

MATLHOKO, MATLHOKO

A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

By

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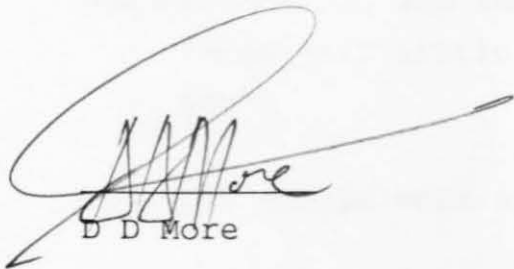
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DECLARATION

I declare that

MATLHOKO, MATLHOKO; A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

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



D D More

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to make a critical evaluation of R.M Malope's celebrated *Matlhoko*, *Matlhoko*, a setswana novel, by applying some aspects of Emmanuel Ngara's three dimensional Theory of Stylistic Criticism. The views of different critics, scholars and authorities will as well be entertained.

Ngara's theory is applied here in keeping with his credo that criticism based on sound aesthetic purpose will forever be useful and his humble acknowledgement that his theory may well be overtaken in future by satisfactory well-brewed ones, but it will, so he asserts, undoubtedly remain the basis for further developments.

Chapter one features the introduction, i.e. aim, scope, definition of concepts and a review on style.

Chapter two revolves around Ngara's Theory of Stylistic Criticism, a tool by means of which Malope's work will be analysed. Amongst others, focus of attention will fall on the following:

- Introduction to the theory
- The theory itself; its three-dimensional nature as found in:
 - * The constituents of a work of art.
 - * Evaluation Criteria and
 - * Critical Terminology.

Chapter three deals with the application of the first dimension of the stylistic criticism theory namely, the constituents of a work of art with particular reference to:

- Characterisation
- The Linguistic format which encompasses:

- * Application of Linguistic and paralinguistic stylistic devices and
- * Determinants of a Linguistic format.

Chapter four boasts the Evaluation Criteria, the second dimension thereof whereupon

- the readability of the text,
- the appropriateness and effectiveness of the writer's linguistic choices and
- content value and aesthetic quality will receive top priority attention.

Chapter five cascades to the summary of the observations made in this study and the concluding remarks which wrap it off.

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CHAPTER ONE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIM

This study has as its aim, the encouragement of competence and the broadening of the reader's experience in order to enable him to respond more adequately to a work of art.

Furthermore, to make it possible for the reader to attain full utilisation of the tools of analysis at his disposal in his assessment of a work of art. It is our intention to foreground the image of sorrow as reflected in Matlhoko, Matlhoko by Malope R.M. as an emotive and affective piece of art and not as a purely cognitive material in need of rational analysis.

1.2 SCOPE

This study comprises of five chapters. The first chapter covers the aim, scope, definitions of concepts and a review of relevant literature on style.

Chapter two opens-up Ngara's theory of Stylistic Criticism, which is in fact a tool that will be used to analyse Malope's novel. Our spotlight will beam amongst others on the following aspects of Ngara's theory:

- The introduction to the theory: The source of its origin and the response to the question why was it necessary for Ngara to embark upon such a project.
- The theory itself: Its three-dimensional nature as revealed in;
 - * the four constituents of a work of art.
 - * the evaluation criteria thereof and
 - * Critical terminology used in the analysis of a work of art.

All the four categories thereof are treated, superficially though, since the study does not cater for the analysis of Malope's novel in terms of the third dimension of Ngara's theory.

Chapter three concerns itself with the application of the first dimension of the Stylistic Criticism theory namely, the constituents of a work of art with particular reference to:

- Characterisation: The lexical items the writer uses to create the characters in Matlhoko, Matlhoko are highlighted. Malope's ingenuous use of the direct method of character delineation, his ecstatic revelation of characters through the indirect method and his enhancement of suspense through the naming method, which accounts for the characters of Mpotseng and Keneeletswe's calibre, is dealt with at length in this chapter.

- The linguistic format encompasses the application of linguistic and para-linguistic stylistic devices. Malope's use of biblical references, his poetic qualities, his tenor of discourse and ultimately, his use of affective and evocative language, are aspects this chapter could not do without. The application of the combination of stylistic devices mentioned above is indeed a rare find in a single work of art.

Chapter four answers the question as to whether Matlhoko, Matlhoko is readable, in other words, whether information is deliberately withheld by the writer, whether Malope's novel's density of texture is low or high and whether his work boasts aesthetic qualities.

Chapter five grounds the study to a halt with its summary of observations and the concluding remarks which seal it off.

1.3 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.3.1 STYLE: a general perspective

Nothing has more resemblance to a real problematic situation than the task of defining style. In fact defining style is as difficult as defining a construct. Turner (1973:13) a celebrated Stylistician posits that its true nature is so elusive that it requires subtle nets to catch it.

Opinions differ as to what actually constitute style. The following are some of the views of noted critics:

Gray (1969:11) observes that style comes from the Latin word "Stilus" and it is only by metaphor that it comes to be applied to other activities.

In Classical Latin it was further taken to mean primarily, a man's quality or a way of writing, then more generally, his way of expressing himself in speech and in writing.

Msimang in Mngadi (1993:5) remarks that:

To some critics, style means a totality of technics employed by an author in manipulating the language to express his thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Ohman (1964:259) simply but emphatically defines style as:

..... a way of writing - that is what the word means.

But in accordance with his credo on transformational generative model, Ohman (1964:259) further postulates that:

Style is a characteristic way of deploying the transformational apparatus of a language, and to expect that transformational analysis will be a

valuable aid to the description of actual styles.

Spencer in Makhubela (1993:11) postulates that:

A writer's style may be regarded as an individual and creative utilization of the resources of language which his period, his chosen dialects, his genre and his purpose within it offer him.

Proust in Ullman (1964:133) impressionistically remarks that:

Style is to the writer what colour is to the painter; it is a matter not of technique, but of a highly personal mode of vision.

Ullman himself, acknowledging these differences of opinion observes that others would regard style as the product of conscious or unconscious choices, on the lines of a formula found in a well known text book. In taking this further, and in so doing, justifying Ullman's claims, Hockett in Ullman (1964:133) enlightens that:

.... two utterances in the same language which convey approximately the same information, but which are different in their linguistic structure, can be said to differ in style.

However, he has noted an opinion from other circles which regard deviation from a "contextually related norm" as fundamental to the concept of style, even though he acknowledges with a cloud of uncertainty that perhaps the neutral of all definitions is the one which equates style with expressiveness as distinct from cognitive meaning.

Turner (1973:29) writes that Ullman includes within the province of expressiveness:

..... everything that transcends the referential.

He goes on to particularise them as among others encapsulating; emotive overtones, emphasis, rhythm, symmetry, euphony and the so-called "evocative" elements which place our style in a particular register (literacy, colloquial, slangy etc) or associate it with a particular milieu (historical, foreign, provincial, professional etc).

A general observation that can be drawn from Ullman's collection of these various approaches is that some are complimentary rather than mutually exclusive, i.e. they all assume the existence of some features which are peculiar to style and distinguish it from language.

Ullman's equation of style with the expressive use of language experiences opposition from other critics, but the argument that style contains features peculiar to itself and distinct from those of language is approved, though with little reservations, as a reaction against the propensity to think of style as a mere aggregate of language features.

Other critics define style as the study of the expressive and the suggestive devices which have been invented to enhance the power and penetration of speech, an idea that could have, in my opinion, been well marketed among Ullman and the like-minded.

In his essay on the style of Autobiography, Starobinski (1980:) refers to style as:

... currently associated with the act of writing. It is seen as resulting from the margin of liberty offered to the author after he has satisfied the requirements of language and literacy convention and of the use he has put them to.

1.3.2 Style: Towards comprehensive definitions

In talking about style, we could refer to a particular period of literature:

For instance, we could refer to a heroic poetic period with particular compositional stylistic features. Common among these features are; repetition, linking, parallelism, absence of stanzas and rhythm. A collection by Schapera of Praise poems of Tswana Chiefs could be relied upon for exemplifications.

We could also mention the style of the so-called transitional period. Here the conspicuous feature is the blend of the indigenous, traditional forms such as linking and the western stylistic features such as equal-lined stanzas and rhyme.

Modern literature reveals a lot of stylistic compositional features imported from the west. Among others feature rhyme, assonance, consonance, metre, sonnets, lyrics and others.

We can also talk of the style of a particular genre or artform. There is a condensed style of a short story for instance or a referential style of the autobiography.

The salient features of the work of a particular writer cannot be left out as having reference to style. We can refer to the descriptive nature of Monyaise or the rustic style of Hardy.

When we speak of Malope's style for an example, we do not imply his command of the relative pronoun, we mean the sound his words make on paper. Every writer, by the way uses the language, reveals something of his spirit, his habits, his capacities and his bias.

Strunk and White (1979:68) notice the following about style with particular reference to the writers:

With some writers, style not only reveals the sprit of the man but reveals his identity, as would his fingerprints.

One celebrated definition of style is revealed by Buffon in Turner (1973:23) when he refers to style as:

.... the man himself.

It is also imperative to adopt a view of style as language or what other scholars call Linguistic Stylistics. Here we consider all sorts of linguistic methods and modes in the study of the language of literacy texts.

One has to make it clear from the start that there is no single theory, (linguistic or literary) that is well equipped to elucidate all the factors which contribute to the impression of style. An eclectic approach to the problem of style is therefore recommended.

Freeman (1970:5-16) adopts a three dimensional approach towards what one may refer to as a comprehensive definition of style. His perception is that recent work in linguistic stylistics may be divided into three types:

- Style as deviation from the norm
- Style as recurrence or convergence of textual patterns and
- Style as a particular exploitation of a grammar of possibilities.

In foregrounding the style-as-deviation view, Bloch in Freeman (1970:5) defines style as:

The message carried by the frequency distribu-

tions and transitional probabilities of linguistic features, especially as they differ from those of the same features in the language as a whole,

There is undoubtedly relative difficulty in defining what is actually meant by a norm, but Fowley (1971:39) rescues us from this plight when he convincingly denotes that:

a norm is actually by reference to the language as a whole or that of some other text or author.

Deviation from the norm simply means moving away from everyday speech or language not necessarily to move away from language itself as some may be tempted to perceive it that way.

Enkvist (1964:24) another scholar of renown convictions views style in almost exactly the same way as Freeman. On his deviation from the norm viewpoint, which he also advocates, he gives assurance that as long as we define the norm so that it yields a meaningful background for the text and feature under analysis, and as long as we limit it with operationally unambiguous procedures, definitions of style as deviation from a norm give us a good first basis for stylistic comparison.

Enkvist (1964:24) further postulates that in taking the direction we have adopted, that of increased precision of definitions of style as deviation from a norm, we have rightly begun to make explicit the role of frequencies and statistical analysis. Ngara also reckons that the quantification of stylistic features to determine frequencies of occurrence is an important aspect of the stylistician's method. In so doing, we are enabled to formalise the difference between the usual and the unusual, the text and the norm.

Freeman's second notion of style as recurrence or convergence of textual patterns emanates from Jakobson's famous pronouncement

that the poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into axis of combination. This is regarded by some critics like Enkvist and Jakobson as set and collocation, or selection and combination respectively.

Enkvist has also evolved a parallel to Freeman's recurrence or convergence concept when he refers to style as an addition to a neutral, prestylistic core of expression. In supporting his view, Enkvist(1964:12) goes on to quote Stendhal from Shipley's Dictionary of World Literary Terms when he states:

Style consists of circumstances calculated to produce the whole effect that the thought ought to produce.

Here, the function of style is being defined not in terms of beauty but more inclusively in terms of expediency and effect.

Leech in Freeman (1970:120) speaks of cohesion which he regards as a grouping of descriptive categories organised around the lexical and grammatical means of unifying a literary text. This cohesion is a kind of a chain relationship. It can be grammatical or lexical as Leech suggests.

Freeman's third view of Style as a particular exploitation of a grammar of possibilities is based on the writer's typical exploitation of particular transformations, thus constituting his syntactic style.

The freedom of choice available to the writer is best explained by Freeman (1970:16) when he encapsulates Ohman's generative grammatical theory by stating that:

With a number of transformational patterns available to him (the writer) to express a given deep structure, he prefers certain patterns over others.

Enkvist's definition to style as a relation between linguistic units bears the same connotation as Freeman's exploitation of a grammar of possibilities' definition.

The above stated views render the most convincing definition hitherto mentioned as deserving an eclectic approach.

1.3.3 Stylistics

This is a catch-all term used in connection with the study of texts.

Stylistics is multifariously defined by different critics, but it certainly evades precise definition.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines stylistics simply as the study of literary style.

Fish (1973:53) on the other hand traces its origin to a reaction to subjectively and imprecision of literary studies and subsequently defines stylistics as implying:

... an attempt to put criticism on a scientific basis.

Ullman (1964:133) resurfaces here to enlighten that:

Stylistics is not a mere branch of linguistics, but a parallel discipline which investigates the same phenomenon from its own point of view.

Guerin et al (1979:286) had this to say about the concept:

Stylistics, defined in a most rudimentary way, is not the study of the words and grammar an author uses, but the study of the way the author uses his words and grammar-as well as other elements -

both within the sentence (where some would see it) and within the text as a whole.

Turner's (1973:7) viewpoint does not differ much from those of the critics above. His view is that:

Stylistics is that part of linguistics which concentrates on variation in the use of language, often, but not exclusively, with special attention to the most conscious and complex uses of language in literature.

The above mentioned are courageous attempts at defining the concept which need to be appreciated when one considers the magnitude of the problems associated with its definition.

1.3.4 A distinction between a Conventional Critic and a Stylistic Critic.

In his attempt to define stylistic criticism, Abrams (1981:192) has this to say:

Stylistic criticism is a method of analysing works of literature which proposes to replace the subjectivity and impressionism of conventional or standard criticism with an objective or scientific analysis of the style of the literary texts.

Before a distinction can be depicted, one deems it wise here to foreground initially the goals of stylistic criticism in order to demystify what may hinder the flow of ideas ahead.

1.3.4.1 The goals of stylistic criticism

Noteworthy here, are the contributions that linguistics can make to literary criticism.

The goals of stylistic criticism come easily to the fore when differentiated from related disciplines. In his justification of the necessity for this distinction, Fowler in Guerin (1979:287) posits that:

We need to make a fundamental division between the linguistic materials available (grammatical facts) and the use made of them (stylistic facts).

Subsequently when one differentiates stylistic criticism from Linguistics, one notices that:

The student of general linguistics is concerned with linguistic description, with the analysis of the various levels of language, the phonetic level, the grammatical, the lexical and the semantic level. The domain of the stylistician is narrower. He makes use of the principles of general linguistics to single out the distinctive features of a variety of the mode of expressions of an author or his idiosyncrasies.

He further uses the principles of general linguistics to:

- (i) identify the features of language which are restricted to particular social context,
- (ii) account for the reasons why such features are used and
- (iii) to say when and where the features are used.

Differentiating a stylistic critic from a sociolinguist on the other hand would bring among others, the following ideas to the fore, that:

The Sociolinguist's domain is that of the relationship between language and society - the question of national languages, dialects, orthographics, language contact, bilingualism, language and social class and registers, to mention but a few.

But here one has to tread with utmost care, for the distinction between the stylistician and the sociolinguist is not that clear-cut as the sociolinguist is very frequently called upon to make use of the techniques and principles of general linguistics.

However, a stylistic critic in his capacity as a stylistic critic cannot claim to take within his scope questions of national languages, languages of education and so on, but what is required of him is to be conscious of them in so far as they are reflected in the work of art he is destined to analyse.

The stylistic critic therefore must concern himself with minute details of grammar, lexis, phonology, prosody, meaning as well as with wider issues of deviation from the norm, the relationship between language and character and the relationship between the author and his audience.

1.3.4.2 The ultimate distinction

Lodge in Ngara perceives the distinction between a stylistic critic and the literary critic as portrayed hereunder:

According to him, the stylistician seems obliged to depend upon an implied or accepted scale of values, or to put aside questions of value altogether, whereas the literary critic undertakes to combine analysis with evaluation. He is as much interested in the questions of value as the conventional critic, while simultaneously seeking to assimilate as much of the insight of stylistics as possible. Both critics are interested in the theme, plot and character except that the stylistician's interest is always related to the role that language plays in the delineation of these features of the novel.

This brings us to an impression that the difference between a stylistic critic and the conventional critic is one of emphasis and method.

Ngara himself briefly presents the summation of this distinction as follows:

Stylistic criticism, so he asserts, seeks to bring the methods and insights of linguistics into literary criticism. It aims at being more systematic and more precise than conventional criticism. It places much greater emphasis on the language component of literature than conventional criticism.

Unlike stylistic analysis proper and unlike "literary stylistics", it endeavours to avoid a purely technical approach to the study of literature and is as much concerned about matters of aesthetic value and content as conventional criticism. This is in line with Ngara's (1982:11) remarks when he declares:

The meaning of a work of art is (therefore) not purely cognitive, but it is emotive, it is affective, it is not subject to a purely rational analysis. A purely rational analysis cannot do justice to literature, for literature is not scientific, and so, a purely scientific approach to a study of literature can only kill the writer's creative effort.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW ON STYLISTICS

Discussions around stylistics since its inception as an analytical device have helped to shape and weed out the unwanted. Earlier scholars in this field have entered into bitter conflicts with modern scholars over some aspects of analysis in respect of style. The former advocate for the maintenance of the status quo with regard to earlier analytical tools whilst the latter continue to phase-in new dimensions.

Included in our findings are articles and dissertations on this topic, some of which will highlight old views as opposed to modernists' views. The latter will be treated at a later stage.

1.4.1 Style in fiction

This is an article by means of which Zoltan Szabo attempts to discourage the writer's unwanted tendencies. In this article, he focusses mainly on the work, A Linguistic Introduction To English Fictional Prose, co-authored by Leech and Short.

Szabo (1985:143) sees his article's purpose as enquiry into the language of a literary text which is indeed necessary since no adequate theory of prose style has so far emerged.

His reservations against the work by Leech and Short is the tendency of the authors to isolate stylistic devices in their analysis of a work of art. He subsequently advocates for analysis which should proceed from consideration and anticipation of the whole to details. In his remarks about the necessity of this approach, Szabo (1985:143) points out that:

It is only in this way that we can avoid isolation and atomism which are in my opinion, possibly the greatest mistakes in stylistic analysis.

It suffices to state that it is thus, only by analysing a text as a unified whole that we can claim to follow the principle of text linguistics. This has earlier been alluded to as an eclectic approach (refer; 1.3.2).

It is also imperative to highlight here that what has been referred to as atomism can also diminish the importance of text cohesion - regarded here by Leech as a dimension of linguistic description which is particularly important in the study of literary text.

1.4.2 THE "New Stylistics": A success story or the story of successful self-deception

In this article Christian Mair's intention is to review the present state of the art in the "New Stylistic" analysis of prose fiction. Mair has made an observation that longer works of prose fiction are usually stripped of their textual unity and their socio-historical significance. In order to assist in the recuperation from this Malady, Mair (1985:117) prescribes the remedy as:

....consciously conducting the stylistic analysis of prose fiction in a framework that is "text linguistic" and sociolinguistic in orientation.

The "text linguistic" part of the framework relates to Szabo's impressions which have been stated in the above article.

It might therefore be sensible if we could treat only the sociolinguistic part thereof.

Mair (1985:120) states that in the linguistic interpretation of literary works, scant attention is paid to the socio-historical background of the text which he states as , its author and its audiences.

He has also observed that there is a decided bias towards short, tightly structured forms, preferably lyric poetry, whose language obviously deviates from the norms of everyday usage. If prose narrative is dealt with at all, it is usually very short extracts from modernist novels whose language is close to that of poetry in many respects.

Realistic novels, whose language is so close to the common usage of the day and should therefore be the easiest to analyse linguistically, are hardly treated at all.

Mair also points out that new stylistics seem to have quietly relinquished the quest for objectivity in linguistic stylistics. Their strives for seeking more vigorously scientific procedures seem, according to Mair, premature. Their claims are that they are aiming at making literary studies more objective and precise but Mair keensightedly responds by stating that, it is not the goal, making literary studies more objective and precise, which was mistaken, but the means employed to achieve it namely, mathematical statistics or a context-free model of transformational sentence grammar advocated by among others, Ohman.

He further argues that there are literary phenomena on the textual level such as narrative point of view or the sociolinguistic varieties employed in a work, which decisively influence style and which can certainly be elucidated in the light of recent work in sociolinguistics, textlinguistics and pragmatics.

1.4.3 The language of humour: Style and Technique in Comic Discourse

This article by Walter Nash concentrates on verbal humour which includes discrete joke or witticism in extended comic discourse.

One must hasten to state that, whilst it might seem irrelevant to our ultimate analysis, which focuses attention on fiction, its relevance cannot be exaggerated since it suffices to remark that jokes and the accompanying laughter (reader-response) are part and parcel of contemporary fictional works.

Nash reveals that research in humour consists in fairly obvious observation that jokes (like all text apparently) depend on knowledge possessed by potentially appreciative hearers. This background knowledge extends past awareness of facts and beliefs in a given culture to recognising its special jokes genres, themes, characters, verse forms and so on. Beyond this background knowledge, Nash enlightens that a joke requires a buildup and a punch or locus which respectively provide a context with some

latent ambiguity and a reversal to bring the joke to the fore.

Although Nash does not focus attention on the relation of characters in a text, he is emphatic that stylistic analysis clearly must determine which if any characters are in on the joke or serves as its unwitting butt. Certain syntactic frames help to create a mood for comedy and set up potentially funny situations. Authorial comment in asides, ironic distance in word choice and so on, create a skewed view of character and plot conducive to comic effects.

A stylistic analysis of a work of art of any genre can be studied against the background of the above stated views.

1.4.4 Stylistic Analysis

An unpublished MA dissertation by Sekeleko titled "Naming Practices in J.M.Ntsime's Drama: *Pelo e ja serati*", gives some hints and warnings on the stylistic analysis of a work of art.

He among others warns that it is not enough in literary or practical criticism to just analyse sentences and show the relation between language and artistic function. He further suggests that stylistics should not just be a middle ground between linguistics and literary criticism. This he acknowledges as original Birch's warning.

Sekeleko recommends that meaning and or interpretation should be the ultimate goal of stylistics. Linguistic stylistic analysis should not lead us away from literary analysis, so he warns.

CHAPTER TWO

2. EMMANUEL NGARA'S THEORY OF STYLISTIC CRITICISM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Ngara's theory is nothing more than an approach to African Literature. It emanated out of his concern with two problems regarding African Literature, one Universal and the other, purely African.

The first and universal problem is that of trying to bring together two closely related disciplines, linguistic and literary criticism. This, Ngara regards as worthwhile and beneficial to both, in particular, literary criticism.

His second problem is the need to find an adequate method of studying the communicative languages of African writers.

Subsequently, an approach evolved by Ngara operates on two basic principles, viz. universality and particularity. In moving away from a point of departure that regards literature as universal, Ngara had to rely on the strength of an advice from Achebe, quoted by Ngara (1982:viii) himself:

.... the African writer should aim at fashioning out an English (the language) which is at once universal and able to carry his particular experience.

Ngara regards this as a good advice for any critic of African literature. It implies that such a writer should employ canons of criticism which are at once universal and capable of doing justice to the literature of his own particular nation.

Clarifying the above issue, Ngara (1982:viii) has this to say:

It is legitimate for the critic of African literature to focus on matters relevant to the African experience and African art, to focus on issues that confront African writers.

2.2 THE THEORY ITSELF

The theory of stylistic criticism proposed by Ngara is intended to encapsulate all artforms like poems, prose and plays.

We start of our analysis by an acceptance that, a work of art, like other language acts, is a communicative utterance produced by the author and received by the reader. The link between the author and the reader is an artform itself.

The reader's response depends on three variables: the nature of the utterance, that is, what the author says and how he says it, the reader's own competence and experience in responding to literary works of art, and the usefulness of the method and approach adopted by the reader.

An adequate critical literary theory should provide the student of literature with a framework of analysis and a method of evaluation. The framework must provide us with a set of critical/analytical language with its particular schemes of concepts.

The theory of Stylistic Criticism proposed here is three-dimensional:

- It gives an account of the constituents of work of art and an account of the dimensions of the language of fiction,
- It lays down a set of criteria for evaluating fiction from the point of view of stylistic criticism and
- It boasts a basic critical terminology.

Ngara's focus of attention was restricted to one genre, as will

our ultimate analysis, and that is fiction.

Hereunder, follows an attempt to elucidate the three-dimensional nature of Ngara's theory:

2.2.1 The constituents of a work of art/fiction and Determinants of Linguistic format.

(i) The constituents of a work of art.

In Ngara's view, fiction can be categorised into four main constituents: content, narrative structure, character and linguistic format.

2.2.1.1 Content

This is the author's subject matter or his theme. He may talk about love, liberation, culture, religion or even an imaginative idea. In so doing, he may choose to tell us something about the subject matter. By so doing, he will be expressing his views about the society and life in general. The subject matter, the theme, the views and attitude expressed by the writer, as well as the meaning of the artefact or its message - all these constitute the content.

Setswana novels contain wideranging topics as well, which include love, culture, religion and imaginative creations hitherto mentioned. Topics on oppressions and restrictions of the minority white government's apartheid system on the Blacks never received attention due to strict censorship laws. However, the period of the serious awakening of nationalistic aspirations, that is the eighties of the twentieth century saw an emergence of few brave authors whose writings started to indirectly address such topics. Matlhoko, Matlhoko by Malope R.M is one of them.

2.2.1.2 Narrative structure

The backbone of a work of art (fiction) is the plot. The plot holds various elements of the novel together and gives it a structure. It is a sequence of events arranged in a time-chain from the beginning to the end. The events have a casual relationship with one another, in other words, one event leads to and determines another, with no necessity for chronology. There is what is referred to as the author's point of view, which is also imperative when analysing the style of a work of art. The writer may stand outside the story or he can choose to describe the events himself.

2.2.1.3 Characters

These are the participants who populate the world of the work of art. They are imaginative creations of the author who interact with one another. They are used by the writer as agents of his communicative utterance. Serudu (1993:203) has this to say about the characters of the novel:

The selection and delineation of characters, their grouping, possible separation and regrouping, are all part and parcel of the comprehensive code of the novel.

2.2.1.4 Linguistic Format

Here we mean the sum total of minute linguistic choices used by the novelist. The linguistic format is the realisation of content, character, and narrative structure into a verbal object.

These form two sets:

- (a) Linguistic features proper and
- (b) Para-Linguistic effective devices.

Linguistic features proper include among others the following levels:

- The grammatical level, where we consider questions of syntax and the relationship between meaning and form. Aspects like the writer's use of compositional principles which include the use of a succession of loose sentences or his obsession with long sentences and how they affect the meaning of his work, are included here.

- The phonological level, which includes rhyme, alliteration, assonance and others.

- The lexical level considers the writer's choice such as collocations, metaphors, similes, their meaning and effect. A simile is a common device and a useful one too, but similes coming in rapid succession are more distracting than illuminating. The reader needs to catch his breath, he cannot be expected to compare everything with something else, with no relief in sight.

- The graphological level, which refers to aspects like print, punctuations, paragraphing, colour and shape. How these contribute to the aesthetic appeal and readability of a work of art.

- The level of tenor of discourse which comprises tone and the degree of formality and informality between the participants in the drama of the novel and between the author and the reader. Paralinguistic affective devices are features such as symbolism, myth, allusion, and allegory which are not analysable in terms of normal linguistic description.

The writer's choice of individual linguistic features and ultimately of the entire linguistic format, together with the reader's response to the linguistic format and the aesthetic quality of a work of art, are determined by a number of interacting factors which may be termed, the determinants of linguistic format.

(ii) Determinants of Linguistic format.

- Medium

This refers to the method which is used to communicate language. The medium can either be authentic or simulated. Conversations in novels are meant to represent spoken language and when we examine a dialogue in a novel as a piece of language, we are actually dealing with a simulated medium, so asserts Ngara.

The significance of dialogue in a novel cannot be exaggerated. Pauw's (1994:139) pronouncements need no clarification when he posits:

Die belangrikheid van die rol van dialoog in die drama en van dialoog as dramatiese element in ander genres kan kwalik oorskat word.

Richard Leith (1980:245) in his article on style relates that:

.... dialogue has to speak with the voice of the internal characters, not just the author.

- Mode

By mode Ngara refers to different kinds of literature or simply, different genres.

- Context

Turner's (1973:134) assumption that:

Stylistics is not to that extend an exact science, but a theory of style is clearly incomplete without some attempt to describe the situation or context in which language is used.

Therefore it stands to reason that culture, geographical setting and historical period refers to context. Some critics prefer to call it milieu. Sensitive as Ngara is about African culture, he regards the successful African writer as one who is sensitive as

well to aspects of culture and simultaneously able and competent to mould foreign aspects of western culture into a fit medium for the expression of national culture, national aspirations, the African temperament and the expression of human predicament as seen through the African eyes.

- Audience

The relationship between the author and his audience is important since as African audience will have a different orientation from a European one.

Rabanowitz and Phelan's discussion in Benzel's (1994:177) article on what they refer to as "double-levelled aesthetic experience" claim that here are two kinds of reading audiences, the narrative and authorial readers, who are bound together in their acceptance of mimetic illusion of a text, but who diverge as the reader becomes conscious of the craft of the text. Rabanowitz in Benzel's (1994:170) article on style goes on further to remark that:

.... the authorial audience knows it is reading a work of art, while a narrative audience believes what it is reading is real.

This double-levelled aesthetic experience which is recommended by both critics seems to be having an important task of enhancing the audience's reading experience by making it plural.

In order to discover a reading identity appropriate for this text, the reader becomes a "second author" sharing creative activity with the writer.

Regrettably most Setswana works seem to have as their destiny, a narrative audience with a single levelled aesthetic experience. This is because of the fact that they are school market

orientated, where readership is guaranteed. Financial gain is undisputedly the motive behind a move in that direction by most writers. This is understandable though, as these writers emerge from the deprived black society which has for a long time been taken advantage of by the colonial oppressors of south Africa.

The recent ushering-in of a liberal era may hopefully bring with it a brand new bunch of writers who, it is anticipated, would have within few years, shaken themselves off from the stranglehold of what one may term moral and intellectual depression they have for a long time been subjected to.

- Personal Factors

Here we refer to the writer's competence in using the chosen language, his own personal interests, his experience, natural inclinations as well as his views and turn of mind. These things have some influence on what he is going to write about and on the attitude and tone of voice he is going to adopt, and ultimately on the linguistic content of his artistic creation. To have a full understanding of a writer, one requires knowledge of his (writer) personal factors. This is in accordance with Ngara's assumption, which seemingly goes along with Serudu (1993:118) when he remarks:

Style reflects the world of the work and may be on index to the author's world view.

For an example, the theme around which Lebethe's writings revolves is love. This is revealed in his novels titled Mosele and his celebrated Morabaraba. A through-the-grape vine, but reliable whisper that he once was jilted (with due apologies) by his former wife whilst upgrading at a tertiary institution speaks a lot about his experiences. He is by no means a pawn in this social game of chess - African chess perhaps or Morabaraba as the title of his work implies.

- Language/dialect

This is the writer's broadest linguistic choice. For instance, the writer may use Sekgatla, Serolong, Sehurutshe or Sekwena which are Setswana dialects or he may alternatively opt for a standard variety without any dialect combinations.

Recent Batswana writers seem to be inclined to making use of standard orthography when narrating, but choose to use dialects in dialogues. Previous writers were devoid of this tendency as they so awfully used to strive after form.

2.2.2 Evaluation Criteria

A work of art is, according to Ngara, evaluated in terms of the following criteria: Readerability, the appropriateness and effectiveness of linguistic choices and para-linguistic effective devices and both content value and aesthetic quality of the artistic creation.

2.2.2.1 Readerability

Readerability is the result of a number of interacting factors. The style of the writer has an essential part to play as well. The aesthetic appeal of the writer's language is another aspect of a novel's readerability, for it determines the writer's power of persuasion. It is the duty of the writer to keep his audience interested and this he will achieve by making use of rhetoric-language which is designed to impress.

Readerability is also determined by the writer's handling of character and plot, for these have a force that sustains the reader's interest. A well handled plot encourages the reader to remain interested while his identification with characters which goes along with other techniques like suspense, will help to increase the reader's curiosity. Readerability can be measured in terms of low, average or high according to Ngara.

2.2.2.2 The appropriateness and effectiveness of linguistic choices and paralinguistic effective devices.

Ngara reckons that the writer's use of language may still be judged in terms of the same eight determinants of linguistic devices. In terms of:

Medium: The creative artist is expected to be aware of the nature of his chosen medium and the limitations it imposes on him.

Mode: Here it is expected of the writer to handle the various constituents of language of fiction well. This includes, narrative, description, dialogue and monologue. He must also keep in mind the fact that whilst poetic quality is a virtue, people do not normally speak in poetry, and so dialogue in a novel should approximate normal everyday language.

Language: To be able to write effectively and artistically, the writer himself must have achieved a high degree of competence in his chosen language. Ngara (1982:23) warns that:

Lack of proficiency in the chosen language limits the choices open to the writer and can often lead to artificially, monotony and mediocrity.

Context: This has best been described in the previous topic on the determinants of the linguistic format, (refer 2.2.1.4).

Characters: The relationship between language and participants is important in terms of verisimilitude and decorum. The author is expected to take stock of the social status and linguistic background of his characters. One cannot for an example expect an uneducated Motswana to stand toe to toe in a dialogue with a scholar on a topic expecting one to be well versed.

Decorum is important, even for the creative writer. The tastes of the reading public cannot be completely ignored without the author running a risk. In Ngara's (1982:27) words:

It is possible for a writer to offend his readers by deliberately using language in a manner that is seen to breach linguistic decorum.

Personal factors: In taking further what has hitherto been mentioned about this aspect, which forms part of the determinants of the linguistic format, the following deserves attention:

The fact that the author's mastery of language should also be controlled by aesthetic purpose, lest it becomes a means of self gratification, resultantly defeating the communicative purpose of art.

2.2.2.3 Content value and Aesthetic Quality

Literature has a social function to perform. It entertains and teaches.

Ngara assumes that a serious writer must be concerned about humanity and his society. He must address himself to human predicament in general and to the African situation in particular.

We expect moral earnestness from the writer. Ngara reckons that true art should not be confounded with political and ideological propaganda. He further warns an African writer that art for art's sake cannot be justified in a world struggling against diseases, illiteracy, racialism and oppression.

The writer is a healer of our minds and souls, but to be a successful healer, the writer should bring us a pill concealed in a lump of sugar. It is then that the readers will taste, suck and swallow the pill and be healed.

In foregrounding the effects of reading to the reader subjected to the above experiences, Lloyd Noel of the Music and the Spoken-Word fame in the Mormon-Terbanacle Choir Programme as currently

broadcast by NNTV channel had this to say:

Reading is not just a skill to facilitate human communication. Its value transcends the mere act of transmitting knowledge through written symbols. It (reading) is at once an instructor to the minds, nurse to the emotions, councillor to the spirits and clergy to the souls.

Reading is therefore not just a literary pursuit, it bestows the wisdom to judge and the power to perform upon its possessor. Only a writer with the power of persuasion can achieve at least one of the abovementioned accomplishments of this kind of reading.

One must hasten to mention that even though the constituents of a work of art have been dealt with separately, this does not imply that there is a clear-cut division between form and content. A perfect work of art is a synthesis of reality, subject matter, theme, views, attitudes and ideas on one hand, and narrative structure, character and the linguistic format on the other.

The theory of stylistic criticism proposed here holds that matter of linguistic format are inseparable from content, in other words, the style of a serious writer cannot be divorced from his ideological concerns.

2.2.3 Classification of Critical Terminology

Ngara proposes that it is important for the stylistic critic to classify the terminology he uses so as to have a fuller understanding of the workings of language, both in the work of art itself and in the process of analysing and evaluating it.

Thus, it suffices to indicate that critical vocabulary may be divided into four main categories. The details thereof will not be highlighted as Malope's work will not be analysed in terms of

this third dimension of Ngara's theory. the four categories are: formal terminology, referential content words, descriptive and affective terminology and classification terminology.

- Formal terminology: these are the backbones of criticism. They constitute the technical dimension of critical terminology, being free from built-in judgements and free from positive and negative connotations.
- Referential content terminology: Since literature is about man, society and the universe, the language of literary criticism necessarily includes words referring to man, life, religion, love, culture contact, culture conflict, good and evil etc. Here the literary critic shows the interaction between literature and life at the point of intersection between art and life.
- Descriptive and affective terminology: It is where the critic has gone beyond the description of the quality of the object itself to a consideration of its effects on the reader. Thus the critics may say that the novel is exciting, compelling, boring or moving.
- Classification terminology: The whole novel here is being evaluated. Its virtues and shortcomings are weighted and balanced in what may be called the sum total of our multifarious response to a work of art. Our evaluation may be summed up in phrases like good, mediocre, great, first class novel, a bad book. This is in fact what one may call the ranking of a novel.

CHAPTER THREE

The first dimension of Ngara's stylistic criticism theory is an account on the constituents of a work of art, namely content, plot, character and the linguistic format. This chapter will focus attention on the latter two.

3 CHARACTERISATION AND THE LINGUISTIC FORMAT

3.1 Characterisation

3.1.1 Introduction

Characterisation constitutes an important element of a novel. It deals with the author's creations of what Ngara refers to as participants. These are the imaginative creations who interact with each other and who, as Ngara says are the agents of the writer's communicative utterance. In their attempts to define the delineation of characters in a novel, different scholars approach this task from different angles. Meij and Snyman (1986:11) are agreeable on the role of a person as an important component of a novel, hence their view that:

Die mens in 'n verhaal is 'n belangrike komponent van die verhaal. Gewoonlik is dit een mens (of meer) wat aan 'n ander mens (of mense) vertel wat 'n derde mens (of mense) doen of wat met hulle gebeur.

Pretorius and Swart (1987:6) relate that characters are revealed to the reader through their actions and reactions, and also, through that which is said about them and that which they say themselves.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1977:278) explains that the novelists are predominantly fascinated by their preoccupation with the convolutions of the human personality, under the stress

of artfully selected experience rather than the plot of their work.

Cohen in Boshego (1993:62) sees characterisation as the means whereby an author establishes the illusion that the persons created through his words are indeed people with traits and personalities which the reader can recognise and even be in a position to analyse. This is readily acceptable since it is by recognising the characters as people like us first that we can proceed to analyse them as real, as resembling realistic actions of men and women we live and share our experience with.

Msimang (1983:99) defines characterisation as:

... a sum total of techniques employed by an artist in presenting characters in a literary work of art so that such characters are perceived by the audience/reader as persons endowed with moral and dispositional as well as physical qualities.

It therefore stands to reason that the author has various means through which he can communicate the traits, feelings and thoughts of his characters. In most cases he employs physical descriptions of varying exactness and fullness so that the character can be visualised by a reader.

We go along with Ntsanwisi in Malope (1983:ix) when he tables a simplified version of the above notion by positing that:

The characters in the novel must be real, they must be kind of people who are found in real life. They must be people with a real location like our next door neighbours.

In his article on Critique of characterisation, Hull (1992:37) foregrounds an observation from the historical developments

associated with characterisation when he pronounces that:

Rich characterisation, or the detailed writing about ordinary people that arose with eighteenth and nineteenth century fiction, coincides with the growth of disciplinary procedures in penology, schools, hospitals and so on.

It is against the background of this observation that he highlights the concerns of some critics, notably Foucauldian literary critics who take exception to the "so called" characterisation. These critics include among others, Miller and Seltzer who take exception to this practice against humanity. They vigorously attack, on ethical grounds, the practice of reporting on individuals as a violation of privacy. This concern for privacy has led to Foucault's announcement of: the end of man, and his subsequent call for a serious critique of writing about selves.

However liberal humanists have to this point defended literary characterisation. Their argument remains that if we deny the personality of characters in books, neither they nor we who are not in the books will have any claim to be treated with moral consideration.

Shlowith Rimmon-Kenan (1989:32) regard characters as:

... imitations of people and tends to treat them with greater or less sophistication as if they were our neighbours and friends, whilst also abstracting them from the verbal texture of the work under consideration.

The same observation in different wording though, is also held by Scholes (1991:129) who remarks that:

The greatest mistake we can make in dealing with

characters in fiction is to insist on their reality. No character is a real person. Characters in fiction are like real people.

It therefore means that the novelist clearly relies upon our knowledge of and reactions to real people. Hawthorn (1985:49) takes this further to explain purposes for which characters are created:

Characters are often created by novelists for purposes other than that of investigation into human personality or psychology. They can be used to tell a story, to exemplify a belief, to contribute to a symbolic pattern in a novel, or merely to facilitate a particular plot development.

It must therefore be kept in mind that great memorable characters are the result of a powerful combination of the impulse to individualise and the impulse to typify as one critic says, since character can be said to be the function of these two.

Methods and techniques used to portray characters help to illuminate the main idea in the narrative. Critics have evolved three main methods of character portrayal:

3.1.2 The direct method

This method is sometimes referred to as the expository technique of character delineation since the artist himself is involved by his direct commenting on a character's make-up.

The writer may sometimes use one of his characters as his spokesperson and through this spokesperson, the other characters are described.

Some critics are sceptical about the writer's application of this

method, thereby claiming that a writer forces his readers to see the characters through his eyes. However, this argument is counter-balanced by critics who regard this technique as most suitable for minor characters. Another advantage they allude to, as Msimang (1986:102) concurs, is that it lends clarity quickly.

3.1.3 The indirect method

In this method, which is sometimes referred to as the dramatic method, character traits are revealed to the reader, not through description, but through their behaviour, actions, attitudes or reactions to certain events, remarks or statements. Pretorius and Swart (1987:12) maintain that:

The reader must actually discover for himself/herself the character traits or the development of character from the behaviour of the character, without being told by the author.

Characters must therefore be given a chance to unfold on their own.

Critics warn however, that an over use of this method tends to be boring. The writer may find himself concentrating on character portrayal at the expense of some aspects of the novel. Yet it has, on the other hand, the capability to fill characters with life and you can feel their pulse as they move through the pages of a novel, (c.f.Msimang, 1983:101).

3.1.4 The naming method

Characters are also identified by their names. One would occasionally come across names used by the author to enhance the creation of suspense and the interest of the reader. Some names given to characters in the novels are often seen as forming an integral part of their individual behaviour and personality.

Maphiri (1993:86) is emphatic on the significance of this method when she posits:

... a technique such as this (naming) enriches the form of the text by deepening its exploration of the human quality.

Malope does not depend on a single method of character portrayal. He employs a combination of the direct, the indirect and to a lesser extent the naming technique to delineate his characters.

We shall consequently observe the application of these techniques in the delineation of his characters in Matlhoko, Matlhoko.

3.1.5 The characters in Matlhoko, Matlhoko

* The main character.

Mpotseng, the main character is a plausible human being of Malope's creation. The writer left the main character's delineation exclusively for the dramatic method, save the section in the introductory phase of the novel where the direct method is partially employed to portray the following:

Dipounama tsa mogoma di ne di arogane, tshika e kgolo mo gare ga phatla e tatametse ga leleme la ntswanyana; e tshesanyana mo godimo ga itlho la moja yona e uba phetelela, (Malope, 1983:1).

(Lips resembling a (tractor-drawn) cultivating implement were divided, a giant vein in the middle of his forehead protruding like a puppy's tongue; a thinner one just above his right eye pounding with a rhythmic beat.)

A large section of the main character's delineation is the exclusive domain of the dramatic method. Its extensive employment

remains unparalleled in Setswana novels.

He is initially portrayed as a rustic gentleman of real rural traits which could not totally get effaced even after a brief orientation in Eesterus and his ultimate settlement in Phelandaba hostels.

In Hammanskraal, this rusticity is revealed in his self-aggravation of the usually delaying tendencies of the African civil service bureaucracy by his failure to ask whether he was in the correct queue or not. This is coupled with the fact that he could not pace himself well after the lunch break to secure his initial place in the queue, this resulting in him catching it by the tail once again as revealed hereunder.

A tshwara mokoloko wa ntlha kwa mogatleng, ya re a le kwa tlhogong ya ona ga twe ke wa ba ba batlang makwalo a lenyalo Fa a le mo gare ga wa botlhano, ga twe a di eme di go iwa dijong. Fa go boiwa koo a iphitlhela a le kwa mogatleng gape. Mmopelela wa ngongoela jalo jaaka e kete ga o na go ka potlakisiwa. Ka sebalalo a goroga kwa o felelang gona, (Malope, 1983:2).

(He caught the first queue by its tail; while approaching the front, he was informed that it belonged to those seeking for marriage certificates. Whilst in the middle of the fifth queue, they were interrupted by the lunch break. On their return, he found himself at the tail of the queue once again. The queue lazily meandered as though it could not be made to double-up its pace. He later arrived at the front, by that time he was almost desperate.)

His fear of the complexities of the civil service administration and its red tape bears evidence of his rustic nature. The revelation thereof is his response to his fiancé during his departure when he correctly predicted:

Poifo ya me ke gore gongwe le kwa Tshwane go ntse go na le tulo e e tshwanang le Hamosekerala, (Malope, 1983:2).

(My fear is that even in Pretoria, there might still be a place similar to Hammanskraal.)

His actions also portray his rural nature. He does not prepare himself well for his bicycle expedition to the Hammanskraal's municipal offices. Resultantly he is forced to park it aside to defaecate - a little embarrassing for a gentleman of his age to do this behind the shrubs.

Malope presents him in this nature when he states:

..., a be a ema fa ditlhareng tsa Sewe-boom go bofolola panta, (Malope, 1983:1).

(He then stopped at Sewe-boom trees, to defaecate.)

In Eesterus, the rustic attributes prevalent in him retain the reader's sympathy and present him as a saddening picture. Overwhelmed perhaps by the excitement of a new job, he forgets his two rand lunch note at home and remains hungry for the better part of the day-how sad!

After relocating to the Phelandaba hostel his paraphernalia is stolen after having gone to bed without first locking his locker. Security does not matter much at home, even most houses do not boast burglar-proofs.

His failure to anticipate that some lads will never return from the Christmas vacations as per contractual obligations lends him in serious predicament, some still owed him a lot of cash from his soft-goods' sale. He sadly acknowledges that as a painful lesson hereunder:

Morago ga kereseBOSE kgwebo ya koafala mo go maswe. Bontsi jwa mathaka bo sa boa go tswa magae. Hosetele e rile nga! ka bosetlaboseng ba ba maruru - dilo tsa dikonteraka. Bangwe ba ba neng ba mo tshwere madi a marukgwe, ba ne ba tsere dikonteraka tse di ba rometseng go sele, e seng Tshwane, (Malope, 1983:70).

(After Christmas, the business boom was terribly curtailed. Most of the rural labourers did not return from their respective homes. The hostel was teaming with novices who were still cold (had no money) - contract issues! Some of those who were still owing him soft-goods' money had taken other contracts out of Pretoria.)

One may be forced to attribute most of his glaring blunders to the fact that he had no education; not through a fault of his own. The family was poverty-stricken when the father passed away as Malope (1983:3) puts it hereunder:

Ena, mogoloe le mmaabo-Modiegi-ba sala mahut-saneng. Ba se na thuto. Ba se na leruo lepe.

((Mpotseng) himself, his brother and their mother were left in destitute with no money, and no cattle.)

His lack of education is revealed in dialogues with his counterparts regarding issues of life which needed of him to fathom from his reserve tank of knowledge. This he could not obviously achieve. A dialogue on influx control and liquor restrictions entered into with his aunt Mmadisenke exposes his lack of depth in aspects of life facing the blacks.

Furthermore, in his contact with any written material, his concentration on written content is superseded by concentration

on pictures of such materials. Nevertheless, one is impressed by his courage and his attempt to stand toe to toe on such subjects with the experienced before his humble acknowledgement to defeat.

The positive aspects of his character are , the very fact that he was inwardly an honest, law-abiding ambitious man with direction and sense of purpose. He was also very much aware of his responsibilities. That is why he was regarded as his mother's greatest hope, particularly after the husband had passed away as portrayed hereunder:

(Mmaagwe) A ikutlwa a aparelwa ke tsholofelo ya gore nyaya, letsatsi le le sa le le kolomela fa Masilo a fitlha tlhogo - a mo tlogela a hupile bana ka meno jaaka katse - le tlhaba gape. Mo go ena Mpotseng e ne ele mphatlalatsana - a bega moso morago ga bosigo jwa dikgadima, (Malope, 1983:40).

(She felt hopeful that the sun which had since set when Masilo - the husband passed away, leaving her with children hanging from her teeth like a cat, was rising again. Mpotseng was to her a shining eastern star - proclaiming "morning - has - broken" after a night of thunderstorms.)

The outcome of Mpotseng's affair with Keneeletswe, (her pregnancy and the ultimate birth of Emma) obviously did a lot of harm to his credibility, but the context within which this took place, does not render him an alien. It could have happened to almost every man in that kind of a life-world situation.

The twist of his personality which renders him dishonest, as in his blatant lies to Keneeletswe, his mistress, about having not been well for sometime, which was in fact an attempt to account for his absence for some weeks, is merely one of failing to

succumb to pressure. Similarly, his inability to erect a house for his family and to advance school fund at appropriate intervals is due to the fact that his honest nature, coupled with forces from without, could not allow him to desert his mistress. Obviously, he had limited funds and his ultimate sale of marijuana was an attempt to do good to enhance his meagre salary in a way. It is only unfortunate therefore, that the end could not justify the means as in the case of others, Mosala for an example. Mpotseng is thus a victim of circumstances.

The writer also contributed to the central character's misdemeanours, as he seemed hell-bent on destroying him. He for instance entangles him in an affair with a lady who was already exploited by his friend, as he later discovered - how humiliating. He (the writer) seems to have had an obsession to see his main character in trouble. At times, when the writer suspects his audience to sympathise with the main character, he appeals for joint cooperation to leave him to perish as he personally puts it hereunder:

Fa a le koo morwa - Masilo, a re mo tlogeleng.
Monna o bolawa ke se a se jeleng. Rona ga re ye
nae tshankaneng. Tseo ke tsa gagwe. O tla
ikutlwa. Re tla bona gore a e tla re a tswa koo,
a be a feditse lefata la tulo eo, (Malope, 1983:-
75).

(Whilst in there (prison), Masilo's son, let us
leave him. A man suffers from his deeds. We are
not going with him behind bars. It's not our
business. He'll see for himself. What we shall be
curious about will be to see whether upon his
release, he shall have finished the prison-samp.)

The main character's final destruction, a penalty he did not really deserve, for he had been punished many a times before by the writer, was the writers permission to Mpotseng's children to

conceive a child together, this was the hammering-in of an unwanted nail in an already sealed coffin. Suicide was therefore the only way in which Mpotseng could outroot himself from the stranglehold of misfortune.

Finally, the writer seems to have had an intention of using the naming method as a stylistic device in referring to his central character as Mpotseng (Ask me), a relevant name for a person who has experienced the real hardships of life but ironically, the writer could not afford him an opportunity to present a response to the question.

* The secondary characters.

(i) Mmadisenke

Malope reserves the expository technique for minor characters in line with what has been pronounced by Msimang (1986:102) about certain critics who regard it as suitable for some. The writer himself comments as follows about Mmadisenke's character, as seen through Mpotseng's analytical observations:

O ne a ise a ko a bone motho yo mokgaraga jalo a le matlhagatlhaga go le kalo. Mosadi a abetswe mmele ke yoo: a le mabelebele jaaka kubu. Difaka e ne e le tsa monna a kuka ditshipi, fela tsa gagwe di repile. Fa a eme a lepeleditse mabogo, go nne jaaka motho a katetse sengwe mo magwafeng. Ka ga Mmadisenke, motho o ne a ka se bue ka letheka. O ne a se na nalo. Jaanong gona mmele wa gagwe o ne o gopotsa motho faki e e emeng ka metshe. Molala wa gagwe o ne o sa bonale; lemeno mo kgokgotsong le tshwana le la lese; matlho a tomogile jaaka a motho a betilwe. Se se gakgak-atsang e le bofefe jo a dirang ka jona. Fa a tshwere sengwe, a sa okaoke; a tseye se, a beye fa, kwa ntle ga go akanya-boitemogelo jwa go dira

mo dikhitshing ka lobaka lo lolleele, (Malope, 1983:12).

(He had never seen a very active, but robust person before. A full-bodied woman, with a breast resembling a hippopotamus. The biceps resembled the weight-lifters', but her's were relatively soft. When standing upright with hands facing downwards, it was like she had hidden something in her arm-pits. With Mmadisenke, one cannot mention her waist. She didn't boast one. Now, her figure could remind one of a two-hundred litre tank balanced with sticks. Her neck was concealed; the fold in her alveolar resembled that of a new-born baby; (her) eyes were protruding like a drowning person. What was amazing though was the speed with which she handled her chores. She never hesitated when she had something in her hands; she would take this, put here, taste there, hang-off here, without having to think about it - the experience of having been a domestic servant for quite some time.)

In spite of her being introduced with a sharp visual picture of a woman of much personality, it is difficult to understand how these features could assist her to exert a powerful hold on a man as she did to Sefako, a married police chief.

The writer then proceeds to unfold her character through the dramatic method as elucidated hereunder:

Her relatively long stay in Eesterus did not make her forget her roots, she still showed preference to rural life as exposed in her exclamations.

"Ka Bakgatla ba ntsetse!", (Malope, 1983:8).

(Swearing by the Bakgatla ethnic group.)

and in her firing of Mpotseng with questions such as:

Tlhang o sa nna kwa gae wa lema? (Malope, 1983:8)

(Why did you not stay at home and cultivate land?)

As in accordance with the Setswana tradition, as an aunt in the absence of the mother, she outrightly assumes the mother's role, thus consoling Mpotseng over his day's misfortunes as when he forgot to take his two rand lunch note. Furthermore she motivates and gives him courage to persevere the challenges of the job as a mother would do to her son. She reminds Mpotseng about his responsibilities as revealed in her reminder that he should write a letter to his mother about his experiences, knowing very well that some shillings would be enclosed therein. The following verifies the above stated:

O kwalele ausi ka moso, o mmolelele gore o
tsamaile jang. Jaanong gone dikgang di gona,
(Malope, 1983:37).

(You must write a letter to my sister tomorrow,
informing her about your experiences. Now there
is something to write home about.)

She even went on to remind Mpotseng to prepare his lunch-box, thus ensuring that he is not stricken by hunger as it hitherto was the case. (Malope 1983:37)

It is quite evident that as in the case of Mpotseng, his aunt's good character is marred by a hard cover acclimatisation character, well suited for the conditions in which they stayed, which were characterised by among others; lack of security and

the fear which accompanied it as evidenced in the following lines:

Felo mono re tshela ka letshogo...., (Malope, 1983:7).

(Here, we live in fear of our lives).

The harsh legislation as for an example, the one on influx control, i.e. the Native Urban Areas Act 1923 amongst others stated according to Rautenbach et al (1987:171) that:

Blacks would be allowed here (in the location) only if they were in possession of a permit to seek work, or had a registered service contract.

Such legislations taught her and many others the tactics of cunningly manipulating them with protectionism from the very tools of its enforcers - the police. Hence her request to Sefako, the police chief to whom she was "emotionally" attached, that her shack be exonerated from nightly police raids in order to guarantee Mpotseng's safety as made vulnerable by his failure to have the residence permit in possession. This she did when she briefly tabled two requests to Sefako:

Ke go lopa dilo tse pedi tsa lelea le le lengwe;
sa ntlha: thusa Mosimane wa me ka tetla ya borobalo. Sa bobedi: raya dintswanyana tsa gago di tsome ntlheng e nngwe ya sekgwa go fitlhela a kgonne go bona tetla ya borobalo, (Malope, 1983:-18).

(I request of you two issues, which in fact are two sides of the same coin. Firstly: secure a residence permit for my son. Secondly: instruct your puppies (the police) to change their hunting

direction to the other side of the bush (township) until he (Mpotseng) manages to secure a residence permit.)

This indicates that she was quite conversant with the rules of the game of survival even in restricting conditions.

She is a police informer, with an impeccable record and she knew very well that reciprocally, Sefako owed his life to her. It is thus stated of her:

A se mafosi fa a go tlhomamiseditse, (Malope, 1983:18).

(She was never at fault with information.)

She might be regarded as immoral in lying to her boss about having to leave early for home, and full of revenge in stealing her spoon, but it must be noticed that the Blacks of the apartheid era have never regarded stealing from a white person or any wrong-doing against the whites as unjust as what the whites did to the Blacks through their oppressive practices was more than unjust.

In the same breath, her affair with Sefako can outrightly be criticised by the naïve and shortsighted as immoral too, but if one perceives it as part and parcel of the survival tactics she had to employ to keep her home-fires burning, a broader version thereof could to a certain extent justify it.

Finally, what could perhaps be regarded as an oversight from Malope is the fact that he has forgotten to romanticise Mmadisenke to make her available to Sefako's lusts, which makes a mockery of their affair as it has no sparks of emotional outbursts commonly associated with love affairs which should not in anyway be depicted as lackadaisical as this one.

(ii) Sefako

An expository technique on the revelation of Safako's character is best outlined by the writer hereunder:

Ka seemo o ne a okama bontsi, matlho a gagwe a le bogale; fa a go tlhomile, a sa bonyebonye; a go phunyeletsa ka ona go tswela ka kwa; go bonala gore o ne a ithutile go seba batho, go ba sebisisa jaaka motho a keleka pholwana e o batlang go e reka. Balatswathipana ba mo ila lekongkong, fela ba mmoifa lebaibai. Ba ne ba re ke mabodi masweu mafologa ntsweng, gone jaaka molatsatsa o lapeng, fa a gaketse o ne a bonwa gotlhe, a bona gotlhe ka nako e lenngwe mo Eesterus. Ena fa a itherolotse, o ne o ka utlwa re ke ena molapo mowela difofu; ga o welwe ke dithai, o welwa gotlhe! yona kgagarapa ya mangana! E ne e le Mokwena oora Maimane kwa Bethanie, (Malope, 1983:15).

(He had a towering figure, sharp piercing eyes which never winked, it seems like he must have taught himself the tactics of carefully observing people in a manner resembling a speculator intending to purchase a bull. Criminals detested him, but were at the same time frightful of him. When serious at work, he could be seen everywhere and simultaneously see everywhere in Eesterus. When in good moods, he was full of selfpraise. A real crocodile as his totem indicates. He belonged to the Maimane family of Bethanie.)

Sefako was an upholder of the law-cum-breaker thereof. A liar who boasted decadent morals in his extramarital affairs and exploitation of the frightful by taking bribes. A great pretender of unparalleled talents who simply is allowed by the writer to get away with murder. A true portrait of policemen in the apartheid era - a tool by means of which apartheid was firmly

entrenched - truly brainwashed to fail to recognise the difference between what constituted crime and what did not.

The dramatic technique gives a hand to the expository technique in the following aspects of his portrayal:

He violated the law in securing Mpotseng's residence permit as he boastfully, but evasively admits:

Boammaruri ke gore go tlotswe molao Mpotseng ga a lefe sepe, (Malope, 1983:35).

(The truth is that the law has been violated. Mpotseng is not paying a thing.)

instead of stating:

Boammaruri ke gore ke tlotse molao.

(The truth is I have violated the law.)

He blatantly lied to his co-ordinates that Mpotseng is his son as he puts it hereunder:

Ke ngwanake; ke boleletse bathusani-le-nna gore ke ngwanake, (Malope, 1983:31).

(He is my son; I have informed my co-ordinates that he is my son.)

He was used to cheating his wife too. When Mmadisenke asks him whether his wife wouldn't question his sleeping - whereabouts he replies by saying:

Ke laetse. Ba itse fa ke le mo tirong, mme ga se maaka, le gona ga go thona fa monna a phirime-letswe, (Malope, 1983:18).

(She is informed. They have the impression that I am at work, but I am not lying, it is not even an issue if a man doesn't sleep at his home.)

Corrupt as he was, he went to an extent of taking bribes from the bootlegs as the following statement highlights:

Fa o rekisa mpampa le mmampuru, Sefako o'ne a na le thata ya go laela maphodisa gore a go tsamae mpadiakeke- fa e le gore o tlhaloganya gore mabogo dinku a a thebana, (Malope, 1983:18).

(In case you sold liquor, (which was illegal) Sefako had the powers to instruct his police subordinates to avoid pestering you - if you understood what it meant to reciprocate.)

He went on further to twist cases in favour of his "next-of kins" as evidenced by the Mpotseng versus the State dagga-sale issue, where he secretly negotiated with the policeman in whose net Mpotseng was caught to twist the case in order to lighten Mpotseng's ultimate sentence.

His affair with Mmadisenke cannot be justified, for if he really felt that he owed Mmadisenke something for saving his life at the hands of snarling criminals, there were other ways by means of which he could have compensated her, not through an engagement in fornication.

His assistance to Mpotseng and Mmadisenke should therefore not be viewed as the deeds of a caring man but as assistance through exploitation, assistance with an ulterior motive.

Despite his portrayal as possessing a certain presence, dignity of manner, and a highly principled character, he was in a true sense outwardly gallant but inwardly corrupt. His outward appearance of exceptional goodness could cast a smokescreen on

many an audience's vision.

In the end, the writer allows him free exit out of the novel, thus permitting him an opportunity to escape very lightly the possible results of his follies. He continues to enjoy his immoral relationship with Mmadisenke and maintains the corrupt image of a police chief, a happiness that he does little to deserve.

(iii) Mmalesedi

With his direct method of character portrayal Malope presents Mmalesedi, Mpotseng's fiancé and ultimate wife as outlined hereunder:

E ne e le mosetsana yo o makiritlana ka seemo, boleele bo lekanetse sentle le bokima. Tlhogo e ne e batlile go tshwana le bese; phatla e le khutlonne. Matlho a le bonolo, nko e eme ka dinao, mme dipounama di boetse kwa morago jaaka motho a foferegile meno Sehuba se rurugile, (Malope, 1983:10).

(She was a little robust in appearance and proportional too. Her head nearly resembled a bus with a square-shaped forehead. Her eyes were full of respect, her nose upright with the lips retracting a little backwards just like in a toothless person. Her breast by then (during her pregnancy) was swollen.)

It is surprising how Malope could decide to present the same person with the same features as simultaneously beautiful and ugly if one has to take into cognisance Mpotseng's relatives view, a few months later, as opposed to the above mentioned:

Mosimane a tla a itse go tlhophha. A mosetsana yo montle...., (Malope, 1983:48).

(The boy sure knew how to choose. What a beauty!)

Here Malope should not be allowed to escape easily with a view that the older people's perception of beauty is different from the younger ones'. We are talking about beauty on the basis of features presented not on the assumption of manners as is usually the criteria used by the elderly. We are briefly speaking, foregrounding form, not content. It is required of Malope to have maintained consistency, for the difference in time between the period of the first exposition and the latter approximated a mere six months.

Through his dramatic method Malope presents Mmalesedi as characterised by utter devotion and submissiveness to Mpotseng's family as most recently married girls in the rural villages are inclined to do. She is a good listener, who could interpret her mother-in-law's emotional climate as revealed in the following sentences:

Mosadimogolo a gotela. Mmalesedi a bona gore botoka a se ganetsane nae, (Malope, 1983:68).

(The granny got heated with the argument. Mmalesedi realised that the better would be to avoid an exchange of words.)

She is highly sympathetic to her husband, with an unconditional acceptance that he is doing everything he could to support the family. She reckons his failure to meet the demands of his family is due to the fact that he is emburdened.

She is shifted towards the background in most cases surfacing intermittently as a highly productive woman as her in-laws are mainly foregrounded with the expertise of traditional practices

from which she was expected to accumulate experience for the future, when she would be alone and expected to be fully accountable.

(iv) Keneeletswe

The direct method was extensively employed in her portrayal in this fashion:

... e le mongwe wa basetsana ba Modimo o ba segofaditseng ka mmele o kgotlaganeng. Fa o sa itse, o ka se ke wa belaela gore o setse a kile a khubama gabedi, gonne mabele a ne a ntse a ngadile kgara jaaka a legamma. Letheka e ne e le la ntlhwamafura, mme mogatla e le wa nku e lekanwe ke phulo. Maoto a ne a batlile a lekal-ekana jaaka a baoki. Fa a rata go tiisa thamo a dira jalo; mme a itse go nna mosadi. E ne ele mongwe wa basetsana ba ba sa tlalatlaleng gotlhe. A itse go dira dilo ka mokgwa o sa bapisegeng. Fa o kile wa feta mo moatlong wa gagwe, o sa ka ke wa lebala boitemogelo joo ka bonako. A na le golo gongwe go gogelang; go sa tlisiwe ke matlho a mafatshwana a le osi, kana dipounama tse di bogale jwa legare di le tsosi, kampo sehuba, kambo mokgwa o a tsamayang ka ona. Nyaya e le bojotlhe jwa gagwe, (Malope, 1983:63).

(She could be counted amongst those girls who could be said to be blessed with a compact body. If not curious, one couldn't be suspicious about the fact that she had twice conceived, for her breast was still upright and divorced from the rest of her body, just like a virgin. Her waist resembled that of a fat buttock insect type appearing mainly after rainy days. Her buttocks resembled a tail of a sheep with a guaranteed

diet. Legs were proportional as the nurses'. In case she wanted to resemble a real woman she did just that. She was second to none in her style of doing things. The experience of her kiss could not easily be forgotten. Something in her made her attractive. It was not her relatively dark-brown eyes, nor her razor-sharp lips, nor her breast, nor her movement. No, it was her entirety.)

It is obvious that Keneeletswa is an attractive character, with an unusual strength and serenity. Her experience of earlier adversity has moulded her into a person who could not entertain wildly inflated expectations of life.

In spite of all this, however, it is noticeable that when Keneeletswa herself speaks and acts, she ceases to be an idealised heroine and becomes a fatally discontented young woman. The dramatic method ingenuously employed by the writer bears evidence of this.

She is full of revenge, for she wants to settle the score with the village girls whom she accuses of having "stolen" her would-be husband after having been jilted by same. This misdirected revenge is revealed when she states that:

Fa a sena go tlhomamisa, a supa legodimo gore o tla ipusolosetsa mo basading ba dipolasa, e seng a senyegetswe go le kalo ..., (Malope, 1983:55).

(After having been rest assured, she took to swearing that she will revenge on the village girls, not when she had incurred such damages.)

Her pride does not allow her to acknowledge that all along she did not know that Mpotseng was married to someone.

She is a real township girl with township experience and tactics on how to handle and squeeze the pockets of a lad attempting to play tricks with her. She threatened Mpotseng with the law and with a visit to his family and those tactics managed to help her exert a hold on him in order to "milk" him further.

Her perception of the basis of her relationship with Mpotseng is best described by the writer after Mpotseng's ultimate arrest when he states:

Kutlobotlhoko ya ga Keneeletswe ka ga setime se se wetseng Mpotseng e ne e le ya gore motswedi wa madi o ne o kgadile...., (Malope, 1983:75).

(Keneeletswe's disappointment about the misfortune that had befallen Mpotseng was that her financial fountain had dried-up.)

This means that Mpotseng's relationship with Keneeletswe can best be summed-up as a give-and-take type of a connection.

Her grievous blunders make her vulnerable to some kind of a penalty, but the kind of punishment she receives is too harsh. It retains the reader's sympathy, particularly when many of the culprits had gone-off scot-free.

Nevertheless her name says it all. Keneeletswe means "I have been cursed". She had since been doomed for failure. The wicked evil spirits ultimately took control, a remarkable application of the naming method as a stylistic device.

(v) Mosala

If there is a character who is dealt with caringly, (despite the evil nature of his ways) and often been made heroic, with his presence almost dominating the book, it is Mosala, a friend to Mpotseng.

A womaniser of unparalleled proportions, choosy in taste, a drug-dealer and impressionist, a game-maker and a winner at all times, full of praise for himself, that was the Mosala of Malope's creation.

It is ironic that he in some cases, is made to "moralise" Mpotseng about failure as though he would not in future contribute to it. These views by Mosala are espoused below:

Fa o le monna wa lapa, ga o a tshwanela go itlwaetsa go palelwa. Go ka tloga ga fetoga selomodiro, (Malope, 1983:72).

(If you are a family man, you are not supposed to familiarise yourself with failure. It can turn itself into a habit.)

He was a liar as indicated when Mpotseng's uncle wanted a clue as to what could have led to his arrest. He replies by saying:

Ruri nka bua maaka, (Malope, 1983:79).

(Truly speaking, I'll be lying.)

It is unbelievable that just like Sefako, he is given an ambassadorial exit out of Malope's novel - unbelievable, if one peruses into his record. Malope showed preference to the dramatic method in foregrounding him.

(iv) The Rural Characters (in general)

Malope's rural characters' conversations consist mainly of homespun philosophy, for an example the issues on cattle farming, climatic conditions, land cultivation and harvest. Their discussions also revolve around conversations of personal idiosyncrasies. Malope's depiction of old-man Mothosu with his characteristic rhetoric on world war II issues and war-coat is

a typical example. Ordinary gossip on daily issues also characterises their lives.

Good-neighbourliness, honesty, sacrifice and willingness are some of the virtues which are typical of them. It is also in these discussions that one observes the permeation of the evil effects of the apartheid system towards the rural areas. The rustics are aware of servitude accompanying apartheid though this is done without direct reference. Masilo's (Mpotseng's late father) lamentations about servitude bears evidence to this as espoused below:

O tlwaela go laolwa: o tlwaela go okanyetswa. O bolelelwa gore o direng - le gona jang. Motlhanka ga a bodiwe gore bothata bo ka lepololwa jang. Tlhaloganyo ya gagwe e nna makume, go bo go bonale jaaka e kete o tsetswe e le setseketseke; ntswa bothata e le gore tlhaloganyo ya gagwe ga e ke e loodiwa ka totso yosi ya tlhaloganyo - mathata, (Malope, 1983:3).

(You become used to getting instructions, you become used to getting somebody thinking on your behalf. You are told what to do - and how to do it. A servant is never asked as to how to go about a problem. His mind is made shallow, so much so that some may think he was born a moron; when in fact the problem lies with the fact that his mind is never sharpened by a single sharpener of the mind - problems.)

Their essential purity of spirit shines out in the monotonous obscurity of lives dominated by too much sweat and extreme poverty. Deprivation and dejection are a common sight amongst them.

In drawing this topic to a close, it suffices to state that

characters in Matlhoko, Matlhoko are very well developed but it is a reader with a sensibility to subtle shades of character who will find much interest in these very different individuals who often display a rare trait of capability to adjust to different situations.

It is however Brink (1987:67) who impeccably sums this topic up with a reminder that:

Die enigste houdbare uitgangspunt is m.i. om "karakter" te beskou as iets wat ontstaan uit - en bestaan by - die wisselwerking tussen al drie die werelde van 'n verhaal (storie, verteltekst, vertelproses), en tussen al die gegewens, impulse, elemente of aspekte binne daardie hele kompleks.

3.2 THE LINGUISTIC FORMAT

The definition of the Linguistic Format has already been attended to (refer 2.2.1.4). It is against the background of these explanations and definition that an attempt is being made in this chapter to analyse Malope's work in terms of the following aspects of the linguistic format: poetic qualities, biblical references, tenor of discourse and the use of affective and evocative language.

3.2.1 Poetic Qualities

It is through the reader's evocation of a literary work of art that its poetic qualities are realised.

We are reminded by Rosenblatt (1980:183) that:

... the reader's evocation of a literary work is by no means the same phenomenon as interpretation. Indeed, very close to the heart of the book is the repeated reminder that bringing a poem out of the text not only requires the full partici-

pation of reader, but also necessitates awareness that evocation is not the same activity as judging the work, analysing it, having an emotional reaction to it, agreeing or disagreeing with its stated or unstated assumptions.

Rosenblatt is speaking about co-creating the poem with the author - that is about becoming aware that one is literally responsible for liberating the poem from the meaningless markings on the page.

The poetic quality evident in Matlhoko, Matlhoko presents itself in more than one form. On one level, it is a reference by Malope to some aspects of his favourite praise-poems of the Batswana clans, tribes or those of their traditional medicine-men. In so doing Malope heightens the poetic quality of his prose. On another level, it reveals itself spontaneously in paragraphs which are fully worded with rhythms, alliterations and imagery abound.

Sefako for an example enjoys a description of an enhanced quality when Malope (1982:23) reveals him through the praise-poem of his tribe Bakwena-ba-Magopa when he praises him in this form:

Ke kwena e ntsho ya Modiana-a-Tau
Fifi la Mokwena,
Ya re ha e tlholla Maimane,
E tswe e eme ka maroo khwiting
Kgagarapa ya mangana ...

(It is a black crocodile of Modiane of the Tau
clan

The pitch-black Mokwena
When it comes to cursing Maimane,
It surfaces to stand on its paws from its hole
A gigantic animal with jaws ...)

The tribal praise is focused on an individual Sefako to the effect that his physical qualities represent all the prime virtues of the Bakwena tribal community, namely, strength and bravery. This coincides well with the depiction of his character as possessing a kind of presence, (refer:3.1.5.ii)

In his description of the pandemonium that reigned as a result of the rumours which spread like wild fire about the relocation of the Eesterus community, Malope (1982:42) reminds us of the traditional medicine-men's common utterances when the bones sense danger:

Di ole mpherefere-a-makgolela;
Malope o sekame, mme go bonala a tlhona.

(They have fallen in multidimensional ways;
Malope (a bones title) is lying tilted, and he seems disenchanted.)

The uncertainty which follows the traditional medicine-men's poetic interpretation of every individual bone's fall is likened to the uncertainty associated with the Eesterus rumours on the forced removal issue. This undisputedly adds distinctive quality to Malope's prose.

The spontaneous revelation, referred to above, which is an unmistakable poetic quality in Matlhoko, Matlhoko is evident in the undermentioned paragraphs.

In his description of the city of Pretoria, Malope (1982:41) had this to say:

Motse wa Tshwane ke seoka se setonagadi, se se
ikgarileng mo mekgatsheng le dithothobolong tsa
dithaba tsa Mogale. Mo mosong se metsa Bantsho,
Makula le Makgoa ba ntse ba utlwa, mme maitsiboa
se tthatsetse bontsintsi jwa Bantsho kwa ntle
gore se sale se ikhuditse, gone ga se ba rate go
le bosigo - ba se bolaisa mala. Se itshokela fela

badiri ba dikhitshi le baletamadirelo, fa le fale
- ke seokasegolo se go tweng Tshwane - a - Mmame-
lodi.

{{The city of Pretoria is a monster-like male animal which lies in the valleys and slopes of the Mogale's mountains (Magaliesberg). In the morning it swallows the Blacks, (whilst) Indians and Whites (are) well aware, and in the after-
noons it vomits multitudes of Blacks outside for it to rest - for it detests them during the night - they upset its stomach. It tolerates only the domestic workers and industrial security-men here and there. It is a powerful animal called Tshwane - of - Mmamelodi (Pretoria)}}.

The above passage is striking for its use of imagery and alliteration. The alliteration is found in the repetition of such sounds as the fricative s, affricative ts and tsh and the plosive th. The imagery is effective both from its alliteration and from its powerful visual sense - a very powerful, grotesque and potentially dangerous animal (seoka se setonagadi). The visual image is supplemented by the contrasted image of taste which is evident in the use of words such as, it swallows (se metsa) and it vomits (se tlhatsetse) the Blacks outside.

These words have more meaning than meets the eye. The intolerance of the whites in respect of co-existence with Blacks in South Africa is highlighted by Malope, a political wit, hence the Whites "swallow" them only when they need their services during the day and "vomit" them when they no longer need their services, for they cannot tolerate their presence. This intolerance on the issue of the White's unwillingness to live co-existentially with the Blacks was entrenched by both the Native Urban Areas Act of 1923 and the Native Resettlement Act (No.19 Of 1954) which was initiated by H.F.Verwoerd with a view to removing the so-called "black spots" from the white areas, Muller (1981:482).

The passage on Mpotseng's initial perception of the Emthonjeni Beer Garden has a striking imagery as well. Malope (1982:63-64) had this to say about Mpotseng's observation of the beer garden:

Ka nako eo o ne a e bona e le gopane e e beilweng mo molomong wa hosetele le seteisene sa Saulsville gore e anye banna mpherefere kgongwana ya makgoa e e ilang lesaka; gopane e e anyang maswi mmogo le morokotso, e feletse e tapotse le yona kgodu e khibidu.

(During those times he saw it as an iguana (a lizard species) situated at the mouth of the hostel and Saulsville station so as to suck from men money (salaries) the white man's calf which detests a kraal; An iguana which sucks milk and all the udder's remnants to an extend that it ends up sucking blood.)

Reference to money as a white man's calf which detests a kraal relates not only to the fact that among the Blacks, money evades accumulation but to the fact that the Whites pay the Black labourers meagre salaries to an extend that it becomes totally impossible to retain it for trying times. This is due to the fact that the wealth of the country is concentrated in the hands of the White minority.

The sucking abilities of an iguana cannot be exaggerated, it suffices to state that it sucks a terrible suck as depicted above. To refer to Emthonjeni as an iguana situated at such a strategic area as planned by the government adds a dimension of an ulterior motive, that of keeping Black men penniless, permanently brainwashed (by alcohol) and enslaved.

3.2.2 Biblical References

Malope's use of the language of the Bible and of religion in general becomes an object of analysis in its own right, it

becomes a variety of language which enhances the internal stylistic features of his novel.

In his clarification of the use of the Bible in a manner described in the above paragraph, Ngara (1982:89) had this to say:

Where extracts from the Bible function at the level of paralinguistic affective devices, our main focus is not on the analysis of the minute linguistic features of each extract, but on the total effect which the extract has on the novel, on its affectiveness and semantic significance; for by relating some key extracts to the events in the novel we get a deeper insight into the novel than we would otherwise.

If one takes for instance the following statement by Sefako, one cannot fail to recognise its familiarity with Christ's reaffirmation of His authority, an extract from the New Testament:

Ammaaruri ke a go raya, ke nna tsela le kgoro mono. Yo o sa tseneng ka nna, ga a kitla a dumelelwa mo motseng ono wa ga rre, (Malope, (1982:24).

(Verily I say unto you, I am the truth, the way and the light. No one will enter the kingdom of heaven except through me).

Read in the light of this quotation from the Bible, (John 14:6) Sefako's utterance assumes a far greater significance than it would otherwise have been the case if it was left out. Obviously Sefako's character is nowhere next to Jesus but Malope ingeniously employs a roar of laughter immediately after Sefako's utterance, thereby implying that even Sefako is acceding to the fact that it is a joke to compare his utterance with that of

Christ.

Again Sefako is said to have been viewed by Mpotseng with great admiration in terms of what he had achieved through his efforts. Hence, this reference to the statement by Malope (1982:31) that:

Mo go Mpotseng, Sefako o ne a tshwana le tsamma
e e reng o sena go gosomela mo motlhobolokong, o
be o thinyega leoto, o fitlhele e rapame gaufi
nao ...

(In Mpotseng's view, Sefako was like a shepherd's
rod which one luckily finds nearby after sprain-
ing one's ankle as a result of a fall into an
ants' hole.)

In the Setswana vocabulary the word (tsamma) a rod, is mainly
used as found in Psalm 23:4 where the psalmist remarks:

Tsamma ya gago le seikokotlelo sa gago di a
nkgomotsa

(Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me.)

The general significance of this phrase should be seen in the
context of the whole Psalm 23 about the Lord's role as our
shepherd- our redeemer.

Another statement, which functions at the level of para-
linguistic affective device is an utterance by Modiegi (Malope
1983:27) which is indirectly related to a Biblical extract as
found in the New Testament. This was said by Modiegi whilst
engaged in a dialogue with Mothosu.

Rangwane, Modimo o teng. Ona o itse tsotlhe. O
tlhaloganya tsotlhe. Dilelo tsa rona o tla di
utlwa. dikeledi tsa rona o tla di phimola.
(1 Corinthians 13:7) -Setswana version.

(Uncle, God is there. He knows everything. He understands everything. Our cries he will hear. Our tears he will erase.)

Failure by Modiegi to interpret aspects of her son's desertion makes her believe that this could be an act of God. Hence, this appeal for mercy against what could possibly be the wrath of God.

By means of this extract, Malope gives his audience deeper insight into aspects of Modiegi's uncertainties.

3.2.3 Tenor of discourse.

As explained before, a book's tenor of discourse is determined by the writer's tone of voice and choice of words. (refer 2.2.1.4)

In this section, the tenor of discourse will be analysed on two different levels the first being, the attitude of the writer towards the Whites in general and the Whites' minority government in particular, and the second being his attitude on matters relating to sex and taboos.

(i) Attitude towards Whites and their minority government.

The writer's unfavourable attitude towards the Whites and the Whites' minority government is something that cannot be gainsaid, but this is by no means expressed through a contemptuous tone.

Characters are forced to suppress their feelings even where they are unfairly treated. Their customary 'botho' denies them the opportunity to revenge. The case of Mmadisenke, who swears to revenge after the boss had unfairly replaced her few hours of leave of absence with a whole Saturday's work ends up with her stealing a teaspoon, and an ultimate confession that she could not just do it (revenge) as stated hereunder:

Ke kile ka ikaelela go mo ruta batho. Ke itumela

gore ga ke a ka ka diragatsa maikaelelo ao,
(Malope, 1983:51).

(I once aimed at teaching her a lesson. I am happy that I did not actualise that objective.)

Hatred is not inherent in her. Reticence therefore, remains the only option where so much injustice is practised.

The passages dedicated to the inhuman tendencies of the Brits White farmers, those of fetching Black farm labourers and literally enslaving them on their farms is toned down in the use of such expressions as:

Maburu a koo a lata batho kwa gae, le fa a ise a ke a ba bone a ba busitse, (Malope,1983:13).

(Farmers out there fetch labourers from their homes, even though he has never seen them returning those labourers back home.)

The control of the language and tone extends to the writer's depiction of apartheid slavery in an abstract form, as expressed by the aged-(they had nothing to lose) when drunk-(for sobriety and fear are not too distanced). Masilo's lamentation speaks a lot of volume. (refer 3.1.p57)

The fear apparent in Malope's characters does not even afford them the opportunity to criticize the government openly. There is always that reluctance to blame the government even in obvious matters relating to their situational conditions, even in a dialogue between two people who could under normal circumstances confide in one another.

An example of this reticence through fear of conviction is revealed in the following three passages.

Mpotseng after failing to make sense out of the argument on the

rationale behind the government's influx control, comes up with a statement:

Fela ke bona e le tshiamololelo go nkganela go ipatlela tiro, (Malope, 1983:220).

(But, I see it as an injustice to restrict me from seeking for a job.)

He does not by any means say "I see it as an injustice by the government".

Mosala, disregarding and simultaneously condemning Mpotseng's attitude of blaming himself for the Phelandaba-misfortune, that of impregnating Keneeletse, vehemently attacks this attitude by stating that:

Ga di a agiwa ke wena dihosetele tse! (Malope, 1983:58).

(You are not responsible for the construction of these hostels!)

This blame he puts on the hostels, but he deliberately fails to mention the obvious institution responsible for their construction - the government.

The intensity of the debates on the Eesterus forced removal issue also reveal this reticence where Malope (1983:43) presents the following observation:

Batho ba rotolelana matlho jaaka e kete ba na le seabe mo tlhomong ya molao o o hudusang makeisana.

(People hotly debated this issue as though they had a share in the proclamation of the legislation responsible for relocating the locations.)

The other would be "shareholder" is not made mention of, which is obviously, the government.

It is for the same purpose of avoiding loaded expressions of contempt against the government practices that some irregularities are foregrounded as jokes as in the following passage relating to how the government managed to "keep to its war-time promises."

Ditsholofetso tsoatlhe tsa go iwa ntweng di ne di akareditswe ke jase e, (Malope, 1983:26).

(All pre-war promises were resembled by this coat.)

For a war-veteran rustic, Mothosu, to display a coat as the only form of post-war compensation makes a mockery of the Smuts government.

Another strategy by means of which Malope down-plays a would-be emotional outburst from his audience on a sensitive political topic is revealed in his depiction of the rules and regulations upon which the hostels were to operate as tabled hereunder:

O ke motse wa banna bosi, mme o ageleditswe ka terata. Ga go tsenwe fela mo hoseteleng-baeng ba ipega kwa kgorong e e disiwang bosigo le motsh-egare- fa e le banna. Basadi le basetsana ba ileliwa gotlhelele go nna baeng mo hoseteleng e. Le fa mosadi a re o tlile go lekola mogatse, ga go tsenwe; o tshwanetse go romeletsa ka bongwe ena a letile mo kgorong. Fa mosadi a batla madi a bojalwa jwa gagwe jo moagi wa hosetele a bo nwetseng molato mpeng, o leta mo kgorong. Fa mosadi a batla monna yo o kolopetseng lejwe kwa morago fa a tloga kwa gae, o leta mo kgorong. Fa mosadi a tla go batla monna yo mmaagwe a biled-itsweng badimong; o leta mo kgorong. Ga go

tsevenwe-mosadi a itse nomoro ya borobalo jwa mmatliwa kana a sa e itse. Ke yona hosetele ya boMpotseng eo, (Malope, 1983:52).

(This is strictly a men-only village, which is fenced. Admission is reserved - visitors have to report at a gate which is guarded day and night - only if they are male. Women and girls are completely barred to become guests at this hostel. Even if a woman came to see an ailing spouse, there is no entry, she has to send someone and wait at the gate. If and when a woman seeks for the arrears of beer purchased by an inmate on credit, she has to wait at the gate. If and when a woman seeks for a man who has deserted home, she has to wait at the gate. If and when a woman seeks for a man whose parent has passed away, she has to wait at the gate. There is no entry - whether she knows the room number to a man sought or not. That is the hostel where Mpotseng and others resided.)

The rules are tabled by Malope in a poetic form as if the intention was to deviate the reader's attention from content to artistry involved in the construction thereof and the appreciation of form rather than concentration on the contents which could if allowed to surface, revolt the readers.

Unequal treatment of government is revealed by a relevant dialogue on the plight of Keneeletswe after the source of her income, Mpotseng was arrested. Her mother attempts a solution to that plight by predicting that her white masters would assist with the children's education. She goes on further to say:

Bona ba bile ba lesego, bana ba bona ba tsena sekolo kwa ntle ga go duela go fitlha ba aloswa materiki, se se gakgamatsang ke gore ba amogela madi a a fetang a rona kwa tirong, (Malope,

1983:76).

(They are fortunate, their children attend school without them having to pay anything until graduating matric, what is even more surprising is that they receive far much fatter salaries than us.)

Despite all these injustices through harsh legislations and personal rebukes, Malope still manages to display appreciation towards some aspects of their traits when he states:

Tshweu ga di tswane, (Malope, 1983:36).

(Whites never leave one another in a lurch.)

One may subsequently arrive at the conclusion that the downplayed tone as expressed by Malope in Matlhoko, Matlhoko almost reveals the true nature of the attitude of the majority of the Blacks of South Africa towards the Whites and the White minority government and that is the fact that they are not opposed to the whites per se, but the system employed to govern them as second class citizens in their own land.

(ii) Attitude on matters relating to sex and taboos.

The treatment of the above issues also enjoys a kind of a downplayed tone.

Issues relating to a young man impregnating an adolescent still attending school are said to be sensitive and related to with reticence.

As this is the most talked-about issue in Malope's work, the following successive statements suffices to highlight his artistry and variety of expressions relating to it together with the resigned manner in which the characters and the writer view it:

(i) Ke motho a le gobedi, (Malope, 1983:3).

(I am two in one) - I am pregnant.)

(ii) ... Powana yooru Masilo, e e tseneng, mo tshimong
ka go sutlha legora, (Malope, 1983:38).

(Masilo's little bull which gained entry into the
cultivated land through fence invasion) -
Masilo's son who got her pregnant.)

(iii) Ba re mosetsana wa bona o merwalo,
(Malope, 1983:39).

(They say their daughter is heavy-laden) -
she is pregnant.)

(iv) Mmutlwa o o robegetseng mo lonaong lwa morwadia
bona ke wa leoka looraMasilo, (Malope, 1983:43).

(The thorn that has broken-off into their
daughter's foot belongs to the Masilo's forest-
Masilo's son got her pregnant.)

(v) Setlhako sa kgaoga serethe, (Malope, 1983:55).
(The shoe's heel got broken-off- she got preg-
nant.)

It is a taboo among the Batswana to talk about sex acts, but Malope employs linguistic technique of great artistry in describing aspects related to it without mentioning it either.

Malope (1983:10) mentions it merely as a side issue, with no loaded connotations when he remarks:

Monnawe [Mmalesedi] o ne a mo tshwara letsogo
maabane fa a ne a jetse Mpotseng nala go mo naya
mofago wa tsela. A tshega a le esi. Banna le bona

ruri!

(Her little sister took her turn (to cook) the previous day when she had paid Mpotseng a visit to give him one - for - the - road. She laughs, men!)

Similarly, men's erection, resulting from lust is handled with great modesty. About it, Malope (1983:53) had this to say:

Fa o sa le lekolwane le le itekanetseng gona,
mogaetsho, ke matlhomola, gonne madi a aga a
boaboa kwa lethekegeng, a se na mosela o a ka
rothang ka ona.

(If you are still a healthy young man, countryman
it is a pity, because blood often takes turns
around the waist, finding no exit from which it
can drip.)

Grosser aspects of human life and behaviour are also handled in a resigned manner. In his amazement to what could best be described as horrific disgust, Matlho tactfully poses a question:

Golo fa re tlile tsaanong ya motho le kgaitsadie?
(Malope, 1983:86).

(Does it mean we are here to marry a person and
his sister?)

Malope should in the end be credited for his political witticism and his opportunistic skills if one considers the period during which his novel was written. Coupled with that, should be credit due to him also, regarding the application of linguistic technique in his quest to preserve traditional norms and values by down-playing aspects of human behaviour which are regarded as

taboo namely physical appetites and sex.

3.2.4 The use of Affective and Evocative Language

Malope's language is capable of arousing the reader's feelings and emotions. If one observes it in its own right, one notices that it indicates the writer's own feelings towards the object or person described. His use of words with strong affective connotations is applied throughout his novel but his noble achievement in this regard remains the remarkable balance which he manages to strike in his description of both the urban and rural life related issues. The very fact that he is well versed with the rural as well as the urban life setting.

The beauty of the language of the rustics and the description of their situational conditions appeals to the reader. This has best been explained in our reference to reticence in respect of taboos in general. Apart from the examples provided, (refer: 3.2.3 p70,71) many more descriptions of distinctive quality which also evoke and affect the reader can be foregrounded:

The portrayal, for an example, of Mmalesedi's aspirations and hopes about the fate of her fiancé' when he departed on a job-hunting expedition appeal to the reader's sympathy as she exclaims hereunder:

Tsa kwa o yang ga re di itse. Botlhokwa ke gore o tshotse lekwalo la tettlelelo. Nna ka re o se re go ya majako, wa ya madilotsana, (Malope,1983:2).

(As for your destination, we know nothing. What is important is that you have a job-seeking permit. As for me, my advice is, remember not to forget your home.)

The same can as well be said about the description of poverty, destitution and helplessness which characterised Masilo's family

after the government's proclaimed relocation of their cattle to the far-away, drought-stricken areas of the Hammanskraal district. This not only reveals their powerlessness to resist harsh proclamations but helplessness beyond the description of helplessness, a pathetic state of affairs in the real sense as verified by the following passage:

[Mpotseng]A gakologelwa sentlenyana go twe dikgomo tso-tlhe tsa Bakgatla di tshwanetse go isiwa kwa morakeng - kgakala kwa Rooiberege, bophirima jwa Mmamahutsana. Tsa ya. Ga di a ka tsa boa. Le gompieno a gompieno o sa ntse a dumela gore kutlobotlhoko ka ga tsona ke yona e robileng rraagwe mokwatla, gonne o ne a fitlha tlhogo felafela fa go sena go feleletswa digwapa tsa tsona. Pholo ya gagwe e khunou - Roomane - e e neng e setse jaaka moriri wa ngwako mo tlhogong e e letwadi, ya direla monnamogolo megoga. Ena, mogoloe le mmaabo - Modiegi - ba sala mahutsaneng. Ba se na thuto. Ba se na leruo lepe, (Malope, 1983:3).

(He remembered vividly when the instruction came that all the Bakgatla's cattle-herds had to be relocated to the camps - far away at Rooiberg, west of Mmamahutsana. They were gone. They never returned. Even today he [Mpotseng] is still convinced that his father died as a result, from their heart-breaking experience, for he passed-away willy-nilly after the last of their biltongs were eaten. His dark-red bull, Roomane, the very last, the only one to remain, accounted for the funeral meal. [Mpotseng] himself, his brother and his mother were left in destitute. With no education. With no cattle.)

It is however in accordance with an old saying which goes on to

say "Loso-logolo ditshego", which means, one can still manage a smile whilst in a strangle-hold of an emotional depression, that Malope's audience is afforded this opportunity. A closer view at the above passage would reveal that it was only after the last biltongs were eaten that the old man "took a decision" to die. The reason as to why it was necessary for the old man to "wait" for the last biltongs can only be expected from the old man, hence, "loso-logolo ditshego".

The writer's description of the situation of the Black rural-commuter, that of being packed like canned fruits in a bus, that has to travel for terribly long distances on non-car-worthy roads, revolts the reader with disgust (if one imagines the relatively cosy conditions enjoyed by their White counterparts). These conditions are presented hereunder:

Motsing a (Baloyi) tsogile ka la molema, a ba katela mo beseng go sale go nkgga mofufutso gore phuu! Go tle go nne maswe fa mongwe a ka potla jwa maabane. Go befe le go feta fa mongwe a gotetsa peipi kana sekarete. Fa o bula matlhab-aphefo go tsena dithunthung tsa matlakadibe mo tseleng e mangopengope, (Malope,1983:9).

(On the day of display of his (bus conductor) negative moods, he would literally pack them in the bus, this resulting in a perspiration pong of unprecedented limits. It becomes even worse if one bellows yesterday's beer. The situation would worsen even more should someone light-up a cigarette. If you decide to open the window a dusty storm of a typhoon proportions may find its way inside.)

However as in the previous example, the audience's level of disgust is simultaneously counter-balanced by the writer's amusing portrayal of Baloyi, the bus conductor, against the

background of the tolerant and generous nature of the rustics, if one relates to their unquestionable subservience to the supreme powers of a "mere" bus conductor. These powers are embodied in the following sentences:

Fa a ipoka a re ena ke poo e ntsho ya Sepilonko, maila go fenngwa. Mo banameding e le Baloyi. Botlhe ba itse gore le fa a sa itse go kgweetsa, fela ke ena komang-ka-nna wa bese. Fa ba itlha-ntsha ba sa eme thapo, a se ke a okaoka go laela mokgweetsi go tlhabela pele. Fa a re bese e tletse go nne jalo. Fa a re ga e ise e tlale, lefoko la gagwe le agelwa lerako, (Malope, 1983:9).

(In his self praise, he would regard himself as a black bull of Sepilonko, which knows no defeat. Commuters knew him as Baloyi. Everyone knew that even if he was not well-versed with driving skills, he was the boss . In the case where they rebelled against the orders to stand in a queue, he did not hesitate to instruct the driver to steam-ahead. When he said the bus is full, it was full, when he said the bus was not yet full, his word was final.)

The most dramatic scene in Malope's novel remains, without doubt the ritual associated with the casting-off of evil spells from the Masilo family after Mpotseng's arrest. Malope (1983:77-78). Malope's vivid and dramatic description relives the ritual and literally engages the reader in the very tense and sacred proceedings.

The description of urban-related issues as well enjoy an awe-inspiring description which evokes the feelings of the audience in the same way as the description of rural-related issues hitherto mentioned.

Sefako's insatiable appetite and stormy eating habits, coupled with his debased pleasure at food portrays the picture of a glutton on display. Malope (1983:17) relates to him when he states:

A sena go feela mogopo, a kadimetsa tee, mme a kgarametsa dijana kwa go Mmadisenke.

(After sweeping the dish, he swallowed tea and pushed the dishes towards Mmadisenke.)

The language is evocative in its use of strong and expressive words such as "go feela", to sweep, in the place of a comparatively mild "go ja" to eat and "a kadimeta" he swallowed, in the place of a relatively weaker "go nwa", to drink.

In another urban-related event, the language describing the event which was later to be viewed as the basis of Mmadisenke and Sefako's love affair, is powerful, full of suspense and terrifying to the reader. Sefako's vivid memory is followed by a graphic description of this spine-chilling event as depicted hereunder:

Ee, a gakologelwa mogang a neng a tlhaselwa ka dithipa ke dilalome tse pedi tse a neng a sa bolo go di tsoma. E rile a ba supa ka serotswana sa kgogo, sa gana go bogola. A le botsa phokoje jaaka tshetlha ya dipoa e lemogile gore e fedile dinala le meno, mme e seng pele mongwe wa banna a mmaya lotshwao mo kgorukgorung, (Malope, 1983-:18).

(Yes, he remembered the day on which a knife attack was waged on him by two hardened criminals which he had been hunting for quite some time. When he pointed a firearm at them, it jammed. He ran for his life like an old beseiged lion, but

not before he was stabbed behind his neck.)

Almost the same can be said about the police nightly raids of illegal tenants which grip the reader with fear and the suspense it embodies which culminates with a sigh of relief on the reader as Mpotseng and his aunt escape the police net of a sure catch with inches. This event is referred to hereunder:

Ba tlhaga ba kokota lebati ka lebati ba fenyek-olola le ka fa tlase ga malao mo diphaposing - Mmadisenke le Mpotseng ba tshwere mala ka diatla gore gompieno go tlile basele ba masele. Fa ba fitlha fa setswalong sa phaposi ya Mmadisenke ba etsaetsega motsotso o le lopane, mme ba fetela pele jaaka thaga e tlola tshimo ya mabele e upilwe, (Malope, 1983:19).

(They came knocking door after door turning beds upside down in their search. Mmadisenke and Mpotseng were terrified that today, complete strangers (police newcomers) have arrived. When they approached the door to Mmadisenke's room, they hesitated for a minute and suddenly steamed ahead just like a flock of birds in a cultivated land (during harvest times) that has been taken care of by traditional medicines.)

The portrayal of the Christmas eve's Riverside family horror at the expense of the compost bucket collectors, however, leaves the reader embarrassed with amusement. A mixture of pity and "they - deserved - it" in a way engulfs the reader. For on one hand one may feel that it was bad of them to tease the collectors and the collectors had to level-up matters to restore their pride, but a question would remain as to whether they did deserve that kind of punishment. This event is accounted for by Malope (1983:29) in the following passage:

[Sefako]A tshokane ka a gakologelwa tiragalo ya baagisani nae kwa Riverside, ba ba kileng ba kgoba boSampokane ka dipuo ... Ya re bosigo jwa fa e tla tsoga e le Keresemose, boSampokane ba fitlha ba sekega emere ya masutelo mo lebating la phaposi ya babakgobi jaaka basimane ba thaya sefu. E rile beng ba phaposi ba bula setswalo mo mosong, emere ya wa, mme ya kgotholela mo phaposing!

(He remembered an event concerning his neighbours at Riverside who once went so far as to tease compost collectors with derogatory remarks. On Christmas eve night, the compost collectors decided to rest a bucket beside the teaser's door in a manner resembling the boys laying out a trap. On their (inmates) reopening the next morning, the bucket fell and spilled-out into the room!).

Reticence and respect for taboos associated with the plight of the married Sefako and his mistress Mmadisenke of having to put-up together for a night in a one-room shelter in the company of Mpotseng can be said to have been generalised under the topic: Tenor of Discourse (refer:3.2.3.ii). The writer regarded this to be an inevitable depravity among the elderly when he remarked:

O tla tshwanelwa ke go tshotlhela kobo le leswe mosadi yo ..., (Malope, 1983:19).

(She would have to complicate matters completely, this woman ...)

However it is the verbal expertise in respect of description of these passage that should be given credit. This description is outlined hereunder:

Ga baakanyediwa go isa maropo go beng. Kerese ya tingwa ise go apolwe. Sefako a potela ka fa morago ga garetene le Mmadisenke jaaka e kete ba bosì ... gone mo bosigong joo, rra, ditlhale di ne di feletse Mmadisenke morutsheng, (Malope, 1983:19).

(Sleeping arrangements were organised. The candle was blown-off before dressing-off. Sefako sneaked behind the curtain together with Mmadisenke as though they were alone - for on that specific night, Mmadisenke had no way out.)

Read in conjunction with the previous quote, this passage possesses some kind of a rousing effect which could be experienced by the readers with average physical appetites.

In concluding this chapter, one is tempted to revert to the basic definitions alluded to in the previous chapters by remarking that:

Although style may be used loosely to comprise the writer's entire craft, however in this chapter, a narrow version thereof was afforded priority, that is, style has been observed truly as the way in which a writer employs his words, phrases and sentences to achieve the desired effects as Roberts (1973:152) intimates.

It is thus his down-to-earth approach in his application of both linguistic features and paralinguistic affective devices that has given Malope a good standing among contemporary writers, as possessing a style of his own, especially after several abortive attempts by aspirant writers to break away from Monyaise - a prolific writer of the sixties.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

We have already enlisted three aspects which were referred to as criteria for evaluating a work of art, (refer Section; 2.2.2). The following is an account of the evaluation of an artistic creation in terms of each of the enlisted items:

4.2 READABILITY

Sub-section (2.2.2.1,p27) has essentially indicated what readability means. The bone of contention of this explanation however remains the fact that readability is basically determined by interacting factors, and these are:

- (i) the style of the writer
- (ii) the aesthetic appeal of the writer's language and
- (iii) the writer's handling of character and plot.

In his emphasis of the significance of (ii) and (iii) above, Ngara (1982:23) explains that:

The handling of language, plot and character may be so powerful that the reader is gripped by a magnetic force which compels him to plough through the book with gusto until the very end.

What could possibly facilitate the comprehension of Malope's novel's level of readability is the distinction which can be drawn between him and the prolific Monyaise's novels. This distinction is discernible in the following aspects:

- The use of unusual and obscured words and phrases,
- Density of texture and
- The technique of withholding information

4.2.1 The use of unusual and obscured words and phrases.

(a) Malope

Malope did not aspire to make things difficult for the reader to understand. Resultantly, one can manage to plough throughout his novel with the gusto referred to above, for his simple and usual phrases are written with the enthusiasm demanding an equal amount of concentration required by any other well written novel.

The application of laboured phrases and terminology associated with the indication of time is common factor among most Setswana writers. On the contrary Malope refuses to toe the line. "Back to basics" seems to be the principle of his choice.

To him morning remains the basic moso, noon remains the basic motshegare and afternoon remains the basic maitsiiboa to mention but a few concepts associated with time indication.

The following example from Malope (1983:12) serves to verify the above stated assertion:

Mo mosong wa Mosupologo Mmadisenke a supologa go sa le gale ka ura ya bone.

(In the early hours of Monday (Monday morning) Mmadisenke hurriedly woke up just in time at four o' clock)

Another example emanates once more from Malope (1983:12) which is phrased in this fashion:

Fa ura ya bosupa maitseboa e ka otlala ke sa bonale, o betse lobota lele gararo-gararo...

(If it can strike seven o' clock in the evening

before my arrival, you should hit that wall three times ...)

Similarly, the naming of most objects enjoy Malope's back to basics credo. A bedroom remains kamore not phapusi as the sophisticated writers are inclined to call it.

A contemporary enthusiast may as well choose to make use of go keketega (to laugh) instead of the basic go tshega as applied by Malope (1983:23) in the following sentence:

Sefako a tshega, a bo a sala a itshwere dimpa.

(Sefako laughed to an extent of clutching his stomach).

(b) Monyaise

It remains clear that Monyaise's intention in his employment of the unusual and complicated phrases is to affect the readers, but unfortunately this ends up frustrating them instead, for on many occasions they fail to bring out a clear picture of what the writer is talking about. Noteworthy examples from one of his classics, Go sa baori, we find the following applications:

The phrase matla-ka-maleo as applied in the following sentence;

Ka pelo a re matla-ka maleo. Ke fa a atamela, a fitlha a lepeletsa dinala mo iso e kete o a ikomosa, (Monyaise, 1982:1).

(He inwardly predicted "trouble". He then went nearer and hung his hands on the fire-place as though he was warming himself up).

is seldom used in Setswana, hence obscured. Most readers come into contact with it for the first time through Monyaise's

works.

In the same breath, the word mpadiakeke, as applied in the following sentence, is very seldom used:

... mme go mo go bona gore ba tsamaya Tshwane mpadiakeke kgotsa ba latela noga ..., (Monyaise, 1982:59).

(...it rests upon them whether they deliberately avoid Pretoria or they challenge it ...).

An audience could easily be thrown out of balance by the application of an adverb, mampa-a-kolobe as used in the following sentence:

Letsatsi le ne le le mampa-a-kolobe fa a thanya mo maibing go fitlhela a robetse mo moriting wa setlhatsana sa mokgalo, (Monyaise, 1982:47).

(It was nearing sunset when she woke up from the confused state of mind and found herself sleeping in the shadows of a tropical tree).

4.2.2 Density of texture

(a) Malope

Density of texture is an aspect which inextricably bound to readability. In analysing Malope's novel with particular reference to to this aspect, the following observations may be highlighted:

Malope's novel's distinctive quality is the fact that it has a relative low density of texture. However we should keep in mind that " low" as used here does not necessarily qualify the quality of the novel.

The poetic quality evident in Malope's novel is as indicated in the previous chapter to a large extent reference to Malope's favourite praise-poems, for an example the poem of the Bakwena ba Mogapa. It is only in very a few cases where spontaneous poetic constructions are made use of. Whenever these are applied by the author, care is taken that comprehensive terminology is used as opposed to the archaic vocabulary which demands the unnecessary puzzling-out of meaning. The description of the city of Pretoria mentioned in chapter 3 p.60 serves as a good example of the above stated views on Malope. He does not cloud his novel with impediments, this resulting in a rhythmic flow of reading which indeed please the readers. Resultantly readers do not preoccupy themselves with semantic clarity at the expense of the much needed flow.

(b) Monyaise

Monyaise's novels boast a relative high density of texture as compared to Malope's works. An introduction to one of his novels Marara presents a poetic description with a relatively high density of texture as indicated here under:

Rremogolo, Mothubatsela-a-Marumoagae, phorogotlho ya mmele wa polokwe, e ne e le mosimane wa kgomo tsa mafisa mo metlheng ya bofelo ya Setswana sa lekgorokgoro; mme a aga a ikana gore motlha a ka tshemogelang kwa Makgoeng, ammaaruri, o tla boa a boka ka letlhare matebele a mantsho, magadimana ntweng, maja a dumaduma, (Monyaise, 1983:5).

(Rremogolo, Mothubatsela of the Marumoagae clan, a robust-like character, was a young man who was making amends to keep the home fires burning during the late stages of the antiquated Setswana, who used to swear that once he could slip to the south, truly-speaking he would

return a filthy rich man, driving a large herd of cattle home).

Obviously this paragraph demands much puzzling out of meanings of words and expressions on the part of the reader. Expressions like, phorogotlho, (bulky) lekgorokgoro, (old/archaic) and figurative phrases like matebele a mantsho, (the black Ndebeles'-referring in this instance to a large herd of cattle) magadimana ntweng (warriors of the same clan-in this case the figurative meaning still prevails, and it implies cattle) and maja a dumaduma (roaring grinders-cattle. Reference is made to their tendency of chewing grass with some thunderous grinding sounds) requires of one to fathom their meanings, which is by no means an easy task. The above paragraph is fairly involved, and in it the writer mentions something without making it sufficiently clear to the reader what he is referring to. It is nevertheless a paragraph written with enthusiasm eventhough the enthusiastic tone is not matched with clarity. It is obvious that a description of this nature is intended to affect the reader.

4.2.3 The technique of withholding information

(a) Malope

In Malope's novel there is minimal application of this technique. Most of his statements are complete. Where information is being withheld, it is primarily because of reticence that received priority attention in the previous chapter. In the rare cases where an incomplete phrase is foregrounded, it is with the writer's full confidence and knowledge that the reader would be familiar with what is left out as in the following passage from Matlhoko, Matlhoko:

Fa a le mo gare ga wa botlhano, ga twe a di eme di ... go iwa dijong, (Malope, 1983:2).

(Whilst in the middle of the fifth queue, it was announced: Let them stop and ... it's lunch time).

It does not require much effort by the reader to predict that the word that is left out, has been omitted due to reticence. The word urinate is derogatory and it is taboo and uncharacteristic of the Batswana to lay it bare.

Malope also seems to respect the intellectual integrity of his audience. This is evident in his tendency of leaving three dots after writing about a particular idea. This does not necessarily indicate that information is being withheld. It is rather his way of encouraging his audience to think more about some other details which can be relevant to the issue under discussion.

A relevant example is provided by an emotion-charged political address by an activist in one of the "illegal" gatherings.

Bagaetsho ba bantle, bana ba thari e ntsho... re iphitlhela re le mo marakanelong a ditsela. Tsela e tla supywa ke Mayibuye, mme re tla e sala morago ka mogopolo osi, re itse fa tsela e le makete... ka ntata ya morwalo o; (Malope 1983:40).

(My beloved countrymen, children of the black karos... we find ourselves at the cross-roads. Mayibuye will find a way for us, and we will follow it as one, knowing very well that it is by no means easy... because of this load)!

(b) Monyaise

Monyaise's technique of indirect statement or withholding information where the reader needs it, requires a great deal of

effort for one to become familiar with what is talked about. However, this does not discredit him as such, as it is counterbalanced by his novels' linguistic dexterity that makes his fanatics oblivious of this obscurity. An example can be taken from one of his novels, Ngaka, mosadi mooka:

A gopola se o kileng a se bolelela Diarona ka ga tlhakantsuke e e dirwang ke baoki ... Hee, motho yo Diarona ... a jaana ga se ene .., (Monyaise, 1976:59).

(She remembered what she once told Diarona about the nurses' manipulations ... Ahh, this very Diarona is she not the one ...).

The "left overs" may not be as obvious as the writer may believe, for many arguments have arisen among the students reading population about the contents which the writer had left out.

4.3 AESTHETIC QUALITIES

Aesthetic qualities are discovered through aesthetic reading. Rosenblatt (1980:185) in his article on The Transactional Theory of Literary Works distinguishes between two kinds of reading, the efferent and the aesthetic.

Efferent reading is that in which the reader disengages his attention as much as possible from the personal and qualitative elements in his response to the verbal symbols, he concentrates on what the symbol designates.

In aesthetic reading, the reader's primary purpose is fulfilled during the reading event as he fixes his attention on the actual experience he is living through.

What is called for in the reading of literature is an intensely

realised aesthetic transaction. This is achieved through the power inherent in a reader's dropping of personality so as to be free to empower an author to complete or fulfil the communication inherent in the text.

4.3.1 Aesthetic qualities in Matlhoko, Matlhoko

Aesthetic qualities in Matlhoko, Matlhoko encapsulate, the role that language plays in deepening our understanding of the portraying character and in indicating the character's social rank and the background of the speaker.

It is interesting that Malope still regards the rustics as the champions of Setswana vocabulary, the archives of the fertile language.

Through language he allows them to express deep thoughts in concrete images. Their metaphors, taken from day to day experiences are striking. The abstractions that readers obtain from the novel's passages is an attempt to reach into the very essence of things. An elevated poetry of the highest order has already received attention in the previous chapter.

4.3.1.1 Use of metaphor

Malope uses metaphor as the trace of resemblance that reduces rather than aggravates difference, but remarkably still, generates, in accordance with Doherty (1992:51), new models of metaphorical functioning that make the familiar even less familiar, the known less known, and that inhibit the trope's easy assimilation to preestablished contextual codes.

In one of his metaphorical show-piece, Malope describes Mpotseng's experiences whilst on his way to Hammanskraal in the most affective way. He is observing from an upper slope angle a view of the town (Hammanskraal), in particular, the effects of the pangs of the winter season on its out-look in the

following sentence:

... e kwa Hammanskraal - gona mo matlong a Mpotseng a neng a bona a bobile fa tlase ga ditlhare tse di falautlhang magodimo ka dinala tse, (Malope, 1983:2).

(... it is in Hammanskraal - at the very houses which could be seen hiding under the trees which were scrapping the heavens with their nails).

The wild fluctuation of the empty tree branches is likened to the scrapping nails - an indication that the event under surveillance is taking place during winter time.

In one of their meetings, Keneeletswe confronts Mpotseng with a bombshell from which we observe the following striking metaphor:

Ke batla ditshwanelo tsa me. Ga ke mokgele e reng pula e na o phuthololwe, mme e re e khutla, o menwe gape, (Malope, 1983:59).

(I want my rights. I am not an umbrella which is unfolded only during rainy days, and folded once again when it stops raining).

She is aware of the fact that she could be exploited if she could allow her affair with Mpotseng to function on his terms.

At one stage, Mmadisenke refers to the police as metsoke ya bommankgodi some kind of a drug, p7. The reader does not merely have to know the drug, but its effects as well, in order to understand what the writer ultimately implies. The drug implied is not that effective. It does not even effect the fashionable "high" expected from the drugs. It is useless just as the police are said to be in Malope's novel.

4.3.1.2 Standard Dialect

Throughout the novel, the reader is impressed by the writer's faithfulness to the standard dialect, with slight deviations in dialogues and descriptions by the writer which the readers can easily tolerate. This is in accordance with Leith's (1980:246) assumptions that:

Faithfulness to the dialect has to be balanced against the tolerance of the reader, who does not want to be punished with unfamiliar words, incomprehensible constructions and impenetrable spellings.

Slight deviations in the mould of, goleng (since when) p7. instead of the relatively standard ke sebaka se se kae, kampo p27 (or) instead of its standard equivalent kgotsa, mosetsana su p51 (here is the girl) instead of mosetsana ke yo, nte pele ke bone p54 (wait let me see) instead of the standard iketle pele ke bone, are among some few examples provided in order to verify the above assumption.

4.3.1.3 Character Creation

Malope's character creation easily matches Margolins (1987:107) character in his article Introducing and Sustaining Characters in Literary Narrative: A set of conditions. According to this critic, in what he calls thematological studies, character is regarded as standing for semantic complex or macrosign, composed of a cluster of smaller units (motifs, semes) unified by a proper name (when identical semes traverse the same proper name several times and seem to settle upon it) a character is created.

4.3.1.4 Use of Proverbs

The use of proverbs adds some kind of what one may refer to as

an adrenalin injected kind of exhilaration through the author's gut wrenching literary manoeuvres. The use of the proverb;

... phokojwe go tshela yo o dithetsenyana ... ,
(Malope, 1983:21),

(... only the wise jackal survives),

uttered by Mpotseng in his dialogue with Mmadisenke is in fact one way of supporting "the end justifies the means" concept as the only way a black person could survive the apartheid South African era.

Another proverb;

Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola, wa motho o a ipetla, (Malope, 1983:35),

(Moremogolo (a traditional medicine men's bone type) is created by being carved, but man shapes himself),

is an advice by Sefako to Mpotseng which implies that man cannot survive from chances created by others, he has to initiate such chances for himself.

As hitherto mentioned, there is no linguistic virtuosity in Malope's novel. The language is not laboured and complicated. the reader is not held back by unusual words. Above all, the writer has a feel of word and phrase which is entirely satisfactory.

Matlhoko, Matlhoko is a literary achievement. The character's are sophisticatedly depicted, biblical references impeccably employed whilst reticence has enjoyed ingenious applications. This novel is linguistically, structurally and otherwise an excellent work whose depth of human concern is realistic and

touching.

Stevens et al (1987:112) regard the hallmark of good scholarly prose as lucidity, and this is exactly what Matlhoko, Matlhoko displays. Rosenblatt (1980:85) puts it mildly when he posits that it is the transaction occurring among text, novel and the reader that ultimately produces a reader's sense of satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 LOOKING BACK

The realisation of Matlhoko, Matlhoko as an emotive and affective piece of art has indeed been realised with the application of Ngara's Theory of Stylistic criticism. With its application, Malope's novel is denied a customary cursory assessment which would have merely foregrounded it as a cognitive material in need of rational analysis.

We have in line with the goals of this theory:

- Singled out the distinctive features of a variety of the ideosyncracies of the author. We are able in the ultimate end to come to the conclusion that, Malope's style is unmistakably simple. In so saying we are taking cognisance of Ngara's (1982:22) warning that:

An easy style is not necessarily a good indication of a novel's readerability, neither does a complex style necessarily hinder readerability.

Monyaise's language for instance, in almost all his writings, is characterised by the use of involved sentences which are far from simple, yet the stories have the power that compels the reader to go on reading them.

Even though Malope's style could be said to be simple, the aesthetic appeal in the language used in Matlhoko, Matlhoko has determined his power of persuasion. He is thus able to equally keep his audience interested, and this he does by using rhetoric.

- We have also in line with the goals of the Theory of Stylistic Criticism, managed to identify the features of

language which are restricted to particular social contexts and most importantly, we have accounted for the reasons why such features are used, and when they are used. The use of vocabulary revolves around the concepts such as servitude, inequality, resistance, political parties, the government, racial divisions, police, prisons and others. It is on the basis of such language features that we are in a position to realise the socio-political context within which they are applied. We have also managed to attach meaning to the native's behavioural pattern on the basis of the context presented by such language features.

It does not by any means surprise the audience when fear grips the township's residents when police come knocking from house to house. Under normal circumstances they would have cherished the idea of a user-friendly police force in a mission of ensuring absolute safety, but it is not the case here. It is thus crystal clear that the events of this novel are taking place within the apartheid South African context.

- We have also taught ourselves to be conscious of the socio-linguistic character of Malope's novel, especially where we are called upon to analyse dialogue among the participants.

With regard to the dialogue aspect, it is not difficult to realise Malope's combination of the mixed Sotho dialects with the standardised Setswana. The use of mixed dialects does not in any way indicate a shortcoming in Malope's use of language but it depends mainly on two aspects, his aesthetic purpose and the moulding of his characters. In his description of a township settlement set-up like Eesterus, he occasionally switches to mixed Sotho dialects as in:

Lekeisene la Eesterus le ikadile kwa botlhaba
jwa motse-mogolo wa Tshwane-a-Poulwe-a-Mabasa,
(Malope, 1983:4)

(Eesterus township lies in the east of Pretoria)

He could have chosen to make use of the standard dialect motse-setoropo (township) instead of the Sotho dialect lekeisene, but if he could have forced reliance on the standardised Setswana, he could have failed to express the heterogenous nature of a township inhabitants.

The very Eesterus is referred to in rural Setswana dialects by the aged as Isiterose, thus depicting the variety of expressions between the aged and their offsprings, between the rural and township dwellers.

- We have in summation concerned ourselves with what the theory expects from us: minute details of grammar, lexis, phonology, meaning as well as with wider issues of deviation from the norm, the relationship between language and character and the relationship between the author, in this case Malope and his audience. These issues are structured and expounded in the three-dimensional approach to the theory which has been made use of by Ngara, even though for the purpose of our analysis, we have restricted ourselves to the first two dimensions which are, the constituents of the work of art and the evaluation criteria.

The first dimension of the theory relates to the constituents of a work of art, where we focused our attention on Character and the Language Format.

We have not failed to realise the following about Malope's characters:

Dialogue - Whilst engaged in dialogue, they speak authentically, their language conveys things about them which they cannot phrase for themselves. This the writer does through the use of dialogue.

Manners - Here we will outrightly concur with Raban's (19868: 92) assertion when he states:

The existence of a body of manners enables the novelist to place his character in a social setting, to give them a physical presence and credible existence without telling us any more about the characters themselves.

This is what Malope does through what we refer to as the indirect method of character portrayal which gives his characters the physical presence and credible existence they portray. His central character and secondary characters enjoy depiction through this privilege.

The poetic qualities, biblical references, tenor of discourse and the use of affective and evocative language elaborated under the caption Linguistic Format, have been found to have been so excellently exploited by Malope to evoke certain kinds of feeling in the reader, in some cases, a mixture of happiness and sadness which the audience may find difficult to balance.

If one takes for an example the following sentence, which is an indication of the turning point of Mpotseng's, (the central character) life, the reader would naturally sympathise with him over his unfortunate blunder. However, the manner in which the writer puts it would invite a snap laughter as indicated hereunder:

...mme ena (Mpotseng) a bolawa ke bodutu jwa hosetele. Ke fa a tla iphetlha mme a ya go nyela mo boping jaaka katse kwa 200 Ramasodi, (Malope, 1983:65)

(He was hard-hit by hostel loneliness. That was when he decided to make a move, and proceed to defaecate on flour just like a cat at number 200

Ramasodi street.)

Some novels may make themselves available to the analysis of their linguistic format through the para-linguistic affective devices such as symbolism, myth, allusion and allegory which are not analyzable in terms of normal linguistic description. It would then become our task to fathom such hidden but implied meanings in order to enjoy their aesthetic effect.

The second dimension of the Theory of Stylistic Criticism focuses attention on the Evaluation Criteria which encapsulate the readerability of the text and content value coupled with aesthetic quality. Chapter four attempts to expound on the aesthetic significance brought about by these items.

In conclusion, one may remark that, it is on the basis of the analysis of a work of art in terms of The theory of Stylistic Criticism that the ranking of most works will be justified and more meaningful reader-response to the works of art realised.

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