists of seventeen stanzas, of which twelve stanzas present the background of the poem and each stanza ends with the refrain. The main message is contained in the refrain **Rona re ne re alositse mabitla**. For example, let us look at the

following stanzas:

**(26) Ba kgutlile, bonnake ba kgutlile,
Ba kgutletse hae hona kwano lapeng,
Ba ne ba re siile mona mekgorong,
Rona re ne re alositse mabitla.**

**Le tjee Modimo o moholo, le mo lebohe,
Le lebohe Ramasedi o rata Basotho,
Ba ne ba re siile mona dithapelong,
Rona re ne re alositse Basotho.**

(Makgaolakgang: 20)

**(They came back, my younger brothers are back
They have comeback home here at home,
They had left us here in our huts.
We had looked after the graves.**

**Even now God is great, we should thank him,
We should thank the Almighty he loves the Basotho,
They had left us here in prayers
We had looked after the Basotho).**

The impression we gather in the first stanza is that of the poet who expresses his gratitude that his brothers who left some years ago, are back home and find them still upholding the promise of keeping the home fires burning. The image that the poet employs to explain his situation is contained in the last line. The image **mabitla** is employed to symbolise people who are unable to help themselves, for example, children, old people and disabled people. The poet's concern was that people could not all go into exile, others had to remain home to care for the so called **mabitla**. At the end of it all, the poet acknowledges the power of God, that, they managed against all odds to perform their duties.

As in oral literature, symbols are widely employed in written literature for probing deep ideas and thoughts. They are a mark of high artistic sophistication in oral culture.

3.1.5.4 Allusion

This technique is found as much in oral as in written literature. It shows how people's language grows by borrowing images and ideas from real experience or from imaginative literature. Okpewho accedes to the above statement and points out that such images and ideas are used in a tightly compressed form (1992: 100). Allusions come frequently in the form of compressed metaphors

which are more commonly called proverbs. Finnegan (1970: 390) also points out that in many African cultures a feeling for language, for imagery and for the expression of abstract ideas through compressed and allusive phraseology comes out particularly clearly in proverbs. She says that the figurative quality of proverbs is especially striking. One of their most noticeable characteristics is their allusive wording, usually in metaphorical form. The allusion of proverbs in various collections are often not obvious. This is frequently due to our ignorance of the culture. A knowledge of the situation in which proverbs are cited may also be an essential part of understanding their implications. For instance, Guma (1977: 99) claims that the whole life and thought of the Basotho is reflected in their proverbs, they embody their most basic traditional values. One area in which allusions enjoy truly fertile usage is in poetry. This is probably because there is no ample room for elaborate description and expansion. In Maphalla's poetry there are numerous uses of allusion. One of the things we notice is the poetic form in which these proverbs are expressed. This, allied to their figurative mode of expression, serves to some degree to set them apart from everyday speech. Let us consider the following examples to illustrate our point.

- (27) Phahamela marole, Kedisaletse,**
O be kwekwe ya pele le mererong;
Kwekwe ya morao nthong tsohle,

Ha e tloha, e tloha le sepolo.

(Sentebale: 12)

(Rise above the dust, Kedisaletse,

Be a first quail even in planning.

The last quail in everything,

When it leaves, it leaves with a flail).

Here, Maphalla is concerned about the life of an orphan, who lost both his parents. He conveys his plea to the orphan in the form of an advice, to take heed and rise above all odds in order to survive. The poet suggests a cause of action to this poor orphan Kedisaletse, to be wise and prompt in whatever he plans to do. This is contained in the proverb **kwekwe ya morao e tloha le sepolo** (the last quail leaves with the Flail) found in line three and line four. The proverb is presented in an unusual manner. Some addition occurs after the first phrase of the proverb, that is, the phrase **nthong tsohle** is added to the initial phrase **kwekwe ya morao**. This addition is done deliberately to give a deeper meaning and clarity to the initial phrase. The proverb normally implies that it pays to be punctual. Then, the poet finds it appropriate to extend the message by adding the phrase **in everything**. In the last line, there is recurrence of the phrase **e tloha** which is part of the last phrase of the proverb. Here, the poet employs repetition for emphasis. Proverbs rely for

their effect on the aptness with which they are used in a particular situation.

Moleleki (1988: 22) maintains that:

**proverbs are to Maphalla a source of inspiration
which fuels his original ideas, and they serve as one
of the vehicles of expression he employs with
commendable effect.**

This assertion is true with Maphalla. Maphalla finds pleasure in using proverbs. In the poem **Ntetekeng**, there are numerous uses of proverbs. It is exciting to see how he fits the proverb to the main subject of the poem. In this poem, he talks about the orphan Ntetekeng, who leads a very painful life. He comments about his name and says:

(28) Ruri bitsolebe ke seromo, banna!

Bitso la motho le ka mmakela mathata,

A sala a kenyakenya qaka a sa e qapa;

E qapilwe ke batho le ho ba tseba a sa ba tsebe.

(Ntetekeng: 9)

(Certainly, a bad name is an omen, people!

A person's name can cause trouble for him,

That he becomes involved in problems he did not create.

Problems created by people he does not even know).

He introduces the first line with the proverb, which implies that a name suits its owner, that is, a bad name is an omen. It seems the poor orphan portrayed here, lives up to his name **Ntetekeng** (hit me as you please). Ntetekeng experiences hardships in his life. Sometimes he sleeps without a meal. He becomes involved in problems which he did not create, perhaps created by his dead parents. In another stanza, the poet expresses his concern about the quietness and passiveness of Ntetekeng. He employs a proverb to highlight his concern.

(29) Ngwana ya sa lleng o shwela tharing, Ntetekeng,

Ntetekeng hobaneng o sa ka wa bua;

Hobaneng o sa bolela o robetse ka tlala,

Le sengwathwana ha o se tsebe hanong?

(Ntetekeng: 10)

(A child that does not cry on his mother's back,

dies Ntetekeng.

Why didn't you say it Ntetekeng,

Why didn't you say that you slept without food,

You don't know even a crumb in the mouth).

The poet portrays a situation in which Ntetekeng finds himself, through the use of the proverb **Ngwana ya sa leng o shwela tharing** (A child that does not cry on his mother's back, dies). The proverb implies that he who does not complain, cannot be helped. Ntetekeng is portrayed as that type of a person. The readers turn to feel pity for him, because such situations are real, and bring misery to the affected person. At the end of the same poem, Maphalla expresses his advice through a proverb found in line three and four of this stanza.

**(30) Le wena a ko iphe matla kgutsana,
Itlame letheke o tshware ka meno;
Folofela leraha ngwana wa ditjhaba,
Metsi ke ao a pjhele o a bona.**

(Ntetekeng: 13)

**(Give yourself strength, orphan,
Fasten your waist and hold firm,
Take care of the mud, child of the nation,
There is water, drying up whilst you watch).**

The actual proverb that is used in this poem reads as: **Hlapi folofela leraha metsi a pjhele o a bona**. Here the poet has extended the usual proverb by

adding other phrases in between the phrases of the proverb. For instance, in line three, the phrase **ngwana wa ditjhaba** is added to the phrase **Folofela leraha**. The purpose is to intensify the meaning that is expressed in the proverb. The proverb implies that when times are bad, one eats what one would not normally eat. This proverb is normally not simple to understand, only someone familiar with the culture can understand it. The foregoing examples illustrate to a large extent how Maphalla employs allusion in his poetry.

Our foregoing discussion on Maphalla's imagery indicates that through imagery and its patterns we can see more of Maphalla the man and understand his contexts and frame of reference. His imagery is related to the existential situation of his fellow human beings. He draws images from the human experiences as well as from the natural environment. It is this effective use of imagery that is responsible for the success and endurance of his poetry.

3.2 CONCLUSION

A significant point is that Maphalla is able to synthesise various styles of traditional and western art to produce something he wants to project. He has achieved success with the different ways that he handles repetition. We hope that through the examples discussed here, we have touched on a number of effective forms of his repetition. He is very successful with his linking and

refrains. This success is due to the fact that he has a way of adding touches of his individuality to what he has taken over from oral literature. We also consider imagery to be the hallmark of good poetry. As a result we have shown how Maphalla manipulates imagery. He uses a pure well-nourished and beautiful Sotho. We have derived great aesthetic contentment from his poetry.

We now move on to look at other devices that he employs to express his artistic style.

CHAPTER 4

ART IN MAPHALLA'S POETRY

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CHAPTER 4

ART IN MAPHALLA'S POETRY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we shall examine Maphalla's artistic mode as realised in his poetry. Language is an important weapon that helps writers to achieve their goals in writing. Language is more than the incidental medium of literature, it is also a shaping and finishing instrument, a primary building material, a part of the conceptual foundation (Ching et al 1980: 3). Language is used differently for different purposes, and our responses as readers or listeners are shaped by our perception of how and why language is being used. Jakobson concurs with this notion that language has a range of different aspects. In his article **Linguistics and poetics**, the key concept he develops is the notion of the **poetic function** of language. He says that in poetic uses of language, the primary interest is in the artistic nature of the language itself (1987: 69). He claims that poetic function is not the sole function of verbal art, but only its dominant and determining function. Attridge (1988: 153) suggests that poetic language does not simply dress pre-existing meaning, or even embody them, but generates meaning as we read. He says:

...it is that focus on the materiality of language as it does its

work of bringing meaning into being that has so often been interpreted as mimetic or ionic representation, because the experience is unquestionably one of increased vividness or intensity of signification

(1988: 154)

Reeves (1970: 157) believes that poetry may express the whole range of human emotions, but unless its language is vital, fresh and surprising, those emotions will be blurred and ineffectual. It is of vital importance that the poet considers the nature of language he employs and how he employs it. A poet is a human being who is most significantly distinguished by the compulsive power to conceptualise, reshape and communicate the experience of life through language. Thus, in an interesting way, poets make it a point to go out of their way to break the basic rules of the language in order to produce what we call ART. For instance, the basic syntax of a sentence which stands as; the subject (s) in the initial position and the object (o) following the verb (v) is mostly violated by the poets. They take the words and work them over in such a way as to lift them above ordinary speech. Furniss and Bath (1996: 10) maintain that one way of describing the way poets use language is to call it a **heightened** language. They suggest that poetic language is **The current language heightened**", and poetic language can also be described in terms of **literariness**. Hence, our purpose in this chapter is to subject to detailed analysis of Maphalla's poetry, and look at how he achieves what we call Art. In chapter two, we have classified art as: verbal art (literature);

visual art; graphic art; decoration art; and performing art. In this chapter our concern will be based on verbal art. Poetry is part of verbal art.

4.1 LITERARINESS

Russian Formalists set about producing a theory of literature concerned with the writer's technical ability and craft skill. Their central focus is not literature per se, but **literariness**. According to formalists, what constitute the literariness of literature is of cardinal importance. Rice and Waugh (1992: 17) describe literariness as that which makes a given text, a **literary work**. They explain that the formalist's interest is in texts, and centres on the function of literary devices rather than on content. Selden explains that literariness has to do with the special use of language which achieves its distinctness by deviating from **practical language** (1985: 8). Practical language is used for acts of communication while literary language has no practical function; instead it makes us see things differently. Literariness of literature is achieved through the use of literary language. Shklovsky in his essay **Art as technique** (1917) develops the key notion of **defamiliarisation** (Ostranenie – makes strange). He points out that literary language **makes strange** or defamiliarizes habituated perception and ordinary language. The key to defamiliarisation is the literary language. Shklovsky (1965), cited in Lodge (1988: 20), puts it that:

... as perception becomes habitual, it becomes automatic.

The role of art in the general is to remove this veil of familiarity, to realert us to objects, ideas and events which no

longer make an impression. Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life and feel things.

Art can do this by employing a range of techniques at its disposal in ways that impede and disrupt our familiar responses. The technique of art is to make objects **unfamiliar** and to increase the length of perception. Such defamiliarisation can be achieved by using various literary devices.

We shall look at how Maphalla succeeds in presenting his ideas and thoughts in an unusual manner and show creativeness and art in his poetry.

4.2 MODE OF ARTISTIC DELIVERY

A writer's style may be regarded as an individual and creative utilisation of resources of language which his period offer him. According to Cohen (1973: 49) the writer's choices, fashion his style which can vary from work to work, especially if the writer prefers to experiment in the stylistic shaping of his material.

4.2.1 Style as deviation from a norm

The concept of deviation is important to the study of style. To be stylistically distinctive, a feature of language must deviate from some norm of comparison. Van Dijk suggests that the **norm** is the language itself as a system composed of rules and categories and the **deviation is observed as a discrepancy between**

what is allowed by language system and what occurs in the text (1985: 40).

According to Freeman (1970: 6) the **style as deviation** school poses questions such as: what does the language of literary text convey in addition to information? What does the language do in addition to what the rules of grammar require it to do? What are a writer's typical patterns of syntactic and lexical choice where he has an option? These questions are most fruitfully considered in the work of the Linguistic Circle of Prague particularly in Mukarovsky's essay, **Standard language and Poetic Language**. Mukarovsky (1958) characterised poetic (literary) language as an aesthetically purposeful distortion of standard language. He points out that poetic language deliberately breaks the rules in order that a given work is noticed as language. Van Dijk (1985: 45) believes that the poet deviates from **expected norms** of linguistic expressions. In other words, he exercises, in the broadest sense, **Poetic Licence**. Maphalla exploits this device extensively in his work, to exemplify this, we shall look at how he employs proverbs in his poems. He employs this device of deviation, that is, in changing the structural patterns of Sesotho proverbs. Moleleki (1988: 24) points out that this syntactical change, adds another dimension to the primary significance of the proverbs. Let us consider the following examples:

(1) **A ko tshware ka meno, Kedisaletse,**

O tshware ka thata, o eme senna,

**O setlele le hara fefo tsa lefatshe,
Le setsing sa dikgohola o tswela pele.**

**Phahamela marole, Kedisaletse,
O be kwekwe ya pele le mererong;
Kwekwe ya morao nthong tsohle;
Ha e tloha, e tloha le sepolo.**

(Sentebale: 12)

**(Hold tight with teeth, Kedisaletse,
Hold harder, and stand like a man,
Work harder even in the midst of wind of this world,
Even in the middle of heavy rain, go on.**

**Rise above dust Kedisaletse,
Be a first quail even in planning
The last quail in everything;
When it goes away, it leaves with the flail).**

The proverb used above, in its original form reads as **kwekwe ya morao e tloha le sepolo** (The last quail leaves with the flail). But, the poet decides to extend the proverb by insertion and repetition. He deviates from the practical usual use of the proverb. The inserted phrases **ya pele le mererong** and **nthong tsohle** are

intended to give a deeper meaning and clarity of the intended message. The poet suggests a course of action to this poor orphan **Kedisaletse**, to be wise, swift and prompt in speech and deed, for a sluggard in everything takes lots of flogging. The unextended proverb normally implies that a slow person always ends up in troubles. Hence, Maphalla finds it to be appropriate for the message he intends to convey. He employs repetition purposely to produce a certain effect. The repetition of the word **kwekwe** (quail) in two successive lines advances the idea in the first line and the repetition of the verb **e tloha** (it leaves) which occurs within the same line hammers at the idea the poet seeks to emphasise and reinforce the desired meaning.

(2) **Kgomo ho Mosotho ke modimo o nko e metsi,
O tshabela ho yona ha ho foka wa makgapheretsi,
Rame sa mariha se itlhomphela mokgatla,
Ha o apere o ka itjella ka kgotso kgwahla.**

**Kgomo ho Mosotho ke sejo le separo,
Ruri kgomo ho Mosotho ke bona bophelo,
Ha e ka phephethwa re ka sala le bosoro,
Ha e ka fielwa re ka e bona mehlolo.**

**Ha le fete kgomo le je motho,
Eo e sa le yona polelo ya Mosotho.**

Mosotho o re bitla la kgomo ke molomo.

Ruri mokete o hlohang kgomo ke sesomo.

(Dikano: 32)

(To a Mosotho a cow is god with a wet nose.

You take refuge in it when the wind of makgapheretsi blows.

The winter's coldness respect only the rough-tanned skin

When you are dressed in it, you can relax in, peace foreman.

To a Mosotho a cow is food and clothes,

Certainly, to a Mosotho a cow is life.

If it can be blown away, we can remain with wickedness,

If it can be swept away, we can see miracles.

It does not pass a cow and eat a person,

That, is still a Mosotho's saying .

A Mosotho says a cow's grave is the (human) mouth.

Certainly, a feast without a cow is a mockery).

The poet opens the first stanza with the basic proverb **Kgomo ke modimo o nko e metsi** (A cow is god with wet nose) and extends it by inserting the words **ho Mosotho**. This word extends the meaning of the proverb and highlights the importance of this valuable animal to a **Mosotho**. The basic proverb signifies that

a cow is a treasure irrespective of its running nose. The structural change, that is, the insertion made to the proverb puts emphasis on its social function. For instance, it is used for ritual purposes, marriages and other cultural practices. To a **Mosotho**, an ox is an important animal which deserves to be treated with respect. In stanza three, we find two proverbs based on the same animal a cow, which give more emphasis to the importance of this valuable animal. The proverb in the first line of this stanza, that is, **ha le fete kgomo le je motho**, implies that it is better to spend on someone than to leave him to his fate. On the other hand, the proverb in the third line implies that a dead cow is not thrown away but ends up in a person's mouth. This shows how important this animal is to a **Mosotho**. Maphalla has an amazing command of his medium. He uses proverbs accurately. His descriptions are apt and create indelible images in the mind of the reader. He makes use of traditional belief that a cow is a treasure to the **Basotho** nation. In the poem **Imamele ntjhanyana**, Maphalla says:

(3) **Imamele hle ntjhanyana,**

Hopola o ngwana e motona;

Hopola o kabelwamanong,

O tla shwela ka thoko ho tsela.

Nka nako ho halefa,

Ithute ho kgoba matshwafo;

Lefatsheng bo robala bo tjhesa

Empa ruri bo tsohe bo fodile.

(Sentebale: 29)

(Please consider yourself little boy.

Do remember that you are a male child,

Do remember that you are to be offered to vultures,

You will die besides the road.

Take time to become angry,

Learn to crush down one's lungs,

On earth, if hot overnight

But, cold the following day).

In the first stanza, Maphalla employs the basic proverb **moshemane kabelwamanong** with a different structure. He introduces new phrases to the proverb and substitute **moshemane** with the phrase **ngwana e motona**. The new phrase **hopola o** begins the second and the third lines of this stanza. This repetition is used to show continuity of the same idea in the following line and also to emphasise the important characteristic to remember that a male child must fend for himself. This proverb is employed in this form to give encouragement as well as advice to a male child that life is not a bed of roses but hardwork is a priority. A male child must defeat a vulture in order to prove his real worth.

In the same poem, we find another proverb employed with a different form from its original form. The proverb in its original form reads as **bo tsholwa bo tjhesa bo tsohe bo fodile**, but, in this poem, Maphalla employs substitution and addition of a conjunction. Instead of **bo tsholwa** in the proverb, the poet chooses to use the phrase **bo robala** to suit the message that he wants to put forth to the reader. He contracts the two ideas **bo robala bo tjhesa** and **bo tsohe bo fodile** by employing the conjunction **empa**. The intention here, is to strike the reader's mind to compare the two ideas and think deeper about the meaning implied. Maphalla through this proverb points out that in this world things change, for instance, one can sleep at night being in a happy mood, but, in the morning we experience a different situation.

(4) Empa kajeno ke mona lebelo le fedile.

Meepa ya dithaba le maralla e nqetile,

Ke mona jwale ke sekowa, ke se ke qhiletsa.

(Mahohodi: 10)

(But here am I today, the race is over.

The steep of the mountains and the hills has destroyed me,

Here am I now a sickling, I now limp).

Maphalla manipulates proverbs in a strange manner which a person who is not

conversant with them, will not be able to recognise them. For instance, in the above example the phrase **lebelo le fedile** (the race is over) reminds the reader of the proverb **lebelo le a fela, thota e sale** (the speed slows down and the ground remains unchanged). It implies that, as one advances in the age, one's pace or speed slows down and yet a wide world continues unchanged. Familiar proverbs cease to be perceived automatically and are thus defamiliarised. Maphalla begins the first line with the conjunction **empa** (but) to introduce a feeling of dissatisfaction towards ageing. He is aware that people are not always happy about changes that occur as a result of the passing of time. It is always a wish to go back to **those days**. Part of the proverb which is **lebelo le fedile**, is beautifully incorporated into the first line to produce the intended meaning.

(5) Tsa lefatshe lena ha di thuse;

Le ha o ka kgaba le ho feta naledi

Le sa tla o tjhabela tsatsi la mehlolo,

Etswe monono lefatsheng ke mohodi.

(Kgapa tsa ka: 26)

((Things) of this world do not help;

Even if you can look bright more than a star

The day of troubles will still rise for you

Yet wealth, in this world is like a mist).

A complete proverb of example (5) reads as **monono ke mohodi ke mouwane** (wealth is like fog like vapour). Maphalla extends the proverb with the conjunction **etswe** (yet) and the word **lefatsheng** to produce the effective meaning he wants. We as humans, gather wealth and do not pause to think that wealth may not last to eternity. He also inserts the word **lefatsheng** (in this world) between **monono** (wealth) and **mohodi** (fog/mist) in order to defamiliarise the proverb. Here, the idea, is to heighten the area of contention in this poem. The poet expresses concern about material things that people accumulate and life hereafter. He employs the above proverb to imply that, worldly riches are of no importance in the life hereafter, that is, wealth is something which just passes easily and fast like a mist when the sun rises.

(6) **Ba e lwana e mahlomafubedu banna ba lekgotla,
Ba tshwara thipa ka bohaleng dithapelong;
Ba tlola matjato batjha ba kgabane phuthehong,
Ke re le ona masea a ba a kenya letsoho.**

(Mahohodi: 34)

**(They fought a fierce battle, men of the court,
Mothers hold the knife by the blade in their mothers' unions;
They jumped actively the youth of the church,
I say, even the babies helped).**

The basic structure of the proverbs should be **mma ngwana o tshwara thipa ka bohaleng** which implies that a mother will do anything to protect her child. Maphalla intelligently employs both inversion and deletion. Inversion occurs in the form of topicalisation. The predicate phrase **ba tshwara thipa ka bohaleng** occupies the initial position unlike in the original form of the proverb. The poet highlights the action carried out by women, that is, always protective over their children. The word **ngwana** which appears in the original form of the proverb is deleted. The effect of the deletion here, is to generalise the meaning of the proverb, instead of specifying the mothers being referred to. Maphalla uses his proverbs accurately, and also to render his communication effective. In the example that follows, Maphalla highlights the effect that the name bears by employing a relevant proverb with the new words added to give it a serious tone.

(7) **Kolong se phahameng sa Lekgulong,
Ho kile ha eba le moshemanyana teng;
Morutwana ka lebitso e le Ketladibona;
Ketladibona wa ho se hlomphe dinako.**

**Ba ipha nako ba bang barutwana,
Ba fuputsa, ba botsa le dipotso;
Ruri bitsolebe ka mehla ke seromo,
Ketladibona a nna a re "ke tla di bona".**

(Ntetekeng: 33)

(In the high school called Lekgulong,
There was once a little boy,
The learner's name was Ketladibona,
Ketladibona who does not respect time.

The other learners gave themselves time,
They explored, they asked questions,
Certainly, a bad name is always an omen,
Ketladibona continued saying, "I will see them").

The poet decides to begin the normal proverb **bitso lebe ke seromo** (A bad name is a curse) with the word **ruri** (certainly), in order to reinforce the meaning of the proverb. He emphasises the message implied by the proverb, that, truly a persons name always reflects his actions. The last line **Ketladibona a nna a re 'ke tla di bona'** depicts exactly the meaning contained in the proverb. The poet inserts a new phrase **ka mehla** between **lebe** and **ke seromo** to load emphasis to the proverb. He expresses his concern, that a bad name always create problems to the owner. It is exciting to read Maphalla's poems. He proves to be a creative writer. He heightens his work by deviating from the norm and break the original and familiar structure of the proverbs. The deviation being unexpected, comes to the foreground of the reader's attention as a de-automatisation of the normal linguistic processes. We use our imaginations

consciously or unconsciously in order to work out why this abnormality exists. The foregoing examples illustrate to a large extent how he employs proverbs in his poetry. Maphalla has a great gift of literary artistry. Moleleki (1988: 22) maintains that:

Proverbs are to Maphalla a source of inspiration which fuels his original ideas, and they serve as one of the vehicles of expression he employs with commendable effect.

4.2.2 Lexical set and collocation

Other concepts brought to linguistic stylistics are **lexical set** and **collocation**. Freeman (1970: 9) describes a lexical set as a group of words that occur in similar situations, that have a similar range of collocation. Ullman (1973:10) defines collocation as the habitual association of a word in a language with other particular words in sentences. Collocation of synonyms is a very common stylistic device which has an emotive motivation. Maphalla employs this device intelligently and strategically in his poetry. We exemplify this as follows:

**(8) Le ha ke le sethotho, ke le tlatsetlatse,
Ke reilwe semaumau ke bahlalefi,
Le ha ke bitswa tsheretshere le ke baena,
Nna Modimo wa ka ha se sethotho.**

(Ntekeletsane: 26)

**(Though I am considered a fool and labelled an idiot,
And called a dunce by the know-alls,
Though I am labelled an imbecile by my brothers,
My God is no fool).**

In this example, these co-ordinated words, **sethotho** (a fool), **tlatsetlatse** (an idiot), **semaumau** (a dunce) and **tsheretshere** (an imbecile) are used intentionally to bring out the desired meaning. The word **sethotho** encompasses the other collocates and is more general in usage, hence, the poet decides to use other synonyms with a deeper and emotive meaning. The synonyms are collocated for emphasis to describe the degree of imbecility. Maphalla gives vent to his disturbed feelings about the degrading names given to him.

**(9) Fatsheng lena ha ho na phomolo,
Fatsheng lena ha ho na kgefutso,
Kgefutso e ka nqane ho lebitla.**

(Sentebale: 68)

**(In this world there is no rest,
In this world there is no respite,
Respite is beyond the grave).**

These words **phomolo** (rest) and **kgefutso** (respite) have a clear semantic collocation. Maphalla employs these collocates to express a deeper and strong feeling about life here on earth. He expresses his concern that there is no rest, instead, rest is only obtained after death. He uses the word **kgefutso** at the end of the second line and at the beginning of the third line to link the idea introduced in the first line.

The following example was written after the poet heard about the death of a certain man who was killed by his wife (cf. An interview with Maphalla). He was disturbed by the manner in which the death occurred. He then, wrote this poem **Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo**.

(10) **Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo di meriti,
Dikgutlwana tsa pelo di kgantsha sekoko;
Mokgubung wa pelo fifi ke la bonkantjana,
Le ka lebone pelong ya motho ha o bone
Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo di meriti,
Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo di sekoko,
Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo di lefifi,
Mehaolwana ya pelo e a nyarosa.**

(Ntetekeng: 27)

(Recesses of the heart are shaded

Corners of the heart excel in parchness;

The centre of the heart is dark,

Even with a lamp you are unable to see the person's heart.

Recesses of the heart are shaded

Recesses of the heart are parched

Recesses of the heart are dark

The inside of the heart startles).

The poet expresses his innermost feelings and thoughts in a lofty style. The sequential occurrence of the phrases with words from the same lexical set, in similar semantic situation is magnificent. These phrases in line (1), (2) and (3) of the first stanza are **kgotjheletsane tsa pelo, dikgutwana tsa pelo** and **mokgubung wa pelo**. The poet employs such phrases in this manner in order to describe the depth of the human heart which implies an area that is not easily accessible.

In stanza (2) we find another sequential occurrence of words from the same lexical set. These words **meriti, sekoko** and **lefifi** occur in similar semantic situations and have a similar range of collocation. The recurrence of the phrase **kgotjheletsane tsa pelo** in all three lines contributes to the structural unity of the verse and provides a line of continuity to the poet's idea that recesses of the

heart are shaded. This type of description will somehow force the reader to stop and think about what the poet tries to project. The reader should have a clear mind in order to see the relationship that exists among these three words **meriti**, **sekoko** and **lefifi**. The darkness that the poet refers to explains the secretiveness of the heart. That is, the secrets in the human heart are described as deep dark and cold but known to the beholder. This poem is rich in imagery. Maphalla does not hesitate to use images to project his subjects. In stanza two, the heart is presented as a deep river which harbours dangerous animals. This is really amazing, but it is for the reader to make conclusions and agree or disagree with what the poet says. As readers we imagine a python and a water serpent sleeping in your heart or causing a riot. This brings us to understand the greatness that the poet refers to. The use of such words in each line captures the concentration of the reader and holds longer in his memory.

Maphalla's language is rich and combines words so easily that they bring about the correct meaning. Here, he says:

**(11) A re keneng selemong sena se setjha,
A re keneng ka morolo le ka mafolofolo;
A re keneng ka matla le ka sefutho,
A re keneng ka sekgahla le ka boitelo.**

(Makgaolagang: 12)

**(Let us enter this new year,
Let us enter with great courage and enthusiasm;
Let us enter with strength and great speed,
Let us enter with force and dedication).**

The poet invites people to get into the new year with enthusiasm. He strengthens this invitation by using words with similar range of collocation. These words **morolo** and **mafolofolo**, **matla** and **sefutho**, **sekgahla** and **boitelo** employed in three consecutive lines give a sense of urgency and forceful tone. The reader is bound to make an introspection, to find out his position with reference to the poet's request. This is something that most people do not practise. Hence, we think it is a powerful and artistic presentation of good ideas that a reader will welcome.

In the poem **Koduwa ya Ralebitso**, Maphalla says:

**(12) Setjhaba sa lla, sejhaba sa bokolla,
Sa tsetselela tjehelete ya sona le thepa,
Le bomatsale ba tsetselela dingwetsi
Tse orihileng masea a sa pepa.**

(Kgaphe tsa ka:)

**(The nation cried, the nation cried loudly,
It moaned for its money and furniture,
Even the mothers-in-law moaned for their daughters-in-law,**

Who died while babies were small).

Here, we find the words **lla**, **bokolla** and **tsetselela** in line (1) and (2). These words bear the same meaning with different effect. The poet tries to bring out the seriousness of the situation, and employs these words from the same lexical set.

4.3 ISLAND CONSTRAINTS

In any given language, there are movement rules which transform the underlying structure of a sentence. For instance, the **topicalisation** transformation, allows certain types of constituents in a sentence to be fronted, that is, moved to the initial position of a sentence. But, it turns out that **topicalisation** too can be blocked from moving elements out of certain sentence structures. Hence, Chomsky and Ross in Radford (1981: 215) introduce the term **island**. An **island** is defined as:

... A construction out of which no subpart can be extracted by any movement rule (though the whole island may be moved as one unit). (Radford, 1981 216)

The general idea is that once you are marooned on an island, you are stuck there, and you cannot be removed from the island by any movement rule at all. There are different structures which form islands in Maphalla's poems. We exemplify these instances below:

(a) **Relative Clauses**

(13) **Pinyane tse ipatileng botebong ba di kweetsa**

(Ntetekeng: 1)

(Secrets that are hidden deep in the dams)

The relative clause **pinyane tse ipatileng** is an island. Why do we suggest that it is an island? We observed that we cannot move any element out of the relative clause containing it, to be adjoined to the other part of the sentence. In fact, such movement is impossible, since the resultant structure becomes ungrammatical:

(14) **Ipatileng botebong ba dikweetsa pinyane tse**

(15) **Mmamotho ke perela ya bohlokwa**

(Dikano: 30)

(A person's mother is a precious pearl).

In this example also, **perela ya bohlokwa** forms an island. If for example, we front the element **bohlokwa** in the above relative clause, the sentence results in an usual structure which presents a different meaning from the original structure, we then, have the following structure:

(16) **Bohlokwa mmamotho ke perela ya.**

(Precious a person's mother is a pearl of).

(b) **Sentential subject**

Let us now turn to look at another type of a clause which forms an island. It is not unusual for one clause to function as the subject of another. For example, in (17) below, the subordinate clause functions as the subject of the main clause. This clause is also called a sentential subject.

(17) **Le ha moya le maikutlo di kgathetse,**

-Tswela pele!

(Sentebale: 10)

(Even if the spirit and feelings are down

Do carry on!).

If we move the elements of this sentential subject, we might, for example, obtain the following structural difference:

(18) **Le ha maikutlo di kgathetse moya le,**

-Tswela pele!

(Even if feelings are down the spirit and –

Do carry on!).

Here, the syntax of the sentence is ungrammatical. No rule can move any element out of a sentential subject. Hence, we classify this subject as an island.

(c) **Coordinate structures**

Radford (1981: 220) suggests that coordinate structures are also islands, that is, any movement rule is blocked from extracting out any of the coordinate structures. Maphalla exploits this type of islanding. He mostly collocates words that have a clear semantic relationship. Let us consider the following illustrations:

(19) **Leme la mosadi ke mollo le sebabole**

(Makgaolakgang: 14)

(A woman's tongue is fire and sulphur).

(20) **Thapelo e etsa mehlole le meeka;**

(Fuba sa ka: 42)

(A prayer does wonders and miracles).

(21) **Nna ke tlamehile maoto le matsoho;**

(Fuba sa ka: 24)

(I am bound at my feet and hands).

In example (19), (20) and (21), elements of the coordinate structures **mollo le sebabole**, **mehlolo le meeka** and **maoto le matsoho** cannot be moved, that is they are islands.

For example, topicalisation as a movement transformation rule, cannot extract **sebabole** out of the coordinate structure **mollo le sebabole**. For example:

(22) Sebabole leme la mosadi ke mollo le-

This movement leads to ungrammaticality,. But, this does not of course block movement of the island as a whole. Hence, we can have the whole coordinate structure moved to the initial position to read as follows:

(23) **Mollo le sebabole ke leme la mosadi.**

This, does not violate the principle that coordinate structures are islands. Maphalla employs this style deliberately to reinforce his ideas and to emphasise the desired meaning.

4.4 ART AS EXPRESSION OF AESTHETIC BEAUTY

Aestheticians try to understand how art is related to what people feel and to what they learn. To gain this understanding, they collect, organise and interpret information about art and aesthetic experience. Earlier on we mentioned that art

is the expression of aesthetic beauty. Now, we shall examine beauty particularly at how it is manifested in Maphalla's art.

4.4.1 Artistic beauty

Artistic beauty depends on how a writer makes explicit his linguistic creativity. Artistic beauty refers to the beauty we perceive in the artistic presentation of the writer's work. Artistic beauty transcends the mediocre and expresses itself in a prolific poetic style. Artistic beauty in poetry remains vivid in the minds of the readers long after the overall poem was read. This beauty is portrayed by the artistic use of ordinary words in an extraordinary setting. Artistic beauty can be compared to a very eye-catching wrapping of a package containing ordinary human experience.

Maphalla is a creative writer who presents his poems artistically. We experience artistic beauty in his work. In the following poem, Maphalla speaks about time and what it entails. He says:

(24) Tsamaya hle, tsamaya nako.

La kajeno le tshwana le la maobane;

Mohlomong la hosane le tla tshedisa,

Mohlomong lona le tla thoba matetetso.

**A ko tsamaye hle, nako tsamaya,
Dihora tsa hao di fupere maima;
Metsotso ya hao e kakasitse mathata,
Metsotswana ya hao e kwetlile mefehelo.**

(Ntetekeng: 25)

**(Please move, time move,
Today is the same as yesterdays
Maybe tomorrow will console,
Maybe it will calm the pains.**

**Please just move, time move,
Your hours carry the burdens;
Your minutes hold the hardships,
Your seconds hide the troubles).**

Firstly, the poet apostrophises time, as though it will stand up and start to move. This device draws the attention of the reader and calls upon the reader to imagine this moving object that the poet is referring to. Secondly, in the second stanza, the poet expresses time into hours, minutes and seconds. He explains further what each unit of time holds for us. He employs three synonymous words which create three different situations that the reader perceives differently. These phrases **di fupere maima**, **e kakasitse mathata** and **e kwetlile mefehelo** carry

the same idea which is expressed differently. This, shows the poet's linguistic creativity and his artistic use of his language. The reader can find it an unusual occurrence that time is expressed into its smaller units. Here, Maphalla tries to project a deeper meaning of the word time. Artistic beauty is vivid in this poem.

In the poem **O ile, K.E. Ntsane**, he eulogises the poet, Ntsane, in a highly metaphorical manner. He captures the beauty in Ntsane's works and presents the different volumes that he has written in an attractive and artistic way.

(25) **Nna ke hopola Maswabi, ngwana Mosotho wa kajeno,
Ke hopola Nna Sajene Kokobela, lefokisi la popota;
Ntsane o ngotse, Makumane ka bokgeleke le bokgalala,
O ngotse Bao-Batho, a ba a ngola Mmusapelo,
Ke mang ya sa tsebeng hatabutle, pitsi ya lebelo?**

(Fuba sa ka: 11)

(I reminisce about Maswabi, the offspring of Mosotho of the present age, I call to memory Nna Sajene Kokobela, a detective of all season, Ntsane also wrote Makumane with great artistic flair, He also wrote Bao-Batho, as well as Mmusapelo, Who does not know Hatabutle, the swift stud).

The art displayed in this poem is magnificent. The poet organises his work artistically in an appealing manner. He introduces the different books that Ntsane has written in a very interesting pattern. To break the monotony of just naming the books, he then, decides to qualify each book cited. The reader is made to appreciate the poem and on the other hand, he is motivated to read Ntsane's collection. This is evident in the last line of the above-mentioned stanza:

Ke mang ya sa tsebeng Hatabutle, pitsi ya lebelo?

(Who does not know Hatabutle, the galloping steed).

The rhetorical question employed here, leaves the reader with no option but with the task of looking for these seemingly interesting books.

In **leihlo la Modimo**, Maphalla says:

(26) Leihlo la Modimo le jwang

Ha le bona le dikgotjheletsaneng?

Le bona le botebong ba mawatle,

Esita le ka mpong ya lefatshe le a bona.

Leihlo la Modimo le jwang

Ha le bona sefubeng sa motho?

**Botobong ba pelo le a bona
Esita le keello ya motho le a bona.**

**Leihlo la Modimo le jwang
Ha le bona kganya lefifing?
Moo batho re bonang botshohadi
Lona le ka bona bosweu bo jwalo ka lehlwa.**

(Sentetele: 51)

**(How is God's eye
That it is able to see in the recesses?
It sees in the deepest part of the sea,
Even in the centre of the earth it sees.**

**How is God's eye
That it sees inside a person's chest?
In the depth of the heart it sees,
Even the mind of the person it sees it.**

**How is God's eye
That it is able to see light through darkness?
As where the eye of man sees only darkness,
The eye of God can see beauty as white as snow).**

The poet portrays the eye of God as an extraordinary organ that can see inside the person. He employs exaggeration beautifully in line three of the first stanza. The reader starts to imagine **this eye**, which can see deep down the sea and as such, attaches a deeper meaning to it. This, acknowledges the fact that God's power is above man. The artistic angle of this poem is portrayed in line two and three of the third stanza which shows the contrast of God's power to see through darkness whereas man is unable to see even through slight darkness. The light referred to here, is associated with the brightness reflected by the snow.

In the poem **O le tshabe leleme**, Maphalla describes the tongue (**leleme**) in a striking and interesting manner. It reads as:

**(27) Ha o tshaba o tshabe leleme,
Leleme le a bolaya, le a phedisa.
Leleme le a bina, le a bokolla
Le ka o kgothatsa la ba la o nyahamisa.**

(Ditema: 21)

**(When you fear, fear the tongue,
The tongue kills and gives life.
The tongue sings and cries,
It can encourage you and can also sadden you).**

It is amazing how the tongue (non-living organ) can perform all these functions that should actually be done by a living animal. Maphalla personifies the tongue to put emphasis to his message and chooses to employ contrasting words to bring out that artistic beauty and to present the good and the evil of the tongue. We find these contrasting words **bolaya** and **phedisa**, **bina** and **bokolla**, and **kgothatsa** and **nyahamisa** in line two, three and four respectively. The recurrence of the word **leleme** in three successive lines brings out the emphasis allocated to the word. The poet highlights to the reader the damage that this small organ can cause and alerts him to take precautions not to become a victim.

In the following poem, Maphalla uses images intelligently to portray the idea of freedom, and also to evoke the emotions of the reader. He says in these lines:

**(28) Ntsu nkadime mapheo ke tsebe ho rura,
Ke rurele ka hodimo ho maru, menateng.
Fatsheng lena nna ke phela ka ho hlora,
Ke bona dinaledi, ke rata ho phela teng.**

(Dikano: 41)

**(Eagle, lend me wings that I may fly about,
Fly high above the clouds, a place of enjoyment.
In this earth I live through unhappiness,
I see stars, I want to live there).**

**(29) Molodi wa pina nkuke,
O fofe ka nna hodimo sebakeng;
O nketse motswalle wa ntsu hodimo
O nthobise mekgoping ya botlaila ditabeng.**

(Fuba sa ka: 25)

**(Oh! Beauty of melody, lift me away,
Fly with me in the sky.
Make me a friend to the eagle in the sky.
Remove me from people who cannot express themselves).**

The beauty of these poems is contained in the use of the word **ntsu** which is the name of a bird. How can a person grow wings which will enable him to fly like an eagle? How can a person live together with an eagle? These are fascinating questions that the reader needs to answer in order to experience the artistic beauty that the poet portrays. The image he employs signifies his turbulent thoughts. He cannot imagine himself living further under man-made restrictions and yet all living creatures, for instance, birds like an eagle have been endowed with freedom. He desperately yearns for freedom.

**(30) Bobedi re ba Modimo moratuwa
Ramasedi o moholo, o a phela,
Le ha dikgukguni di ka kgukguna le ka kgitla,**

Dira tsa rera merero, tsa rala meralo.

O wa ka, ke wa hao.

Bobedi re ba Modimo.

(Sentetele: 42)

(The two of us, belong to God, my love,

God is great, he is alive,

Even if prowlers can prowl in the night,

The enemies plan their devices and plot their plots,

You are mine, I am yours

The two of us belong to God).

The recurrence of similar sounds draws the ear of the reader to the sweetness perceived in sounds. Maphalla expresses his concern about these midnight prowlers and employs the repetition of the rough velar sound **kg** and the trill sound **r** to obtain a particular sound effect. We find beauty in these sounds and the attention of the reader is gripped. Maphalla heightens the poetic quality of his poems by using alliteration.

Aristotle asserts that a beautiful object (poem) must be evident to the eye and please it. He writes:

A beautiful object, whether it be a living organism or any whole composed of parts, must not only have an orderly arrangement of parts, but must also be of certain magnitude, for beauty depends on magnitude and order. (In Loomis 1971: 428).

4.4.2 Longinus on the Sublime

Longinus state that wherever the sublime occurs, it consists in a certain excellence of language, and it is by this that the greatest poets and prose writers have gained eminence (in Dorsh, 1965: 101). A lofty passage does not persuade the reader but takes him out of himself. These sublime passages exert irresistible force and sway every reader.

I have no doubt that Maphalla is one of those writers. For instance, in the poem **Fuba sa ka**, Maphalla pleads with the publisher **mophatlalatsi** to publish his chest **sefuba**. In fact, Maphalla refers to his innermost thoughts and feelings that can be made public, not the actual chest. He says:

(31) Mophatlalatsi nkutwele

Phatlalatsa sefuba sa ka ke sena.

Ke tsona dikaqa, makukuno a kgale,

Ruri, makaqabetsi a lefatshe lena!

(Fuba sa ka: 3)

**(Publisher, please have mercy on me
Publish my feelings here they are.
They are lumps, rugged places of the past,
Certainly, the(se) troubles of this world).**

Moleleki points out that:

**Tse patehileng, tse tshwenyang motho, ho ye ho thwe ke
tse ka sefubeng (1993: 180).**

Maphalla's choice to use the word **sefuba** is appropriate because it represents his thoughts and feelings. The reader is persuaded to read further in order to understand what the writer refers to. The word **sefuba** is associated with a very secretive place which carries all that is good or bad. If any work is submitted to the judgement of an acute critic, fails to dispose his mind to lofty ideas and the longer he reads it, the less he thinks of it, then, there is no true sublimity. But, when the work is pregnant in suggestion, when it is hard, also impossible to distract the attention from it, and when it takes a strong and lasting hold on the memory, then we may be sure that we have lighted on the true sublime. In general we may regard such work as truly noble and sublime and always pleases the reader.

Kant in Knox (1958: 54) regards the sublime and the beautiful as two species of the aesthetic judgement. He believes that "the beautiful" is what pleases in the mere judgement, and that "the sublime" is what pleases immediately through its opposition to the interest of sense.

There are five principal sources from which almost all sublimity is derived:

- i) grandeur of thought
- ii) vigorous spirited treatment of the passion.

These two sources of sublimity depend mainly on natural endowments, whereas those which follow derive assistance from art

- iii) a certain artifice in the employment of figures.
- iv) Dignified expression, which is subdivided into:
 - a) the proper choice of words and
 - b) the use of metaphors and other ornaments of diction.
- v) this source embraces all those preceding and it is the majesty an elevation of structure.

Sesonske (1965) maintains that of all the five sources mentioned above, the most important is the first, that is, grandeur of the mind. But all these sources depend on the command of the language.

(32) Ke tla o romella dipalesa.

Tse kgabileng jwalo ka wena nnake;

O tle o tsebe hore o palesa ya ka,

Ha ke o bona ke lakatsa ho phela.

(Sentebale: 38)

(I will send you flowers

Attractive flowers like you my dear one,

So that you know that you are my flower,

When I see you I wish to live).

The beauty in this stanza comes out in the word **palesa** (flower) which the poet employs to symbolise "love". The poet associates the beauty of the flowers with the woman he loves. He employs simile in line two deliberately to depart from usual word usage to powerful effective expression. It appeals to the reader's senses in such a way that its effect strikes him (reader) and give him pleasure. Ngara (1984: 24) explains an image as an expression that is meant to convey vivid meaning. This is true for Maphalla, he also uses an image to stimulate his readers to see or hear objects that he is describing. In the last stanza of the

above-mentioned poem, he insists on the gift of flowers, and the importance of presenting them while a person lives. He says:

**(33) Ke tla o romella dipalesa nnake,
Ke tla o romella dipalesa o sa phela,
Palesa tsa lebitla ha di re letho
Di semumu jwalo ka lona lebitla.**

**(I will send you flowers my dear one,
I will send you a bouquet whilst you live;
Grave's bouquets are valueless.
They are deaf like the same grave).**

Maphalla's description of situations is very appealing. His language is full of imagery. Here, he speaks of flowers which are deaf like a grave. This interests the reader who really starts to think about the grave which is definitely quiet. Maphalla really commands his language and employs words intelligently to express his thoughts.

In this example, the poet depicts a true reflection of what lovers say to each other. The intensity of emotions expressed comes out in these expressions **phororo ya maikutlo** (waterfall of emotions) and **kgohola sa maikutlo** (flood of emotions). The poem reads:

(34) Mamela hle nnake, moratuwa,
Mamela phororo ya maikutlo ke ena;
Ntho ena ha se phororo ke sekgohola
Kgothola sa maikutlo ha se na thebe,
O wa ka, ke wahao,
Bobedi re Modimo.

(Sentelele: 41)

(Please listen, my love,
Listen to the waterfall of emotions, here it is,
This thing is not a waterfall but a flood
A flood of emotions have no shield
You are mine, I am yours,
Together we belong to God).

This poem, imitates a real situation, where two people are deeply involved. Maphalla uses beautiful words which explain the overflowing love shared by two people. The reader turns to imagine **phororo** (waterfall) and **sekgohola** (the flood) of feelings that the poet expresses. There is a flow of emotions presented by linking the last word **sekgohola** in line (3) to the first word in line (4). It is exciting to see how Maphalla uses exaggeration to present unique situations to the reader. The reader is compelled to read with interest and eagerness to hear more about this love.

Aristotle says:

**The poet should act out his play to the best of his power,
with gestures that go with it, ... who themselves feel the
emotion, are most convincing. (In Loomis, 1991: 437)**

In the following poem, Maphalla says:

**(35) Kgotso lefatsheng ke moputso,
Moputso wa kutlwano le lerato bathong;
Kgotso ha e thonakwe, e rothisa mofufutso,
Kgotso ke perela, e molemo ditjhabeng.
Kgotso ho nna ke bophelo,
Ke ona moya oo ke o phefumolohang;
Nna ka mehla ke etsa thapelo,
Ke ikele ka kgotso mohla ke orohang.**

(Fuba sa ka: 66)

**(Peace on earth is a prize,
A prize born by love and harmony amongst a community;
Peace does not come on a silver platter, rather it is striven for,
Peace is a pearl, it is useful to the nation.**

Peace to me is life

It is that spirit that I breathe,

I, everyday make a prayer,

That I leave in peace, the day I leave).

The poet speaks about **peace** and how important it is to the nation. He presents this poem in a fascinating manner and refers to **peace** as a pearl, which implies that peace is something of importance and is much valued. The way he uses words bears out a pleasant feeling. The first line ends with the word **mopotso** (prize/reward) and the very same word starts the second line. The same idea is carried to the next line for emphasis and create beauty in the eye of the reader. Maphalla associates peace with a pearl, which explains how much value is attributed to **peace and harmony**.

(36) Le ha ke le sethotho, ke le tlatsetlatse,

Ke reilwe semaumau ke bahlalefi,

Le ha ke bitswa tsheretshere le ke baena,

Nna Modimo wa ka ha se sethotho.

Le ha ke le otseotse ke robetse,

Ke phaphatha le tsona dira tsa ka;

Le ha ke sa bone le ha ke jewa direthe,

Nna Modimo wa ka ha a robale.

(Ntekeletsane: 26)

**(Though I am considered a fool, and labelled an idiot,
And called a dunce by the know-alls,
Though I am labelled an imbecile by my brothers,
My God is no fool.**

**Though I am a moron, I am sleeping,
Talking even to my enemies
Though I do not see even if they gossip about me,
My God does not sleep).**

Here the poet employs words such as **sethotho** (fool), **tlatsetlatse** (idiot), **semaumau** (dunce) and **tsheretshere** (imbecile) to bear out a tone of ridicule. The reader experiences a feeling of degradation, even if the poem is not referring to him. If such words are used to describe your ability, then you are completely relegated to nothing. It means you have no value, you are incapable of performing any sensible work. That is, you are labelled a useless person. But, the last line expresses words of comfort. That is, even though I am labelled a fool and rejected by my own brothers, God is always there for me. The poet tries to express his concern about people who ridicule and undermine others. Sesonske (1965: 167) maintains that the sublime is attained chiefly by the artist's exciting ideas, especially when lively. Maphalla, in his poem **Bopepele ntlohele** expresses those exciting and emotional ideas. He expresses himself as follows:

**(37) Bopepele ntlohele,
Ke hlatse mahiwele a nkimetse pelo,
Bopepele a ko ntlohele,
Ke nye matsete, ke etse maipolelo.**

**Bopepele ntlohele,
Dikaqa ke tsena maikutlong,
Bopepele a ko ntlohele
Ho neng ke honyetse. Dikgutlong?**

Fuba sa ka: 1)

**(Leave me alone, oh sluggishness!
Allow me to pour out the clots in my heart,
Please, leave me alone, sluggishness,
Let me set free my innermost feelings**

**Leave me alone, oh sluggishness!
Here are lumps in my feelings,
Please leave me alone sluggishness,
How long have I shrunk inside the gorges).**

Throughout this poem, Maphalla is concerned about his inability to express himself. This is contained in the repetition of the phrase **Bopepele ntlohele** in

each stanza. Maphalla personifies **Bopepele** (sluggishness) and addresses it as if it is a human being. The poet is bitter that he is restricted to voice out his feelings. He has no freedom to release the aches that feel his heart. **Bopepele** is something abstract, but the poet calls upon it as though it will respond. He refers to **Bopepele** while, actually he implies his inability to express himself freely. He employs the idiomatic expression **ke nye matsete**, to emphasise his deepest concern about his freedom of speech. He wants to explode and express all that is stored in his heart. He expresses his thoughts and emotions in an exciting manner by employing words in an unfamiliar way. The reader feels and experiences good language, and as a result, enjoys the poem.

(38) Modimo, boloka Basotho le bosotho,

A ko boloke setjhaba le botjhaba,

Sitsa Basotho ka kgotso le kgutso.

Fatsheng lena la bontatarona.

Modimo wa Basotho a ko rapelehe,

Wena lefika, qhobosheane ya rona,

O bile lehaha la baholo ba rona,

Ha o ka re furalla re tla tshabela kae?

(Sentebale: 23)

(God, protect the Basotho nation and bosotho,

Please protect the nation and nationhood

**(God, protect the Basotho nation and bosotho,
Please protect the nation and nationhood
Provide the Basotho with peace and calmness
In this land of our fathers.**

**God of the Basotho, please listen to our prayer,
You, the rock, our fortress,
You became a cave of our elders
If you abandon us, where shall we take refuge).**

The choice of words is appropriate. The beauty of the language comes out from the repetition of sounds. Maphalla interrelates words with similar roots but different prefixes to highlight the difference in meaning. The reader takes pleasure in the rhythm created and turns to enjoy reading the poem.

Some of Maphalla's poems, have a distressing expression. In such poems, the poet laments the death of his friends, beloved ones or colleagues. These poems create a gloomy atmosphere. For instance, in the poem **lphomolele mosuwe**, he moans the death of one of his colleagues, and says:

**(39) Robala o phomole, robala mosuwe,
Robala ka kgotso mora Tshepiso le Mmamodulela;
A ko bone le kajeno re sa koboteditse difahleho,
Ka pelo tse bohloko re re tsela-tshweu,
Re re tsela-tshweu, ikele, ikele professor!
(Makgaolakgang: 35)**

**(Sleep and rest, sleep mosuwe,
Rest in peace the son of Tshepiso and Mmamodulela,
Even today we are still facing down,
With painful hearts, we say, go well,
We say, go well, go well professor!).**

The poet expresses his sympathy in a simple and polite manner. This, he achieves by making use of euphemism. He employs these synonymous words **robala** (sleep) and **phomola** (rest) as though he refers to ordinary **sleep**. He refers to death in an inoffensive tone. The words have that comforting element. In the last line, the poet employs an emotional phrase **ikele, ikele, professor** to reflect that emotional, final moment of bidding farewell to someone you value, whom you shall see no more. The poet has a good choice of meaningful words that bear out that gloomy atmosphere. As readers, we find ourselves in the very same situation of the poet, that we turn to sympathise with him. We also experience that feeling of loss.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The above discussion clearly indicates that Maphalla has a brilliant command of the Sotho language, and this is illustrated from his artistic use of it in his poetry. The beauty in the poems encourages the reader to want to read the whole range of his poetry. We appreciate the art with which Maphalla handles his poems. He has the natural gift of narrating ordinary human experiences with an exquisitely beautiful poetic skill. We cannot appreciate the intricacy, and the power of this language unless we, as readers do the kind of syntactic work outlined in this discussion. Russian Formalists believe that art does not strive for generalisation, but art seeks to defamiliarise even that which appears as generalised and unified.

CHAPTER 5

IDEOLOGY IN MAPHALLA'S POETRY

5.0 INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 5

IDEOLOGY IN MAPHALLA'S POETRY

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The concept of ideology is discussed in detail in chapter two. Also, the different views and comments suggested by various scholars have been discussed. Our concern in this chapter will not be general views on ideology but on the relationship between ideology and literature, and how it manifests itself in Maphalla's poetry. Ideology signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world which is the kind of experience literature gives us. In literature, ideology serves as the medium through which human consciousness operates. Ngara (1985) points out that African artists find themselves producing their work in the context of certain ideological assumptions and they consciously or unconsciously define their own positions in relation to these assumptions. Our focus will be on three categories: the dominant ideology, the aesthetic ideology and the authorial ideology. These three concepts overlap, but we shall try to demarcate them. Maphalla's poetry makes us see the ideology from which it is born and it is a reflection of the dominant ideology. Then, what is dominant ideology? We shall examine how it manifests itself in his poetry.

5.1 DOMINANT IDEOLOGY

By dominant ideology we refer to the beliefs, assumptions and sets of values that inform the thoughts and actions of people in a particular area. It is the duty of the writer to produce works which awaken the readers. To create such works, the writer must study all the different kinds of people, all the classes, all the patterns of life and struggle. As mentioned in chapter two, ideology is projected through ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) such as (1) the educational ISA, (2) the religious ISA, (3) the political ISA and (4) the cultural ISA, which includes literature and arts. Hence, most writers are subjected to heavy influence of various ideological state apparatuses. Maphalla is no exception, we propose to use his poetry in exploring the influences that shaped his poetic vision.

5.1.1 Educational Influence

Maphalla believes that his teachers at school played a very important role in inculcating the passion for poetry. He further accredits the nurturing of his love for poetry to his teachers by the way they taught poetry. As a student, Maphalla says that he was a keen listener and a good imitator. Hence, today, he is one of the distinguished poets in contemporary Sesotho. He continues to suggest that poetry is more vivid, more descriptive and yet to the point. He also argues that poetic language is void of rigid grammatical rules. Maphalla even goes to the

extent of regarding poetry as his daily bread. This, can be demonstrated by a handful of extracts such as:

- (1) **Nna thothokiso ke a e rata;
Ke e rata le ho feta kgauta.
Ha dira di ntikile, di nnyedisa,
Thothokiso ya ka e a ntshedisa**

(Makgaolakgang: 3)

(I love poetry

I love it more than gold;

When enemies have surrounded me, and despise me,

My poetry consoles me).

- (2) **Ha ke kgenne, ke hloname,
Bothothokisi bo a nthabisa;
Kgalefo ya ka bo a e kokobetsa,
Tholwaneng tsa kgalefo bo a mphemisa.**

Bothothokisi bo a ntebisa,

Ke sesa le dikganyapa bodibeng;

Bothothokisi bo a nkgabisa,

Ke hlakisa sa ntsu sepakapakeng.

(Kgapha tsa ka: 2)

**(When I am disgusted, and angry,
Poetry makes me happy,
It diminishes my anger,
It makes me avoid anger.**

**Poetry deepens me,
I swim with serpents in a deep river,
Poetry beautifies me,
I shine like an eagle in the sky).**

In the following poem, **Thothokiso**, he further motivates to the readers why he adores poetry by saying:

**(3) Thothokiso ke masodi, menyepetsi,
Thothokiso ke setlhare sa moya le maikutlo;
Thothokiso e lebatsa mahlori makaqabetsi,
Matshediso a thothokiso ha a na kgutso.**

(Dikano: 3)

**(Poetry is tears,
Poetry is a tonic to both the spirit and feelings,
Poetry makes you forget your unhappiness and troubles
The solace of poetry has no end).**

Maphalla was highly motivated at school and as a result, he developed a keen interest in Sesotho literature. He shows his great honour for knowledge by dedicating most poems in this volume **Mahohodi** to poems on education and knowledge. Poems like **Tihapi, folofela leraha** (fish, resort to mud); **Mamela ditaelo** (heed advice); **Itjhorise ka mehla** (sharpen yourself daily) and **Bokellelsa manna** (collect manna) urge the reader to have a constructive purpose in life while there is still time. This is confirmed in one of his poems. He says:

(4) Bokeletsa manna tsatsi le sa tjhabile;

Hobane ha le diketse, e ba ho fedile;

(Mahohodi: 10)

(Gather manna whilst the sun still shines

because when it has set, it will be all over).

Christianity also played an important role in the life and the writings of Maphalla.

5.1.2 Christian influence

In Maphalla, we see a poet who is preoccupied with his own relationship to Christianity. Maphalla could not escape the influence of Christianity. Indeed, the

influence of Christianity coloured his thinking and fuelled his creativity, values, and beliefs. Hence Christianity has a dominant influence on Maphalla and shows itself in most of his writings and poems. It is no wonder that Maphalla believes that the **Lord's prayer** is the empirical poem. Some of the poems found in Maphalla's poetry have striking similarities with the material found in the terrain of Christianity. A brief discussion of some of such poems will serve to illustrate our point:

**(5) Sentebale, oho sentebale;
Nkgopole dillong le menyakeng;
Le ha fatshe lena le ka ntebala,
Wena mookamedi ya renang-
Sentebale.**

(Sentebale: 1)

**(Forget me not, please forget me not;
Remember me in tears and in joy,
Even though this world can forget me,
But you, oh Saviour, the Omnipotent,
Forget me not).**

In this poem **Sentebale**, Maphalla pleads with the Lord not to abandon him in difficult times, even in happiness. He does not forget that God is great and

merciful. The fourth line reminds the reader of this line **Mookamedi ya renang o tseba se re se hlokang** from hymn No. 17 in the hymnal book entitled **LIFELA TSA SIONE**. Maphalla employs an image that has religious connections to express his appreciation and thankfulness that God knows our needs.

Another example which reflects the amplitude of Christianity upon his mind is from the poem **Mohla Namoha**. The imagery he uses is revelation, largely unconscious of incidents he observes and remembers.

(6) **Tsietsing tsa letswalo re bitsa ho wena Ntate,
E hlanake haholo, o e lwane, Morena;
Bodibeng ba mahlomola seinodi ke wena
Ha o ka re furalla re ka ba ba mang?**

(Sentebale: 68)

(In troubled conscience, we call upon you, oh father,
Get stuck in and fight a good fight, Lord,
In the deep of sorrow you are the kingfisher,
If you abandon us, who would we be?)

The first line of this verse resembles hymn number 117 which reads; **Tsietsing tsa letswalo re bitsa ho wena**. Through this reference, the poet implies that when everything is down, we turn to call on the Father (God) for refuge. In line

three, the concept of **Father** as saviour is reflected in the words of hymn number 99 which reads: **Bodibeng ba mahlomola seinodi ke wena**. Maphalla has unflagging hope in the intervention of his Creator in all his predicaments. The hymns employed in these examples are intelligently interwoven into his compositions, that they enhance the quality of his poems. The religion that Maphalla has imbibed also finds expression in his poem **Tadima Hodimo**:

(7) **Thapelo ke setlhare, e a phekola,
Thapelo e etsa mehlolo le meeka;
Ha o le tsietsing tsa lefatshe, rapela,
O bitse bitso la Jehova, Ntata ho loka;
-Tsela e nngwe, tadima hodimo.**

(Fuba sa ka: 41)

**(Prayer is tonic, it heals,
Prayer moves mountains;
When in trouble kneel and pray
Call upon the name of the Lord,
Father of righteousness
-There is only one pathway,
focus on heaven**

Hence, the poet demonstrates his unshakeable faith in the Lord. He believes that through prayer we will triumph. Since childhood, Maphalla has been exposed to

situations which opened up his eyes and mind to the realities of this world. In the following discussion we shall notice how this contributed to his way of thinking and writing.

5.1.3 Political Influence

As far as Maphalla remembers, he could not attend with his playmates at the lower primary school because they were of different ethnic group. But when he proceeded to the higher primary school, which mixed the Sesotho and Nguni pupils, things became different. This confused Maphalla as to why he was separated from his Nguni peers in the first place in the lower classes. This remained unanswered until he got to understand much more later in his life, how the black man is governed by the white man.

Maphalla's home life was one long hardship from childhood, accentuated by the meagre earnings of hard toil by both his parents. He was forced to do piece jobs after school hours and during vacations in order to supplement the family income. It is these menial jobs that opened Maphalla's eyes to life and to the South African situation. He was schooled to regard the white man as **baas** and his wife as **missis**. On the other hand, white bosses and weak-boned madams insisted on calling him a **boy**. According to Moleleki (1988:6), it is not surprising then that Maphalla, through his poetry, seems to regard

His task as helping his society to regain its belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration. (Ngugi, 1971: 6)

Maphalla writes his work during the time of social upheaval, and period of intense political activity and also a period of lively artistic activity. Feinberg (1980: 11) articulates the relevance of poetry to the liberation struggle in the following words:

Undoubtedly poetry and song are the most popular and accessible means of creative expression and communication in South Africa. Indeed, to the vast majority of South Africans, these art forms are often the only means of expressing feelings about life under apartheid, a life where human concern and assertion have been systematically stifled and stamped upon by the most outrageously ruthless and exploitative state system. It is this brutal oppression, with its unique codification of racial discrimination, which has generated the immense engagement and passion of South African song and poetry.

Maphalla is very much concerned about depicting the struggles of black people. Moleleki says that, perhaps this might be one of the reasons why he exhorts his eyes to wake up to the realities of this world, in the poem entitled **Mahlo a ka tutuboloha** (My eyes open).

(8) Mahlo a ka tutuboloha

**O lekole tsela lefifing le letsho,
Fatshe lena ha se la difofu,
Le kgantsha sekgukgu, ho tswedipana.**

(Kgapha tsa ka: 3)

**(My eyes open up,
Survey the path in the pitch-black darkness,
This world is not meant for the blind,
It boasts of secrets and zigzags).**

Maphalla uses the symbol of **darkness** to stand for the evil and the ignorance that prevail in our lives. He believes that one should keep faith and hold one's head high in this world.

In **Ke ikopela tokoloho** one of his poems, we are presented with the basic facts of blacks' suffering, exploitation and deprivation of the basic necessities of life.

The first stanza of this poem says:

**(9) Ha ke kope lefatshe,
Ho busa le marena;
Ke ikopela tokoloho,
Le nna ke tshwane le wena.**

(Kgapha tsa ka: 50)

**(I do not ask from the world,
Nor to rule with the rulers;
All I am asking for is my liberation,
To be in charge of my destiny like you).**

Here, Maphalla employs the imagery of power and control. He suggests that he would love to be as free as his counterpart, who seems to be in control of his destiny. This line **ke ikopela tokoloho** (I am asking for my liberation) is repeated several times in the poem with some variations in the words and arrangement of the lines. It is an image that has an imaginative appeal and results in a powerful tone of the poem. In the sixth stanza, he further comments that:

**(10) Ke ikopela tokoloho,
Ho tswa mona ditlamong,
Nke ke rure sa serurubele,
Ke sese sa ditlhapi matamong.**

**(I am asking for my liberation,
To be freed from this bondage,
I yearn to float like a butterfly,
And wiggle as fish in meres).**

Maphalla compares himself with the butterfly and the fish which seems to be insignificant but have freedom.

The same idea of freedom is embodied in this poem **ke tsetselela tokoloho** (I yearn for my liberation/freedom). The poem suggests that:

**(11) Ka mehla fatsheng lena re ditlamong,
Tlamong tsa moya le nama, bophelo;
Fatsheng lena motho ka mong,
O tlamong tsa ditihoko, ditabatabela.**

(Fuba sa ka: 52)

**(Everyday in this land we are in chains,
Chains of the spirit and flesh, of life,
In this land everyone,
Is in chains of needs, desirables).**

This poem signifies the poet's perception of the nature of the human struggle for freedom, independence and social justice. We are deprived of the basic necessities of life. What the poet wants is to be delivered from spiritual bondage and from racial oppression. Furthermore, there is persistent request from the poet that:

(12) Mophatlalatsi nkutlwele'

**Phatlalatsa sefuba sa ka ke sena;
Ke tsona dikaqa, makukuno a kgale,
Ruri, makaqabetsi a lefatshe lena!**

(Fuba sa ka: 3)

**(Publisher, please have mercy on me,
Publish my feelings here they are;
These are lumps, old rugged areas,
Certainly, troubles of this earth).**

The feelings he refers to are his innermost thoughts about the situation which prevails. He cannot reach his people without the help of the publisher. He sets out to use his pen to fire against the system that brings such sufferings and humility on people. He goes on to say:

(13) Peseletsa kgutsana
Baheno ba shwele,
Le ha o setse lepalapaleng;
O tla nne o phele.

(Kgapha tsa ka: 13)

(Persevere you the orphaned,
Your family has died,
Though you are alone and homeless,
You will always survive).

Optimism is a dominant feature in this poem. He does not condone despair, but he believes that perseverance and despondency is a lifeline to eventual success. He has hope that one day people that are in despair will triumph and suggests in the last verse of the above poem that:

(14) Peseletsa kgutsana,
Di pele di morao,
Mohlomong ha le tjhaba,
Katleho e tla ba ya hao.

(Persevere you the orphaned,
They are in front, also at the back,

**Maybe, when tomorrow rises,
Success will be yours).**

Maphalla asserts that the cultural influence as a child of a Mosotho cannot be overlooked. We shall now focus on the influence he found from his cultural background.

5.1.4 Cultural Influence

Maphalla chooses to remain largely within the confines of his culture. He also writes on the basis of his African tradition. He uses Sesotho traditional thought to articulate his own philosophy of life, his own view of the world. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It involves the historical sense, which we may find to be indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet. According to Nkomo (1990: 41), the historical sense involves a perception not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence. This historical sense is what makes a writer traditional. The poet must incorporate the achievements of his predecessors in his own works but be aware of his own time, his own culture and that of his ancestors. Maphalla's poetry is full of images related to African traditional beliefs, that is, his poetry has a strong influence of his culture. Let us consider a few examples of his poems which show these images.

5.1.4.1 Images relating to mythology

We are indebted to Moleleki (1988: 85) for the use of the above heading. Maphalla has a high influence of his traditional background. It is not surprising that his choice of images relating to African mythology is significant. He employs his traditional heritage as a tool for communicating his ideas and beliefs about the early history of race. Perhaps, he also draws from his culture those aspects which might be relevant to the present situation. His poems are about African life and suggest its ways. This is evident in the following examples:

**(15) Ka lapeng ha Mmantsubise ho hlongwe lehlaka,
Re hlile ra bona ka bomme basadi ho fereselaka;
Ra bona ka banna ho bobotheha ba hetla kgafetsa.
Hore kajeno ho bitohile mohale wa marumo Kweneng.
(Sentelele: 44)**

**(In the home of Mmantsubise a reed has been planted,
We actually saw from the hustle and bustle of women.
We saw men with smiles curiously stirring about
That today a brave warrior of Kweneng has emerged).**

It is in accordance with the Basotho traditional belief that when a child is born to a family, a reed or its substitute is pitched outside a hut in which there is a

newborn baby. This belief, was highly appreciated and valued in the past. It is used to inform the neighbours about the new developments in a particular family, as a result, neighbours would show their appreciation by sending gifts for the newly born baby. Life was very interesting in the past, unlike today, where life is different especially in the urban areas.

Guma (1977: 1) maintains that a people's past is its spiritual heritage, and as such, it should not only be nursed and nurtured, but preserved and jealously guarded for all times. He believes that it provides stability and without it, a nation is like a tree without roots. Maphalla, who strongly resorts to his cultural heritage resembles a tree with firm roots. The idea here, is to enable the reader to appreciate the present by associating it with what he knows about the past. For example, his poem **Kgomo** in **DIKANO**, clearly shows that Maphalla has an insight of the culture of the Basotho nation. He knows that a cow is an important animal to a Mosotho. It is an asset of the Basotho nation. He associates his poem with the beliefs of the Basotho. He employs appropriate proverbs that depict exactly what the Basotho believe in. He says:

(16) Kgomo ho Mosotho ke modimo o nko e metsi.

(Dikano: 32)

(To a Mosotho, a cow is god with a wet nose).

(17) Mosotho o re bitla la kgomo ke molomo.

(Dikano: 33)

(A Mosotho says that a cow's grave is the mouth).

5.1.5 Other poets as source of inspiration

Influence does not imply an imitative relationship between the source and the influenced object, because the influenced will always remain himself or herself. A writer, despite being influenced, his writings will always be original. Although, Manyaka (1992: 17) believes that originality is a very delicate issue which is not there in literature, Ntuli (1984: 15) puts it clearly that:

It is a common knowledge that an artist cannot work in a vacuum. For him to produce anything, a number of influences work on him. In the first place, these influences are his experiences which he expresses in the medium of his choice. In the second place he is influenced by the models of expression found in his cultural and artistic environment.

Maphalla, like any other author, has fed on the work of other authors, especially his predecessors in the genre of poetry. This is evident in the way his poetry

imitates and echoes the poets who have become his source of inspiration. For instance in Khaketla's poetry we find this poem:

**(18) Ba ile, ba ile, re boMolahlehi,
Ba ile, ba ile, jo motso qhalane;
(Dipjhamathe: 54)**

**(They are gone, they are gone, we are the Molahlehis'
They are gone, they are gone, alas the house has fallen apart).**

Maphalla says:

**(19) Ba ile baratuwa ba ile
Ba ile ke setse lepalapaleng,
(Fuba sa ka: 17)**

**(They are gone, the dear ones, they are gone,
They are gone, I remain stranded).**

and

**(20) O ile, O ile wa hlooho ya kgomo,
O ile, O ile ke setse lepalapaleng;
(Dikano: 38)**

**(He is gone, gone, my bosom friend,
He is gone, gone, I remain stranded).**

Here, both poets use *ile* (gone) for iconic effect to create a depressed atmosphere associated with death. The pain that results from death is also felt deep inside the reader. Furthermore, there is a quiet influence from Mokhomoto creeping into Maphalla's poetry. The volume **SEBABATSO**, opens with a poem entitled **Mopherathethana** (an unappetising dish) in which she appeals to fellow authors to support her so that her work can be acceptable. While, Maphalla's poem **Bopepele ntlohele** in **FUBA SA KA**, bears the same intention as Mokhomoto's opening poem, Maphalla, says that the inherent tendency to speak badly should leave him alone.

Maphalla asserts that Ntsane played an important role in his writing of poetry. He admires Ntsane as a great writer and wrote this poem about him:

**(21) Basotho, theang tsebe ke le bolelle taba,
Taba ya kgeleke ya maikutlo, kgalala
Kgalala ya kajeno le maobane, Kemoele.**

(Mahohodi: 24)

**(The Basotho, listen, let me tell you the news,
The news about an expert of feelings, an icon,
The poetic icon of today and yesterday, Kemoele).**

He also dedicated the volume FUBA SA KA to Ntsane. He was deeply touched by Ntsane's death and laments his death in the poem **O ile, K.E. Ntsane**. He expresses his deep feelings in this way:

**(22) Letsatsi la bitoha le pepile madi,
Le kwetletse Bakwena lerumo kobong;
La phahama la hana ho bososela,
Le hlwentse seka tau ya motswetse;
Ke leo le tshekalla le koboteditse sefahleho,
Eitse ha balepi ba le lohela malepa,
La e nyanyabetsa kwena sefubeng
Jwale madi a phutsalla madibeng
Dibata tsa sitwa ho nyorolla melapong.**

(Fuba sa ka: 5)

**(The sun rose blood red,
Concealing from the Bakwena the
spear under its blanket,
It rose without its usual splendour,
Grimacing like a lioness with cubs,
It continued rising in its gloom
When the weather forecasters were about to forecast
the gloom, that was to follow**

The crocodile was struck.

And the river was stained with its blood

The wild animals could not quench their thirst).

In this poem, the pain of loss through death sticks out. The pain is captured in fascinating images he employs in the second stanza. He employs personification to intensify the cruel hand of death and the sad tiding it brings with it. **Lerumo** (spear) signifies an instrument that brings pain to the Bakwenas.

There is nothing wrong in a poet echoing other poets but it has to be done imaginatively, says Ngora (1990: 35). Maphalla proves to have done this more successfully in his poetry. In 1985, he received **LESIBA'S MOILWA** floating trophy for his volume **KGAPHA TSA KA** and in 1991 and 1992 he was presented with a **MOFOLO AWARD**. These are not the only awards he received, but many more awards came his way.

Culture has played an important role to help convey and illuminates the poet's ideas, beliefs and thoughts in such a way that these appeal to our sense of perception.

5.2 AESTHETIC IDEOLOGY

It refers to the literary conventions and stylistic stances adopted by the writer.

Thus, romanticism, modernism, realism and formalism are aesthetic ideologies. Does Maphalla the poet, use a style with features characteristic of these ideologies? This will be our concern here to look at the ideologies displayed by our poet. In chapter four, we have already discussed formalism at work in Maphalla's poetry. Formalists concerned themselves with the writer's technical ability and craft. We have showed the art with which the poet handles his poems. Hence, we shall not discuss it in this chapter.

5.2.1 The poet and realism

Realism in the arts, is the attempt to portray life as it is. To the realist, the artist's main function is to describe as accurately and honestly as possible what is observed through the senses. Classicists show life as being more rational and orderly than it really is, while, romantists' works show life as being more emotionally exciting and satisfying than it normally is. Realism rejects imaginative idealisation in favour of a close observation of outward appearances. Furst (1992: 3) asserts that **art always aims at the representation of Reality, that is Truth.**

Marx and Engels (1976: 90) maintain that literary criticism hinges on the term realism. The accurate depiction of reality is the most crucial aspect of a work of art. Marx and Engels believe that poets do not write in a vacuum, their writings derive from social and historical conditions and reflect interests and activities of

a class. According to Lukács (1978: 75) true realism enables the writer to see the connection between things and to relate his description of objects to the essence of these objects and of the reality around them. To Lukács, the task of art is the truthful and accurate representation of the totality of reality. True art aims at a profound and comprehensive depiction of reality and does not present reality abstractly (1978b: 30). He has a view that the dynamics of realism compel the writer to present a progressive depiction of the conflicts of an epoch. Realists try to be as objective as possible. They try not to distort life by forcing it to agree with their own desires. Marxists maintain that writers must recognise that people are the true source of literature. To create a genuine work of art writers must observe and study people, their life, their struggles. Looking at Maphalla, most of his work is written in a realist mode. He sets out to write about life, about society, about reality. It is this reality which he transforms into artistic forms.

In the poem **Leleme** found in the volume **FUBA SA KA**, the poet depicts the real situation of what this small organ can do in our lives. It opens with introductory lines which introduce us to this important organ of the body that we know of, but highlights his certainty about its activeness.

(23) Hara ditho tsa mmele tse bopilweng ke Mmopi,

Ruri ha ho e matjato ho feta leleme.

Leleme le aba mahlale le hara mekgopi,

(Fuba sa ka: 52)

**(Of all the body's organs that were created by the Creator,
None is as sharp as the tongue,
The tongue distributes knowledge even in a group of people).**

It continues to point to us the role that this insignificant but important organ does in our lives.

**(24) Leleme le tsanyaola difela ho roka Modimo,
Le tshedisa motswalle le kgothatsa baena,
Leleme le qapetswe ho pheta tsa lehodimo,
Le qapa diqabang, le qabanya metswalle
Jo! Leleme ha le kgopame ke sebaole,
Le ka o retla o phela, wa ba wa makala.**

**(The tongue snips hymns to praise the Lord,
It consoles friends and comforts brothers,
The tongue is made to talk about the heaven.
It starts quarrels, it causes friends to quarrel.
Alas! When the tongue is bent, it is a sulphur.
It can chop you alive and surprise you).**

Here, the poet portrays the good and the evil that the tongue is capable of producing. It can destroy or build a person, friends, brothers, sisters and a nation.

It is a harmful organ which can bring misery into the lives of people. While on the other hand, it can create peace and bring happiness among people. Hence, there is a saying that **leleme le a phedisa le a bolaya** (the tongue can heal yet it can also kill). He concludes the poem with a forceful assertion that:

(25) Ruri tjhefu ya leleme ha e na ditlakala.

(Truly, for the venom that flows from the tongue there is no remedy)

This is a real situation that exists in our lives. The poem presents the truthful description of the role the tongue plays in our lives. It is a true reflection of our experiences.

Maphalla goes on and presents a poem that depicts **life** (bophelo) and its essence in this world. He presents reality in a style characterised by a pattern of imagery revolving around words such as **mofufutso** (sweat) and **ntwa** (battle).

(26) Mamela, bophelo ke mofufutso ngwanaka,

Lefatsheng bophelo ke ntwā e kgolo;

Le hara dintwa ke bolela ya dibono,

Ntwa e mpe, ntwā ya kgumamela.

(Ntekeletsane: 11)

**(Listen my child, life is a struggle,
Life is a battle in this world,
Even among the battles, I mean a fierce one,
A fierce battle, a battle for survival).**

The philosophy that this poem articulates is not based on abstraction, but it is a depiction of real life and facts in a true way. There is a firm realisation that success in life cannot be found on a platter, it calls for hardwork, suffering, sacrifice, endurance and perseverance. Hence, Maphalla employs images of **sweat** and **battle** to signify the painstaking and toil which we must endure to succeed. In the Bible, it is eloquently stated that:

**“You will have to work hard all your life and sweat to make
the soil produce anything” (Genesis, 3:19)**

The poet, Maphalla, is a humble person, his humility is portrayed in his work. In the poem **Se mpatleng dipaleising**, he articulates his feelings and attitude towards life in suburban areas. He depicts events concretely and says:

**(27) Se mpatleng dipaleising,
Moo dikgosana di jang wa kebolelwa;
Le mpatleng hona mona mehlongwafatsheng
Moo baena ba kollang ntsi hanong.**

(Makgaolakgang: 96)

**(Do not associate me with grandeur,
Where royalties dwell,
Find me in the dwelling of ordinary people
Where the humble folk eke out their ordinary existence).**

Life in the suburbs is associated with high class people who live in remarkable houses and live extraordinary lives. But, Maphalla refuses to be associated with such luxury. He prefers to associate with people living in informal settlement areas. He believes that people living in informal areas do not have access to facilities required for a decent life. The conditions under which they live are not conducive for a healthy living. But, these people are very easy to communicate with. On the other hand, it might be that Maphalla refers to **dipaleisi** and **dihlongwafatshe** as symbols representing **whites** and **blacks** respectively. The implication is that whites live a comfortable life while blacks suffer in order to earn a living. This is a truthful account of the situation in which blacks find themselves. Maphalla looks at the plight of the black people from a historical point of view. He portrays poverty by associating it with life at the squatter areas.

In the poem **Fatshe lena**, the image of violence is evident and it is conveyed to the reader in this form.

**(28) Fatsheng lena ke "ntshupe ke o supe",
Ke "ha ke kgathale, o ka nketsang?"**

Fatshe lena le kgantsha “ntjhape ke o shapel”

(Fuba sa ka: 16)

(This is the world of finger pointing,

I do not care you won't do me a thing,

In this world if you hit me, I hit you back).

The poet conveys a vivid picture of a real life situation, where people cast threats at each other. It seems participants show an attitude and believe in reciprocating any action that occurs. The ugliness of the language is a reflection of the ugliness of the behaviour the author sets out to expose. The overall effect is to portray a world of corruption and violence. Maphalla is not only concerned with projecting a radical critique of the society but seeks to do so in a highly artistic and metaphorical form. Violence is portrayed in terms of images which denote a world of strife where people do not care about each other. These images are not only meant to elicit a certain response in the reader but they are richly symbolic. Maphalla deepens his views about **Fatshe lena** (this world) and emphasises that:

(29) Fatsheng lena ho jwang, banna?

Fatsheng lena ha ho na kgefutso,

Kgefutso e ka nqane ho lebitla.

(Sentebale: 68)

(How is this world, brothers?

In this world, there is no rest,

Respite is that side of the grave).

This is an honest and truthful depiction of the world in which we find ourselves. Life is full of action. Here, on earth, you survive through hardwork. There is a common saying, that, **phomolo e ka nqane ho lebitla**. This saying implies that you rest when you are dead.

Maphalla consequently succeeds in presenting a truthful and balanced reflection of reality and is able to capture the mood of the time. His method is that of objective realism, and his art becomes a model of the triumph of realism.

5.2.2 The poet and modernism

While realist writers are concerned with depicting social reality and factors which influence man's life, modernists' concern is exploring states of mind, man's consciousness and the sub-conscious (cf. Ngara 1985: 109).

Maphalla's aesthetic ideology is characterised by a form of modernism. He employs devices such as symbolism, which is also found in oral literature. Let us extract few examples from his poems to illustrate this.

In the poem **Kgotjheletsane tsa pelo**, Maphalla describes recesses of the heart as being shaded and invisible to the human eye. He makes use of images to concretise his description of the heart. In the fourth stanza of this poem he describes the human heart as follows:

(30) Pelo ke kweetsa, ke madibamatsho.

(Ntetekeng: 27)

(the human heart is a bottomless pit, it is a deep fountain).

He refers to **pelo** (human heart) as **kweetsa** and **madibamatsho**, and we automatically understand them as metaphorical ways of indicating his feeling. These images stimulate new ideas about this important organ of the body. They tend to influence the way we understand this organ **pelo**. These metaphors suggest the good and evil that can dwell in the human heart. Maphalla also refers to the heart as an abyss in which all human thought and actions originate. He associates **pelo** with a deep fountain where dangerous and terrible snakes like a python are found. That is, the secrets in the human heart are described as deep and only known to the beholder.

The poet also makes use of metonymy to create certain images in his poems. Metonymy works on the basis that the name of one thing is used to name something which is associated with it. For example:

(31) Pene, motswalle wa ka,

Ka wena lefatshe le tla nkgopola.

(Makgaolakgang: 91)

(Pen, my friend,

through you, the world will remember me).

This cannot literally be true; imagine a person being a friend to a pen, that is, exchanging ideas with it. But, to understand these lines we automatically have to associate **pene** (pen) with published writing. That is, this word **pene** refers to Maphalla's literary works which presuppose his ideas and thoughts. The pen serves as a means of producing these ideas and thoughts. This image might also suggest that the poet assumes a modern form of presenting his work, instead of doing it orally. The pen that he is referring to, has made it possible to disseminate his work over a large area. He is optimistic that through his writings, he will never be forgotten. In the last stanza of this poem he expresses his confidence in this small instrument, but, which takes him to far and near places. He says:

(32) Ha o le teng ke na le lefatshe.

(When you are there, I have the whole world).

Maphalla's literary creations remain his source of inspiration and happiness. He claims his greatness through this pen by saying **ke na le lefatshe** (I have the whole world). That is, this modern concept of writing, illustrates people with knowledge and new ideas about life.

Maphalla is a modernist who does not compromise, instead he expresses things as they are. He gives advice about life and says:

**(33) O tshware ka meno,
Bophelo ke lempetje,
Bo fetoha le letsatsi.**

(Sentebale: 40)

**(Persevere and clench your teeth,
Life is like a chameleon
It keeps on changing as the days wear on).**

His language is rich in imagery. In the second line he associate life with a chameleon which changes its colours according to the environment it finds itself. Maphalla implies that life is not a bed of roses, it is unpredictable as a chameleon, and one has to work hard in order to survive. He wants the reader to take heed of his advice and take a particular line of action.

Maphalla is not satisfied with mere naturalistic representation of reality, but wishes to invest in reality with an artistic form. Because he conveys his meanings through images and other forms of indirect reference, his language is more poetic and his poetry can be described as simply **modernist**.

5.3 AUTHORIAL IDEOLOGY

Whatever stance the writer takes constitutes his or her authorial ideology. Now authorial ideology is what determines the poet's perception of reality. Whether or not a poet presents an accurate analysis of social reality, whether or not a poet presents a view of society characterised by false consciousness, depends largely on authorial ideology. Now what is Maphalla's stance as far as these concepts?

Maphalla writes about life, its pains and pleasures. That is, his themes are based on death, pain, love, hope and peace. His subject matter addresses man everywhere and anywhere in the world. Chaphole (1985: 91) describes him as a universal poet and not a localist poet.

Optimism is a dominant feature of Maphalla's poetry. He comes out of the real conditions of human existence, out of conflicts and struggles that have a historical basis and out of what man and woman can actually do. He is in favour of poetry based on life. Authorial ideology in Maphalla is characterised by **true consciousness** instead of **false consciousness**. The latter distorts the truth

and Luckács (1971) regards ideology to be false when it is partial, incapable of grasping the total meaning of society and history. Maphalla is able to see clearly the antagonistic forces operating in a particular epoch and present an accurate analysis of society. Maphalla, through his poetry tries to depict situations where man exploits another man, inequality that exists amongst people and contradictions that can never be wiped out. This is reality which is truthfully depicted in his works. Let us focus our attention on the following extracts:

(34) Ebe o tla nthata le hosane,

Ha tsa hosane e se e se tsa kajeno?

Ebe o tla nthata le hosane,

Ha mathatha a hlwele manolo hodimo?

(Fuba sa ka: 45)

(Will you still love me even tomorrow,

When tomorrow's matters are no longer like today's?

Will you still love me even tomorrow,

When problems have overpowered me).

To the poet life seems to be a series of contradictions that bring about misery to humanity in general. He expresses his dissatisfaction over such painful contradictions. In this poem his experience in love affairs seems to be the source of mistrust. The repetition of the first line in the same stanza lends emphasis to

his doubts. It encapsulates his central concern. At the end of the poem he summarises his concern and says:

(35) Phelo ba kajeno ruri ke lempetje.

Menyaka le dikano ke tsa nako le motsotso.

(Certainly, life today is like a chameleon,

Happiness and vows are for a moment only).

(36) Ruri lefu le manyala baneng ba batho,

Ha le swabe ho koqola motho o mo ratile.

(Dikano: 39)

(Surely, death is like filth to innocent people

It is not ashamed to take away a person you have loved).

Here, Maphalla expresses his strong concern about death. By using an emotional word **manyala** (filth) indicates his protest against this unfair situation. **Manyala** (filth) symbolises something worthless, not to be considered at all but it takes away someone he held so dearly in his heart. The poet seems to question why this has to be this way. It is as though he finds it unacceptable that life has to be ended by death.

Maphalla's poetry also mirrors the socio-political conditions of his society. He raises concern about the position to which they are unfairly relegated. He puts it clearly in his poem that:

**(37) Ha ke kope diphetoho
Tsa madi le tsa tswalo,
Ke ikopela tokoloho
Fatsheng lena la Rabohle.
(Kgaphe tsa ka: 51)**

**(I do not ask for changes
Pertaining to my blood and birth
I am asking for my liberation
On this earth of the Almighty).**

This poem opens with a forceful assertion which foregrounds the intensely subjective experience. The poet expresses this serious but false allegation found in the words **madi** (blood) and **tswalo** (birth) which are the indication of the basis for oppression. But, the poet expresses his wish to enjoy freedom before death. The word **Rabohle** (Almighty) is employed sarcastically to imply that nobody has a moral right to ill-treat another human being. He confirms the saying that this earth belongs to us all, black or white. In other words, the poet denounces oppression.

Maphalla presents an accurate reflection of some actions of the members of the society. In the poem **Mmadiatheng wa mafifing**, the reality of the situation, as the poem goes on shows that a woman can be a wicked shrew.

**(38) Mosadi eo ka lebitso ke Mmadiatheng,
Mosotho o itse bitsolebe ke seromo,
Mmadiatheng o ne a tshajwa malapeng,
A bile a tshajwa ke monna a mo nyetse.**

(Kgapha tsa ka: 31)

**(That woman is Mmadiatheng by name,
The mosotho said a bad name is a curse,
Mmadiatheng was feared in the homesteads,
She was even feared by the man she was married to).**

In this poem Maphalla presents his perception about women. He reflects exactly what other women are capable of doing. He manages to make it new to the reader by simply telling it truly, giving it a realistic truth. A woman is considered a merciless person without respect. According to our culture as blacks, men are regarded as superior to women, as a result, women have to humble themselves before men. Hence, in the poem **Mosadi ya kgabane**, he iterates his feeling about a woman in this form:

(39) Mosadi ya kgabane ke ya hlomphang,

Ya sa mameleng keletso ya tjobolo tse hlophang.

(Mahohodi: 22)

(A distinguished woman is the one who respects

The one who does not seek advice from troublesome people).

Maphalla as a realist, gives a complete and correct account of an observed social reality. He presents in terms of his experiences, the suffering and struggles of his people. He is very much concerned about the real conditions of human existence in this world. In the poem **Kgapha tsa ka**, the poet sets out to express that concern:

(40) Jwale ke lla se pelotlhomohi,

Ke llela mathata le bothata;

Ke llela kgethoilo le leeme;

Ke llela kgotso le kgutso ditjhabeng,

Ke llela pula le nala lefatsheng

Ke llela kutlwano pakeng tsa baena.

(Kgapha tsa ka: 1)

**(Now I cry an extremely painful cry,
I complain about troubles and difficulty,
I complain about discrimination and bias,**

**I yearn for tranquillity and peace amongst the people,
I yearn for rain and abundance in this land,
I yearn for harmony amongst fellow beings).**

Here, the word *Ila* is used to denote both a complaint and a wish. The suffering he and his fellow beings are subjected to is expressed by crying. The pitiful cry also draws the reader's attention to the source of the poet's pain. He pronounces clearly the causes for his cry, that is, **troubles and difficulty; discrimination and bias**. He is not only being discriminated against but he is also forcibly silenced each time he tries to voice his complaint. He further yearns for peace amongst his fellow beings. What is remarkable about Maphalla, is his fortitude. This is evident in the last two lines of each stanza:

(41) Empa ruri kgaphe tsa ka

Di ke ke tsa wela fatshe.

(But certainly my tears

Will not flow in vain).

The poet expresses his unflinching hope for future victory, that definitely his crying will not be in vain.

5.4 CONCLUSION

From the point of view of authorial ideology, Maphalla is much more a realist than of an idealist. His style is simple and yet forceful. This forcefulness comes from the genuineness of the stand he takes and from the seemingly natural manner in which the language flows out of him. Indeed, Maphalla's poetry is a symbolic expression of his entire inner self. Moleleki quotes Moloji as saying:

**Dithothokiso tsa Mosotho di bontsha
botebo ba maikutlo a hae a moya le nama,
le kelello ya hae e kgonang ho bopa,
di sibolla, di senola makunutu le
menyenyetso ya pelo ya hae.**

(1988: 175)

**(A Mosotho's poems reveal the depth of his
spiritual and physical feeling, and his mind
that is capable of creating; they unearth
and expose the secrets and the
whisperings of his heart).**

In the next chapter, we look at the relationship between art and ideology, and look back at what we have done thus far.

CHAPTER 6

LOOKING BACK

6.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART, AND IDEOLOGY

6.2 CONTRIBUTIONS

6.3 EVALUATION

6.4 POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 6

LOOKING BACK

In this final chapter, we wish to look back on some of the findings of the previous chapters, not only with a view of bringing into focus some of the revelations of the study, but also in the hope that there may be lessons to be learned by intending researchers. The first issue we address is that of the relationship between art and ideology. Secondly, we indicate contributions that this study makes and give evaluation of Maphalla's work. The last issue is to suggest possible future research directions.

6.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND IDEOLOGY

Art is not in itself an ideology, but has a particular relationship with ideology. The relationship, as Althusser (1971) would say, is not the same as the relationship between science and ideology. While science gives us knowledge of reality, art makes us **see, perceive and feel** reality. Art makes us see the ideology from which it is born. What this means is that effective communication is not simply a question of art or craft. But, the significance and appeal of poetry is partly determined by its relevance to the poet's ideology. We cannot study the style of a writer in isolation from the circumstances in which it is produced. Maphalla through his artistic style, projects a new ideology which

questions and challenges the racist ideology on which apartheid is based. This is conveyed in an uncompromising tone exemplified by this poem **Ke ikopela tokoloho** (I am asking for liberation) in **KGAPHA TSA KA**.

It reads:

**Ha ke kope lefatshe,
Ho busa le marena,
Ke ikopela tokoloho
Le nna ke tshwane le wena**

**Ke ikopela tokoloho,
Ya mmele, pelo le moya;
Ke kopa tokoloho ya maikutlo,
Ya ho bua nnete ho sa kganya.**

**Ha ke kope tshwarelo,
Ha ke le seo ke leng sona;
Ke mpa ke ikopela tokoloho
Ke mpa ke kgaba ka yona.**

(Kgapha tsa ka : 50-51)

**(I am not asking for the world,
To rule with the kings,
All I ask for is my liberation
So that I be like you.**

**I am asking for freedom,
of my body, heart and spirit,
I ask for Freedom of expression;
To speak out the truth while there is time.**

**I am not asking for forgiveness
For what I am
I simply ask for freedom
With which to be proud of.)**

There is no simple separation of art and ideology. A perfect work of art is a synthesis of art and ideology.

Perhaps in **O ile K E Ntsane**, Maphalla succeeds in bringing out the artistic mastery which is his hallmark. Equally richly portrayed in this poem, is the predominance of his own ideology which colour the poem throughout. He transforms reality into artistic forms. In this poem, more than in several of his other masterpieces of artistic process, Maphalla touches the threshold of poetic artistry in telling the tale of K E Ntsane's demise. In the second stanza of this poem he says:

**Letsatsi la bitoha le pepile madi,
La phahama la hana ho bososela,
Le hlwentse seka tau ya motswetse,**

Ke leo le tshekalla le koboteditse sefahleho.

(Fuba Sa Ka : 5)

**(The sun rose blood red,
It rose without its usual splendour,
Grimacing like a lioness with cubs,
It continued rising in its gloom.**

These lines cited above, are rich in imagery, expressive of a very high level of ideological clarity, capable of appealing to the emotions and imagination of the reader. He employs exaggeration, personification, simile and symbolism to help him depict the accurate and typical situation which prevails whenever death has struck.

Art is style, the manner of expressing oneself in a language. Poets make use of language to express or show their ideas, feelings, thoughts and experiences. Hence, there is a strong link between art and ideology.

6.2. CONTRIBUTIONS

In this work we have shown how traditional literature has formed the building blocks of modern literature. We further identified techniques from traditional

literature that Maphalla employed in his poetry. We also discussed art and ideology relating to Maphalla's poetry.

The study has shown that Maphalla enjoys using repetition in his poetry. He employs various patterns of repetition that provide structure and coherence to the poem. Variation and development through the use of repetition is widely employed and effectively.

Maphalla has used repetition as a device which builds up successive layers of insight and meaning around the central theme and manifest a unity as well as opportunity for development in the poem.

Poets make it a point to go out of their way to break the basic rules of the language in order to produce what we call ART. Hence, our study reflects on how Maphalla achieved this. We discussed the technique of *ostranenie* which **make strange** or defamiliarizes habituated perception and ordinary language.

Defamiliarization does this by employing a range of devices at its disposal in ways that impede and disrupt our familiar responses. In the literature we have analysed, the study has shows how Maphalla defamiliarizes the familiar, reconstructed and reshaped known assumptions. In any given language, there are movement rules which transform the underlying structure of a sentence, for example topicalization. We discussed **islands**, which refer to a construction

out of which no subpart can be removed by any movement rule. Hence, the term "Island Constraints" came about in our study. Maphalla has a brilliant command of the Sotho language and this is illustrated by his artistic use of this language in his poetry. Maphalla's art makes him unique in that he is very good at playing with words.

We also looked at the concept ideology in Maphalla's poetry. We stated that his poetry makes us see the ideology from which it is born. We looked into three categories, namely: the dominant ideology, the aesthetic ideology and the authorial ideology and how these ideologies manifest themselves in his poetry.

Under dominant ideology, we looked at the various influences that shaped his poetic vision. The educational influence brought to bear on Maphalla is abundantly evident, even in his own admission. Possibly without the influence which was so abundantly exerted in his formative years, he may well have pursued a career other than writing. Maphalla could not escape the influence of Christianity. Christianity coloured his thinking and fuelled his creativity, values and beliefs. It shows itself in most of his writings and poems. Some of his poems have striking similarities with material found in the terrain of Christianity. The political set up in this country, played an influential role in opening Maphalla's eyes to the injustices prevailing in our societies. Maphalla also writes on the basis of his African tradition. He uses African traditional thought to articulate his own philosophy of life and his own world-view. Maphalla's poetry is full of images related to African traditional beliefs. These images are discussed in this study. Maphalla like any other author, has fed

on the work of other authors, especially his predecessors in the genre of poetry. This, is evident in the way his poetry imitates and echoes the poets who have become his source of inspiration. Dominant ideology has illuminated the poet's ideas, beliefs and thoughts. Aesthetic ideology discussed, looked at the stylistic stances adopted by the poet. Maphalla is a realist. He tries not to distort life by forcing it to agree with his own desires. He sets out to write about life, about society about reality. It is this reality that he transforms into artistic forms.

6.3 EVALUATION

The poet produces the utterance and the reader receives, interprets and transmutes the utterance. To do so, the reader must be able to feel the impact of a work in all its complexity and its force. The reader must have the courage to admit what he feels and the flexibility to know what he feels. He must be emotionally alive and morally very honest. He must also be free to express his genuine feelings about any work. In evaluating Maphalla's poetry, I trust that I will live up to these requirements as a critic.

We also come to two crucial principles mentioned by Ngara (1990) regarding the interpretation, appreciation and evaluation of literary texts. The first principle points out that poetry is not self-explanatory. The understanding of

poetry requires an understanding and appreciation of historical and social conditions, ideological factors, literary forms and devices and, of course, a sufficient mastery of the language in which the poetry is written. The second principle is that the meaning of a poem does not necessarily correspond exactly to what the poet intended to say. The poet intends to say something but on the other hand he is concerned with sound, imaginative, emotional or intellectual appeal and its forcefulness. As a result, the poet will find it necessary to modify the poem, and a word here, a structure there, or the order of lines. In the process, the meaning of the poem is altered to a greater or lesser extent. We can, therefore see that, in the creative process there is a tension between content and form, between the what and the how. It is maintained that the success of a poem partly depends on the resolution of that tension. However, the point being made is that because of this process, the poet cannot claim that the finished work means exactly what he originally intended to say. That is, the poet cannot claim to have the final interpretation of the poem. The reader may have a different and equally valid interpretation. The poem enjoys relative independence from its creator.

Maphalla writes about things he has experienced, seen, observed and also about places he has lived in. As a poet who has lived in a traditional or cultural environment, some of his poems reflect the cultural influence and, hence, in some poems he refers to the ancestors (*badimo*). For example, in this poem where he moans the death of K.E. Ntsane, he says:

**Ntsane, moholo o rongwa a eme,
E tle e re ha a fihla hae hodimo,
O ba bolelle tlasa letsatsi re a sotleha.**

(Fuba sa ka: 14)

**(Ntsane, an elder is sent whilst
he is on his feet,
So that, when he reaches home
Explain to them that here on earth
we are suffering).**

The poet addresses the deceased Ntsane, as though he is still within reach. According to the poet's culture, Ntsane is not dead but has joined the world of the ancestors. As a result, the message is intended for the ancestors from whom help and blessings are expected.

Maphalla, has a good religious background, as a result we find a lot of religious influence ingested in his poems. His readers turn to be emotionally absorbed by such poems. For instance, he says:

**Kajeno pelo ya ka e bina sefela,
Pelo ya ka e bina sefela sa teboho,
Ke leboha Ramahodimo ha a mphile bophelo
A mphile le lona lefatshe ho phela ho lona.**

(Ntetekeng: 70)

**(Today, my heart sings a hymn
My heart sings a songs of thanksgiving,
I thank God the Almighty for the life he
has given me.
He has given me even the land to live on).**

Through his poems, Maphalla voices his dissatisfaction about various situations and occurrences. Maphalla's poetry raises the reader's consciousness and contribute towards a fuller understanding and appreciation of the work. His poetry help us to understand the world we live in, its beauty and its ugliness, its predicament and its potential. Maphalla is extremely concerned about our situation as black people. In his two poems from the volumes FUBA SA KA and KGAPHA TSA KA, he articulates his feelings in this form:

**Ka mehla fatsheng lena re ditlamong,
Tlamong tsa moya le nama bophelo;
Fatsheng lena motho ka mong,
O tlamong tsa ditlhoko, ditabatabelo.**

(Fuba sa ka: 52)

**(Everyday in this world we are in chains,
Chains of the spirit and the flesh, of life;
In this world everyone
Is in chains of needs, desirables.)**

**Ke ikopela tokoloho,
Ho tswa mona ditlamong,
Nke ke rure sa serurubele,
Ke sese sa ditlhapi matamong.**

**Ha ke kope tshwarelo,
Ha ke le seo ke leng sona,
Ke mpa ke ikopela tokoloho,
Ke mpe ke kgabe ka yona.**

(Kgapha tsa ka: 50)

**(I am yearning for freedom
Freed from this bondage/chains,
I yearn to float like a butterfly,
And wiggle as fish in dams.**

**I am not apologetic
Being what I am,
But I am yearning for freedom,
With which to walk tall).**

According to Chaphole (1985: 91), Maphalla is a universal poet and not a localist poet. His subject matter addresses man everywhere and anywhere in

the world. He writes about death, pain, love, hope and peace. He has the natural gift of narrating ordinary human experiences with an exquisitely beautiful poetic skill.

Maphalla's poems are at times unnecessarily long, because he repeats himself excessively. He also uses rhyme very frequently. He uses too many different patterns of rhyme scheme in his sonnets. Maphalla loves to rhyme his lines. In some poems he changes his rhyme scheme around from stanza to stanza. When rhyme is used excessively, it usually has a detrimental effect on the poems.

He has an excellent command of his language. He has a magnificent creative mind, which determines the artistic expression of his thoughts. He takes words and work them over in such a way as to lift them above ordinary speech. Maphalla confirms our judgement and says:

**Ha le mpona ke le ditshika ke le tjee,
Ke otlilwe ke bothothokisi tlhare sa mehopolo,
Ke phekotswe ke siba la bongodi, mosesetso.**

(Mahohodi: 32)

**(When you see me as staunch as I look,
I have been reared and motivated by poetry, a medicine
for the mind.**

**I have been healed by a writer's feather,
A healing plant mosesetso).**

6.4 POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The understanding of a poem does not only consist in an interpretation of its meaning or its theme. A poem contains both a semantic and an aesthetic meaning, and to understand it, it is to appreciate both (Ngara, 1990:5). It is quite clear that as students of literature, we need to look at a dialectical approach to the criticism of poetry. An exploration of authorial ideology leads us to a deeper understanding of the content of the poet's work. An examination of aesthetic ideology enables us to appreciate the dialectical relationship between content and form. By focussing on the aspect of poetic communication, we are able to judge to what extent a poem has succeeded as a work of art. In this way, we hope to enable the reader or student of poetry to regard a poem as a complex whole. As a result, the student of poetry will realize that the effectiveness of a poem does not depend on the mastery of only one feature.

It is our concern that more research should be undertaken to explore the relation between form and ideology on the one hand, and form and aesthetic effect on the other. It is important that more research be conducted on the works by other indigenous languages writers.

Reading through dissertations and theses in the nine indigenous languages, we have not come across any full scale discussion of art, and ideology. It will be exciting, we believe, to see this theme taken up in Zulu, in Tswana, in Venda, in

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