

**THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
NORTHERN SOTHO DETECTIVE NARRATIVE**

by

NGWAKO SIMON MOGALE

Submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

AFRICAN LANGUAGES

at the

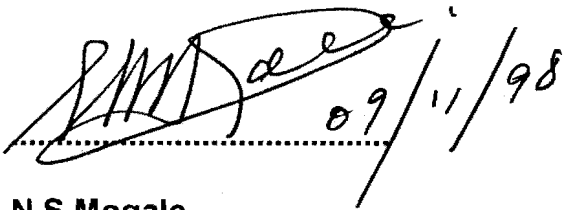
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER : PROFESSOR S M SERUDU

NOVEMBER 1998

DECLARATION

I declare that THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHERN SOTHO
DETECTIVE NARRATIVE is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or
quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N S Mogale', is written over a horizontal dotted line. To the right of the signature, the date '09/11/98' is written in a similar cursive style.

N S Mogale

09-11-1998

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most heart felt thanks go to my promoter Professor S M Serudu, for his meticulous corrections of chapter after chapter during the progress of this research. The final product bears a stamp of his guidance.

Many thanks to Professor Adrian Roscoe, Head of the Department of English Studies at the University of the North for his advice on the English language as well as motivation and encouragement which made me to believe that I can make it.

It would be a serious omission if I forget my two friends, Mr N T Mashabela, a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy of Education, at the University of the North and Mr P R Madiga, a lecturer at Modjadji College of Education who always insisted that I should strive for quality, not public glory but private sorrow.

For the accurate and speedy typing of this thesis, I would like to say many, many thanks to Mrs E J Lebepe.

Finally, many thanks to my students, whose contribution in the form of questions, debates and even arguments shaped the ideas which appear in this work.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late grandmother, and grandfather, Kobela Linah and Malesela Samuel Mogale.

SUMMARY

The aim of this research is to investigate the nature and development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho from its beginnings in the 1960s up to its present level in the 1990s.

Due to the peculiarities of each text under study, different literary approaches, viz. Marxism, Feminism and Intertextuality have been utilized in an attempt at getting the best out of each text. The basic requirements of a detective narrative as legislated by the Detective Club in Britain and Ronald Knox have been used as a scale on which to weigh this product in Northern Sotho.

The study investigates also how the detective narrative in Northern Sotho reflects the social history of the society out of which it originates. The differences in the texts of the 1970s with those of the 1990s is highlighted and the accurate way in which they are mirrors of the socio-political developments is revealed.

The study finally reveals the achievements and failures of writers of this genre in Northern Sotho. Different areas which need research by future scholars are suggested.

By way of conclusion the most important observation made is the need of being guided by a text under discussion whenever a literary approach is to be chosen. Also, more of

modern literary approaches need to be experimented on in relation with African literature written in indigenous African languages so as to assist in finally deciding upon the need of a home-brewed approach.

UNISA
BIBLIOTECA LIBRARY

896.397713087209 MOGA

Clk
Kls
Acos
Aanw



0001728882

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NO.	HEADING	PAGES
1.	The Detective Novel in Northern Sotho	1
1.1	Aims and objectives	1
1.2	Methodology and Approaches	4
1.2.1	Marxism	5
1.2.2	Intertextuality	11
1.2.3	Feminism	12
1.2.4	Approach to detective narrative	14
1.3	The development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho	16
1.3.1	Protest of the 1960s	16
1.3.2	Compliance of the 1970s	17
1.3.3	Imitation of the 1980s	19
1.3.4	Freedom of the 1990s	20
1.4	Scope of Research	20
2.	A Marxist reading of D N Moloto's "Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo"	24
2.0	Introduction	24
2.1	The place of literature	24
2.2	Historical factors which shaped Moloto's thinking	28
2.3	Moloto and his world	29
2.3.1	Land	30
2.3.2	Education	32
2.3.3	Influx-control and police harassment	35
2.3.4	Unemployment	39
2.3.5	Housing	41
2.4	The art in "Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo"	42
2.4.1	Alexandra through Moloto's mirror	43
2.4.2	Narrative style	45

2.4.3	Humour and satire	50
2.5	The crime of editors	53
2.6	Résumé	56
3.	M A Kekana's works: detective versus love story	57
3.0	Introduction	57
3.1	Detective versus love story	58
3.1.1	Detective stories	58
3.1.1.1	Crime	59
3.1.1.2	Detective	62
3.1.2	Love stories	64
3.1.2.1	The love-story in "Nonyana"	64
3.1.2.2	The love-story in "Nnete"	69
3.1.3	Characterization	72
3.2	Portraits of African womanhood in Kekana's work	79
3.2.1	Diamond: the rebel	80
3.2.2	Bubbles: the "bitsh"	86
3.3	Résumé	89
4.	An intertextual reading of V M Moloto's "Letlapa la bophelo"	91
4.0	Introduction	91
4.1	Theoretical framework	92
4.2	Intertextual relations	95
4.2.1	The Chase in Moloto	96
4.2.1.1	Milieu	96
4.2.1.2	Crime	99
4.2.1.3	Detective	103
4.2.1.4	Characterization	106
4.2.1.4.1	The detective	107
4.2.1.4.2	The criminal	110

4.2.1.4.3	The victim	112
4.2.2	The Chase in Motuku	114
4.2.2.1	Setting	114
4.2.2.1	Plot	115
4.2.2.3	“Ralato 2”: Crime v/s detective story	117
4.3	Résumé	118
5.	The “Ten Commandments” of the detective novel	120
5.0	Introduction	120
5.1	The “Ten Commandments” of the detective novel	122
5.1.1	Setting	123
5.1.2	Plot	124
5.1.3	Crime	125
5.1.4	Detection	127
5.1.5	Characters	128
5.1.5.1	The important client	129
5.1.5.2	The detective	130
5.1.5.3	The criminal	131
5.1.5.4	The victim	133
5.1.5.5	The suspects	133
5.1.6	Style of narration	133
5.2	Bopape examined	134
5.2.1	The rural world of Mankweng and surroundings	135
5.2.2	Bopape’s intricate plot	137
5.2.2.1	Exposition	138
5.2.2.2	Activating circumstance	139
5.2.2.3	Complication	140
5.2.2.4	Climax	143
5.2.2.5	Denouement	144
5.2.2.6	Solution	145
5.2.3	The murder of Mmatšhego	147
5.2.4	Bopape’s detection	148

5.2.5	Characters	152
5.2.5.1	Maleka, the important client	152
5.2.5.2	Nnono, the detective	154
5.2.5.3	Brenda, the criminal	159
5.2.5.4	Mmatšhego, the victim	162
5.2.5.5	The suspects	163
5.2.6	Bopape's narrative style	164
5.2.7	Bopape's social comment	167
5.2.7.1	Inefficient and brutal police service	168
5.2.7.2	The decadence of capitalist society	170
5.2.8	Résumé	173
6.	S J Chokoe: setting contemporary trends	175
6.0	Introduction	175
6.1	"Lengwalo" as a detective novel	175
6.1.1	The murder of Seila	175
6.1.2	The construction of an interesting plot	176
6.1.2.1	Exposition	176
6.1.2.2	Motoric moment	177
6.1.2.3	Complication	178
6.1.2.4	Climax	179
6.1.2.5	Denouement	179
6.1.3	Where is detection	180
6.1.4	Setting of ga-Mashashane	182
6.1.5	Fusion in character portrayal	183
6.1.5.1	Letshela, the unpromising hero	183
6.1.5.2	Sergeant Motle: from the dedicated police officer, to the criminal	185
6.1.5.3	The suspect-detective and the suspect-policeman	186
6.1.5.4	The man who worthed five-hundred thousand rands	187
6.2	Social comment	188

6.2.1	H Z Motuku: commitment to apartheid	198
6.2.2	S J Chokoe: the mirror of police harassment	193
6.3	Résumé	196
7.	General Conclusion	197
7.0	Introduction	197
7.1	Findings and recommendations	197
7.2	Future research	201

CHAPTER 1 : THE DETECTIVE NOVEL IN NORTHERN SOTHO

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The detective novel in Northern Sotho, as a sub-genre of the novel, is not as well developed as its English, American and French counter parts; but when compared to the same from other South African languages, e.g. Sesotho, Setswana, Xitsonga, and Tshivenda, one can safely state that in Northern Sotho a significant start has been made. Those humble beginnings boast the following novels:

- ❑ Moloto, D.N. : Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo 1960
- ❑ Moloto, V.M. : Letlapa la bophelo 1983
- ❑ Kekana, M.A. : Nonyana ya tokologo 1985
- ❑ Bopape, H.D.N. : Lenong la gauta 1986
- ❑ Mothapo, M.T. : Etshwang mare 1986
- ❑ Kekana, M.A. : Nnete fela 1989
- ❑ Maputla, S. : Ga se nna mmolai 1989
- ❑ Chokoe, S.J. : Lengwalo 1994.

By examining each of the above novels, we will be striving to reveal the nature and development of this sub-genre in Northern Sotho. Also, in undertaking this study, it is deemed necessary not to ignore H.Z. Motuku's short stories which appear in the collection "*Nka se Lebale*". In compiling his short stories about the detective Ralato, Motuku, though not that original (see 4.2.2) produced some of the most interesting detective narratives in Northern Sotho. Hence we believe for justice to be done to this study, these short-stories should also be looked into. Ramaila's, Ramokgopa's and Matlala's short stories will not enjoy the attention of this research due to their lack of relevance.

The main aim of this study is to investigate and analyze the Northern Sotho detective narrative as a literary work of art and trace the development from its humble beginnings to its present status. Interest in this field has been aroused by the realization that very little has been written about the detective narrative in Northern Sotho. First, it was P.S. Groenewald (1977: 19) who charted the way by his article: **Die Speurverhaal**. This article traces the thematic concerns in the Northern Sotho detective narrative cutting across D.N. Moloto's novel, "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" to Ramaila's, Ramokgopa's, Matlala's and Motuku's short stories in "*Taukobong*", "*Molomatsebe*", "*Ditaba tša dipoko*", "*Hlokwa la tsela*" and "*Nka se lebale*". In his M.A. dissertation, **The Detective Novel in Northern Sotho, A Comparative Study**, L.L. Mphahlele managed to do a comparison of only three novels, viz. "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*", "*Letlapa la bophelo*" and "*Etshwang mare*". And in doing this comparison many significant points about the novels were missed. To mention but a few: one cannot understand the in-depth study of D.N. Moloto's novel without touching on its protest nature, the power of its narrative style, and the fact that it is basically a police story not a detective novel. Also, the lack of originality in V.M. Moloto's novel stands out so conspicuously that one fails to understand how a literary critic can miss it. Tracing the sources when reading this novel becomes imperative for any understanding to be achieved. This will become clear in our future discussions particularly in chapters two and four.

The only other scholarly work worth mentioning in this field is D.M. Mampuru's (1986) article: **Critical Assessment of Lenong la Gauta as a Detective Novel (story)**, an Honours extended essay which appeared in ALASA. In this article, Mampuru discussed those characteristics of the detective novel which developed over a period of time in Britain, France and America and came to be accepted as the requirements of the form. She successfully placed "*Lenong la gauta*" on this scale and gave her verdict.

Now, having surveyed this field for existing literature, we concluded that too much has been left untapped. This state of affairs could not be left uncorrected. Thus this study is intended to provide an in-depth investigation and analysis of this sub-genre with the purpose of revealing its characteristics and peculiarities in Northern Sotho. It is believed that this will provide new knowledge, enhance understanding and lay the groundwork for a better appreciation.

A study of this nature is usually aimed at enhancing the knowledge of scholars of literature; but in this case we would like to go further and contribute to the authorship by providing a better understanding of the nature of this sub-genre and its requirements. One might say authorship is spontaneous and no writer is going to allow his free flow of ideas to be hampered by prescribed rules laid down by armchair critics. This would also hold water for other genres, not just the detective novel. Its peculiarity lies in these requirements which should be respected for it to exist. If an author is not going to adhere to these requirements then he should try his hand at something else, not the detective novel.

This study would fail dismally if it didn't reveal the relationship between the detective narrative in Northern Sotho and the socio-economic background out of which it originates. The subjects of detective narrative are crime and its detection the former a social illness and the latter a remedy. This was not the case in Apartheid South Africa. Law enforcement agencies were viewed as enforcing unjust laws and hence many criminal offences were taken to be heroic deeds aimed at undermining a cruel, inhuman system. Also, the black population, legally demoted to second-class citizenship, consisted of a mainly exploited proletariat who had no interest whatsoever in maintaining bourgeoisie privileges, something which is of paramount interest to the detective narrative. One can mention here V.M. Moloto's milieu in "*Letlapa la bophelo*". The wealth portrayed in this novel was non-existent amongst the blacks in South Africa at that time, while, on the other hand, D.N. Moloto

successfully portrayed the squalour in which the urbanized black man found himself. Hence the search for links between this type of fiction and the wider social reality should be of paramount importance if this study is to succeed in its main objectives.

Having outlined our aims and objectives, what comes to mind immediately is how this research is going to be carried out. This brings us to the issue of methodology.

1.2 METHODOLOGY AND APPROACHES

Of importance to a literary scholar should always be the question: how best can a piece of literary art be understood? And for us in this study our main concern is to identify a vantage point from which a detective narrative can best be approached for maximum understanding. Since for this study we are going to examine a number of authors who tried their hands at this sub-genre, it goes without saying that no one approach can fully serve this purpose. A *mélange* of approaches will be used and each will be selected for the purpose of achieving a particular objective under each section. In doing this selection we will be guided by the words of Ngara:

It is my view that if the critic is to perform his duties adequately, he should in turn be sensitive to the concerns of the artist and develop critical norms which give a satisfactory account of the content and form of the art of the day (Serudu, 1989: 2).

This brings us to the different literary theories to be utilized in undertaking this study. Two points need to be stated here. First, we should state that our choice of approach will be determined by the work to be analyzed. This is, the impression which the work makes on the researcher, as a reader, will be the deciding factor in

the choice of theory for a maximum understanding of what is deemed to be the best aspects of that literary text. In short, the text comes first, the theory second.

Secondly, in our discussion the application of the literary theory will be more important than an in-depth study of the theory itself.

1.2.1 Marxism

Literature does not develop in a vacuum, but rather out of a particular social background, and Marxist theories have a simple premise: that literature can only be understood within the framework of social reality; i.e. for maximum understanding, history and the society should not be divorced from literature. Marx maintained that social reality is found in history, which is a series of class struggles. These class struggles change over periods of history due to economic conditions (Webster, 1990: 57). The fact that society is divided into unequal economic classes determined by the right of ownership of property is evidenced by the existence of the aristocracy and the peasantry in feudal times; and the bourgeoisie and proletariat under capitalism. The former division was based on land ownership while the latter is based on ownership of capital.

For Marxists, a cultural artefact like literature cannot be divorced from this division for it is designed to reinforce the interests of the controlling or privileged class by articulating its world view (ibid). This relation between the economic basis and all the means of cultural production is what the Marxists call superstructure. Fokkema and Kunne-Ibsch (1977: 84) quote Marx as stating that:

The mode of production of material life determines altogether the social, political and intellectual life process. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the

contrary their social being, that determines their consciousness.

This means that from their position of economic power, the bourgeoisie not only dominate and exploit the proletariat but also uses state power to control literature, religion, art, education, the legal system and all other aspects of civil life to justify its domination and maintain the status quo.

It is on these issues of class conflict that we will focus in applying these Marxist theories. Marx and Engels "believed that the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat would lead inevitably to the overthrow of capitalism, thus promoting the cause of social progress" (Fokkema & Kunne-Ibsch, 1977: 83). This class division, which is the evil consequence of industrialization and capitalism, is crystal clear in urbanized areas. Hence, it is not surprising that the first detective novel in Northern Sotho, "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*", should depict such a colourful urban milieu. Detective fiction develops within an industrial setting though mobility can be rural when the industrial setting is transported to the rural area and disturbs the rural calm. This is the vital link between the detective narrative and Marxism as a literary approach.

In our application of this theory the procedure to follow will sometimes be to start by looking at the structure of history and society and seeing whether the literary text reflects this. Sometimes we might start from the specific text and move to the author, the author's class and the role of this class in society. For example, the following excerpt from Moloto (1960: 2) will be understood and given the relevant interpretation when perceived through this theory:

Ba bantši re tseba dimpho tšeo boMakhina ba di hweditšego
bofelong bja ntwā, ka baka la mošomo wo motonagadi wo ba

o dirilego, e lego gona go šireletša lefase la gabobona le ka moka tše di lego go lona madireng. Mongwe le mongwe o filwe leotwana, go mo hola mosepelong, le jase ya setšone, go ruthufatša mmele wa gagwe mohlang ga phefo.

(Many of us know very well the presents which Makhina and company received at the end of the war, because of the great and important duties they had successfully performed: being to protect their fatherland and everything in it against the enemy. Each one of them received a bicycle, to help him when taking journeys, and a military coat, to warm his body against cold winters).

A thorough critical appreciation of this novel will be undertaken in chapter 2. Here it is important to demonstrate how a Marxist approach could be applied to this excerpt. The first step would be to give a brief sketch of the society of the author, and more particularly his class. The supremacy of the whites in South Africa had been strengthened from the National Convention of 1910. From that time parliament passed act after act to erode all rights and privileges left for blacks up to 1948 when apartheid officially became government policy. After 1948 the South African government strove by every means to consolidate power, land and wealth in the hands of the whites. All attempts by blacks to liberate themselves were severely crushed. When studying this society, the Spro-cas commission found that:

South Africa, it is generally agreed, has been one of the most rapidly developing countries in the world during the twentieth century, yet we find that the lion's share of the increased wealth has gone to only a small proportion of the population, whilst in some sections of the economy (for example, the gold

mines, the white-owned farms, and the reserves) the majority of the people have actually grown poorer over time (Randall, 1972: 12).

Now, how relevant is the above excerpt to the situation outlined? It is “overwhelmingly political and proletarian in outlook, and concerned with problems of colour and race” (Shava, 1989: 1). It is a ringing indictment of the three evils of apartheid: segregation, oppression and land-dispossession. Over and above these is important also to note how it says what it purports to say. This will show how apartheid censorship made authors camouflage their message and smuggle it to the readers (Mogale, 1993: 77).

The author says: “Ba bantši re tseba dimpho tšeo boMakhine ba di hweditšego” (Many of us know very well the presents which Makhina and company received). There are two shades of meanings in this statement. The first one is the knowledge which is confirmed by the author as well: that of bicycles and military coats. We all know that the black ex-soldiers received these presents at the end of the Second World War as their demobilization packages. This is not the message which the author would like to impart to his reading public, because at the end of this sentence he is very sarcastic towards these packages. He says: “.... ka baka la mošomo wo motonagadi wo ba o dirilego,” (.... because of the great and important duties they had successfully performed). It is this sarcasm which reveals the insignificance of the packages received by black ex-soldiers and thus clearly portrays the attitude of the government towards blacks: they could be exploited for military and economic gain while their humanity was rejected. Moloto is an angry author, and he cannot hide his anger. Towards the end of this paragraph he reveals this anger by portraying the abject poverty in which these black ex-soldiers live:

Go bangwe, le ge e šetše e dio ba dithapo fela, ke tšona dikobo tša bošego le mosegare, go fihlela le nankhono (Moloto, 1960: 2).

(For others, though they are now only cotton threads, they are their day and night clothes up to today).

And these are men who fought for their country, men who had seen colleagues dying for their country they can't afford a decent pair of trousers and a warm blanket. Moloto is disgusted by this, hence he says:

Ke tshepa gore Makhina yena o ile a kwela rakgolwagwe bohloko ka ya gagwe (Moloto, 1960: 2).

(I believe that Makhina felt pity for his grandfather and gave him his coat).

No self-respecting man could accept these humiliating packages, no self-respecting government could give them to its brave, patriotic ex-soldiers but the South African government did just that.

The second shade of meaning we get from what the author does not say, and this is the message which he would like to impart to his readers. In the clause: "Ba bantši re tseba dimpho" the author is calling upon his reading public to revive their knowledge, (and those without this knowledge to research and acquire this knowledge) of the demobilization packages received after the Second World War. He would like to have his readers compare the benefits which were enjoyed by white ex-soldiers with those given to black soldiers. The author is also pleading with his readers to bear with him for not mentioning that white ex-soldiers received

land, for they know what the government would have done to his book had he mentioned that. The plea to the readers is there between the lines; the fear of the government is there invisible on the page, its stench is so strong for his people to smell. Though the Publications Control Board could not get this message, we the readers could.

To understand Moloto's statement one has to see it against the history of South Africa immediately after the Second World War. It is a historical fact that after the war white ex-soldiers were given tracts of land as demobilization packages. There is a story of a certain Lord Delamere who, after returning from the war, was told to take his pick of land. He moved to the fertile plains stood on a hillock, and declared that "as far as the eye could see" was his, and that became a fact. The African villages which fell within that circumference were forcefully removed to a small corner of the lord's lands, where, deprived of their livelihood, they provided him with plentiful cheap-labour. That is the origin of "reserves" in the South African context. Thus in the sentence "Ba bantši re tseba dimpho" it is implied that we not only know that the packages received by black ex-soldiers were not commensurate with the duties performed, but we also know that white ex-soldiers were very well rewarded indeed.

Finally we should mention that Moloto, in this excerpt, is not only commenting on what he perceives as social injustice in his society he is also advocating change in the society's values and norms. Though he is writing under severe oppression, he cannot let things continue unchallenged he cannot let his class be oppressed for ever. He is calling upon his class, the blacks (proletariat), to rise and break the shackles of oppression.

In conclusion, one can ask the question: was there any other approach which could have been used to bring about a better understanding of this artefact? We believe

that there was none, and we believe that this approach was the best and was dictated by the artefact itself.

1.2.2 Intertextuality

In the above discussion on Marxism we have seen how literature, as part of the superstructure, can never be separated from the economic base. Texts which are produced in a certain era are either intended to further enforce the legitimacy of the ruling class or to highlight its illegitimacy and bring about change. This relation of production and the socio-political context, which could be included within a broad definition of text, is, according to Still and Worton (1990:), a major force influencing every aspect of a text. This brings us to our next discussion: that of "Intertextuality" as one of the approaches to be used in this study.

Intertextuality maintains that a text (to be understood in the narrower sense) does not exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and hence does not function as a closed system. Still and Worton (Ibid) mention two axes through which other texts enter the text: First via the author, who is a reader of texts before he is a creator of texts, and thus his work of art is inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences of every kind. For example, Motuku's detective short-story, "*Ralato 2*" can be traced to James Hardy Chase's novel, "*Shock Treatment*" as its original source.

Secondly, via readers (co-producers) because in the process of reading, what is produced is due to the cross-fertilization of packaged textual material by all the texts which the reader brings to it. A reader's knowledge of some theory unknown to the author will bring fresh interpretation and understanding. Also an allusion to a work known to the reader will contribute to the interpretation while on the other hand, if the work is unknown it will have a dormant existence in that reading (Still and

Worton, 1990: 2). A good example which springs to mind is the benefit the researcher derived from John Bunyan's classic "*The Pilgrim's Progress*" and knowledge of Intertextuality as a literary theory, when reading O.K. Matsepe's "*Mahlatsa a Madimabe*". Some knowledge of the obstacles which Christian had to overcome on his journey sheds light on the problems which Matsepe's Seitshwenyeng met on his way.

For the purpose of this study it will suffice at this point to state that this approach will be adopted for a critical appreciation of those texts that can be understood better only if their predecessors or hosts are referred to. Apart from Motuku's "*Ralato 2*" this theory will be applied to V.M. Moloto's novel, "*Letlapa la Bophelo*" which cannot be properly understood without referring to James Hardley Chase's two novels "*Lay her amongst the Lilies*" and "*Twelve Chinks and a Woman*".

1.2.3 Feminism

One of the approaches which we will use in undertaking this study is feminism. One might be surprised by this, but the reason is not too far to find. It is not by choice that we will devote a whole chapter to this approach, since it is necessitated by the fact that M.A. Kekana, who has two detective novels to her credit, is not only a woman author, but is also committed to the feminist cause though she tries to camouflage this. It is clearly evident in her first novel, "*Nonyanga ya tokologo*". Hence we believe that for this study to do justice to Kekana's work, feminism should be adopted as the best tool for maximum understanding. Also, since the purpose of this study is to reveal the nature and development of the detective novel in Northern Sotho, we will fail to understand that nature if the feminism in Kekana's novels is not highlighted.

Feminism is basically the position that women should enjoy the same rights as men,

but as a literary theory Eagleton (1991: 2) states that it “is a broad church with a number of co-operating and competing approaches it is probably more appropriate to talk of feminist theories rather than feminist theory”. But nevertheless in its diverse manifestations it is concerned with difference and the marginalization of women. Because feminist critics believe that our culture is patriarchal in nature, in literature they “try to explain how what they term engendered power imbalances in a given culture are reflected, supported, or challenged by literary texts” (Guerin et al, 1992: 182). In so doing feminists try to examine the experiences of women from all races classes and cultures. In this work we will analyze these experiences amongst Northern Sotho women as perceived by Kekana in her detective novels.

A statement by Kekana clearly reveals the patriarchal nature of Northern Sotho culture:

“Taamane naa wena o gola bjalo ka tokwane, goba nka re kua godimo o nyaka go fihla kae ka gore šimo o hlomola le rena borrangwaneago!” Ke Lesiba yo a rego bjalo, “Fela ga wa topa fase ka gore ka gešo ga re tsebe dirikhihlelana. Fela leabela le se fetiše ngwana’mogoloaka, mosadi wa go lekana le banna ka leemo le yena ka nako ga a botse” (Kekana, 1985: 7).

(Taamane, why do you grow like a mushroom, or can I ask where do you want to reach up there because here you are taller than me your uncle!” It is Lesiba who says that, “But you have not taken after someone we don’t know for in our family there are no short people. But do not go too far my brother’s daughter, for a woman who is equal to men in height is sometimes unappreciated”).

This talk is a clear example of the victimization of women intellectually, emotionally and physically. Here Taamane is blamed for growing faster and taller than men, as if she's responsible for that. She's even cautioned against this, though it is acknowledged to be hereditary. This is pure patriarchal ideology which produces the stereotypes of strong men and feeble women. If a woman grows tall and strong, she's not feminine. That is why Lesiba says: "... mosadi wa go lekana le banna ka leemo le yena ka nako ga a botse". The growth of Taamane is viewed by Lesiba as both unfeminine and unnatural. Toril Moi concurs:

.... patriarchal oppression consists of imposing certain social standards of feminity on all biological women, in order precisely to make us believe that the chosen standards for 'feminity' are natural (Jefferson and Robey, 1991: 209).

From the above example it is hoped that we have demonstrated how, through the feminist approach, Kekana's work can be understood. Through her novels, she criticises the patriarchal political and economic setup of our culture.

1.2.4 Approach to Detective Narrative

A study of the detective story could never be complete without paying special attention to the peculiar features of this type of fiction. Murch (1958: 17) maintains that for a story to qualify as a detective story in the modern meaning of the term it should "conform to the almost fixed pattern that characterises detective fiction, a pattern that has come to be accepted by authors and readers alike". This makes the detective story unique for it has its on 'fixed form' and its accepted variations. When one embarks on a study of this sub-genre it is only logical to pay attention to elements of this fixed form.

The purpose of this research is to study Northern Sotho detective narrative. The detective story has evolved due to popular interest in crime stories and as such it is popular literature and "popular literature of any country has its own individuality, derived from its reflection of national character and contemporary economic or social conditions" (Murch, 1958: 11). Do Northern Sotho detective stories reveal these? We can state here that it is definitely not the case for there is a glaring lack of originality among most Northern Sotho authors who have tried their hand at this type of fiction. (This will be discussed in Chapter 4). Nevertheless this does not matter much, for the detective story, whether in French, English or Northern Sotho, Murch (1958: 11) maintains:

May be defined as a tale in which the primary interest lies in the methodical discovery, by rational means, of the exact circumstances of a mysterious event or series of events. The story is designed to arouse the reader's curiosity by a puzzling problem which usually, though not always, concerns a crime.

This clearly indicates that this type of fiction has developed and established some elements peculiar to itself. Here we will mention some of those elements and an in-depth discussion will be undertaken in Chapter 5, substantiated with examples from H.D.N. Bopape's *"Lenong la Gauta"*.

Two of the most important elements of the detective story are crime and detection, while its major characters are the detective, the criminal and the suspects. Murch (1958: 14) adds to this by stating:

There can be no doubt that it expresses drama, especially the drama of city life, - the crowds of strangers, the ever-present possibility of a chance encounter with crime on a train or bus,

the frightening unexpected things that "could happen to any one" and which therefore are particularly thrilling to those city dwellers whose everyday life is humdrum.

This emphasizes the importance of the issue of setting in a detective story, which should be urban.

In the above discussion we have given reasons for our choice of approaches and the appropriateness of each theory on specific sections of this research. Mention was also made of determining factors which influenced this choice, and examples from different texts were given to substantiate the relevance of our choice for particular approaches. Thus in our discussion above we have already covered the approaches we will use for this research as a whole.

1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DETECTIVE NARRATIVE IN NORTHERN SOTHO

The history of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho is like that in English or French, a social rather than a literary history. This will be clearly demonstrated in our next discussion in which this history will be divided into four periods.

1.3.1 Protest of the 1960s

The development of the detective narrative is closely related to the movements of industrialization and urbanization. One can even say that it is born out of the resultant evils of industrialization. In examining the objective function of this type of literature, Mandel (1984: 8) observes:

It responds to a need for distraction - for entertainment - sharpened by the increased tension of industrial labour,

generalized competition, and city life.

Thus it is revealed that this type of literature is basically bourgeois, and it is an attempt by this class to reconcile awareness of social injustice: their wealth as opposed to the abject poverty of the proletariat. In this unfair distribution of wealth, revolt and crime are inevitable, hence the Bourgeois class needs a distraction - the crime story - in which "revolt against private property becomes individual. With motivation no longer social, the rebel becomes a thief and murderer" (Mandel, 1982: 8-9).

It is not surprising that D.N. Moloto wrote his novel "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" in 1960. South Africa had become highly industrialized and millions of blacks, after being dispossessed of their land, could only hope for better living in and around big industrial cities, where they sold their labour and lived in squalour. Unemployment increased and crime reared its ugly head.

Moloto, though he adopted the bourgeoisie mode of communication - the detective novel - he is in fact protesting against not only apartheid but capitalism as a whole. This is the theme of the detective narrative of the 1960s - protest.

We can call this the period of 'good bandits'. The robbers of this time somehow remain within the bounds of the moral order of the proletariat community. They are heroes. They don't steal, but rather take from rich whites. It is not by coincidence that Setsokotsane robs Mr Van Dyk's business. They were carrying out a policy of wealth redistribution.

1.3.2 Compliance of the 1970s

In the 1960s, after the Rivonia trial, it seemed that the Afrikaner juggernaut had

finally triumphed over African nationalism and resistance. Since it came to power in 1948, the Nationalist government had been striving for entrenching economic and political power in the hands of the whites. Gerhart (1978: 85) confirms this when he states:

Malan and his followers were determined to refashion South African society according to Afrikaner ideals of racial purity and segregation, and at the same time to end once and for all any possibility that the country might ever move towards an extension of economic and political rights for blacks at white expense.

To an extent the Nationalist government succeeded. That is why there were homeland governments. Some blacks believed apartheid was just, and complied with the oppressor. This was the period of 'total onslaught', when each and every black man who attempted to advance the cause of liberation was termed a 'terrorist'. It was this mentality which gave birth to H.Z. Motuku's short detective story "*Ralato 1*" in the collection "*Nka se lebale*". In this story, the detective, Ralato, penetrates a cell of freedom fighters, wins their confidence and finally betrays them to the police. The detective is presented as a hero:

.... lehono ka thušo ya gago re kgonne go swara ka moka diphelephethe tšeo maikemišetšo a tšona e lego go senya le go dubakanya lefase la gabo rena.

(.... today due to your help we have succeeded in arresting all the terrorists whose intention was to destroy and destabilize our fatherland).

These are the words of the Minister of Law and Order when thanking Ralato for his deeds. To the oppressor, whose intention was to maintain bourgeoisie white supremacy he is a hero. But is he a hero to the proletariat black community? Obviously he is Mamasela.

One really wonders whether it was Motuku who penned this short detective story or if it merely appeared under his name. It wouldn't be surprising if it was the brainchild of the then BOSS intended to brainwash the black schoolchild.

1.3.3 Imitation of the 1980s

In the history of the detective narrative one can refer to this period as the era of American junk food. In terms of production it was quantitatively very rich though qualitatively dismally poor. Five detective novels were published during this period, the titles and authors of which appear under section 1.1. It was during this period that South Africa appeared to be the fifty-first star on the American flag. Living in South Africa felt more like living in America than Africa. Due to the Gold War and the apartheid mentality, the South African population was bombarded through the media with the message that everything American is good.

The Nationalist government propaganda machine was effective, and this manifested itself in literature. There is little if any originality in the detective novels published during this period. The American crime story's influence is very visible in the literature of this period. In his novel, V.M. Moloto merely combines James Hadley Chase's two novels while Bopape and Mothapo do not escape this influence either. It is only M.A. Kekana who shows originality and comes with something altogether new - feminism.

1.3.4 Freedom of the 1990s

The unbanning of the ANC and other liberation movements ushered in a spirit of freedom in South Africa. That fear which kept on lurking at the back of the mind and inhibiting authors in their work was now dispelled. Authors could now write about their true everyday experiences without fear of censorship. The detective narrative of the 1990s reveals this freedom, particularly the freedom of pointing out the harassment, the corruption and cruelty of the police force.

Throughout the apartheid years, the black population of South Africa was hostile to the police because they were viewed as agents of an oppressive system whose sole purpose was to uphold unjust laws. The police themselves were also corrupt and cruel when dealing with blacks. They were not rendering a service to the black community, but were rather a force of oppression. It is this perspective on the police which S.J. Chokoe portrays in "*Lengwalo*". In this detective novel, the criminal and the uniformed policeman in the end turn out to be one and the same while the civilian suspect, formerly harassed by the police, is the amateur detective who cracks the case.

One wonders whether the detective narrative has reached its zenith with Chokoe's novel or whether there is still room for development. But since this is popular literature, after some feasibility studies, those authors who intend to try their hand at this type of fiction will find out whether its demand curve is rising or declining.

1.4 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Chapter one has introduced this study by outlining its aims and objectives. The different literary approaches which will be adopted as an anchor for this study have been discussed.

Marxist literary theories, and their relevance to the study of some texts chosen for this study, have been discussed. Intertextuality has also been selected as it seemed to be a proper approach to unlock those texts which displayed a strong influence from previous works. For the female authors who appear to advance the feminist cause, feminism has been chosen as the most appropriate approach. The important elements of the detective narrative have been discussed as a basic foundation for a critical assessment of this genre. To conclude the chapter, a survey of the history of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho was done.

The next chapter will concentrate on a critical assessment of D.N. Moloto's novel "*Tšhipu e nile ke lebelo*" as a detective novel with a theme of protest. The socio-political background to this novel will be analyzed and the Marxist vantage point will be adopted. Various manifestations of Moloto's protest will be analyzed. These will include land dispossession, influx control, education, inferior salaries and baaskaap-mentality. Another point which this chapter will highlight concerns the mistakes committed by the editors of this novel. In correcting the first edition, the editors changed certain expressions as if they were language mistakes, while they were artistic expressions. This seriously affected the intended message of the author.

The third chapter will concentrate on M.A. Kekana's novels: "*Nonyana ya tokologo*" and "*Nnete fela*". Her novels have a strong feminist flavour and this will be revealed. Her anti-male chauvinism and anti-sexism will be revealed through an analysis of her heroines: Taamane and Bubbles, contrasting them with the male chauvinist detectives Tšhaledi and Ariel.

Literature does not occur in a vacuum; it is influenced by the complete social fabric in which the author finds himself. This phenomenon has been termed intertextuality by Julia Kristeva and it will be the subject of the fourth chapter. In terms of the notion of intertextuality, a text does not exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole,

and so does not function as a closed system. We will use this theory in our attempt to unlock V.M. Moloto's "*Letlapa la bophelo*" and M.T. Mothapo's "*Etshwang mare*". In this chapter we will also explore the various manifestations of intertextuality: imitation and influence. James Hardy Chase wrote in a particular social setting with its peculiar cultural practices. Moloto transplanted these unique cultural and social practices which are peculiar only to American society into a Northern Sotho novel without considering the plausibility of his setting.

Chapter five will try to analyze those important aspects of the detective narrative which Monsignor Ronald Knox referred to in 1928 as the "Ten Commandments of Detection" (Symons, 1972: 13). Though each and every detective novel in Northern Sotho will be alluded to in our discussion, H.D.N. Bopape's "*Lenong la gauta*" will be used as a model.

The sixth chapter will concentrate on the peculiarities of S.J. Chokoe's novel: "*Lengwalo*". Mandel (1982: 42) states:

The crime story is based upon the mechanical, formal division of the characters into two camps: the bad (the criminals) and the good (the detective and the more or less inefficient police).

Chokoe's novel deviates from this norm and presents the police as the bad elements while the criminal ends up being the good character. This deviation will be fully analyzed.

In chapter seven we will comment on our findings. We will try to answer questions such as: What is the position of the Northern Sotho detective narrative today? Has there been improvement in quality and production? Various factors which have a bearing on the development of this type of fiction, either negatively or positively, will

be analyzed.

Though we cannot prescribe to writers the topics they ought to handle, and how they should handle them, we will make recommendations which might be helpful to writers in the future. Too little research has been conducted on this sub-genre, hence areas which need further research will be highlighted.

CHAPTER 2 A MARXIST READING OF D.N. MOLOTO'S "TŠHIPU E RILE KE LEBELO"

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Marxism is a political, social and economic philosophy which is very broad and highly complex, and the part of it known as Marxist literary criticism is no less so. An attempt to describe the basic tenets of this theory has been made in chapter one, and it would be relevant here to concentrate only on that model which is to be adopted for this study. But before embarking on this it would be wise to locate literature within the Marxist outlook on society.

2.1 THE PLACE OF LITERATURE

Marx maintained that social relations between the capitalist class and the proletarian class form 'the economic structure of society' (Eagleton, 1976: 5). This economic base provides for a superstructure which contains a certain form of state. Within this state, law, politics, religion, ethical and aesthetic values are designed in a way which legitimizes the power of the social class which owns the means of economic production. Hence the dominant ideas of a society are the ideas of its ruling class (Ibid, 1976: 5).

Art is part of the superstructure of society. It is that element in the complex structure of social perception which determines how the situation in which one social class has power over the others is viewed. To understand literature, which is part of art, then means understanding the total social process of which it is a part. Eagleton (1976: 6) concurs:

Literary works are not mysteriously inspired, or explicable simply in terms of their authors' psychology. They are

forms of perception, particular ways of seeing the world, and as such they have a relation to that dominant way of seeing the world which is the 'social mentality' or ideology of an age.

Ideology is borne out of existing social relations, out of the way class-relations are experienced, legitimised and perpetuated. It is more than a simple reflection of a ruling class's ideas. To understand it we must analyze the precise relationship between different classes in a society, and to do that means grasping where those classes stand in relation to the mode of production (Ibid, 1976: 7).

Understanding literature requires more than just a discussion of plot and characterization. For the fullest explanation of any work of literature it is essential to understand the complex, indirect relations between that work and the ideological world it inhabits. Take, for example, the impression which Ribs left on Makhina's mind:

Tseleng o be a tšama a nagana ka ga Ribs. O be a leka go kwešiša gore ke motho wa mohuta ofe. Ribs o be a enwa bjälwa, eupša o be a sa lebelelege bjalo ka setagwa. Go bonagala gore ke mohuta wo setšong sa wona e bego e le batho ba nnete; bao ba bego ba ithata, ba itlhompha ebile ba hlomphega. Ke ka baka la bophelo bjo bošoro, bjo bo se nago lešoko, bja Gauteng le metse ye mengwe, re bonago bana ba gabo rena ba timela, etšwe bona ba re ba itebatša mašwana (Moloto, s.a.: 36).

(On the way he was thinking about Ribs. He was trying to understand the type of person she was. Ribs did drink liquor, but she did not look like an alcoholic. From the look

of things she looked like the type of person who initially was honest, self-respecting and dignified. It is because of the cruel, merciless life of Johannesburg and other cities that we see our brothers and sisters going astray, while they think that what they do is only to make them forget their troubles).

To understand the fine artistic force of this passage, the thoughts which occupied Makhina's mind as he proceeded from "Thanda Cafe" and the author's comments on the life in Johannesburg, involves subtly placing it within the imaginative vision of the novel as a whole. The evil which the author sees in the South African form of government as crystalized in urban areas, and the destruction it causes on the lives of black people, like Ribs, cannot simply be accounted for in terms of psychological factors in Moloto himself, for individual psychology is also a social product. According to Eagleton (1976: 7) all this is a unique transformation into art of an ideology of the time.

Here the author presents us with a character in Ribs, whose dignity and self-respect have been knocked by the harsh life under the twin-evils of apartheid and capitalism, but who against all odds, still proudly clings to that fast-fading beauty. She was unemployed not out of her choice, but because influx-control and colour-bar laws made it impossible for her to sell her labour on the market. Thus she was leading the difficult and dangerous life of selling liquor illegally. Time and again she had to take a sip with her male clients as a way of loosening their purses. She couldn't allow herself to get drunk as this could harm her business. All this was done for one objective: money. That's why, when her uncle came back from his game of dice and demanded money, Ribs fought for her profits like a wounded tigress:

O rile a sa iphutolla fale, setlogolo sa mo ratha ka
motšhene wa dintu, sa be sa mo nna kgopa, sa mo kgama.

O rile ke tšhošetša ka gore ge a tsoga o tla bontšha Ribs, a be a no feletša ka go bolela ka megolo, a re, “mo tlošeng, o a mpolaya!” (Ibid: s.a.: 35).

(While he was still straightening himself, his niece knocked him down with her head, knelt on him and started to throttle him. He tried to frighten Ribs with a beating when he stood up but ended up pleading through a choking throat saying: “take her away, she’s killing me!).

Here an uncle and her niece are fighting over money, a typical example of a decadent capitalist family. Moloto can understand why all the Ribses of South Africa lead that type of life. He blames all this on the cruel and merciless life under apartheid, the system intended for the dehumanizing of the black people. Eagleton (1976: 8) concurs:

To write well is more than a matter of ‘style’; it also means having at one’s disposal an ideological perspective which can penetrate to the realities of men’s experience in a certain situation.

In this situation, Moloto only sees moral deterioration amongst the urbanized blacks, he also sees the evils of capitalism. A person’s survival depends on his material possessions. A person like Ribs sacrifices her own dignity for the sake of material gain. She has just said this to Makhina:

Bjale, ka gobane ga ke na tšhentšhi, re ka fo sepela bohle go ya kua o dulago. O tla ntokišetša gona (Moloto, s.a.: 34).

(Now that I don’t have change, we can leave together and

go to your place. You'll fix things for me there).

Go with a stranger to his place in the middle of the night! This was pure prostitution. Moloto is able to decipher this because his historical situation allows him access to such insights.

Naturally Ribs is not a drunkard, a thief or a prostitute: that is not in her character, but the South African situation in which she finds herself has bred this monster. That is why in the next paragraph when Makhina discovers that his money has disappeared from his pocket, the author comments:

O mo laile ngwanenyana wa Gauteng (Moloto, s.a.: 36).

(She has fixed him the girl of Johannesburg).

This petty theft, like the attempted prostitution before, has not been committed by the original Ribs, the one who was truthful, self-respecting and dignified, but by the new Ribs, the product of apartheid and decaying capitalist society.

2.2 HISTORICAL FACTORS WHICH SHAPED MOLOTO'S THINKING

At the beginning of this century South Africa was experiencing a radical transformation of its economy from an agricultural one into industrial one. By the time the Second World War broke out, the concentration of mines and factories on the Witwatersrand was comparable, to the industrial regions of Europe and America. From the gold and diamond mines sprang banking houses which brought South Africa into the mainstream of international finance and commerce, but most unfortunately the fruits of this material prosperity were unevenly distributed.

Political and economic power in South Africa lay in the hands of a white minority

regime, whose ideology was to maintain and reinforce the existing order. This is not surprising for the distribution of wealth within a society is synonymous with the distribution of power. Randall (1972: 7) concurs:

It is the powerlessness of the poor that perpetuates their poverty and alienates them from the hopes and drives of that society. On the other hand, the economically secure are suspicious of the aspirations of the insecure, and become repressive and resistant to change.

The white rulers of this country were restricted by attitudes and policies which had developed during the nineteenth century, and instead of abandoning "baaskap" they refined it into "apartheid" or "separate development". That which had been unwritten custom was now implemented with single-mindedness, consistency and ruthlessness. The social, residential, cultural, economic and political lives of South Africans were legislated against. From 1948, the governments of Malan, Strijdom and Verwoerd passed act after act, starting with the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (No. 55 of 1949) and culminating with the Promotion of Bantu self-government Act (No. 46 of 1959) (Muller, 1993: 481-486).

This policy restructured the South African society in such a way that it qualified to be labelled an irresponsible society.

2.3 MOLOTO AND HIS WORLD

"Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo" is Moloto's response to this type of world, and it shows how a black-man lives out his role in a class-divided, colour-based society.

Moloto, like many black people in this country, found himself living in the abject poverty of Alexandra Township. When the poverty of this township is contrasted

with the wealth and plentifulness of neighbouring Sandton and surrounding suburbs, crime is inevitable. Under such an unfair social set-up, revolt, invasion or plunder of private property is justifiable as redistribution of wealth. The motive for this is social and one who carries out the action is not a thief or a murderer but a rebel. This is the cause advanced by Moloto in his novel. He is taking up arms against the capitalist apartheid society of South Africa.

2.3.1 Land

The unequal distribution of land in South Africa has been one of the causes of the existing inequality. In the rural areas the Africans have been forcefully removed from the most fertile land to barren areas referred to as reserves. These reserves over and above being barren are overpopulated and as such making a living out of agriculture here is next to impossible. Randall (1972: 43) concurs:

This means that some forty-five percent of the total rural population of South Africa (Black) is supposed to be supported by twelve percent of the rural land.

On the other side highly valuable land in urban areas could not be owned by Africans. Some of the few places like Sophia Town in which Africans were allowed to own property were demolished.

The obvious results of this policy were twofold: Firstly, sufficient employment opportunities could not be found in the reserves and this led to rapid urbanization, which the government tried to control through a migrant labour system (Randall, 1972: 43). Secondly, the multitudes who flocked to the urban areas could not all be absorbed by industries and mines, and this created large numbers of unemployed people with no means of earning a livelihood in the urban areas. It is these conditions which led to the rise of groups like

Setsokotsane. Moloto (s.a.: 01) comments:

Batho ba mehlobo le mehuta ka moka ba gona motseng wo. Go na le baruti, dingaka, mathitšhere le ba bangwe. Le ba go se nyakege ba gona. Bao ke babolai le mahodu, bao ba itshepilego go phela ka go hlakola bangwe. Mošomo ga ba o kgome ba šoma gola go robetšwe. Go tsebega gabotse gore go na le bao ba sa kgonego go hwetša mošomo, ka mabaka a mantši, eupša le bao ba tšhabago mošomo, bomahlalela, ba gona.

(People of all races and characters are all found in this township. There are priests, doctors, teachers and others. Even those who are not wanted are found here. Those are murderers and thieves, who live by robbing others. They don't work, they work only in the middle of the night. It is well-known that there are those who can't get employment due to various reasons, but there are also those who are just plain lazy).

The many reasons which create unemployment are mostly man-made, apartheid. It has already been discussed in this chapter how influx-control laws and the colour-bar act made it difficult for a person of colour to sell his labour. Thus people denied a chance of making a decent living by the evil apartheid system, had no choice but to resort to crime.

The barrenness of the land and high population density in the reserves left no room for commercial farming. There was only one plant which was part of the natural vegetation that could be cultivated: dagga. This plant can be cultivated even on rocky mountain soil. This might be the reason why Kgoši Nyatsane was dealing in dagga, his people cultivating it, while he was their connection with the

market via Setsokotsane.

This inequitable distribution of land had been made worse by the fact that at the end of the Second World War white soldiers were given large tracts of land as remuneration for their service. This point is elaborated on under 1.2.1.

2.3.2 Education

Before 1955 education for the Blacks was mostly run by the missionary societies. The mission schools accepted black and white pupils belonging to different social levels without distinction. Things were not to continue like this for ever and in 1953 the government passed the Bantu Education Act. Commenting on this Act, Oliver & Atmore (1967: 259) state:

One of the most far-reaching apartheid measures was the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which took African education out of missionary control, and made it an instrument of government policy in reshaping men's minds.

Through this act and many which were passed by the National Party government, it hoped to carry out its policy of enslaving the black man, exploiting his labour, and checking his social, cultural and educational advance to fulfillment (Gerhart, 1978: 170).

The Africans did not take this lying down. The Bantu Education Act was vigorously opposed in the press, various public forums and by some white and many black opposition forums (Lodge, 1983: 114). This opposition is reflected in some of the creative writings by Blacks. Eagleton (1976: 44) puts this into perspective by stating: "The writer translates social facts into literary ones, and the critic's task is to de-code them back into reality". This is exactly what we are trying to do here, and to demonstrate how this works we can cite Serudu, (1977:

01):

Bana ba ka ke be ke tla ba lesa bjang
Ba enwa meetse a tsebo sedibeng
Se fatilwego ke bangwe.

(As for my children, how could I leave them
Drinking water from a spring prepared by others)

Here this dramatist reveals to us one type of protest against Bantu Education. Mphaka, who stands for the black academics who went into exile, here reflects on the reasons for his decision to leave his motherland. He couldn't let his children drink water from the poisonous spring of Bantu Education. As such he was forced into exile to look for greener pastures for himself and his family. Serudu here clearly portrays difficult decisions which had to be taken by black academics when Bantu Education was introduced, and for the reader to clearly understand this excerpt, it must be looked at against the social background which prompted the author to write this drama text.

In his novel, Moloto also shows commitment to the struggles of his people against Bantu Education. He comments:

Makhina e be e le lešole ntweng ya Bobedi ya lefase. Ke gona mo a ithutilego ditsela tša bohloidi, le ge Babaso ba bontšhwa gannyane (Moloto, s.a.: 1-2).

(Makhina was a soldier in the Second World War. He learned espionage techniques there, though Blacks are taught only a little).

Under apartheid even in the few professions which were left open for them,

blacks were given as little information as possible. The hero-detective of this novel, Makhina, was given little training in this field. This was the aim of Bantu Education. In his capacity as Minister of Native Affairs, Verwoerd explained the aims of Bantu Education in the House of Assembly as follows:

"Racial relations (in South Africa) cannot improve if the wrong type of education is given to Natives. They cannot improve if the result of native education is the creation of frustrated people who, as a result of the education they received, have expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa do not allow to be fulfilled immediately, when it creates people who are trained for professions not open to them, when there are people who have received a form of cultural training which strengthen their desire for white collar occupations to such an extent that there are more such people than openings available" (Muller, 1993: 483).

Thus Makhina, like all other Blacks, was not given a proper education, his training was inferior to that given to his white counterparts.

Moloto further pours scorn on Bantu Education by portraying its poor products. He reveals this by presenting us with a character named Mr Legong who liked to speak English, though his knowledge of this language left much to be desired. The author's comments on Mr Legong are as follows:

Mna Legong o be a itumelela kudu Sekgowa se se tšwago molomong wa gagwe. Re kwa gore o be a kganyoga go ba toloki (Moloto, s.a.: 07).

(Mr Legong was very much proud of his English. We do hear that he aspired to be a court interpreter).

The English of Mr Legong was horrible, to say the least. The issue here is not only that this man's English was far from being correct, but mainly that he was not aware of this fact himself. This man, whose ambition was to be a court interpreter says:

No, my wife and children is well, except Rose (Moloto, 1960: 8).

Explaining the illness from which Rose suffers, he further says:

I think the wind has enter her. Anyway, my wife was take her to the doctor yesterday. I believe she will soon be in the best possible state of health (Ibid, 1960: 8).

Through this character the author is able to reveal to the readers the extent to which Bantu Education was poisonous. This character, like all products of Bantu Education, has been taught "at least one official language on a purely utilitarian basis; i.e. as a medium of oral expression of thought to be used in contacts with the European sector of the population" (Lodge, 1983: 116).

2.3.3 Influx-control and police harassment

"*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" can never be properly understood and its literary merits appreciated without understanding the South African society as it existed under apartheid rule. The validity of this statement can be substantiated by analyzing among others, Chief Detective Inspector, D.P. Hudson's words when giving Makhina instructions:

O se ke wa dumelela maphodisa go go senyetša taba ye.
Ga ke ba nyatše, fela ba nnyamiša ka go senya nako ka go
tšama ba botšiša dipasa, le mo go leng phatlalatša gore

motho ke mohlomphegi, goba kwanyana ya Modimo
(Moloto, s.a.: 10).

(Do not allow policemen to spoil this case for you. It is not that I undermine them, I just don't like their tendency of wasting time by asking for passes even where it is obvious that a person is respectable or humble).

The South African Police Force, unlike their counterparts anywhere in the world, were servants of the government, employed for enforcing unjust laws rather than assisting their fellow citizens. In the above excerpt, the Chief Detective Inspector comments about one of the duties of the police: to check passes from any black man to ascertain whether he is permitted to be in the urban area and has paid his taxes. This can be understood if looked at against the background of the structure of the South African society during this era. This society was pursuing two contradictory goals. Firstly, there was separate development and secondly economic growth. The first goal implied that every black man lived in and belonged to his respective homeland. This policy implied that African workers were temporary sojourners in the cities of South Africa, coming from the "foreign countries" of Transkei, Kwazulu, KwaNdebele, etc. (Randall, 1972: 96). Their families had no right to be with them and the pass-book was an instrument of enforcing this policy. If one was found without a proper endorsement in one's pass-book legalising his presence in the cities, one was given forty eight hours to go back to one's homeland. Commenting on the cruelty and destructive nature of this system, Randall (1972: 97) laments:

A lonely woman waiting desperately for news and money from her absent husband, a lonely man paying *lobola* so that he may marry another *man* in town are only two examples of human beings crushed by a system whose weight bears down daily more heavily on our society.

This system also turned honest citizens into criminals. Gerhart (1978: 169) states: "Africans who found their existence in the city defined as 'illegal' in terms of apartheid regulations usually resigned themselves to living outside the law and depending on their wits to avoid jail or deportation to the rural reserves". It is against this background that a reader can understand the following comment:

Ke bophelo bja Gauteng. Re phela ka moo re kgonago; e
seng ka moo re swanetšego (Moloto, s.a.: 15).

(It is Johannesburg's life. We live the way we are able not
the way we should).

This comment is by a woman character, Rachel. She was not a criminal, but was living out of the bounds of law, because that law was unjust. People were resigned to making a living in ways which were within their means, even though they might have been illegal. In fact, according to Gerhart (1978: 169), "The point at which honesty ended and criminality began was difficult for most urban Africans to specify".

Sir Richard Mayne, one of the first two Police Commissioners in Britain, issued these instructions:

Every member of the Force, whilst prompt to prevent crime and to arrest criminals, must look upon himself as a servant and guardian of the general public and treat all law-abiding citizens, irrespective of their social position, with unfailing patience and courtesy (Murch, 1958: 248).

This was not the case in the South African Police Force. The African section of the population was harassed by the police everyday so that in the end it looked upon the police force as an enemy rather than a necessary service for the

protection of law-abiding citizens. Policemen were feared; mere mention of the word "police" necessitated flight. Hence it is not surprising that we find a man leaving his wife and running for dear life when he sees Makhina approaching them:

Mmalo, go rileng! Makhina o ile a šala a itshwere dinoka, a tlabegile, gore na se se dirilego semangmang yola gore a lahle mogoma fase, a tšhabeše ka mokgwa wola wa go šiiša keng? (Moloto, s.a.: 50).

(Alas, what has happened? Makhina remained holding his waist in surprise about what had made that unknown man throw down his hoe and run for dear life like that?).

This is the ultimate in humiliation, for to be a man implies being able to protect your wife, feed your family and generally be there when the need arises. Here is a man running away, leaving his wife unattended! The reason can be only one: apartheid in general, but specifically "poll-tax". Men, the majority of whom were unemployed, were forced to pay poll-tax and they could hardly afford it. So this man knew that if Makhina was a policeman searching for tax-dodgers, he would not harm his wife. That's why Makhina also thought about tax-evasion when he saw the incident:

A fo phetha ka gore monna yola o swanetše go ba a tšhaba bakeng la motšhelo (Molot, s.a.: 51).

(He concluded by thinking that the man must be running away due to tax arrears).

2.3.4 Unemployment

The Spro-cas Economic Commission cites unemployment as potentially a major area of insecurity for the individual (Randall, 1972: 26). In the rural areas it is a bit better for one can try to make a living from the land, but in the urban areas life is really hard for an unemployed person. Moloto (s.a.: 15) clearly portrays this in the discussion between Rachel and Mamohapi:

“Ke kgwedi ya bone ke dutše ka matsogo. Gona bjale ke phela ka ncanca, ruri!”

“Ke nnete o swanetšwe go ba o phela boima!
Ge o sa dire maano o tla tlaišega!”

Rachel o re, “Ke leka ka kudu go ba kgatong e tee le bangwe. Gona bjale ke šetše ke kgona go dira mabjalwa ka mehuta ya ona. Le a Sekgowa ke nawo. Eupša ga se thato ya ka!

(“It is four months now that I have been unemployed.
Right now life is too bad for me!”

“It is true you must be pulling hard. If you don't try some
you will suffer”.

Rachel said: “I try by every means to be in step with others.
Right now I have learned to brew different types of
liquor. I stock also Western brews. But all this is
against my will”.

Rachel here is complaining about her life of misery due to unemployment. It is the fourth month since she has lost her job and now she's trying even illegal means just for survival. What strikes one is that she does not like doing what she does, for she says: “ga se thato ya ka”, (it is not my will); but she cannot help it. Gerhart (1978: 170) has made this observation:

Measured by any index of social pathology known to industrial societies, the African population of South Africa's cities ranked among the world's most troubled masses of humanity.

As a committed author, Moloto understands and sympathizes with the urban black masses, not only because he suffers with them, but because he possesses the talent and ability to comprehend the dynamic social factors causing certain behavioural patterns. It is not by chance that he presents us with Polomeetse, a gangster with a heart of gold. This man tried to protect Rachel, though he knew very well that he was outnumbered and was risking his own life, which he later lost due to this good-heartedness. The question one can ask here is why he joined Setsokotsane if he was so good-hearted? Moloto (s.a.: 01) answers this question:

“Go tsebe ga gabotse gore go na le bao ba sa kgonego go hwetša mošomo, ka mabaka a mantši”

(It is well-known that there are those who cannot get employment due to various reasons).

Polomeetse was one of those people who joined a gang because of lack of employment; he was not a criminal at heart. He was driven to criminality by the apartheid system. Gerhart (1978: 169-170) concurs:

The school boys of today became the pickpockets and gangsters of tomorrow, driven to crime by disintegrating family life, deteriorating education, and the prospect of nothing but dead-end employment.

2.3.5 Housing

"*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" is more of a social than a detective novel. In it the author deals more with the social conditions which bred crime than deduction in detecting crime and bringing criminals to justice. Moloto here presents us with the living, vibrant milieu of Alexandra, a violent black township in which one wonders whether there existed anyone who was not a criminal or whether the difference lay only in the degree of criminality. He writes about the Alexandra which he knows, and it is not a beautiful picture which he paints:

Motse wa Alexandra, wo e lego wo mongwe wa magae a
Gauteng, ke motse wo mogolo kudu, wa go patana

(Alexandra Township, one of the black townships of
Johannesburg, is big and congested).

There is nothing lovely about this place, it is a congested, overpopulated township. The ever-flowing, endless stream of people makes the fear of crime ever present in the minds of law-abiding citizens.

The horror of Alexandra lies also in what takes place in some of its dwellings. Some of these have earned themselves names like Sodom and Gomorrah due to their reputations. In describing Gomorrah Ribs says:

"A gona mantlo ao ke didimogago mmele ge ke a gopola.
Mantlo ao a tlišago dillo le ditsikitlano tša meno batswading,
metswalleng, gotee le baaging ka moka ba motse wo, ka
baka la sehlogo se se dirwago baneng ba bona, mantlong
ao. O ka reng ka Gomora moo go letšego dikarolo tša
bobe ka moka?" (Moloto, s.a.: 33).

(There are houses which make my whole body shiver when I think about them: houses which bring the cry of pain to parents, relatives and all inhabitants of this township, because of the cruel deeds inflicted on their children in those houses. What can you say about Gomorrah where all types of evil take place?).

It is not only the slum nature, the criminal nature in Alexandra to which the author draws our attention, but also the lack of security in this improper housing setup. Rachel's residences consisted of only one room. This room served as a kitchen, lounge, dining-room, bedroom and bathroom. This shows poverty in the life of Africans in Alexandra and other townships. Randall (1972:) concurs:

The provision of housing is the most obvious necessity on physical security. Housing has been recognised as an essential element in determining the quality of life.

The lack of this basic necessity and accompanying effects definitely contributed to the criminal life in Alexandra.

2.4 THE ART IN "TŠHIPU E RILE KE LEBELO"

Moloto's novel is unique, it is not that type of detective novel which is simply escapist entertainment. The type which Mandel (1984: vi) describes as: "when you read them, you don't think about anything else; when you finish one, you don't think about it again". This way of looking at a detective novel in general is incomplete but, concerning Moloto's novel in particular, it is untrue. This novel keeps drawing the reader back to it time and again. With every reading a new understanding of life in South Africa is gained.

2.4.1 Alexandra through Moloto's mirror

Commenting on the reflectiveness of literature, Eagleton (1976: 51) stated: "Literature, then, one might say, does not stand in some reflective, symmetrical, one-to-one relation with the object". That is true, but the object is still reproduced in an artistic way; that is, it is deformed, refracted, dissolved, resulting in a unique product. Thus Moloto's novel is a reflection of life in Alexandra, as perceived by the author and not a mirror reproduction of it. It is this perception which makes this text interesting. He has captured the pain and the pleasure, the squalour and the beauty, the despair and hope of life in Alexandra and successfully presented it in picturesque language.

Moloto's Alexandra is a living setting, a setting he knows very well. Hence his characters are given real residential addresses. His detective, Makhina, lives on Fourth avenue, whilst his colleague, Mr Legong, lives on Sixth. Mamohapi, his secret agent, lives on Second avenue. For one who knows Alexandra the streets leap to life in-front of one's eyes when reading this novel. Also the famous shebeens of Alexandra are given names like Sodoma and Gomorrah.

One is also tempted to believe that the criminals of this story, Setsokotsane, are based on real life criminals who once lived in and terrorized Alexandra; the Msomi gangsters. Moloto seems to be very conversant with their modus operandi: houses with tunnels connecting them to escape routes; house-breaking and theft; dealing in stolen property and dagga and also the fact that once a member always a member. That is why Polomeetse, no matter how dissatisfied he was with their cruelty, could not just leave and abandon them.

Moloto has also successfully captured and portrayed the role played, by money, or rather the lack of it, in the lives of the urban township population. Ribs' uncle plays a game of 'dice' while she sells liquor. When serving her customers, Ribs surveys their wallets, and a man with a fat purse is a prospective lover or victim

of pickpocketing, which Makhina suffered. After taking a peep at Makhina's wallet, Ribs suggests:

"Bjale, ka gobane ga ke na tšhentšhi, re ka fo sepela bohle go ya kua o dulago. O tla ntokišetša gona. Ge e le gore kua o dulago gona ga go na tšhentšhi, re ka no ya ka bobedi khefing ye nngwe. Gona dilo di tla loka (Moloto, s.a.: 34).

(Now because I don't have change, we can go together to your place. You'll fix things for me there. If you don't have change where you stay, we can go to the nearest restaurant. There things will be fixed).

The thing to be fixed here is not change, but anything which Makhina might need from a woman in exchange for money. Ribs is actually hinting to Makhina that she is ready to spend the night with him, of course at a price. Thus it is not surprising that, after parting ways with Ribs, Makhina discovers his loss:

Diponto tše lesome, gammogo le tšhentšhi ye a bego a e hweditše pontong tše tlhano, di šetše "Thanda Café". O mo laile, ngwanenyana wa Gauteng (Moloto, s.a.: 36).

(Ten pounds, together with the change he got from five-pounds was left at "Thanda Café". A Johannesburg girl has tricked him).

One wonders how this pick-pocket robbed an experienced detective like Makhina, but it seems that while he was concentrating on the sweetness of her goodbye kisses she must have been employing her fingers to good use at his back: one hand brushing his neck while the other was emptying his pocket.

2.4.2 Narrative style

Moloto is a good storyteller. He captures the attention of his reader from the first to the last page without losing it for a moment. This he manages to do not only because he has a good story to tell, but also because he employs certain techniques in his craft. Firstly, his characters, like those in the folk-tale, are based on the good versus bad format. The folk-tales purpose is to enforce and sustain the society's morals and values, hence its characters are classified in two clear camps. Kunene (1989: 198) states: "The oral artist synthesized all these elements in society and told a narrative in which they all contributed to the total didactic purpose of the story". In keeping with this tradition Moloto's story has its own heroes and villains, and he likes his heroes. They are handsome when male and very beautiful if female. Describing Makhina, he says:

.... e be e le tshwete ya go ema ka dinao, ya go lekanela.
E be e le monna yo mohlapatloo, wa go bogega, wa ditedu
tša go mela bjalo ka dithuntšhwane (Moloto, s.a.: 02).

(.... he was strong, tall and of average weight. He was a
coffee-coloured man, handsome with scattered bears).

Thus, the hero, because he is to maintain the ideal of society, is presented as a handsome, young and strong man, whilst on the other hand, the villain, a social misfit, is a frightening, ugly rogue:

O be a na le hlogo ye kgolo ya kgokolo, gomme a ruile
moriri le ditedu la go šiiša. Boso bja letlalo la gagwe bo be
bo mo dira selo sa go tšhoša. Godimo ga moo, o be a na
le ditatswa, gomme di bonala bjalo ka legala mošiding
(Moloto, s.a.: 21).

(He had a big, round head, with overgrown and hair. His skin was frighteningly pitch-black. Over and above that, his lips were red and looked like burning coal on black-ash).

Mamogašwa's looks have to suit his deeds so as to drive the message home.

It is not only in the appearance of characters that the author shows his preference, but also in naming them, the hero is named Makhina (one who ties down animals) whilst the villain is Mamogašwa (mountain mampa); and his fellow gangsters are given snake names: Mokopa (mamba), Petla (cobra) etc. Their group is called Setsokotsane (tornado) which causes havoc in its path.

Another aspect of Moloto's narrative style, closely related to character portrayal, is his ability to describe characters and events. Due to this he has been able to present us with life-size characters, because the reader is able to build for himself a picture of the character from the author's description. Under the pen of Moloto, Mamohapi becomes a living beautiful lady:

Ke kgarebe ye tshelana ya go ema ka maoto. Moriri wa gagwe o moso, o swanelana kudu le dintšhi tša gagwe, tše o ka rego ke tša maitirelo. O na le nkwana ya ntlhana, le mahlwana a maswana a bogajana. Ditsebe ke tše kgolo tša go ema, gomme di nyalana gabotse le sefahlogo sa gagwe sa go ela (Moloto, s.a.: 09).

(She's a tall light complexioned lady. Her black hair matches well with her eye-lashes which look too beautiful to be real. She has a sharp nose, dark bright eyes. Her ears are big and match well with her long face).

The author's description of the beauty of this lady is so moving that if one meets

her in the street one could easily recognise her. He goes on to say: "Ba re le dikgogo di be di mmoga ka go kekela ge a feta". (They say that even chickens were showing appreciation by clucking when she passes). Through this exaggeration Mamohapi's beauty becomes even more beautiful, particularly because the author says she was not born only of human-beings, but that the gods also had a hand in her birth.

The description of the fight between Makhina and Mamogašwa is really a piece of art. We read about how Mamogašwa was fighting with his whole body; kicking, kneeling, hitting with fists, biting and hitting with his head. Makhina was already bleeding from the mouth while Mamogašwa kept the rain of his fists constant. It is said that Makhina felt as if Mamogašwa was using eight hands, and when he tried to hit back he felt as if he was fighting a locomotive. What a description!

Mamogašwa e be e le yona noga ya meetse ka nnete, e tsošitše setsokotsane sa yona. Go boima kudu go hlaloša gabotse gore o be a elwa bjang. Bokaone ke go dio re o be a elwa ka mmele wa gagwe ka moka, go tloga leotong go fihla hlogong; a raga, a itia ka khuru, a itia ka letswele, a loma, ebile a itia ka hlogo. Phefo ya difeisi tša moesa yo, e be e dio tsoša marole fase (Moloto, s.a.: 73).

(Mamogašwa was a real water monster, which caused a tornado in its wake. It is very much difficult to explain the way he fought. It would be better just to say he used all his body, from the toe to the head; he kicked, used his knee, his fists, teeth and even his head. The tornado caused by his fists raised dust from the ground).

Throughout this story the reader is never left behind; the author keeps on inviting

us to accompany him in the development of the plot. This the author achieves by the use of the first person plural pronoun "rena", and its subjectival concord "re":

Ba bantši re tseba dimpho tšeo boMakhina ba di hweditšego (Moloto, s.a.: 02).

(Many of us know the presents which Makhina and company received).

In "ba bantši re" he is referring to himself and his reading audience. In using "re" he invites his readers to share with him this knowledge. By virtue of belonging to his society, his readers should know, or if they don't he is calling them to order. It is their responsibility to know the injustices which take place in their society.

When Makhina found Rachel semi-conscious he carried her on his back, the action he once tried with drastic consequences when Petla pretended to have fainted. Hence he says:

Rena re be re gopola gore mohlomong Petla o mo lahlišitše go pepula batho ba bogolo (Moloto, s.a.: 39).

(We were thinking that maybe Petla has taught him to stop carrying big people on his back).

The readers, together with the author, have already gone through the incident where Petla throttles Makhina, and now that happening is common knowledge.

Sometimes Moloto uses the subjectival concord alone without the first person plural pronoun. The meaning of his sentences is not lost. Throughout the whole

book, except at the end, we know members of Setsokotsane by their "snake-names" only. It is this set-up which makes the author comment:

Ga re tsebe gore ke morwa wa mang (Moloto, s.a.: 16).

(We do not know whose son he is).

Both readers and author just knew Petla by that name. It was the court of law which revealed that he was in actual fact Robinson Dikgale.

Closely related to the above discussion is the use of digression as a stylistic technique. Moloto uses this device to introduce a new character, Mamohapi, who helps his detective. He apologises to the reader as if the reader is lost and offers an explanation about this character so as not to confuse him:

Mmadi a se ke a tlabja ke Mamohapi. Ke morwedi wa Mna. B.J. Ramolobeng, yo e bego e le mohlalobi wa maphelo, gona motseng wa Alexandra (Moloto, s.a.: 09).

(The reader should not be surprised by Mamohapi. She's the daughter of Mr B.J. Ramolobeng, who was a health inspector in Alexandra township).

This digression does not interrupt the flow of the story, but it is rather important to its development. The way the author introduces this character suggests that he takes for granted that the reader knows Alexandra, and also that it is necessary to introduce Mamohapi properly. This contributes also to giving his characters life-size stature.

After having learned about the coward Mr Sebina, the author tells us about the

need for a policeman who would guard the stolen goods until a truck arrives to carry them away. It wouldn't be wise to delegate this duty to Mr Sebina, and alluding to this he says: "Inaganele gore ke ofe" (Moloto, s.a.: 25). (Think for yourself who that would be). The use of the reflexive verbal prefix makes this a one-sentence digression which invites the reader to recall the previous incident which revealed Mr Sebina's character.

2.4.3 Humour and Satire

Writing literature under apartheid not only required the ability to tell a story, but also the ability to camouflage one's message to escape the scrutinizing eye of the Publications Control Board. Mogale (1993: 75) concurs:

This censorship is so strict that whenever an author takes up a pen to write something, the first thing to cross his mind is not the theme and how to tackle it, but whether whatever he writes would elicit a positive nod from the authorities or not.

One way of smuggling the intended message to the readership, which became refined during those days, was the use of satire and humour. Apartheid was cruel, but blacks survived it, mainly because of their ability to laugh even under pain. They laughed at incidents which involved transgression of the Immorality Act, the mixed marriages Act, and so on. In literature this ability to pour scorn on and ridicule apartheid appears through the use of satire. Makgamatha (1990: 202) cites Ngugi wa Thiong'o who comments:

Satire takes, for its province, a whole society and for its purpose, criticism. The satirist set himself certain standards and criticizes society when and where it departs from these norms. He invites us to assume his standards

and share the moral indignation which moves him to pour derision and ridicule on society's failings. He corrects through painful, sometimes malicious laughter.

In his novel, Moloto creates some incidents which might not have received an approving nod from the authorities through satire. A good example which comes to mind is the elaboration on the important duties which black soldiers performed in the Second World War and the mention of the rewards they received at the end of this description, makes one laugh painfully.

Moloto tells also the story of a man who was working with his wife in the field. When Makhina stopped next to them to ask about a car which might have passed by them the previous day, the man dropped his hoe and took off on his two legs for the mountain. A man does not run away from another man leaving his wife alone! This is a disgrace, but if one looks deeply at it, one will understand the reason behind this queer behaviour. Moloto (s.a.: 51) explains it this way:

A fo phetha ka gore monna yola o swanetše go ba a tšhaba
bakeng la motšhelo.

(He just concluded by telling himself that that man must be
running away due to tax evasion).

Taxation, in the form of a hut tax of 10 shillings and the poll-tax of £2 on each adult African male were introduced as a means of forcing them to change from being subsistence farmers to wage earners (Pampallis, 1991: 24). Since many African males could not afford to pay these taxes, the government had to use cruel measures to enforce payment. Policemen sometimes raided villages to arrest tax-dodgers, and thus the utterance of the word "police" usually triggered a general male flight to the mountains. In the above excerpt Moloto pours scorn

on this system, but his disgust is hidden behind the humorous description of the flight of the man, followed by that of his wife with a shining head. Nevertheless, to a committed critic, these abhorrent, humiliating practices by the apartheid government still needed to be exposed and despised.

The police were not only an instrument of oppression they failed dismally as a law-enforcing agency. This does not escape Moloto's pen. He comments on the prevailing lawlessness in spite of the presence of the police. Rachel Sehlogo, a law-abiding citizen, has to live with Mamogašwa against her will simply for fear of her life. She says:

“Le wena o na le tsebo ye e tletšego, gore boithatelo bo atile fa! Ga go weno yo a ka lekago go go emelela. Ešita le ona maphodisa ba fo go feta o bolawa ke motho, gomme ka morago ba tle go leta setopo sa gago” (Moloto, s.a.: 16).

(You also know very well that everyone does what he likes here. There is nobody who can protect you. Even the police just pass by when you are killed and return to guard your corpse).

Here the uselessness of the police, their failure in their most important duty, that of providing security on law-abiding citizens, is exposed. Who could hope for protection from constable Sebina?

At times, Moloto makes us laugh just for the sake of laughter, especially when describing the features of characters he does not like. One facial feature which never escapes his attention is the nose. About Hlogotšhweu's nose he says:

“Nko yona, o be e ke o nametšwe ke segwagwa” (Moloto, s.a.: 60).

(His nose resembled a frog riding on his face).

Hlogotšweu's nose was not only big, it was also badly shaped. Natshenda's nose was also big. He says:

“Nko e be dio ba sešebo sa bakgonyana” (Ibid: 56).

(His nose was just like meat set aside for your in-laws).

In-laws, particularly when they bring lobola, are given a big meat so as to loosen their purse, hence, Natshenda's nose was really big.

2.5 THE CRIME OF EDITORS

Part of the author's satire, an important part at that, which appeared in the first edition, has been lost through ill-informed editing. When comparing the first edition, second impression, with the second edition, third impression, we discovered that what appeared to be a language mistake in the earlier edition was corrected in the later edition without considering the context within which it was said. The erroneous corrections seriously changed the author's humour and satire, thus affecting character portrayal and theme development.

Moloto presents us with a character, Mr Rufus Legong, a colleague of Makhina, who, in spite of his lacking knowledge of English, likes to speak the language. Through Mr Legong, the author pours scorn upon Bantu education by revealing the poor quality of its products (Refer to 2.3.2). Mr Legong is one of those people who, after taking one or two glasses of intoxicating beverages, tends to think that their thoughts are properly expressed through the medium of English. Here we are presented with Legong relaxing with Makhina:

Ba lletše ga bedi, Sekgowa sa ba se thongwa. Ke Rufus yo

a thomilego go se bolela, le ge a be a sa se tsebe go ya kae. O be a tšama a se rathantšha; eupša Makhina o be a kgona go momantšha maratha ao, ntle le go mo lemoša gore o gobatšha polelo ya batho (Moloto, s.a.: 05).

(They took two sips each, then English started. It is Rufus who started to speak English, though he did not know it that much. He was breaking the language into pieces, but Makhina was able to mend those pieces without making him aware that he was damaging other people's language).

Here Mr Legong's little knowledge of the English language is revealed. It is said "o be a tšama a se rathantšha" (He was breaking the language into pieces). It is important that not only did Legong not master the English language, but also that he was not aware of his short-comings. He was so proud of his English that he aspired to be a translator:

Mna Legong o be a itumelela kudu sekgowa se se tšwago molomong wa gagwe. Re kwa gore o be a kganyoga go ba toloki (Moloto, s.a.: 07).

(Mr Legong was very proud of the English he spoke. We hear that he aspired to be a court interpreter).

Thus the wrong English used by Legong is part of Moloto's satire and humour. Correcting it defeated the intention of the author: that of creating a proud but ignorant character through whom the readers can learn a valuable lesson in life. In short, Moloto's text has been wrongly edited so that its later versions have distorted his artefact to such an extent that one can say a crime was committed.

Here follows a comparison of all those expressions which were changed:

1st Edition Second Impression	Second Edition Third Impression
1. "No, my wife and children is well, except Rose".	1. No, my wife and children are well, with the exception of Rose".
2. "What can she possibly be suffering from?"	2. "Isn't Rose well?"
3. "I think the wind has enter her. Anyway, my wife was take her to the doctor yesterday. I believe she will soon be in the best possible state of health".	3. "I think she has flu. Anyway, my wife took her to the doctor yesterday. Soon, I believe she will be in the best possible state of health".
4. "Only the best is what we all wish for. Good evening, Mr Legong".	4. "That is what we all wish for: only the best! Good evening, Mr Legong".
5. "Good evening, Mr Manamela. I respect to see you tomorrow in town, and in good health".	5. "Good evening, Mr Manamela. I expect to see you in town tomorrow. Keep well.
6. "Yes, yes Mr Manamela, you are speak the true". With English we says: "every cloud has a silver line".	6. "Yes, yes, Mr Manamela, you speak the truth. In English one says: "Every cloud has a silver lining".
7. "You know, knowledge it is power. Good evening, Mr Manamela".	7. "You now that knowledge is power. Good evening, Mr Manamela".
8. "You know, your uncle he is wonderful!"	8. "You know, your uncle is wonderful!"

Except for sentences 2 and 4, which were said by Makhina, the rest were spoken by Legong, and as such the mistakes in grammar are artistic and should not have been corrected. Moloto presents us with a man who does not completely master tense in the English language. It is not only tense which is

faulty in Legong's English, but also his knowledge of English idioms is wanting. He translates Northern Sotho idioms into English. For an example, "the wind has enter her" is from "o tsenwe ke phefo", which in English is "she's caught flu". Also his vocabulary is very poor. For example, he confuses "expect" with "respect". All this and many other grammatical errors in Mr Legong's language serve a certain important purpose in this text and should not have been corrected.

2.6 RÉSUMÉ

An attempt has been made in this chapter to understand Moloto's novel from a Marxist perspective. We started with an analysis of the position of literature within the superstructure of society and indicated how Moloto fits in and deploys his art in the service of his class.

A detailed discussion of the historical factors which shaped Moloto's thinking has been given, and this provides a background against which the novel should be examined for maximum understanding. We have tried to reveal how the author responds to various shades of injustices suffered by his class e.g. land-dispossession, inferior type of education, police-harassment, unemployment and poor housing.

The discussion proceeded to reveal the beauty in Moloto's novel. The author, has an interesting story to tell, and he tells it in an absorbing way. The living picture he paints of Alexandra becomes vividly clear in the mind of the reader. The narrative style he employs, and the devices he uses to captivate his reader's attention, were elaborated on. Special attention has been paid to his rich sense of humour and the use of satire.

In conclusion we extracted from the text what we believe are mistakes committed in editing the first edition of this novel. We hope that this opinion will be taken into consideration by the publishers when reprinting this book.

CHAPTER 3 M.A. KEKANA'S WORKS: DETECTIVE VERSUS LOVE STORY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the most productive novelists in this sub-genre, is M A Kekana, who has two detective novels to her credit: "*Nonyana ya Tokologo*" and "*Nnete fela*". Hence forth we will call the former "*Nonyana*" and the later "*Nnete*". In both novels, one point which stands out clearly is the two-pronged approach the author adopts towards her art. Firstly she has a love story to tell, and she tells it beautifully. She shows a deep understanding of the psychological turmoil experienced by a woman in love. Her heroines are not only troubled by this feeling, but are also in a perpetual struggle for liberation from oppressive patriarchal society. Though in love, they rebel against the sexist attitudes of their lovers, and hence experience internal conflicts. On the one hand they are pulled by love, but the need for freedom and recognition as individuals in their own right pushes them in the opposite direction. Secondly, her heroines' lovers are either professional detectives (Tšhaledi) or involved in detection for their own personal interest (Ariel). This aspect brings in the element of the detective story in these novels because in both cases crimes are committed, the action of detection is carried out, and finally the criminals are caught and punished or die.

The purpose of this study is to understand the nature and development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho. Here we find ourselves faced with a female author who has come up with a unique style which does not conform to the traditional format and the question is how to approach her work? We believe that though our interest lies in the detective story, the other facet of her artefact should not be ignored for literary criticism aims at maximum understanding of a piece of

work.

3.1 DETECTIVE VERSUS LOVE STORY

One element which stands out clearly in Kekana's work is the way she combines the detective with the love story. It seems that in writing love stories Kekana, in both novels, felt the need to pit her heroines against detective adversaries. This assumption is based on the fact that in both novels the love story occupies a larger section than the detective story, and it might not be accidental because she seems to understand the former better than the latter.

3.1.1 Detective stories

Though Kekana seems to understand love stories more than detective stories, she manages to introduce certain elements of the latter into her novels, and blends the two together to make what seems to be one story, although they are two. In "*Nonyana*", the detective hero, Tšhaledi, is introduced as a lover, without any mention of his work. It is only later, when the love story develops, that we learn about his attachment to the Brixton Murder and Robbery Squad. While the reader learns about Tšhaledi's escapades as a lover, the narrator has successfully hidden the fact that a secret investigation of Mademone was also progressing. Mademone, a powerful gangster, had already committed crimes, and Tšhaledi was involved in trying to unravel the tentacles of its crimes. The narrator makes the two stories, love and detective, converge over Diamond Tseke. In pursuing his love adventures, the detective, Tšhaledi, stumbles on the clue to the committed crimes, and thus the case is solved. In "*Nnete*", Ariel is pushed into detective work unintentionally. Ariel as a radio announcer and producer of radio drama, has a manuscript delivered to him, written by Karabo, in which the criminal activities of the "syndicate", a gangster, are dramatized. It is in trying to defend himself against the syndicate, which tries

to silence him, that Ariel gets involved in detection. Ultimately, it is the strength of Bubbles' love for Ariel which leads to a confession and the arrest of the syndicate. We will now attempt an analysis of those elements in these stories which make them detective stories.

3.1.1.1 Crime

In trying to define a detective story, Symons (1985: 13) states: "The two qualifications everybody has thought necessary are that it should present a problem, and that the problem should be solved by an amateur or professional detective through processes of deduction". Thus, crime is central to a detective story, for it introduces all the other elements: the detective, suspects, criminals and detection, not forgetting the setting. One unique aspect of Kekana detective stories is how she handles the issue of crime. According to Symons (1985: 13) it is imperative for the criminal to be mentioned early in the story. This point serves to highlight the importance of introducing the crime committed. Kekana does not follow this format.

Kekana introduces Tšhaledi as a traveling young man who falls in love with Diamond Tseke. Nothing is said about the case he is involved in at that particular moment. We don't meet his superiors, and hence know nothing about his briefing. The nature of his task (if there is one) is very secretive. It is only towards the end of the book that we learn about the crime which is committed in this story:

Lebakeng le Tšhaledi o swaragane le go hlomantšha mehlala ye mohlomongwe e ka mo thušago go latišiša mediro le mesepelo ya sehlopha sa basenyi sa leina la Mademone (1985: 145).

(At this time, Tšhaledi is busy tracing the tracks which might help him in unraveling the deeds and movements of a criminal gang called Mademone).

From this we can only assume that from the beginning, Tšhaledi was involved in tracing this gang, which was dealing in drugs and gun-running. Over and above these illegal businesses, they had murdered Babsy Tefo, and in trying to obliterate their tracks Max Tuli followed.

One might make a hasty judgement and label this as a shortcoming in Kekana's detective story, unaware that it is one of the devices she uses to capture the attention of the reader. It is at the end of the book that we come across the crimes which had been under investigation even from the beginning of the story:

Yo Bova Lebese o timeletše lebakeng la ge a letetše go iponatša pele ga Kgoro ya Tshenko a begwa molato wa polao, bohodu le go swara sethunya ntle ga tumelelo.

(This man, Bova Lebese, disappeared while he was waiting for his trial, before he could appear before the Court of Law, charged with murder, theft and illegal possession of a firearm).

These are some of the crimes which Tšhaledi was investigating. The law enforcing agencies had already discovered that Kenny Zungu was actually Bova Lebese, a hardened criminal who was on the run, and they were investigating all the activities of his gang so as to bring them all to book.

The revelation of who Kenny Zungu actually is, is the climatic point to which everything leads and the plot of this detective story has been constructed

backwards.

Kekana employs the same technique in "*Nnete*", where initially we meet Ariel, a radio announcer who falls in love with Bubbles. Ariel dislikes Bubbles' assertiveness and self-confidence and makes the destruction of these traits his goal.

No crime is mentioned at the beginning. It is only after Karabo's manuscript has landed in the hands of Ariel that we learn about the existence of the syndicate as a criminal group and their activities of defrauding banks of large sums of money. This is revealed by Karabo, after being disinherited by his father. The criminals are known: Noko, Mokaba, Mello and other syndicate members, including the hitmen Champ and Thoba. What is left is for the law to take its course. Although the crimes of the Syndicate seem not to have been discovered by the law, and are not officially investigated; the fact that Ariel knows about them, makes their arrest and punishment inevitable.

Finally, though not of least importance, it should be mentioned that although there are crimes committed in both novels, nevertheless, Kekana's work lacks one vital point: a puzzle to be solved. The puzzle is vital to a detective story, for it is only through its existence that we can enjoy logical deduction. Because of the absence of this puzzle the readers are denied the pleasure of suspense enjoyed in accompanying the detective in unraveling the mystery through the dark alleys and camouflage created by the criminal. This mystery "is the identity of the culprit, to which the detective and reader alike are to be led by a systematic examination of the clues" (Mandel, 1984: 16). Kekana's stories dismally fail to satisfy this psychological need to which the detective story is supposed to respond. There is no tension, no suspense, no surprising solution or catharsis in her stories.

3.1.1.2 Detective

It has been stated above that the existence of an amateur or professional detective is one of the two important elements which identifies a detective story. It is over her detective heroes that Kekana's two stories, detective and love stories, meet, but unfortunately with a serious compromise on the personalities of her detectives.

Both her detectives, Tšhaledi and Ariel, are macho-men, psychologically and physically suited for their roles as detectives. They are strong, intelligent, confident no-nonsense types of men who don't hesitate to call a spade a spade. At the magistrate's office, Ariel calls the relaxing clerks to order with the words:

"Hee mokgomana, o tla ntshwarela kudu go kgaoletša kang yeo ya lena ye bose. Fela o tla elelwa gore ye ke nako ya modiro e sego ya magang a bjalo ka ao" (Kekana, 1994: 3).

(Hey you fellows there, you'll forgive me for cutting short your sweet discussion. But you'll realize that this is time for work, not for such talk).

By merely looking at him, the poor stupid clerk, who had been mesmerized by Bubbles, realized that he had no choice but to toe the line. Ariel's appearance oozed with power and authority. Later on Bubbles approached him with these questions in mind:

O be a nyaka go tseba gore maatla a nago nao a dirilego gore yena a ikwe a boetšwa ka kua kantorong mankgapele a gokae mo go yena gobane ka kagego ga se yo boima. Mme o ile a a lemoga gohle mo go yena (Kekana, 1994: 5).

(She wanted to know the source of this power and dignity which made her feel small initially when she met him in the office, because physically he was not heavily built. She realized that it was all about him).

Her hero-detective in "*Nonyana*", Tšhaledi, is also manly and handsome. Although the author doesn't give us a graphic picture of his physical build, we learn from Diamond's appraisal that he was handsome:

Lebakeng la ge a dutše a bolela naye Taamane o šeditše gore lesogana le ke la tebelelego ye botse. Gomme ge motho a bonwa ke Taamane gore o a lebelelega gona ka kgonthe ke mothokgomo ka gore ditekanyetšo tša gagwe temaneng yeo e be le tša godimo go ka fihlelelwa ke ba bantši (Kekana, 1985: 4).

(While she was talking to him, Diamond observed that this guy was handsome. If a person was appreciated as handsome by Diamond, then that person was really handsome, because her standards were too high to be reached by many).

But, alas, though manly men, suitable for the roles she has chosen for them, Kekana's hero-detectives, contrary to the master-plan of the detective story, fall in love. Symons (1985: 14) states that Wright placed a ban on love interests in the life of the detective-hero, and for this he has the full approval of Dorothy L Sayers, who severely reproved "the heroes who insist on fooling about after young women when they ought to be putting their minds to the job of detection". Kekana's heroes do exactly that, in-fact, Tšheledi and Ariel are more of lovers than detectives. This issue brings us to the next point in our discussion: the love-stories in Kekana's

detective novels.

3.1.2 Love-stories

Kekana dismisses Dorothy L Sayers saying: 'the less love in a detective story, the better' (Symons, 1985: 14). In fact, the opposite seems to be true for Kekana' for a reasonable time of their lives her detectives went chasing girls. Both novels can be said to be seventy-five percent love-stories, and only twenty-five percent detective.

3.1.2.1 The love-story in "*Nonyana*"

Both love-stories in "*Nonyana*" and "*Nnete*" start with an accidental meeting of the two sets of lovers. Tšhaledi meets Diamond on a train from Pietersburg to Pretoria and they fall hopelessly in love with each other. The narrator reveals Diamond's feelings to us with these words:

Go fihla bjale ga go lesogana le a le tsebago le a kilego a le lebelela ka kgahlego. Mme bjale go bonala Tšhaledi a tla roba setlwaedi seo, o be a na le maatlakgogedi a go gapa pelo ya kgarebe ye. Taamane o be a tlwaetše go bogelwa esego go bogela (Kekana, 1985: 4).

(Up to the present moment she hadn't known of any young man she had looked at with appreciation. But now it seemed Tšhaledi was going to break this habit, for he had the magnetic powers of capturing her heart. Diamond was used to being appreciated but not to appreciating others).

This is the beginning of the love story in this novel. There is nothing wrong with girls falling head over heels in love with the detective, but for the detective to reciprocate, that is something else. Here Tšhaledi does exactly that:

Mengwageng ya gagwe ye mesometharo a le mo lefaseng Tšhaledi o be a sešo a bona kgarebe ye botse go phala ye e lego hleng ga gagwe. Eupša go fapanang le Taamane, yena ga a ka a amogela maikutlo ao a kgahlego ka bonaba, eupša ka thabo le go fola pelong (Kekana, 1985: 5).

(For the thirty years he had lived in this world Tšhaledi had not yet seen a more beautiful girl than the one sitting next to him. But, unlike Diamond, he did not reject this feeling of love, but accepted it with pleasure).

The narrator has succeeded in painting for us a vivid picture of two young people in love. At this point the reader hears nothing about crime, detection or the detective. Tšhaledi is introduced as a lover, and the ultimate conclusion of this love story, marriage, is inevitable. Diamond's aunt, Sibongile, also predicts this:

"O ra gore ga o kwe ditšhipi ge di lla naa?"

"Ditšhipi tša eng? Nna ga ke kwe selo". Lesiba a
bolela ka makalo.

"Ditšhipi tša lenyalo", Sibongile a sega ka kgotsotfalo,

"la Tšhaledi le Taamane. Ke a le profeta" (Kekana, 1985: 19).

("Do you mean that you can't hear bells ringing?")

"What bells? I can't hear anything" said Lesiba surprised.

"Wedding bells", Sibongile laughed with satisfaction,

“Between Tšhaledi and Diamond. I can prophesy that”).

Here the story could have ended with marriage and the usual ending to a love story: they lived happily ever after, but this happy ending is postponed due to the differences in the idea of marriage between the two lovers. The author introduces his sub-theme: what constitutes an ideal family. He brings in this through the aspirations of Tšhaledi, whose idea of a happy married life is to have a domesticated wife:

Bjalo nyalo yona e tliša maikarabelo a lelapa le go tšwelela ga bana bao ba nyakago tlhokomelo Bjale wa ka mosadi e tla be wa go dula gae ga ke rate mosadi wa go šoma ka ntle le gae (Kekana, 1985: 28).

(Marriage brings family responsibility and children who need to be taken care of My wife will stay at home, I don't like a working wife who spends much time outside the family house).

This male chauvinist approach to marriage is the pivot of Kekana's love story. To submit to this type of marriage to Diamond is tantamount to submission to the worst kind of oppression. She says:

Ga ke ešo ka kwa polelo ya kgatelelo ye kaaka (1985: 28).

(I have never heard such oppressive talk).

Another aspect of Kekana's love story is her understanding of the role played by internal conflict in the life of a woman in love. Diamond's deep love for Tšhaledi brings with it marriage and oppression under his authoritative rule and all this is

opposed to her love of freedom and independence coupled with her contempt for family life. This conflict creates confusion in Diamond. She just doesn't know what she wants. The confusion reigning in Diamond's mind is clearly depicted by the sayings:

"Tšhaledi ke mo hloile! (Kekana, 1985: 110).

(Tšhaledi, I hate him!).

To emphasize this feeling she calls "hatred", she further states:

"Le ge oka bolela ka mehuta yohle goba gwa direga eng ge e le go wena Tšhaledi nka se boe" (Ibid; 1985: 114).

(Even if you can talk anyhow or even if anything can happen, to you, Tšhaledi, I'll never come back).

The reader gets the impression that Diamond hates Tšhaledi with all her heart. After running away from him and achieving great success in the world of modeling one would believe that she has found what her heart yearned for; and that her hatred for Tšhaledi was genuine, but we are surprised later to hear the same character declaring:

"Tšhaledi o se makale ge ke le fa: ke boile" (1985: 181).

(Tšhaledi don't be surprised by seeing me here: I have come back).

From the above discussion it becomes clear that Kekana, as a female author, has

an especially deep understanding of the emotional turmoils experienced by a woman in love. It seems that from a woman "I hate you!", if clearly analyzed, might mean "I love you!". This Kekana has revealed through making Diamond run away from Tšhaledi whereupon it later becomes clear that she was running away from love. Her running away had nothing to do with Tšhaledi's oppressive tendencies. She just did not understand her feelings of love towards him. At the end we find Tšhaledi still being the same old "Chauvinist pig".

"Gobane nna Tšhaledi ke sa dutše ke le yola wa maloba le maabane, ka lapeng la ka molao le sepheto sa mafelelo go rema tša ka (Kekana, 1985: 181).

(Because I, Tšhaledi, am still the same as yesterday and the day before: in my family my word is final).

In-spite of all this, Diamond is now prepared to live with Tšhaledi and to abide by his rules without any complaint. She declares:

"Ke tlile go wena ke gopotše tšeo gabotse, ke tla leka go ba mosadi yo o mo nyakago (Ibid; 1985: 182).

(I came back to you having thought about all that, I will try to be the type of wife you desire).

Now Diamond is no longer interested in the so-called freedom and success in modeling. She wants to be a successful family wife. Were these aspirations only misguided youth's ambitions or, like good wine, had she matured with time?

In this love-story, Kekana is trying to reveal to her readers that there is self-

fulfilment in being a successful family wife. The important role played by a family and making her husband happy should be recognized like any other profession. Diamond, who started by despising this role in a family, learned the hard way that a family wife performs an important duty for society. This she learned through realizing how satisfied her friend Lucy was in raising a happy family. The pain which she experienced when her children rejected her made her realize how empty her life was.

3.1.2.2 The love-story in “*Nnete*”

In the love-story of Bubbles and Ariel, Kekana reveals the irresistible power of love. This two love each other, but they don't want to fall in love with each other. To Bubbles, Ariel is a dangerous man to fall in love with, because she can't control him. He frightens her, thus threatening her self-confidence:

Ariel e be e le monna yo a sa ratego go mo rata, go bolela therešo. Gobane o tšhaba temogo le bohlale bja gagwe, di mo swariša bothata gobane a ka se iketle ka yena (Kekana, 1994: 135).

(To be honest, Ariel was the type of man she didn't want to be in love with, because she was afraid of his wisdom which made it difficult for her to control him).

This was the type of man Bubbles did not want to fall in love with. Ariel could see through all her tricks, and this was a threat to Bubbles' way of life. To her, men were toys to be played with. Her beauty made them melt in her arms for her to use the way she wanted.

On the other hand, to Ariel Bubbles was wild, tricky and too assertive for his liking. She seemed to believe that her beauty could get her anything she liked. His main objective was to tame her:

.... o rata go bona Bubbles a wele pele ga gagwe. O be a belaela go mo thapiša, a thubakanye boikgantšhonyana bjola bja gagwe (Kekana, 1994: 114).

(He wished to see Bubbles humbled before him. He was anxious to tame her, to destroy all her pride).

These two could not understand their feelings towards each other. They interpreted this feeling as hatred. Ariel wants to tame and humble Bubbles, while Bubbles is afraid of Ariel. What they don't understand is that they love each other. Their love is so great that it borders on the supernatural. It has magnetic powers like a TV aerial which pulls in signals on the air waves. Kekana understands this phenomenon. At one stage in her plot she presents us with Bubbles who switches on a radio and goes to stand at an open window facing the direction of Ariel's home while Ariel at the same time does the same thing without knowing why:

Gomme ka ntle le lebaka le rego a kwa a gogelwa go yo ema lefasetereng le nkego le mo mema ka kholofetšo ya gore o tla ipshina go fetiša ge a theeletša a le moo go lona a bogetše ntle (Ibid; 1994 38).

(Without any known reason he felt himself pulled to go and stand in front of a window, which seemed to be inviting him with a promise of enjoying the music better if he listened standing there looking outside).

Bubbles is pulled by this supernatural power of love to go and stand at this window while Ariel does the same on the other side of the township:

Seo a bego a se dira moo e be e le go obamela fela maikutlo
a rego go yena a eme moo ka mokgwa wona woo (Kekana,
1994: 31).

(What he was doing was just obeying a feeling which
instructed him to stand right there like that).

Through this incident Kekana has portrayed the supernatural power of love. She pits these two, Ariel and Bubbles, against this powerful phenomenon and makes us anxiously wait for the outcome.

It takes a Judas Iscariot's kiss for Bubbles and Ariel to realize how much they love each other. For Bubbles this kiss was just part of the game:

O be a tseba yena a swanetše go kgatha tema fela. Fela ge
molomo wa gagwe o kopana le wa Ariel o ile a timelelwa ke
tema yeo, a lebala (Ibid; 1994: 132).

(For her, this was just play-acting. But as soon as her mouth
touched Ariel's, she forgot her part).

Even when they felt this love, they still doubted it, or they could not put a name-tag on their feeling:

"Bubbles?"

"Mmmm".

"Ke eng se magareng ga rena?"

"Lerato" (Ibid; 1994: 133).

("Bubbles?"

"Mmmm".

"What is this between us?"

"Love")

It is this love which bursts Bubbles' self-confidence and assertiveness like soap bubbles in front of her eyes. She has agreed to betray Ariel, to take him to his death because of her obedience to her father and the Syndicate. But, looking at Ariel walking towards his death unaware, her conscience and love for him asserted themselves so strongly that she makes her choice there and then. She chooses Ariel. This decision leads to her father's death, the arrest of the Syndicate and finally marriage to Ariel and a life of happiness thereafter.

In both these novels we have two endings, because each contains two stories: the love story and the detective story. In both novels, marriage, the end of the love story, is preceded by the arrest and/or death of the criminals, which is the end of the detective story.

3.1.3 Characterization

Kunene (1993: 155) has pointed out that the two most important functions of literature are to entertain and give the reader a greater understanding of human behaviour. Through the understanding of factors which contribute to certain behavioural patterns mankind is moved towards more and more tolerance. Normally, in fiction the negative aspects of human behaviour will be highlighted and in doing so, issues like why people hate one another, kill and steal, will be probed.

In Kekana's work one finds that what captures her attention mostly are emotional problems resulting from the feeling of love.

Literature can never be divorced from the society out of which it is born. Western societies, due to their capitalistic nature, are very much individualistic and their literature dwells much on the adventures of individual characters. Gerard, quoted by Kunene (1984: 173), has correctly observed that African cultures are based on values that are primarily societal and that their survival can only be ensured by the closest group cohesion. This is reflected in their literature because one of the functions of literature is to preserve the religious myths of the group so as to bolster its sense of collective identity and dignity. The issues raised above are bound to have an effect on the nature of characters an author portrays in his/her story.

In evaluating characters in Kekana's work we cannot ignore the influence of culture, for in doing so would be failing to acknowledge that "the writer's style and his approach to characterization are just as much a response to his situation as are his choices of theme and plot" (Kunene, 1984: 174). The actions of the characters should always be judged against the accepted norms of their society.

In her heroines, Diamond (*Nonyana*) and Bubbles (*Nnete*), Kekana has revealed the ambitions, fears, frustrations and confusions of young women when they fall in love. Diamond Tseke is a beautiful, determined and focused young lady who has a clear-cut picture of her career in mind. Unlike her classmates at Mathimako, she knows that her future lies in showbiz.

When she reads about a beauty contest sponsored by Sales House she is determined to enter for it. This reveals her strong-willed nature. Once she sets her mind on something, nothing can stop her. No matter how much Tšhaledi protests, she proceeds to enter for the beauty contest. Her success in this contest is a step

towards realizing her dream: that of registering her name in the world of modeling. In pursuing her dreams she breaks the heart of everyone who loves her: her parents, her relatives and her fiancé.

Diamond is a woman in love, as well as a woman confused. She loves Tšhaledi, but marries Max because she thinks he can make her forget the man she loves but despises living with. She declares that she hates Tšhaledi, but when she sees him with Maria, seemingly deep in love, she jealously attempts to spoil his happiness.

Diamond holds an ill-founded belief that self-realization and self-satisfaction lie only in professional success. She doesn't understand how a house-wife can get satisfaction from bringing up a happy, healthy and loving family. To her satisfaction from this seemingly low-class occupation is unthinkable. She is so surprised to see Lucy, overweight, married to a reserved, poor man and herself ageing before time, happy with her situation. She can't understand the self-satisfaction and fulfillment Lucy gets from raising a big family. She only learns through the pain she suffers at being rejected by her children that there is pride and joy in motherhood.

Diamond is actually a rough diamond that fools, not realizing its inherent beauty might throw away. There is beauty in her character which, after the rough and tumble of showbiz life has purified it, it shines out when she finally settles down to married life.

Unlike Diamond, in Bubbles the author has portrayed a real bitch. Bubbles is a cunning, designing and cruel woman. She realized that her beauty was the open sesame to all doors and was using it to the full. At the magistrates offices she uses her beauty to get service before anyone who has been standing in the queue for a long time. She knows that her beauty mesmerizes men and makes them do things for her. Sons are taken to be more important than girls in African families because

the responsibility to carry over the family and clan name is theirs. Hence Noko pinned all the hopes of his family on Karabo. When she learned this, Bubbles planned and succeeded to undo and destroy Karabo. When Karabo was finally disinherited, this cunning, sadistic woman is excited with pleasure. Also it is painful to see how Bubbles was using Kwena. He was just like a puppet on a string in his love affair with Bubbles. Bubbles enjoyed playing with Kwena. She was going to get married to him not because she love him, but simply because it was convenient to her.

In this cunning, sadistic and designing woman, there is also a loving nature. She really loves Ariel. When looking at him walking to his death, she makes a decision to save him. What she did was due to pure, unadulterated love.

In Tšhaledi (Nonyana) and Ariel (Nnete), we meet life-size loveable characters who are role models in their communities. Tšhaledi, a detective attached to the Brixton Murder and Robbery Squad, is very conservative. In the eyes of Diamond he lags behind modern civilization, hence his name "Tšhaledi", a deverbative from "šalela", meaning to lag behind. In African culture, a woman's role is to look after her family, take care of her children and husband, and this is what Tšhaledi believes in. He can't stand having his wife-to-be enter for beauty contests, work as a model exposing her body to the public. Tšhaledi cannot understand why Diamond sees nothing wrong in this. Tšhaledi is presented to the reader as one who is steadfast in his beliefs about the role of a woman in the family. After parting with Diamond for years, when she comes back he clarifies for her his stand with these words:

Gobane nna Tšhaledi ke sa dutše ke le yola wa maloba le maabane, ka lapeng la ka molao le sephetho sa mafelelo go rema tša ka (1984: 181).

(Because, I, Tšhaleli remain the same as yesterday and the day before; in my family the final word is mine).

That is final according to Tšhaleli, and Diamond has to take it or leave it.

Tšhaleli's life as a whole is rooted in African culture. He keeps his roots intact at Mamabolo and shows deep scorn for urban life. After Diamond has absconded from her family, Tšhaleli does not demand his lobola back from her parents. He believes that a woman's grave is at her in-laws.

Tšhaleli is a role model for those amongst whom he lives. This detective is a trained teacher and talented painter. Because of his love for a quiet life and the type of work he does he has time to indulge in his hobby.

Ariel is a strong, self-confident and straight-talking man. He called the clerk at the magistrate's offices to order when he realized that the man was mesmerized by Bubbles' beauty. Observing how Bubbles uses her beauty to get service at this office, Ariel develops some hatred towards her. He decides to humiliate her. He feels that it would please him very much if he could destroy her self-confidence.

In keeping with his name, Ariel is like a radio or TV aerial which receives and sends out signals. He sends and receives love waves from Bubbles. When he stands at the window of his room, Bubbles does the same thing on the other side of the township without knowing why she does so. Ariel not only sends love messages through the air waves, he attracts and receives crime information from Karabo unexpectedly. Here he is with a manuscript detailing the crimes of the Syndicate in front of him, the information which should be sent to the police department. Thus, it is in his nature to pull people and information towards him.

Both Ariel and Tšhaledi have true love. Tšhaledi loves only Diamond and Ariel only Bubbles. Maria, who was employed as a police informer, has fallen in love with Tšhaledi, but he does not reciprocate. On the other hand, Motlatšo indicates to Ariel beyond any doubt that she loves him, but, like a good role model, he doesn't fall for this schoolgirl. These two, Tšhaledi and Ariel, honour true love and get the reward of eternal happiness while Max and Kwena pervert love and get the punishment of death.

Max and Kwena are necessary agents in the process of purifying Diamond and Bubbles. Max is prepared to get married to Diamond even though she is pregnant with Tšhaledi's triplets. This is a taboo in African culture. A pregnant woman, according to African culture, is holy, and should not be touched by another man except by her husband for he will contaminate the well from which the child is going to be taken. Max breaks this taboo. One might ask how plausible is this happening? Does this reveal the extent to which Max loved Diamond or what? One might have expected Max to advise Diamond to return to Tšhaledi for she was carrying his children, but he does the unexpected, he marries her and they settle down. For this queer step which Max has taken, Kekana makes him suffer a violent death on the hands of Lance.

The same fate befalls Kwena whose love for Bubbles is great; but they are unsuitable for each other. Bubbles does not love him at all, but enjoys Kwena's company simply because she can control him. Bubbles likes the way she can dominate Kwena. Kwena is very weak, for he is anxiously looking forward to his marriage with Bubbles, but he agrees with the Syndicates to use her as a bait for Ariel. Like Max, Kekana makes Kwena suffer a violent death at the hands of Thoba and Champ.

The existence of Max and Kwena is significant of the change and development in

the character of Diamond and Bubbles. It makes them realize where their real love lay. It opened their eyes, focussed their lives like a furnace that removes the impurities of iron through fire.

There are other characters who are used only to complete the roundness of the main characters. Their importance lies only in the role they play in revealing certain personality traits among the main characters. The Tseke family in Mamelodi, Lesiba, Sibongile and Pele, are only important in so far as they reveal that wild side of Diamond's personality. Lucy, Diamond's friend, serves to reveal to Diamond the beauty of what Diamond despises most in life: a big family. Lucy is happy raising a big family, something Diamond despises; she's not even aware of her overweight while Diamond's obsessed with looks, and Lucy's husband is poor and dull, something Diamond can't tolerate.

In "Nnete" also, the other "anonymous" characters (anonymous not in the sense of lacking names, but due to the purpose they serve although they have labels, as in the words of Kunene (1984: 176)) bring to light the dark side of Bubbles' character. Her cunning and designing nature is exposed through her relationship with Noko, Karabo and Pula. Noko is deceived by Bubbles' appearance of obedience to such an extent that he disinherits Karabo while on the other hand Karabo allows himself to be denied the wealth of the family. Pula serves to expose Bubbles' hipocracy in her relationship with Kwena.

In portraying her characters, Kekana has shown a certain understanding of the woman's mind, a new aspect altogether in Northern Sotho literature. She is the first female writer in this language who appears to be conscious of the politics of feminism. In a study of this nature, this issue cannot be ignored, and an attempt to pursue it takes us to our next discusison.

3.2 PORTRAITS OF AFRICAN WOMANHOOD IN KEKANA'S WORK

Feminism as a political movement has not taken root among African writers using indigenous African languages. First this might be due to the fact that they were mainly concerned with their political liberation from the apartheid oppression to have time to indulge in the politics of gender. Productive and established writers like O.K. Matsepe, E.M. Ramaila and others were concerned with preserving African culture in their work and exploiting the 'makgoweng motif'.

In their works they portrayed women who complacently continued to fulfil the roles expected of them by their society and to accept the superiority of men. On this issue one has to think of the many women portrayed in the novels of Matsepe, and observe how glaringly absent is the feminine point of view from these works.

In the introduction to "*Nonyana*", Kekana observes:

Ke nnete gore basadi ba ikwa ba gateletšwe ka fase ga taolo
ya banna ka lapeng le dilong tše ntši (Kekana, 1985: i).

(It is true that women feel oppressed under the control of men
in the family and many other areas).

In both her novels, Kekana tries to reveal all shades of this oppression. In "*Nonyana*" she deals with oppression in the family, while in "*Nnete*" she concentrates on the preference given to sons at the expense of girls in families. Initially we discussed the types of characters which she portrays in her work, but now we are going to concentrate on her portraits of African womanhood from a female point of view. Kekana makes her female characters uncensor themselves, and rediscover their goods, their immense body territories which have been kept

under seal. (Showatter, 1986 145).

Kekana's heroines reject the roles expected of them by their society and rebel against the superiority of men. They are powerfully aware of the unfairness of traditional society and long to be fulfilled in themselves, to be full human beings, not merely somebody else's appendages (Palmer, 1987: 39). Such was Diamond and Bubbles. But we need to state here that Kekana seems to be asking the question: Does the African woman's acceptance of her man's dominance necessarily diminish her? A deep reading of Kekana's work seems to negate this belief. She seems to be saying that it is only those misinformed feminists like Diamond who mistake domination for oppression. Palmer (1987: 39) would agree with her observation that the African woman "sees her femininity as consisting precisely in her cheerful acceptance of and willingness to fulfil her allotted role". This is the message driven home by Kekana in her novels. Actually, the African woman knows how to rule in subservience.

3.2.1 Diamond the rebel

In "*Nonyana*" she presents us with a radical young woman, Diamond, who is not prepared to accept or submit to any type of male domination. To reveal her rebellious spirit, Kekana places her in a typical traditional society where in the roles of men and women are very sharply defined. Tšhaledi, Diamond's fiancé, defines his ideal happy family as follows:

Bjalo nyalo yona e tliša maikarabelo a lelapa le go tšwelela ga bana bao ba nyakago tihokomelo. Lebakeng leo go bohlokwa go mosadi go tlogela tše ntši tše ka mo ahilogantšhago le legae la gagwe mme a le fe boineelo bjo bo tletšego Bjale wa ka mosadi e tla ba wa go dula gae, ga ke rate mosadi wa

go šoma ka ntle le gae (Kekana, 1985: 28).

(Marriage brings with it family responsibility in which children are born and need to be taken care of. During this time it is important for a woman to sacrifice a lot of things which might separate her from her home, and devote all her time to the family Now as for me, my wife will stay at home, I don't like having my wife work outside the family).

The heroine, Diamond, "sternly rejects this traditional concept which consigns the woman to cooking, providing comfort for her husband's bed and bearing children" (Palmer, 1987: 39). All this is in conflict with Diamond's aspirations, for although she loves Tšhaledi, and would like to be married to him, she would still like to pursue modeling as a career and succeed in the world of Showbiz. Reaching for the sky in this area would give her self-fulfilment, and on the road to this there is no room for child-bearing. It is these aspirations which drive Diamond to rebel against Tšhaledi's attempts at relegating her into subservience, domesticity and motherhood. She's so rebellious that even after accidentally conceiving and giving birth to her triplets she dumps them with Tšhaledi and pursues her career. She declares:

Bana ba sebakeng se ga ke ba nyake, ke go nea bona. Ga ke ešo ka rata go ba motswadi, le go tšeelwa nako ya ka ke bana, ba ntlhokiše sebaka sa go tšwetša merero ya ka ye o e tsebago (Kekana, 1985: 132).

(At this point in time, I don't want these children, I am giving them to you. I am not yet prepared to be a parent and have my time wasted by them and disturbed in achieving my goals,

which you know).

In a society that lays so much emphasis on children as the means of ensuring the continuity of the family and the clan, a woman's femininity consists in her ability to bear and rear children. This act of throwing away her children by Diamond, is regarded as a sign of wickedness. Nthole, her father, states:

"Aowa! Kganthe ge Tšhaledi a sa tšee bjale o re o letetše go boa ga phaga yèla? Aowa, gape o na a ba a letile leswiswi"
(Kekana, 1985: 159).

(No! Do you mean that the reason why Tšhaledi doesn't get married is that he is waiting for that polecat? No! He is wasting his time).

She's all things in this world, but not a woman. Her father's disgust is strengthened by the fact that, after giving birth to the triplets; two girls and a boy, traditionally a symbol of a woman's fulfillment and new life, Diamond persists in following her modelling career. Nthole believes that she can't have taken after anyone in his family; she is so queer that she must have taken after someone in her mother's family. Another example of male chauvinism. A wise son makes his father proud of him; a foolish one brings his mother grief, so says the Bible (Proverbs, 10:1). Does this mean that everything bad in the child is from the mother's genes whilst everything good should be from the father's side? Nthole exclaims:

"Ga ke tsebe gore o abetše (mang) yo ngwana. Ka gešo ga re na ba ba bjalo" (Ibid; 1985: 72).

The conventional female identity is constructed by the discourse of male hegemony.

Surprised by Diamond's height, her uncle, Lesiba, exclaims:

"Taamane naa wena o gola bjalo ka tokwane, goba nka re kua godimo o nyaka go fihla kae ka gore šimo o hlomola le rena borangwaneago!" Ke Lesiba yo a rego bjalo, "Fela ga wa topa fase ka gore ka gešo ga re tsebe dirikhihlelana. Fela leabela le se fetiše ngwana' mogoloaka, mosadi wa go lekana le banna ka leemo le yena ka nako ga a botse" (Kekana, 1985: 7)..

(Diamond, do you grow like a mushroom, or may I ask where you want to reach because you are becoming taller than me, your uncle!" Lesiba said, "But you've taken after your kinsfolk because in our family we don't have dwarfs. But also you should not overgrow because a woman who is as tall as men sometimes is not appreciated).

Even a natural phenomenon like growing should conform to the norms of patriarchal society, which maintains that femaleness is inferior to maleness. A tall woman like Diamond is not feminine. As if taking after her height, in life as well, Diamond resists impositions of such an identity based on gender differences.

In Tšhaledi, Diamond is faced with the ultimate in male chauvinism. When preparing for their future family, Tšhaledi doesn't discuss plans with her, but comes with everything cut and dry. In their quarrel, Tšhaledi states:

Nna ke a go rata, fela mosadi wa go lekalekana le monna ge a bolela yena nna ga ke mo rate (Ibid; 1985: 30).

(I love you, but I don't like a woman who says what she likes when talking to a man).

Thus, according to Tšhaledi, a woman should listen and accept a man's opinions. She might hold counter opinions but it wouldn't do her good to argue; she should rather accept her man's word as final.

Kekana, through Diamond, supports a feminist course with some reservations, for she seems to be against radicalism in feminism. In fact, Kekana's work, though advancing the feminist cause, is a caution to those feminists who carry the banner for this cause rather too far. This she does through a speech by Pele teeming with idioms:

Ga a lemoge gore tokologo ya mosadi ga se gore a foše molekane wa gagwe ka maswika a bakišane le yena go swara mpheng wa selepe a be a tšee bana a tšholle le meetse a a hlatswitšego dikobo ka ona (Kekana, 1985: 162).

(She is not aware of the fact that for a woman to be liberated she does not have to throw stones at her husband, quarrel with him over who should own an axe's handle and throw away children with dirty water).

Put in simple terms, Kekana here is stating that there are certain duties and responsibilities in a family which belong to men, hence it would seem stupid for a woman to challenge men in these areas. Should a woman try to do this, she likens her to someone who is quarreling with her man over the possession of a penis. An axe can't function without a handle, and vice versa. Thus women should be satisfied with the ownership of an axe, which when complemented with a solid

strong handle, can do a proper job. She further alludes to the irresponsibility of radical feminists in the expression "throwing away children with dirty water". In this she might also be referring to Diamond's actions when she dumped her newly-born triplets with Tšhaledi.

Another important aspect of Kekana's view on the roles allotted to men and women in a family is that she sees them not as culturally determined, but as natural. She states:

Le go kgotsofala ka maemo ao tlhago e go abetšego ona.
Taolo e re okametše bohle ka mekgwa ya yona ya go
fapanafapana. Bjale ge Taamane a re ga a nyake go laolwa
ke monna o kgahlanong le tlhago ka boyona gobane ke yona
e beilego tatelano ya maemo ka lapeng magareng ga
balekane (Kekana, 1985: 163).

(One should be satisfied with the role allotted by nature. We are all one way or another under control. When Diamond says that she does not want to be controlled by a man, she is against nature because the hierarchy of powers within the family is naturally determined).

This is exactly what feminists are against, that because nature has given men a penis, they are superior, more powerful and should dominate women. In feminist circles this notion is referred to as phallocentrism and it emanates from the story of the woman being created out of the rib of a man in Genesis.

Kekana is firm in her belief that nature has allotted men and women their roles and that each can be free within their sphere of influence. If one tries to disturb this

order, one is bound to suffer. She shows great psychological insight in penetrating Diamond's thoughts and revealing the pain she feels when rejected by her children:

Lešoko la wela Maite, bohloko bjo a bo bonago mahlong a morwediagwe ge a tšhabja ke ba gagwe bana, le yena bja mo fetela. Meokgo ya tšhologa mahlong a bona ka bobedi ge ba lla ka setu (Kekana, 1985: 185).

(Maite felt it when she observed the pain visible on her daughter's face when she was rejected by her own children. Tears flowed from their eyes, both of them in silence).

The pain of rejection was so great for Diamond that her mother felt it as well. These tears which were flowing down her cheeks do not only reveal the pain but regret as well. That is why the author concludes with the words: "Le yena o tla lokologa bjalo ka tšona a phela ka lapeng la gagwe, madulong a a mo swanetšego le ba lapa la gagwe (Kekana, 1985: 185) (Emphasis mine). (She will be free like them in her family, in her rightful position within her family). That rightful position is a secondary but cheerfully accepted and important role" (Palmer, 1987: 39).

3.2.2 Bubbles: The "Bitch"

In "*Nnete*" Kekana places her heroine in a family which resides in Phelindaba, a Pretoria township, but which still adheres to traditional rules. This she does so as to reveal the oppression women suffer in traditional societies and to make her heroine's rebellious spirit plausible.

The Noko family is blessed with two children, the twins, Bubbles and Karabo, a girl and a boy. One would have expected them to get the same treatment since they

were twins but, according to Palmer (1987: 41), in this type of society that is not possible:

The preoccupation in African societies with the continuity of the line means, not just a desire for children, but a preference for sons.

Thus for Noko his two children could under no circumstance be treated the same; the boy, Karabo, was a guarantee to him of immortalizing his name. He declares:

“Ke re ge e šetše pelo ya ka e nyaka go ya kgole, ka boa ka homotšega, gobane ka yo Karabo ke na le molotaleina, ga ke fela. Ke thome ke leboge ge ke na le yena gobane ke phumotšwe megokgo (Kekana, 1994: 16).

(Sometimes my heart bleeds, I think deeply but become consoled because with Karabo my name will be immortalized, I have someone to carry on the line. I am thankful for being blessed with him).

Thus to the Noko family, Karabo is of a higher value than Bubbles, who is not that important for she will marry and go. When Bubbles overheard her father voicing these opinions she felt unwanted and despised, which had some negative consequences on her personality. Palmer (1987: 42) concurs with this when she observes: “This traditional preference for sons leads to some strange consequences since it has disturbing effects on the psyches of not just the woman but some men as well”.

Bubbles' decision to usurp Karabo in the eyes of her father is a direct result of

Noko's preference for Karabo simply because he was male. Bubbles decides that since Karabo has acquired seniority by virtue of his gender, she must usurp him through achievements. This brings out good personality traits in her character: dedication, hardwork, assertiveness and general cleverness, but it also reveals the dark side of her: cunning, sadistic and designing (Refer to 3.1.3). She becomes a real harridan who is determined to get her way at all times and at all costs. She learns competition rather than co-operation. From the time when she was only ten years old, she competed with and succeeded in beating Karabo. Now as an adult she was confused; instead of looking for love she was competing for domination. In her affair with Kwena, she enjoyed her domination over him and knew very well that she did not love him, but loved Ariel, though she felt scorn for him for the strength in his character, which she could not overpower.

Thus Bubbles' psyche has been distorted by the feeling of not being loved and accepted simply because she was not male. She rejects and resists her feelings of love towards Ariel. In a relationship she is not looking for love, but for domination.

Through Bubbles, Kekana reveals to us the suffering of a woman conscious of gender discrimination in a patriarchal society. This woman, due to this awareness, looks for the most effective weapon she possesses to use in this society. Bubbles discovers her beauty can make her succeed in a world dominated by men. She doesn't prostitute herself, for that would still make men exploit her, but uses her brains and beauty to beat them at their game: business. She leads them like sacrificial lambs to the alter when they serve her, mesmerized by her beauty. This also reveals the stupidity of men when they are exploited by women. At the magistrate's offices Bubbles is given red-carpet treatment and what do those men get in return? Nothing.

Bubbles' competitive spirit and assertiveness are presented as wild elements in her personality which need to be tamed. She's placed against a strong character in the person of Ariel who makes it his ambition to tame her. Finally Bubbles is tamed and submits to Ariel's domination as a subservient, domesticated woman.

Kekana has presented us with something new in Northern Sotho literature, a feminine perspective on the position of women in a patriarchal society. Many feminists might not agree with the stand she adopts at the end of her novels, but many will agree that "*Nonyana*" and "*Nnete*" are good pieces of literature.

3.3 RÉSUMÉ

Examining the novels of Kekana has been the most demanding assignment of this study so far. This is so because here we are faced with a female novelist who tried her hand at writing detective novels. Faced with this task we had to decide on a vantage point from which Kekana's work could be approached for maximum understanding. Since we adhere to the belief that the choice of methodology is to be dictated by the artefact to be studied, feminism was selected as the most appropriate approach. Obviously, this choice is largely influenced by the gender of the author and the ideas she propagates in her work. On the other hand we could not pursue this approach at the expense of our stated objective to study and analyze the nature and development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho. At the end we had to find an area where these two meet so as to try to understand Kekana's work.

On going through Kekana's detective stories we discovered that they leave much to be desired. Her portrayal of crime and its detection reveals that she knows very little about the art of writing a detective story. From the above observation, though without being prescriptive, we are tempted to suggest that she should stick to what

she knows best: love and its emotional turmoils. While in search of better words, in the meantime we can borrow Robert Bolt's (1960: 39) expression: the currents and eddies of the detective novel she can't navigate, she's no voyager. But in the thickets of love stories, oh there she's a forester.

Though a feminist, Kekana does not do much for this cause. In her novels she portrays the experiences of women in a patriarchal society from a female perspective; she gives a picture of women suffering oppression of all types, women who are assertive and who strive for acknowledgement and recognition of what they are, not as somebody appendage; but alas, all this they do due to ill-informed youth and lack of experience in life, for ultimately they sheppishly submit to domesticity. Kekana seems to be saying that it is natural that the phallus is a symbol of power, and it is high time that women should accept this. In her words she says:

“.... tokologo ya mosadi ga se gore a foše molekane wa gagwe
ka maswika a bakišane le yena go swara mpheng wa selepe
....” (1985: 162).

(The liberation of a women does not mean that she should
fight her husband and quarrel with him over who should hold
the axe's handle).

This exposes the downright stupidity of some of the ideas propagated by feminist activists. Another important point related to the above is the beautiful artistic way in which Kekana drives these points home.

From her two novels; (*Nonyana*) 1985 and (*Nnete*) 1994, certain elements pertaining to her style are starting to emerge. This provides another interesting area to be researched, but we must leave it for other scholars.

CHAPTER 4: INTERTEXTUALITY : THE KEY TO MOLOTO AND MOTUKU'S TEXTS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Even though Riffaterre (1984: 141) maintains that intertextuality is not a felicitous surplus, the privilege of a good memory or a classical education, when the researcher read V.M. Moloto's "*Letlapa la Bophelo*" and came across an incident in which a short, plump woman always eats prunes, the mind immediately recalled having read the story somewhere in one of James Hadley Chase's novels. For a better understanding of this text, then, a search was started, and after covering over eighty of Chase's novels, the story was found in "*Lay her amongst the Lilies*". The incident of a dismembered female corpse necessitated a further search which ended in Chase's novel, "*Twelve Chinks and a woman*". A revisiting of these novels provided a better understanding of Moloto's text. The same applies to H.Z. Motuku's short-story, "*Ralato 2*" in the collection "*Nka se le bale*". The story of a paralyzed husband who is electrocuted by her wife's jealous lover sounded familiar, and a search for its source led to Chase's novel, "*Shock Treatment*".

Such are the benefits of a good memory and it was the discoveries above which prompted the choice of intertextuality as a suitable approach for maximum understanding of Moloto and Motuku's texts. Riffaterre (1984: 141) concurs: "The term indeed refers to an operation of the reader's mind, but it is an obligatory one, necessary to any textual decoding". If it were not for the benefit of a good memory, the intertexts reflected in Moloto and Motuku's work could have remained hidden and as such the texts could not have been well understood.

4.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mention has already been made of intertexts reflected in texts, and it would be useful to define here what an intertext is. Reffaterre (1990: 56) defines this as "one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance". Now in our case James Hardley Chace's novels "*Lay her amongst the Lilies*", "*Twelve Chinks and a Woman*" and "*Shock Treatment*" are intertexts reflected in Moloto and Motuku's works.

Now back to the term intertextuality. It would be time-consuming, if not futile, to attempt to present the different approaches of a remarkably heterogeneous theory of intertextuality, for, according to Susanne Holthuis, there is consent only on one point: that intertextuality is based on the idea of relations between texts (Petofi & Olivi: 1994: 77). Worton and Still (1990: ix) concur when they state that intertextuality is a promiscuous interdiscipline, or even a trans-discipline, certainly a transverstine discipline in that it constantly borrows its trappings, now from psychoanalysis, now from political philosophy, now from economics, and so on. The term itself 'Intertextuality', was coined by Julia Kristeva, embracing amongst others what had previously been known as: plagiarism, sources, influences, archetypes, allusion and imitation. Actually, Plottel and Charney (1978: vii) state that this term has given a name to that which had been previously nameless. Further they explain:

Interpretation is shaped by a complex of relations between the text, the reader, reading, writing, printing, publishing, and history: the history that is inscribed in the language of the text and in the history that is carried by the reader's reading. Such a history has been given a name: intertextuality (Plotter & Charney: 1978: xx).

This assertion agrees with Kristeva's observation that every text builds itself as a mosaic of quotations, every text is an absorption and transformation of another text (Ibid: xiv).

Worton and Still (1990: 1) have identified two factors which negate a text existing as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, functioning as a closed system. First of all, before he can be considered a creator of texts, the writer is a reader of texts and thus his artifact is inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences. Hence when he sets down his ideas, Plattel and Charney (1978: xv) maintain:

"Every syllable, every word, every utterance set to paper reflects amalgamation and repetition and countless types, stereo types and precedents".

This implies that everything written carries the mark of a gap with something else that is, or was, written. Actually this is what is commonly referred to as plagiarism, and Plattel and Charney (1978: xvi) concur: "Plagiarism is as natural to literature as the eating of tame sheep is to a lion." This metaphor implies that writers feed on other writers. Writers read and, consciously or unconsciously, borrow from their reading when they write. Hence, "every text echoes another text into infinity, weaving the fabric of the text of culture itself" (Plattel & Charney, 1978: xv). Thus, not only texts previously read by an author, but also aspects of his cultural background are a major force influencing every aspect of a text.

Secondly, according to Worton and Still (1990: 1):

A text is available only through some process of reading what is produced at the moment of reading is due to the cross-fertilization of the packaged textual material (say, a book) by all the texts which the reader brings to it.

In his text, an author might refer or allude to a work previously read by himself but if this work is unknown or forgotten by the reader, it will go unnoticed, and hence have a dormant existence in that reading. But a good memory on the side of the reader will be of great advantage on understanding the text in this event. For example, Johan Bunyan's "*Pilgrim's Progress's*" presence in O.K. Matsepe's "*Mahlatsa a Madimabe*" will always be dormant to a Northern Sotho reader who is unfamiliar with it. But to one who has gone through Bunyan's text, its presence in Matsepe's text as an intertext will be noticed and taken into consideration when appreciating the work. Thus intertextuality complements our experience of textuality. Since in literary criticism of great importance is the vantage point from which to approach a work of art, in some cases, if not all, intertextuality might be a necessary condition for the comprehension and interpretation of a text.

Worton and Still (1990: 2) further mention the fact that a reader's experience of some practice or theory unknown to the author may lead to a fresh interpretation. Being familiar with the theory of intertextuality, one's interpretation of Matsepe's "*Mahlatsa a Madimabe*" will be deeper and bring about new and fresh interpretation, for it will be based on the relationship between this text and the intertext.

Thus intertextuality has two axes: texts entering via authors and texts entering via readers. The most important aspect of intertextuality is its challenge to the notions of unity and origin through its insistence that texts are influenced and conditioned by numerous texts and sources. Intertextuality questions authority. Thosago (1995: 82) quotes Kenneth Quinn, who says:

.... no writer of genius hopes to write a work that is wholly original: complete originality is the dream of the artistically naive, the refuge of the artistically incompetent.

Thus, the notion of a writer as a stylist is negated. A book is not, and can never be, an *ex-nihilo* creation. The idea that a writer composes his work from experiences of strong emotions which inspire him is born out of naiveté. According to Plottel & Charney (1978: xv), there can never be a trustworthy text free from all cultural constraints including that of language.

4.2 INTERTEXTUAL RELATIONS

It is appropriate at this juncture to borrow Calvino's words:

You have now read about thirty pages and you're becoming caught up in the story. At a certain point you remark: "This sentence sound somehow familiar. In fact, this whole passage reads like something I've read before". Of course there are themes that recur, the text is interwoven with these reprises, which serve to express the fluctuation of time (Thosago, 1995: 156).

It has been mentioned under our introduction (4.0) how the same thoughts raced through the researcher's mind. Thus it was established that Moloto's novel and Motuku's short story are based on, or certainly refer to, Chase's novels. Susanne Holthuis states that an intertextual relation is present if texts are typologically related, if they show equivalent or quasi-equivalent functional and/or system immanent properties, or if a text refers to another in some way (Petöfi & Olivi, 1994: 79).

It should be mentioned here that in establishing the relationship between these texts we are not attempting to trace the origin of Moloto's novel and Motuku's short-story, for, in the words of Mokgoatšana (1996: 137), if intertextuality has to do with the digging up of origins, the endeavour will have no convincing end because not all original sources of the so-called original source can be traced.

The tracing of *originarity* - the origin of origin - is like chasing a mirage.

4.2.1 Chase in Moloto

The intertextual relation between Moloto and Chase is that of imitation. The two James Hadley Chase novels, "*Lay her amongst the Lilies*" and "*Twelve Chinks and a woman*", have been brought together through the process of liquefaction resulting in Moloto's "*Letlapa la Bophelo*", hence forth to be referred to as "*Letlapa*" which is 'a pulped version of the two novels. (Due to the unavailability of the original versions of the Chase novels, the Afrikaans translated versions were used for this research. The Afrikaans titles are: "*Lê haar tussen die Lelies neer*" and "*Geel vir geld*". The two titles will henceforth be referred to as "*Lê haar*" and "*Geel*" respectively).

Having read too many of James Hadley Chase's novels, V.M. Moloto could not help being influenced by this author. When he tried his hand at writing a detective novel, he was bound to imitate this prolific American author. According to Aristotle, we learn through imitating others, and our instinct to enjoy works of imitation is inborn (Worton & Still, 1990: 6). There is creativity in imitation because the parasite imitates a host whom he emulates and attempts to improve on.

4.2.1.1 Milieu

The setting of Moloto's novel is foreign to South Africa. This is not surprising if one considers the fact that what he writes is not totally based on his first-hand experience of life in South Africa, but on the influence of a foreign writer. Thus, unlike D.N. Moloto, who depicts a lively, colourful and realistic Alexandra and Vendaland in "*Tšhipu e nile ke lebelo*", V.M. Moloto's Witwatersrand approximates Orchid City rather than any city in South Africa.

"Izintaba", the Khosa's homestead, is a beautiful mansion behind security gates, with a big and brightly flowered garden. Appreciating the garden, Motsamai thought: "Ke kgolwa gore le sona serapa se se bitša dimilione" (Moloto, 1983: 23). (I believe this garden is worth millions). This was not a poor man's appreciation of wealth, but a real estimate based on the exorbitant display of wealth in front of him. The well-cared for, beautiful garden with a lion statue and a well designed, heart-shaped and bright-blue lighted pond, rightly deserved this estimate. At the gate of this estate there is a warning:

Ga go tsenwe,
bafeti ba tla otiwa go ya ka taelo (Moloto, 1983: 22).

(No entry.
Trespassers will be prosecuted. By order).

This is a well constituted setting for crime in a detective novel. The conspicuous, exorbitant wealth creates the impression that those living within this set-up are self-sufficient and satisfied with everything. All their needs are met within these security walls. Hence there is no need for them to commit a crime. On the other hand, the high-walls and security gates prevent any outsider from committing a crime. All this makes the crime more conspicuous, the puzzle about the motive and the criminal more puzzling.

"Izintaba" is not a child of Moloto's mind, but a copy of Chase's Crestways, the Crosby's homestead in "*Le haar*" Describing this homestead, Chase (1978: 8) states:

Almal is agter hoë mure weggesteek. Almal het hoë houthekke om onwelkom besoekers uit te hou. Almal straal dieselfde stilte uit, daar is dieselfde geur van blomme en grasperke.

(All of them are hidden behind high walls. All have high wooden gates to keep away unwelcome visitors. All exude the same quietness, there is the same aroma of flowers and lawns).

“Izintaba” is not a homestead in South Africa, it approximates Crestways and other millionaires’ homesteads in Orchid City.

Also, Dr Mahlangu’s sanitarium is a replica of Dr Salzer’s sanitarium. The white sound-proofed walls, concrete roofing and steel burglar-proofed windows are the same. The idea of a private lunatic asylum is foreign to South Africa, not to mention its being owned by a black person. If it doesn’t exist in 1998, how much more unlikely was it in 1983? Moloto transplanted this idea in toto from Chase’s novel. Even the occupants of these homes are the same. In “*Letlapa*” we find the lunatic, Hopper, who exhibits the same cannibalistic tendencies. There is also the naked girl, wh has been fed so many drugs through injections that she doesn’t even remember her name. She appears in both novels. Moloto never reveals the identity of this girl. It is only in referring to “*Lê haar*” that we can assume that she might be Seipati, for in Chase’s novel she turns out to be Janet, the heir to the Crosby millions. Here is one of the places where Moloto’s text falls short rather than transcends the intertext. In fact it seem the author is confused here for initially it was said that Desmond knew Seipati very well:

O be a tseba mongwalo wa Seipati gabotse ka ge e be e le
mogweragwe wa go wa le go tsoga (Moloto, 1983: 16).

(He was familiar with Seipati’s handwriting because she was his very close friend).

Thus, unlike Malloy, who had never met Janet Crosby and thus had no way of knowing that the girl he was looking at was not Anona Freelanders but Janet, Desmond could recognize Seipati if she were the naked girl in the sanitorium. But then in Moloto's novel, the naked girl turns out to be Judy Setati. This leads to the happy ending of the sub-plot, in which the daughter is reunited with her grief-stricken father.

Thus for a proper understanding of the milieu depicted in Moloto's novel a revisiting of Chase's novel, "*Lê haar*", is imperative.

4.2.1.2 Crime

In presenting the crimes to be investigated, Moloto borrowed from both Chase's novels, "*Lê haar ...*", and "*Geel*". The first crime is the complex Khosa case, two deaths in the family; and the second is the apparent kidnapping case of Judy Setati. The detective of this novel, Desmond, never agrees to investigate the second case although he incidentally solves it in the process of solving the first one.

The puzzle in the crime of this novel lies in the Khosa case. Seipati Khosa, whom Desmond knew very well, and was friendly with, had written Desmond this letter:

Leka ka maatla go hwetša motho yo a phedišago kgaetšedi
ya ka gabohloko ka go mo lefiša tšhelete ye ntši (Moloto,
1983: 15).

(Try by all means to find out who is blackmailing my sister
by making her pay such a lot of money).

What complicates this matter further is the fact that Seipati wrote this letter two

days before her death and a year had passed before Desmond received it. Moloto has failed to give his readers any plausible reason for the delay of this letter. Thus Seipati's letter has miraculously been delayed by over a year in reaching its destination. For a reader who is not conscious of the existence of "*Lê haar ...*", this incident will never be understood.

In "*Lê haar ...*", Malloy, the owner of Universal Services Detective Agency, receives a letter from Janet Crosby requesting a meeting with him in which she wants help about someone who is blackmailing her sister:

Sal u asseblief so vriendelik wees om my om drie-uur more middag by bogemelde adres te kom sien? Ek is angstig om getuienis in te win omtrent iemand wat besig is om my suster af te pers (Chase, 1978: 5).

(Would you please be kind enough to meet me tomorrow at three o'clock in the afternoon at the above-mentioned address. I am anxiously trying to gather information about someone who is blackmailing my sister).

This letter Malloy places in the pocket of his raincoat before reading it and totally forgets about it. After fourteen months he gives the raincoat to the nightwatchman, who discovers the letter and hands it back to Malloy. Thus the delay of the letter, in Chase's novel, is given a plausible reason.

There are two points one would like to make clear. First of all the similarities between this two presentations of crime are too great to be coincidental. There is no doubt that Moloto got his ideas from Chase. Actually this borders on plagiarism, but according to intertextuality this is not a crime. Those critics who would like to castigate Moloto for this should not forget that complete "originality is the dream of the artistically naïve, the refuge of the artistically incompetent"

(Thosago, 1995: 82). Secondly we would like to highlight the fact that, from the above illustration, it has become abundantly clear that a revisiting of the intertext is the *conditio-sine-quo-non* of a proper understanding of Moloto's presentation of crime. A reader can never understand the reason for the delay of Seipati's letter without reading about Janet's letter to Malloy.

Moloto has thus presented us with a crime, that of blackmailing. Susi Khosa is being blackmailed and Desmond has been paid five-thousand rands to find the blackmailer. Now that Seipati has died after sending the letter and money to Desmond, the question which comes to the mind of the detective and the reader alike is whether her death and Susi's blackmailing are related. This is the puzzle of this detective story.

The disappearance of Judy Setati is the second crime which should be investigated. An old man, Mr Setati, requests Desmond to help in searching for his missing daughter, Judy. In spite of pleading from Mr Setati, Desmond is not prepared to help. He claims that he has a lot of work to do, but we have already read that: "E be e šetše e le lebaka go se molato woo ba bego ba o swere" (Moloto, 1983: 10). (It is quite some time since they had had a case to handle). Motsamai's refusal to help Setati is incomprehensible and leaves a dent on his personality, for he has to be the hero and stand for good against evil. The reader is left suspended, not knowing whether the detective will investigate this case or not, and also whether this case is related to the Khosa case. To understand this case properly, one has to read "Geel".

In "Geel" we have an old man, Andrew Lindsay, whose daughter has disappeared and he approaches Fenner to help find her. Fenner refuses to help because in the U.S.A. kidnapping is a federal offence which falls under the jurisdiction of the F.B.I. Lindsay's insistence that Fenner should help him, not the F.B.I., is based on his previous success in the Blandish case. In his first and most successful novel, "*No Orchids for Miss Blandish*", Chase had written about the kidnapping of Miss Blandish and her ordeal at the hands of the Ma Grissom

gang. An avid reader of crime stories would be familiar with this story and thus comprehend the direction of Lindsay's thoughts.

Moloto has certainly read Chase's novel and been impressed by this case and finally has borrowed it to use in his novel. Since his South African Northern Sotho reader might not have read about the Blandish case, he justifies Setati's request for help from Desmond by stating that he had heard about his success in arresting the Maheizel gangster. There was once such a gangster around the Witwatersrand and this gives the author's story a realistic, plausible social grounding. Nevertheless this does not repudiate the idea that source of Moloto's story, is Chase's novel, "*Gee!*".

The puzzle in the Judy Setati case is how it is related to the Khosa case. Will our detective, Desmond, investigate it, and, if he does, will its solution provide a clue to the Khosa case?

Finally we have to comment on how Moloto handles this aspect of crime. One can justifiably say that the motives for Moloto's crime are very shallow. There is no much brain-work to back the actions of his criminals. The motive for Mrs Khosa's crimes is just that her husband loved Seipati more than Susi. At the end she confesses and the ultimate punishment of death is meted out and society is purged of this evil woman. Though there is little detection, the story is a catalogue of one murder after another.

In "*Lê haar ...*" greed leads to a carefully planned embezzlement of Trust fund monies by one of the Trustees of the Grosby estate, attorney Manfred Willet. Here we have an educated criminal who occupies a position of trust. He is the least suspected. This angle is lacking in Moloto's novel, hence its shallowness.

In "*Gee!*", Glory would like Fenner to end Carlos' crime of slave-trafficking. After Carlos had murdered Chang, one of the Chinese who was in love with Glory, she decides to retain Fenner under the pretext that he was to investigate

the disappearance of her non-existent sister who has something to do with twelve Chinese. This was a clue about Carlos' racket because he always transported his Chinese slaves in groups of twelve men and a woman. Indeed, finally Carlos is killed and his racket shattered. The disappearance of the Lindsay girl is related to the plot in the sense that her dismembered body was to be used as a decoy for Fenner to think that it was that of Glory's non-existent sister.

Thus, though Moloto got his ideas about crime from "*Lê haar ...*" and "*Geel*", his handling of this aspect of a detective novel is less sophisticated than Chase's. Does this reflect the level of sophistication of his society?

4.2.1.3 Detective

Of importance to the detective story is not so much crime itself, but the steps taken to detect the motives for it, the manner in which it was carried out and finally identification of the criminal. In his novel, does Moloto travel with his reader on his way to unravel the mystery of what happened in the Khosa household? If he does, is every step taken by Motsamai towards solving this case logically explicable? Unfortunately the answer to these questions is an emphatic negative. It is the objective of this discussion to show how Moloto failed his readers in this aspect and also to reveal how the gaps left in between can be filled by referring to Chase's novels; thus highlighting the importance of these intertexts.

The death of Seipati and her father pose some questions for Desmond. Moloto (1983: 28) asks:

Seo se bego se mo makatša ke mahu a mabedi: motho le morwedi wa gagwe ba hwe ka kotsi! "Go swanetše go be go na le motho yo a nyakago go ikgobela mahumo a ga Khosa.

(What surprised him was these two deaths: a man and his daughter both dying through accidents!" There must be someone who is trying to collect Khosa's wealth).

This necessitated a visit to the Khosa's house.

In his visit to the Khosa's family and in his discussions with Susi, nothing is mentioned of Dr Seanego, but after this visit he proceeds to search for 50 Zwelethu, which is Seanego's surgery. Dr Seanego has signed Seipati's death certificate but nowhere in this novel does the author inform his readers how Desmond knew this. In this instance, the author has failed to give a plausible explanation of the actions of his detective.

From the discussion with Dr Seanego the reader learns the following:

"Setopo sona o ile wa se swara?"

"O be a šetše a bolokilwe" (Moloto, 1983: 30).

("Did you ever touch the corpse?"

"She was already buried").

This is another unusual happening. Desmond, together with the reader, is puzzled about this issue of a blind doctor being made to certify the death of a corpse long buried! What is being hidden here?

The most which covers the above event is lifted only after one has referred to the intertext, "*Lê haar ...*". After visiting the Grosbys, Malloy decided to check a copy of Janet's death certificate at the Country Building. There he discovers that her death certificate has been signed by a Dr John Bowley, hence his visit to this old, poor-sighted doctor. From this; two points become clear: first, Malloy's visit to Dr Bowley is a logical result of the information gathered at the Country Building. Second, it was important for Mrs Grosby to have Dr Bowley

certify the death of Janet because the corpse which he examined was not Janet's but that of a nurse, Freedlander.

Another important similarity between the two books is how the criminal attempts to obliterate his/her tracks, thus avoiding being detected. After speaking to Desmond, Dr Seanego is killed and Desmond observes a car, T.J. 48623, which is always following him. The car is registered in the name of Dr Mahlangu and has been reported stolen. The thug who drives it, Chumi, employed by Mrs Mahlangu, is later killed in a fight with Motsamai. In "*Lê haar ...*", after speaking to Malloy, Dr Bowley is killed, and Malloy observes an olive-green Dodge with the registration number O.R. 3345, following him. On enquiry it is discovered the car is registered to Dr Salzer and has been reported stolen. The driver of the car, Benny Dwan, who is employed by Mrs Crosby, alias Mrs Salzer, is later killed after fight with Malloy (by the police, so it seems). In both stories, the killing of the doctors, reporting the cars as stolen, and attempting to kill the detectives, are all attempts at obliterating tracks by the criminals. The similarities between these two is too great for Moloto to deny the influence of Chase.

From "*Gee!*" Moloto borrows three events to build his fiction. While reminiscing about the events relating to the Khosa case in his office, Motsamai is confronted by two thugs, dressed in black suits and carrying tommy-guns. After ransacking Motsamai's office, searching for something which is never mentioned in this text, they beat him up. Secondly a corpse is placed in Motsamai's office without any reason being given for that. This is just an isolated incident which the reader does not know the purpose of. Thirdly, while looking for Judy Setati, Motsamai finds a dismembered body in a room. This is one of the most cruel murders in this text. Motsamai assumes that the dead woman is Judy, but later learns from Mrs Khosa that the dismembered body belonged to a nurse she had employed. There is no reason given for her murder and the dismembering of her corpse.

It is only by revisiting "Geel ..." that the reader can make sense of some of these events. In Chase's novel, the two identically black-dressed thugs are members of Carlos' gang, who were to beat Tenner so as to discourage him from investigating the Marian Daley case. The tommy-gun which they carried suited the time and place. In the American context the gun was popular with gangsters, but in the South African context an A.K. 47 might have been the more appropriate weapon. The body of a Chinese planted in Tenner's office was meant to delay him, for the police were tipped off about it. In "Geel" this body belongs to Chang, Glorie's lover, but in Moloto, it remains a nameless corpse. Had the police found the body in his office, Tenner would have had difficulty in explaining its origin. So there is a purpose in dumping this body in Tenner's office, but it is not so in "Letlapa". The dismembered body is that of the Lindsay woman, who has accidentally been killed by Carlos. Unlike in "Letlapa", where Judy Setati survived the ordeal, in "Geel" the Lindsay woman perished. The dismembering was to disguise her identity - a body without a head and arms is difficult to identify. Also it was meant to mislead Tenner into thinking the body was that of the non-existent Marian Daley. Moloto does not give any motive for the dismembering of the body which Motsamai discovered. It is just one of several brutal and senseless murders.

The above proves beyond doubt that in his fiction, Moloto has bitten off a big chunk from Chase's novels and tried to blend it into his story, but most unfortunately, he failed to give reasons for some of the actions. This is a serious flaw because detection is based on logical deduction from observed evidence, rather than on strokes of luck or prophecy.

4.2.1.4 Characterization

In his characterization, Moloto has presented us with a copy of Chase's characters without any pretence of being original. Before we can delve into a detailed character analysis, it might be helpful if we started with a table through which Moloto's characters can be placed against their counterparts from

Chase's novels.

	LETLAPA ...	LÊ HAAR	GEEL
1.	Desmond Motsamai	Victor Malloy	Dave Tenner
2.	Brayn Sekgopo	Jack Kerman	
3.	Masemenya	Paulo Bensinger	Paula Dolan
4.	Seipati Khosa	Janet Grosby	
5.	Susi Khosa	Maureen Grosby	
6.	Mrs Khosa	Mrs Grosby	
7.	Mr Khosa	Macdonald Grosby	
8.	Dr, A Seanego	Dr John Bowley	
9.	Dr Mahlangu	Dr Salzer	
10.	Mr Setati		Andrew Lindsay
11.	Judy Setati		Lindsay's daughter
12.	Captain Snyman	Captain Brandon	
13.	Tšhukudu	Sergeant MacGraw	
14.	Chabalala	Sherrill	
15.	Pholo	Hopper	
16.	Chumi	Benny Duran	

The above table is not only meant to show the characters Moloto copied from Chase's novels but also to show the resemblance in their personality traits which will be revealed below.

4.2.1.4.1 The Detective

In his portrayal of the detective, Motsamai, Moloto seems to be confusing issues. It is not clear whether Desmond is a private detective or attached to the police services. In explaining this character, Moloto (1983: 10) states:

Monna yo o be a kile a šomela kgoro ya maphodisa

mengwaga e se mekae. A nagana go tšea magato a botseka.

(This man had worked for the police services for some years, then he decided to join the detective section).

This gives the impression that Motsamai was still attached to the police services, though was now serving in the detective section. This impression is strengthened by the fact that this detective section is said to be under the control of Makhamisa. So Motsamai was working under the control of someone else, but it is only here that any mention is made of his seniors. Nowhere in this book is mentions made of him reporting about happenings, progress or the lack of it in his investigation. In fact, he conducts his work as if he is a private detective. Setati pays him one thousand rands as a retainer for tracing his missing daughter, and promises him some more after the successful completion of the assignment. Also, in her letter to Motsamai, Seipati Khosa has included six-thousand rands as an upfront payment for the job of tracing Susi's blackmailer. It is only private detectives who are paid like this.

This confusion in the portrayal of the detective in Moloto's text can be clarified by referring to Chase. Chase clearly uses private detectives in his novels. In "*Lê haar ...*", Victor Malloy owns a private detective agency, Universal Services. Explaining the nature of this establishment, Malloy says:

Dit is nou net meer as drie en `n half jaar sedert ek Universal Services gestig het: `n organisasie wat enigiets onderneem - van `n poedel vir sy wandeling neem toto `n afperser vastrek (Chase, 1978: 3).

(It is now just over three years since I established Universal Services - an organisation which takes care of everything - from returning a wandering poodle to its owner to arresting a blackmailer).

Also in "Geel ...", Dave Tenner is a private investigator, though this is not as categorically stated as in "Lê haar ..." Moloto's Desmond has been portrayed after private detectives. It is only that in South Africa the idea of a black man establishing a private detective agency was unthinkable, so Moloto placed his detective within the police service. This causes confusion.

Another aspect of the portrayal of the detective which Moloto seems to have copied from Chase is the relationship between his detective and police service. He paints his detective, Desmond, as an intelligent, hardworking and morally incorruptible personality who is in constant conflict with the inefficient, corrupt and brutal police service. Captain Snyman is inefficient and corrupt. He would like to discourage Motsamai in his investigations. His subordinate, Tšhukudu, and his partner constantly harass Motsamai on his instructions. This relationship is the same as that of Malloy and Captain Brandon. Brandon is corrupt; he tries to protect his benefactors, the Grosby family, from being investigated. He sends his lackies, MacGraw and Hartsell, to manhandle Malloy. The hold which the Grosby family has over the police service is revealed by the fear which Maureen instills in the hearts of the rogue policemen. Thus, Desmond, like Malloy, is presented as a protector or guardian of society against crime in the absence of a duty - conscious police service.

4.2.1.4.2 The Criminal

There are too many flaws in how the criminal is portrayed in Moloto's novel. First of all, the actions of Susi lead to suspicion, and this is a serious flaw, for in the end when she is arrested the reader is not surprised. One of the most important aspects of a detective novel is the element of surprise, when finally the criminal is exposed. The criminal should be a character never suspected by the reader and other characters of evil-doing. From the time when our detective and readers meet Susi, her behaviour raises a lot of suspicion. She says: "O se botše motho gore ke gona mo" (Moloto, 1983: 25). (Don't tell anybody that I am here). The obvious questions resulting from this behaviour are: why is she hiding and from whom or what is she hiding?

The second flaw is that even at the end of the story it is not clear whether the criminal is Susi or her mother. This is so because both of them confess to the same crime. Susi says:

Gape go ile gwa tsoga ntwaga magareng a ka le ngwanešo.
Chabalala ge a lamola, ka leka go mo thunya; eupša
Seipati a tla tseleng ya kolo (Moloto, 1983: 58).

(There was a fight between me and my sister. Chabalala tried to come between us; I tried to shoot him, but Seipati was in the bullet's way).

If this was really the case, then Seipati's death was accidental. But soon after this revelation, Mrs Khosa offers a different explanation:

Khosa e be e le monna wa ka. Ke nna ke mmolailego ka thoboro ge ke lemoga gore o rata Seipati, ngwana wa mosadi wa pele go feta Susi wa ka Seipati a senya ka

go di tsenatsena, ya ba gore le yena a tlošwe tšatšing
(Moloto, 1983: 65).

(Khosa was my husband. I am the one who shot and killed him when I realized that he loved Seipati, his daughter by his first wife, more than my daughter, Susi, Seipati tried to intervene, then it became necessary to have her killed).

From these two confessions, Seipati had two murderers and died under two different circumstances. The author does not try to reconcile these different versions, and the reader is left confused. But Susi and her mother receive the punishments due to them: Susi is jailed while her mother commits suicide.

In his novel, Moloto has portrayed small-time criminals who commit petty crimes. Their motives for murder are too silly: "... ge ke lemoga gore o rata Seipati, ngwana wa mosadi wa pele go feta Susi" (When I realized that he loved Seipati, his daughter by his first wife, more than Susi). This motive is too shallow and hence there is little brain-work involved in planning the crime.

Mrs Khosa and Susi's counterparts in "*Lê haar*" are Mrs Crosby and her daughter, Maureen. Chase presents Mrs Crosby as a cool, insane murderess who always eats plums whilst going around wantonly committing her crimes. This peculiar behaviour of eating plums has been reproduced in Moloto's novel though her insanity has been omitted. She is so certifiably insane that, though she is a qualified medical practitioner, she has been struck off the roll because she once left a patient on the operation table without completing her work. But in Chase, Mrs Crosby and Maureen are just pawns in the great game of the master, Manfred Willet, one of the trustees of the Crosby estate. Maureen confesses:

Dit was die heeltyd sy idee. Hy het met die Trustgeld

gedobbel. Janet het dit uitgevind. Dit was hy wat my ma orreed het om vir Janet in die sanatorium toe te sluit. As dit nie vir Douglas was nie, sou hy my ook laat toesluit het (Chase, 1978: 158).

(It had always been his idea. He had gambled with the Trust money. Janet had discovered that. He persuaded my mother to lock Janet in the sanatorium. If it were not for Douglas he would have had me locked up as well).

Thus Chase presents us with an intelligent, professional man, whose greed turns him into a criminal. His crime is well planned. When the detective and the readers meet him for the first time, his evil ideas and deeds are so completely camouflaged that it can even be thought of him that he is of great help to the detective. In the end when he is exposed, the reader is surprised. This is how the criminal should be presented in a detective novel, and Moloto has failed dismally in this respect.

4.2.1.4.3 The Victim

In Moloto's novel there are three victims: Khosa, Seipati, and Judy Setati. From the look of his house it can be deduced that Khosa was a rich man, and thus he might have made a lot of enemies. His wealth is a good enough motive for his murder and the circle of suspects is very wide. In Seipati, the author has portrayed a victim who limits the number of suspects in her murder. Seipati is very concerned about the welfare of her sister, who is apparently being blackmailed. We are given no choice but to suspect that her murder must have something to do with her concern. Initially, this is only a suspicion, but in the end it is proven to be a fact. From her character, it is only those immediate family members, her half-sister and stepmother, who could have anything to do with her death. Susi confesses to the murder and maintains it was accidental while

her mother, who also confesses to the same murder, states that it was premeditated. The other victim, Judy Setati, was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. She was a witness to Seipati's murder and thus had to be silenced. Just as with the other characters, Moloto's portrayal of the victim is based on Chase's novels.

In "*Lê haar*" Seipati's counterpart, Janet Crosby, appears to have been killed, but instead she is held prisoner in the sanatorium where she is fed drugs on a daily basis. She is kept alive because Millet does not want to be implicated in murder, though it is important to him to have her removed from society because she is an heir to the Crosby millions:

Hy het driekwart van sy fortuin aan Janet nagelaat sonder enige voorwaardes en 'n kwart moes vir Maureen in trust gehou word (Chase, 1978: 7).

(He has left three quarters of his fortune to Janet without any restrictions and a quarter for Maureen had to be held in trust).

This is a good enough motive for murder. But such a motive is lacking in "*Letlapa*". Khosa is killed because of his love for Seipati, while Seipati in turn is killed so as to silence her.

In "*Geel*" the Lindsay woman, Judy's counterpart, was also in the wrong place at the wrong time. She accidentally meets Carlos who kills her unintentionally. In an attempt to dispose of her body, she is dismembered.

There are no suspects in Moloto's novel. All the other characters serve to bring out the best and worst in the main characters: viz the detective and the criminal.

There is too little to learn of the characters portrayed by Moloto. His story is too pre-occupied with violence rather than with unravelling of any mystery. In fact, in the words of Mandel (1984: 94), the mystery becomes a mere pretext and as such vanishes altogether.

4.2.2 Chase in Motuku

H.Z. Motuku has written five detective stories centered on the adventures of the super-sleuth, Ralato, in the collection "*Nka Se Lebale*". It is the short-story, *Ralato 2*, which captured our attention because of the nature of its plot. The story of a crippled husband electrocuted by a jealous lover sounded familiar and very similar to one in "*Shock Treatment*" by James Hadly Chase.

Having revealed and demonstrated the success achieved through the use of intertextuality in unlocking Moloto's text, it is felt that it would yield some dividends if the same is done with "*Ralato 2*". This is one way to prove that intertextuality, as a literary approach, might be the best if not the only way of understanding some detective stories in Northern Sotho.

4.2.2.1 Setting

The setting of "*Ralato 2*" is Soweto. The author paints so clear a picture of Soweto that the story sounds very plausible. His characters move from Sophiatown to Meadowlands and Dube. The lives of Rubi and her husband, Sello, are given a true Soweto setting. Here Motuku has succeeded in grounding his story in a true South African urban milieu.

It is only when Motuku describes the road between Johannesburg and Evaton that one suspects that the hills and deep valleys have been placed there for the convenience of the plot. This is the place where Sello met his accident, and in the same way in "*Shock*" Delaney met his accident on a mountain road.

4.2.2.2 Plot

Motuku starts the problem in his plot by making his victim, Sello, marry Rubi, who has two faults in her personality: She is beautiful and attractive but highly flirtatious. Secondly, she's a spendthrift who always quarrels with her husband over finances, and sometimes even thinks of killing him so as to be free to use all their money without restraint. It is under these circumstances that, while driving the drunk and sleeping Sello, Rubi stops the car at the beginning of a deep descent and conveniently forgets to engage the handbrake. Sello is permanently paralyzed from the waist downward in this accident. This complicates the lives of Rubi and Sello. The entry of a handsome radio-technician, Johannes Mathibedi, takes the problem towards a climax. The impending scandal and disaster are unavoidable when this young man meets a flirtatious wife with a paralyzed husband unable to satisfy her sexual needs. Johannes plans and electrocutes Sello through a radio he has built for him. The stupid and inefficient police officials believe that Sello died from an accident. It takes a shrewd and observant Ralato to expose Johannes and have him arrested.

Motuku did not write his short-story ignorant of the existence of Chase's novel, "*Shock*" There are many similarities between the two stories, the differences being only the identity of the criminal and the motives for the murder.

Chase's plot is as follows: Gilda, who is mad about money, marries Delaney. Before the end of three months she coaxes him into taking out an accident insurance policy, to the value of a hundred thousand dollars. A day later Delaney cancels without informing Gilda. Three days later he has an accident. In this accident, Delaney was drunk, asleep and Gilda, who was driving, forgot to engage the handbrake after stopping on a steep mountain road. He gets paralyzed in this accident. Then Terry Reagan, the T.V. and radio technician, sells Delaney a handmade T.V. set. He meets the sexually hungry Gilda, and

desires her to the point of insane craving. This moves the plot from its complication towards the climax. Terry plans to get rid of Gilda's bullying, crippled husband, indirectly coaxed by Gilda with vague promises of marriage. He hits upon an ingenious plan to make the murder look like an accidental death by electrocution. Delaney dies, not from electric shock, but from poisoning. To her horror, Gilda discovers that Delaney had spent all his money. She can only get five thousand dollars from the T.V. insurance policy. This meant trouble, for, although the police believed Delaney's death to be accidental, the insurance detectives were bound to dig deeper.

With the entry of the insurance investigator, Maddox, the plot moves towards a climax. Maddox believes that Gilda had killed Delaney, but she's saved by a clever attorney.

Then Gilda marries the seventy years old multi-millionaire, Henry Fuller. Fuller dies after falling down the terrace steps of his roof garden. There is no trouble about the verdict at the inquest. Gilda walks away four million dollars richer. This reminds Terry about Delaney's words:

Do you know what's the matter with my wife? I'll tell you.
She's mad about money. That's all she thinks about
(Chase, 1959: 128).

It is indisputable that Motuku's plot, though not as deep as Chase's, is based on the latter. Motuku uses Johannes' craving desire for Rubi as the motive for the murder of Sello. Thus Johannes is the criminal but his counterpart in "Shock", Terry, is not the criminal, but rather a victim of deceit. In Chase, it is Gilda's pathological love for money which is the motive for both the death of Delaney and Fuller. Chase highlights how an evil woman can use her looks to enrich herself and how at the same time naive and unsuspecting men can fall prey to such a designing, scheming vampire. Thus, though Motuku has copied Chase's

plot, he could not master the master's sophistication.

4.2.2.3 **"*Ralato 2*": Crime v/s Detective Story**

Motuku's short-story is more of a crime story than a detective story. There is a great difference between the two, and it is imperative to show how these two are not the same article with a different label.

As with the plot of a crime story, Motuku's is based on the psychology of characters. The emphasis is on the emotional stress of Rubi her spendrift character, her crippled husband and her insatiable sexual appetite. All these make her wish her husband was dead. The love and desire which Johannes has for Rubi and the rationale that she was not responsible for Sello's misfortune, and as such not morally bound to stick by him, creates in him a misdirected conviction that it is his responsibility to release her from an unbearable bondage. Ninety percent of the story is based on these psychological problems, which are followed by the actual murder of Sello. The story is constructed forwards from those problems. What remains is whether Johannes will be caught or not. On the other hand the format of the plot of a detective story is quite different. According to Symons (1985: 162), it is based on a deception which might be mechanical, verbal, concerned with forensic medicine or ballistic. Deception comes first; then the plot is constructed backwards, with the revelation forming the climatic point to which everything leads.

In "*Ralato 2*", the detective, Ralato, plays second fiddle to the victim and criminal. In a crime story, the detective is neither central nor important. In the words of Symons (1985: 162) most often the central character is just somebody to whom things happen. In this story, the central character is Rubi. Ralato comes into the story only at the end, serving only the purpose of exposing Johannes. On the other hand, in a detective story, the detective is, according

to Symons (1985 162), "Always at the centre of story's action, most often the hero, and generally a keen observer who notices things missed by others". Though Ralato notices the impossibility of a paralyzed man bending forward to perform the task of unscrewing a radio set, something missed by the police, he is nevertheless not central to the story.

In the spirit of a true crime story, Motuku's story is based on his characters. There is a vivid portrayal of the personalities of Rubi, Sello and Johannes, on whose traits the story is based. In fact one can say that, without the personality traits of Rubi, the misfortunes of Sello and the insane infatuation of Johannes, there wouldn't be a story. Even after the murder of Sello, we see how Rubi and Johannes continue with their lives, which is important to the story's effect. Though Motuku has not revealed this, through our reference to the intertext, we are horrified by the spectacle of Gilda moving away from the inquest into the death of Fuller, four-million dollars richer. We feel pity for the unsuspecting, unfortunate millionaires who might cross her life in the future. In a detective story only the detective is characterized in detail. The people of the detective story are subsidiary to the plot.

The above shows that "*Ralato 2*" is in no way a detective story. Motuku wrote a very good and moving crime story based on James Hadley Chase's crime novel "*Shock Treatment*".

4.3 RÉSUMÉ

As a reader, when approaching "*Letlapa*" and "*Ralato 2*", the researcher came with such information as knowledge of James Hadley Chase's crime stories and the theory of intertextuality. It was this knowledge which led to the recognition of intertexts in Moloto's novel and Motuku's short-story. Thus, knowledge of existing literature, and the theory of intertextuality, helped in identifying and marking existing intertexts which might have been dormant to a

reader who had not been exposed to this knowledge. Having identified and revisited these intertexts, a new and deeper understanding of the books has been acquired. Hence, one may suggest that, in this case, intertextuality be accepted as the most appropriate approach to be adopted for unlocking meaning in these texts.

Though we have not been trying to locate the origin of Moloto's novel and Motuku's short story, it can be safely stated that the source of inspiration for these two texts is Chase's novels. Attempting to trace the origin of these as well would be a cumbersome task, for it would lead us to the American dream, the rise of capitalism in which the accumulation of wealth is all that matters, and so on. If Moloto and Motuku were to be confronted, there is no way in which they could claim originality and authority over their texts. In fact they would be liable to a charge of plagiarism. But since their guilt or innocence is not the subject of this study, their artefacts should just be accepted and appreciated for having provided us with valuable material on which to apply the theory of intertextuality.

Another important point not to be missed is the acknowledgment that Moloto and Motuku have transcended their sources in their texts. They did not simply translate James Hadley Chase novels, but adapted the stories and tried to give them a South African context. Moloto's story takes place on the Witwatersrand and proceeds to Warmbath, where it tragically ends on the cliffs of the Waterberg. Motuku's short story is also given a true South African, Soweto setting. These settings are not accidental, they are the seats of South African capitalism and as such approximate the American setting in Chase's novels. The ability to do this is justifiably an art in itself.

CHAPTER 5: THE “TEN COMMANDMENTS” OF THE DETECTIVE NOVEL

5.0 INTRODUCTION

One day while the researcher was trying to trace one of the intertexts contained in V.N. Moloto's "*Letlapa la Bophelo*" after reading the title of the book on a table, a colleague remarked: "Le wena o bala dilo tše dibjalo?" (You also read such things?). The "thing" he was referring to, which was one of the "things" not suitable for an academic to read, was James Hardley Chase's novel "*Lay her Amongst the Lilies*". This comment originates from the ill-founded assumption that popular fiction is aesthetically inferior to canonical literature. This assumption is supported by Thompson (1993: 27) whose comment on the works of Agatha Christie and Dashiell Hammett runs:

“.... in most circles the work of both authors is generally regarded as subliterary, mere pulp, a disposable product whose inferiority can be inferred from its large sales”.

It is interesting to note that these authors' work was selling well. Mandel (1984: vi) concurs:

Not a few of their authors and quite a number of capitalist publishers have become millionaires by producing that peculiar commodity. They have guessed right about the needs it satisfies as a use-value - or to put it in current parlance, they have correctly gauged its demand value.

The reason for the high demand for the detective story is because of its appeal to the interest of the ordinary man in the street, its appeal to the urban masses

as it provides a diversion from the boredom and monotony of urban factory life. G.K. Chesterton attempted to understand the popularity of the detective novel in his discussion paper "The Genuine Psychological Reason for the popularity of the Detective Novel", in which he observed:

The first essential value of the detective story lies in this, that it is the earliest and only form of popular literature in which is expressed some sense of the poetry of modern life (Murch, 1958: 10)

The industrial revolution accompanied by rapid urbanization brought with it an affordable public schooling system. An increasing reading public, which was just literate but definitely not academic, preferred novels that offered entertainment and relaxation, novels that appealed to curiosity and a taste for excitement, the essential ingredients of modern urban life.

The above perspective on the detective novel, though not completely false, it is at least incomplete. It denigrates the detective novel mainly because of two factors: first the strict formula it must adhere to and secondly its popularity. This perspective ignores one important aspect of the detective novel: that it reflects the society out of which it evolves. The researcher's colleague and many others suffered from this omission in their perspective on the detective novel. Their attitude can be summarized by Mandel's lament:

I used to think that they were simply escapist entertainment: when you read them, you don't think about anything else; when you finish one, you don't think about it again (1984: vi).

Like Mandel, many others have seen light on the road to Damascus.

In one of our interviews with him, H.D.N. Bopape confessed to having been addicted to crime stories, particularly James Hardley Chase novels, in the 1970s. It was this addiction which made him aware of the lack of crime stories in his vernacular. At that time the only crime story in Northern Sotho was D.N. Moloto's "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*". This keen interest in the genre made him start with the project which ended in "*Lenong la Gauta*".

Unlike all the other crime stories in Northern Sotho, "*Lenong la Gauta*" is conspicuous by the attempt of the author to adhere to the formula of the detective novel. From the first page to the last, the author tried not to wander beyond the formulaic restrictions which channel the detective novel, and the success he achieved in this is monumental. It is the purpose of this chapter to reveal and appreciate this achievement.

5.1 THE "TEN COMMANDMENTS" OF THE DETECTIVE NOVEL

When we talk about a formula, people tend to think about something static, something within which there is no room for originality. It is one of the objectives of this research to dispel this myth. The formula of the detective novel is something which adjust to the discipline of individual authors and thus it is something dynamic. In attempting to explain this formula, Hamilton (1987: 1) states:

Formula is in fact merely a set of interrelated conventional elements found in a large number of individual works. Such conventions spring from an agreement between writers and readers which allows the artist to simplify his material and to control through concentration, the reader's connotative associations.

The rules for the writing of detective stories have been codified by Ronald Knox

in his "Ten Commandments of Detection" and S.S. Van Dine in the United States. According to Tani (1952: 20) this codification and the foundation of a "Detection Club" among British writers of detective stories (in 1928) to enforce these rules are "proof that in the twenties the detective story was a rational game, something almost scientific". This was done simply as a guide to new writers in the genre; and the essential of these techniques were not drawn by them, but evolved through a period of time. Murch (1958: 17) refers to these rules as a "fixed pattern that characterizes detective fiction, a pattern that has come to be accepted by authors and readers alike".

What follows is a discussion of the most important aspects of these "Ten Commandments" of the detective novel.

5.1.1 Setting

According to Hamilton (1987: 2) there are two crucial elements in the setting of the detective story: "lawlessness and the maximum opportunity for personal enrichment". These two can be found in abundance in an urban society where the existence of multitudes of people in a concrete jungle presents the ever-lurking danger of crime and the state's inability to protect all its peace-loving citizens. Chesterton concurs with this when he observes that detective fiction expresses "some sense of the poetry of modern life" (Murch, 1958: 14). The detective story expresses drama, especially the drama of city life. This point is further affirmed by Hamilton (1987: 46) in his declaration that the detective novel "is set against a society in turmoil where the crime or crimes are symptomatic of a general corruption and lawlessness".

Over and above an urban setting we can add that the setting should be colourful and display exorbitant wealth. Hamilton (1987: 52) agrees:

The story must be played against a colourful or unusual

background. The streets of a big city are not necessarily colourful. If they're not, make them so.

Murder committed in a setting of exorbitant wealth is more conspicuous than that which takes place in one of abject poverty. If people seem to be lacking nothing in life one expects perpetual happiness among them, whilst in a situation of filth and poverty an abrupt violent end to life is rather accepted. Moreover, in this seemingly wealthy setting, there should be no room for outsiders to enter and commit crime.

5.1.2 Plot

In a detective novel the first consideration is plot; the delineation of character is usually a secondary matter. There is only one type of plot, with two variants, which can be constructed in a detective novel, i.e. the mystery plot. The two variants in this plot are "pursuit and capture" and "delayed revelation" (Hamilton, 1987: 52). In Northern Sotho detective narrative, a good example of a pursuit and capture plot is that in D.N. Moloto's "*Tšhipu e nile ke lebelo*", in which the question of who committed the crime is not important or does not exist at all. It is known that the Setsokotsane has committed the crime, but what is important is to pursue them and effect an arrest. On the other hand, a good example of a delayed revelation plot is that of H.D.N. Bopape's "*Lenong la Gauta*". Here a murder has been committed, and the detective's duty is to reveal why, by whom, and how.

There are two distinctive features of the delayed revelation plot. First is its form. It has "an Aristotelian perfection of beginning, middle and end" (Symons, 1985: 14). Thus its form is classical in nature; the formula being that a murder occurs; many are suspected; all but one suspect, who is the murderer, are eliminated; the murderer is arrested or dies.

Secondly, in the delayed revelation plot there is always a puzzle for the reader. There are always questions about who, why and how. Emphasizing the importance of this puzzle, Murch (1958: 30) states:

The prime essential in this type of novel is the puzzle-device, the labyrinthine trial which the author plans first and camouflages for later discovery by the right person in the right way at the right time.

Thus in the detective novel, crime is not that important in itself, it is only a framework for a problem to be solved, a puzzle to be put together.

5.1.3 Crime

The question, what kind of crime should the detective investigate in a detective novel, presupposes that there should be a crime! On this issue, Murch (1958: 12) states a different fact: "Some detective stories are not concerned with a crime, and in that case, the hero's function is simply to discover the truth". But, nevertheless many theorists of the detective novel maintain that the story should be centred on a particular crime. Many authors also adhere to this belief. Murch (1958: 12) observes:

.... in the majority of detective stories the central puzzle does concern a crime, for crime lends itself particularly well to the creation of a dramatic and complicated plot, with an exciting chase and a display of detective acumen by an amateur or a police officer, leading to a sensational conclusion with all the evidence clearly explained and justice triumphant.

The above assertion takes us back to the question of what kind of crime the

detective should investigate. We would like to answer this question in this way. The crime should be an interesting one, e.g. fraud, kidnapping or even SBV robberies. But Wright holds a different opinion:

.... the crime simply must be murder, because three hundred pages is far too much potter for interest to be maintained in any mere fraud or deception (Symons, 1985: 94).

There are many reasons for murder to be preferred as the crime to be detected in a detective novel. Wright, above, states that it is a crime which captures the interest of the reader more than any other crime. Auden goes further by elaborating on how our society is fascinated by a crime of murder:

Murder is unique in that it abolishes the party it injures, so that society has to take the place of the victim and on his behalf demand atonement or grant forgiveness; it is the one crime in which society has a direct interest (Mampuru, 1986: 159).

Thus, it is sympathy with the victim which drives society to be interested in the arrest and punishment of the criminal. Symons (1985: 18) agrees:

Murder is in many societies seen as the act which makes its perpetrator finally unacceptable. He may be expelled or destroyed, but never pardoned.

Mandel (1984: 40-41) tends to agree with the above assertion but goes further to reveal that this obsession with death is an ailment of capitalist society:

.... the alienated human being in bourgeois society is

obsessed with the integrity of the body, indispensable instrument of labour and earning. Hence a much greater obsession with death.

He goes on to reveal that in this society death is viewed as a catastrophic incident rather than an inevitable conclusion of life.

Thus, death, and more particularly murder, is at the very centre of the detective story. Mandel (1984: 41) observes that, unlike in traditional societies where it is viewed as an unavoidable human fate or a tragedy, in a detective novel it is an object of enquiry; it is a corpse to be dissected, a thing to be analyzed.

5.1.4 Detection

According to Symons (1985: 13) there are two important qualifications for a detective novel: "... it should present a problem, and the problem should be solved by an amateur or professional detective through a process of deduction". Thus, logical deduction is the heart of the detective story. To emphasize the importance of this aspect, the Detection Club in Britain asked its members to swear to this oath:

".... that their detectives would 'well and truly detect the crimes presented to them' without reliance on 'Divine Revelation, Feminine Intuition, Mumbo-Jumbo, Jiggery-Pokery, Coincidence or an Act of God' (Symons, 1985: 13).

This oath emphasizes that in a good detective story all clues must be laid bare to the reader. 'Fair play' to the reader is very important in a good detective story. The author should take the reader into his confidence by allowing him to share the stages of his quest, his successes and his disappointments as well. Mandel (1984: 16) concurs: "The battle of wits, in other words, unfolds

simultaneously at two levels: between the great detective and the criminal, and between the author and reader". On both these levels, the mystery is the identity of the culprit, to which the detective and the reader alike are to be led by a systematic examination of clues. To maintain tension and suspense, the reader ought not to succeed in outwitting the author. To achieve these there should be no cheap tricks. Mandel (1984: 16) puts it succinctly as follows:

The clues must all be up front. No secret substitution of one identical twin for another is allowed. No secret passages out of rooms supposedly locked from inside. The reader must be surprised when the murderer's identity is revealed, and with no violation of 'fair play'.

In carrying out his detection, there are two ways in which the detective can gather clues: Firstly, he can use violence, i.e. those he suspects of having information can be subjected to violence until they come out with the truth. Secondly, he can use mental detective work. Murch (1958: 24) observes:

"The essential feature peculiar to the detective novel is the prominence it gives to that exercise of the mental faculties which solves a problem by analytical deduction".

It would be interesting to analyze how Northern Sotho authors handle this issue.

5.1.5 Characters

In a detective novel, the first consideration is the plot, the delineation of character is usually a secondary matter. One can mention here that in M.A. Kekana's novels. "*Nonyana ya tokologo*" and "*Nnete feela*", the situation has been reversed. She has written what is called a '*roman de mœurs*', in which the portrayal of character is more important than the construction of plot. This is

merely a deviation by this author. According to Wright, characters in a detective story should “merely fulfil the requirements of plausibility”, because any deeper delineation would “act only as a clog in the narrative machinery” (Symons: 1985: 14).

Another aspect to be noted about the characters of a detective novel is that they are ciphers or conventional types. Symons (1985: 20) states: “In a detective story good people and bad people are clearly defined and do not change (except for the bad person who is pretending to be good)”. This point is clearly explained by Mandel (1984: 42):

The crime story is based upon the mechanical formal division of the characters into two camps: the bad (the criminals) and the good (the detective and the more or less inefficient police).

Tani (1953: 10) is of the same opinion, for he mentions that characters in a detective novel are reduced to their essential functions; as in a chess game, every piece is capable of only certain moves. Thus when, and only when, any care is lavished on characterization, it manifests itself in the portrayal of the detective.

5.1.5.1 The important client

One of the familiar characters in modern detective fiction is the important client. This is the person who retains the detective to do his job. He is in most cases the next of kin of the victim, and as such is interested in seeing justice done. Due to his standing in the community, his work or physical disability, he is unable to carry out the investigation himself; hence he requires the services of a private detective. This might also be due to his mistrust of the normal police services. The importance of this client in most cases is enhanced by his/her financial

status. Normally he is a person with such a great financial clout that expenses are never a problem; his interest lies only in results.

5.1.5.2 The detective

The second qualification for a detective novel as outlined under 5.1.4. is that the problem in it should be solved by an amateur or professional detective. This highlights the fact that the detective is a vitally important figure in the detective novel. He is the hero of the story, overshadowing both the murderer and the victim. Hamilton (1987: 41) concurs:

.... is a man of strength and consummate skill. He vanquishes his foes in fair contests, executes feats of daunting proportions, and exhibits courage and tenacity when undergoing trials. Ultimately, he emerges victorious.

This description fits well Makhina in D.N. Moloto's "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*". His fights with Setsokotsane make him an appropriate example of a detective in Northern Sotho.

About the detective, Hamilton (1987: 41) further states that he is:

.... self-reliant, independent, competent, strong, and has his own internalised code of behaviour. He is honest. He does not take advantage of his superior strength, nor use it without considerable provocation, and then only in a fair competition. Weaker individuals are granted protection, if worthy, and he is chivalrous to women. His code separates him from the bully, and his self-restraint justifies the violent acts he performs.

The above assertion proves beyond any doubt that the work of a detective is the work of men. It is neither suitable for boys nor women.

One of the most important requirements of a detective is also that he should have a scientific turn of mind, for the chief interest of the story should be mental analysis. Murch (1958: 141) states:

The hero of a "thriller" gains his success by energetic action, the detective hero gains his by taking thought, by bringing his intelligence to bear on the problem, sometimes not even needing to move from his chair.

Although there are times when physical effort might be needed to supplement mental deduction, Symons (1985: 94) also discourages too much movement in cars, boats and aeroplanes, and emphasizes the importance of mental gymnastics.

Another important aspect of the detective is a ban on love interest. Dorothy L Sayers severely reprovved "the heroes who insist on fooling about after young women when they ought to be putting their minds to the job of detection" (Symons, 1985: 14). Thus, the less love in a detective story, the better. Very much related to this requirements is the awareness of the responsibilities and limitations represented by a wife and family. A detective should be free from these restrictions.

5.1.5.3 The criminal

Tani (1953: 4) maintain that "the *sine qua non* requirements of the detective story are a detective and a criminal". The criminal, in a detective novel, has his own importance second only to that of the detective, and what happens to the criminal is the measure of the detective's success. According to Murch (1958:

19) the detective story "recognises the activities of the criminal as reprehensible and not to be tolerated, much less regarded with amusement or admiration". Thus if the story appeals to the reader's emotions, his sympathy should be on the side of the detective, and he should feel indignation or horror at the actions of the criminal. The criminal is a villain to be caught and punished. He should be hunted, his guilt proven and his person delivered into the hands of the law, after which no more should be heard of him.

Symons (1985: 94-95) identifies five rules to govern the creation of a criminal in a detective novel. First, the criminal should be introduced early in the story, but his evil thoughts and deeds should be so properly camouflaged that he is not suspected of any wrong-doing. Actually he should appear as an accepted and respected figure. Symons (1985: 20) also maintains: "This mask is stripped away at the end of the book, when his real features as law-breaker are seen". Second, he should not be the detective, or at least not the official detective. The third and fourth rules state that he should neither be a servant nor a professional criminal. According to Symons (1985: 94) the former is legislated against because "no servant could ever be guilty of more than petty theft or attempted black mail", and the latter because he should be part of the same social group that contains other suspects. Mandel (1984: 45) takes issue with the above assertion:

The key point is not the class origin of the murderer, but his representation as a social misfit, a bounder who violates the norms of the ruling class and must be punished for that very reason.

Lastly, the criminal should be a person whose motives are personal, and within that context rational.

5.1.5.4 The victim

If, in a detective story, the crime to be investigated is murder, then the victim becomes very important due to his/her relationship to the motives of the crime. Murch (1958: 216) states:

His personality, his way of life, his past history, the plans he has in mind, may all play a part in the working out of the plot, to disclose possible motives for his murder (the crime with which such stories are generally concerned) or to provide a shoal of 'red herrings'.

The character of the victim should be portrayed in such a way that it reveals two conflicting sides. First he/she should display certain evil tendencies that inspire hatred from those close to him. Secondly, he should reveal a side which shows that he/she is good natured, honest and reliable. This would inspire jealousy in those close to him/her, a probable motive for murder. Thus in these ways the number of suspects would turn out to be unlimited.

5.1.5.5 The suspects

The suspects should be those whose personality traits and actions leave much to be desired. Their suspicious characters should divert the attention of the detective from the criminal. According to Murch (1958: 216), often enough the detective becomes convinced that the person compromised by the evidence, usually a woman, is in reality innocent, and an element of chivalry is thus introduced.

5.1.6 Style of narration

That narrative style best suited to detective fiction is that of presenting the story

in the form of an eye-witness account of exciting events actually taking place, giving the reader all the facts and a vivid word picture. This style has been used by so many writers in this field that it has come to be accepted as one of the rules of this genre. If the detective is the narrator, the reader's interest is captured, and he is able to move with the detective through all the passages of his detection.

Secondly, according to Hamilton (1987: 38), detective fiction uses a colloquial style of narration. The vernacular appropriate to the characters and their milieu is featured. The vernacular's most disreputable relatives, slang and tsotsitaal, play a prominent role. The language used is sometimes ungrammatical.

5.2 BOPAPE EXAMINED

What the legislators, Monsignor Ronald Knox with his "Ten Commandments of Detection" and the "Detection Club" in Britain, did was not only to formulate rules to be strictly observed by the authors, but also to give guidance to literary critics about the scale on which to judge products within this genre. This was in a way a literary theory from which a detective story was to be analyzed.

But a work of art springs from the spontaneous flow of feelings and ideas from the artist. This should not be restricted by rules and other sorts of restrictions. Symons (1985: 97) concurs:

There is no limit to folly, but it seems surprising that the intelligent men and women who devised the rules did not see that they were limiting the scope and interest of their work.

Even under such circumstances, some writers managed to express their creative spirits within the confines of these rules and their artefacts "reached

peaks of ingenuity that have never since been attained and are now rarely attempted" (Symons, 1985: 97).

Nevertheless, even though these rules are limiting, they should not receive only lip-service. The task of this study at this point is to investigate whether H.D. Bopape adhered to these rules. If not, where and when did he wander beyond their confines? And was this consciously done for the purpose of enhancing the beauty of his artefact or not? In those cases where Bopape's novel does not provide suitable examples, other detective stories in Northern Sotho will be deployed for the purpose of demonstrating the working out of those aspects of the genre.

5.2.1 The rural world of Mankweng and surroundings

An ideal setting for a detective story has been discussed under 5.1.1. There emphasis was laid on the notion that the detective story should be played against an urban, industrial setting. Bopape has deviated from this rule. His story is played out against the rural or rather semi-urban world of Mankweng and its surroundings.

The rural and almost semi-urban life of the township of Mankweng, in which lies the University of the North, is vividly portrayed. The life of the students at this university is revealed through the eyes of Nnono. The Maleka residence is a comfortable house not far from the university. The township spirit evoked by the monotonous four-roomed municipality houses is indicated by Mmatšhego's and Nnono's residence. This is a simple township which does not in any way approximate to an urban, industrial setting. Like the real Mankweng, the only major employer is the university.

Bopape also portrays the simple rural life of the villages of Mmasealama and Ga-Motholo. The story moves to Seshego, another township next to

Pietersburg. Naniki's home is another typical township four-roomed house.

Now the question is why does Bopape deviate from the rule that the setting of a detective story should be urban and industrial? The most plausible reason is provided by Auden when stating that superior detective stories are those set in idyllic and preferably rural conditions, so that the corpse appears "shockingly out of place, as when a dog makes a mess on a drawing-room carpet" (Symons, 1985: 19). Thus the death of Mmatšhego is not shocking only because she has been brutally murdered, but also because of the scene and setting of the murder. The police at Mankweng Police Station might not have handled a murder case for years due to the tranquillity of the place, which has been shattered by this horrible deed.

Bopape might also have chosen this setting as a way of protest, protest against the corrupting evil of industrialization and capitalism. (This aspect will be dealt with in detail under 5.2.7.2). His characters from Mankweng, Mr Maleka, Nnono and Sima, are good people. Their humane nature has not been corrupted by the love of money. On the other hand, those from Johannesburg, Mmatšhego, Mpho and Nakedi, are evil people whose interest in life is only money. Bopape reveals the corrupting power of urban life through Brenda. The beauty and monetary value of "*Lenong la gauta*" has possessed her like a demon. She kills for the purpose of owning this necklace. Her stay in Johannesburg has changed her from the humane Brenda to an evil murderess.

Bopape has chosen this setting also because of his love for Mamabolo's world. He knows this world and cherishes its beauty. He loves the spirit of communal life where people help one another. This is revealed by the way Mr Maleka helped Nnono's family. Bopape's Mankweng is a calm, orderly and peaceful world in which everybody knows everybody else. This life of tranquillity is surrounded by the slow, pastoral rural life of Masealama, Motholo, Mamotintane and Makanye. The seed which later shattered this tranquillity was planted by

the arrival of a woman who came from an unknown place, a woman without a past, without a history: Mmatšhego. She is an agent for the transference of urban turmoil to rural calm. Her coming is like letting loose a bull in a China shop. The thugs who are after her beat up Maleka's workers, beat up Nnono, and cause critical injury to Naniki. These thugs are an embodiment of all that is evil in urban life. In that life there is house-breakings and theft, jail-life, evil-stepmothers, and even 'vat-en-sit' marriages.

Thus, the aura of corruption so much prevalent in urban life is lacking in "*Lenong la gauta*". The appearance of wealth here is from good characters. Unlike the urban wealthy, who in most cases are empty souls hiding behind a showy facade, Mr Maleka is an honest, considerate humane man. It is only his daughter, Brenda who, despite being entitled to his wealth and being happily married, is very unhappy. Her appearance disguises a deeper truth, and according to Hamilton (1987: 12), the detective novel is structured around the attempt to decode and solve the mystery of existence.

5.2.2 Bopape's intricate plot

Under 5.1.2 the different ways in which a detective novelist can construct his plot have been discussed. Bopape, in his novel, has properly woven the mystery of his plot. The mystery here is who has killed Mmatšhego? To reveal the answer our detective must go back to discover why the murder was committed before he could discover how and by whom. Tani (1953: 45) concurs:

The traditional detective novel presents a reconstruction of the past and ends when this reconstruction has been fulfilled. To reconstruct the past is to go back to a point (the one of the crime) about which the detective is concerned.

Bopape constantly employs this technique of flashbacks, i.e. a deliberate movement to events or scenes of an earlier time. These regressions in time are important components of the plot structure and detection in this type of genre. Tani (1953: 45) says: "So to go back in time is equal to finding a criminal, or unravelling a mystery".

5.2.2.1 Exposition

The controversial relationship between Nnono and Brenda introduces us to the plot of this novel. The mysterious fear and anger in Brenda raises the questions: what is she afraid of, and also why such unnecessary anger at Nnono? Her explanation does not hold water:

"Taba ye ya gago ya go lala o phapharega mašego ga ke e rate le gatee. O be o le kae bošegong bja maabane?"
(Bopape, 1982: 2).

(I just don't like your bad habit of going about in the night. Where were you last night?).

This does not explain her fear. Even after Nnono's explanation she still seems to be suspicious: "Ke ka lebaka la eng ke swanetše go go tshepa?" (Bopape, 1982: 3). (For what good reason should I trust you?).

The reader's suspicion about Brenda is increased by Nnono's observation of soil on the tyres of her car:

Kgonagalo ye nngwe gape e be e le gore Brenda a ka ba a sepetše ka koloi bošegogare ge phoka e šetše e wele fela gare ga mpa ya bošego. Brenda o be a tla ba a be a etšwa kae? (Bopape, 1982: 6).

(Another possibility is that Brenda might have been out with the car after dew had fallen, but where could she go in the middle of the night?).

These telltale signs of Brenda's shady movements leave the reader with questions which the author does not pursue, but which he will answer later when he ties together all the strings in his plot.

Through these events the author has introduced his main characters, Brenda and Nnono. At this juncture the author employs his favourite technique of regression in time, to clarify the reader on the relationship between Nnono, Brenda and Mr Maleka. These events, which took place before the story begins, are brought in to clarify Mr Maleka's request that Nnono become his private detective.

5.2.2.2 Activating circumstance

The discovery of Mmatšhego's corpse introduces the puzzle of this story. It is the crime which necessitates detection, thus the activating circumstance in the plot. It transforms Nnono from a husband and son-in-law into a detective. He must now answer the question: who did it?

Taba yeo ke bego ke sa e kwešiše ke ya polao ya Mdi Maleka. Ruri a ka ba a bolailwe ke mang goba bomang? Gona o bolailwe ka lebaka la eng? (1982: 24).

(What I did not understand was the murder of Mrs Maleka. Who might have killed her and why?)

Nnono must roll the stone of detection up to the top of the hill. What is left is for him to get the instruction from the important client and the complication of the

plot will start. This he does from Mr Maleka with the words:

“Gona Nnono, hwetša mmolai! Hwetša mmolai wa mosadi wa ka! Wena tsoma mmolai wa Mmatšhego” (Bopape, 1982: 30).

(Then, Nnono find the murderer. Find the person who has murdered my wife. You must search for the person who has murdered Mmatšhego).

5.2.2.3 Complication

The complication of this plot starts with the beginning of detection, and as such even before Nnono can get instructions from Mr Maleka to find the murderer of Mmatšhego, the complication has already begun. From his curiosity Nnono has established, through questioning Kwete, that the doors were unlocked when Mmatšhego and Maleka were discovered. This provides the first clue towards identifying the killer. It implies that Mmatšhego opened the doors to someone she knew and trusted or that the killer had the keys. This reduces the circle of suspects. It was an inside job.

The instructions from Maleka and the payment of a hundred rand as retainer officially bring in Nnono as a detective. This leads Nnono to meticulously search Mmatšhego's room. The search yields a diary which provides the second clue and a window into Mmatšhego's past, through the sentences:

“Maoka a ya toropong”

“Mohlatlego o diaparo (Bopape, 1982, 43)”.

(“Maoka went to town”

“Mohlatlego clothing”)

The diary also mentions Naniki who shone some light in the dark tunnel of Mmatšhego's past. Nnono's interrogation of Naniki suggests that the motive for Mmatšhego's murder might lie in her past. Naniki mentions the frightening letters Mmatšhego was receiving from Johannesburg.

"Seo ke se tsebago ke gore mangwalo ao a be a mo tšhoša le go mo letša. Ke be ke tseba gore a a mo tšhoša ka gore o be a lla a bile a roromela pele a a bula (Bopape, 1982: 49).

(What I knew is that those letters frightened her and made her cry. I knew that because she shivered and cried before she could open them).

The suspicion that Mmatšhego's past has caught up with her is strengthened by the attack on Naniki. This seems to be an attempt at silencing Naniki because she knew something about Mmatšhego's past.

The discovery by Nnono that he is being tailed complicates the plot further. Are these people the murderers? Have they something to do with Mmatšhego's past? When Nnono gets beaten up and warned to keep his nose out of issues which do not concern him our suspicion is raised. The problem is that they seem to have no connection with Mmatšhego's immediate family; hence there is no way in which they could have killed her.

Nnono's interview with Brenda increases our suspicion of her. She evades the questions about her whereabouts on the night of the murder. She cannot account for the soil on the tyres of her car. Is she the inside murderer? This suspicion is raised by her opposition to Nnono's investigation. She attempts to pressurise her father to stop Nnono.

Ge a ka tsena kotsing, ke tla šala ke reng ka leseana leo le lego ka mo go nna? (Bopape, 1982: 98).

(If he gets into trouble what will I do with the child I am expecting?)

It is the first time Brenda's "pregnancy" is mentioned. Even her husband has never been told about it. Is it real or is Brenda cunningly using her father's parental love to dissuade Nnono from furthering his investigations?

The second search of Mmatšhego's room yields a piece of paper bearing the words: "*Lenong la gauta*". This raises more questions than answers. Some of the answers are provided by Mpho Mokone, who is in fact Mohlatlego Maoka. The following facts are now clear: Mmatšhego was Mohlatlego's stepmother. "*Lenong la gauta*" is something valuable, something which was in the hands of Mmatšhego. Mmatšhego's past has been unravelled and hence the motive for her murder revealed. What is left now is to identify the murderer. This will move the plot towards its climax.

The last post of the complication of this plot, the event which takes us towards the climax, is the revelation by the police that they have a sign through which the murderer can be identified:

Ka fao, gonabjale re na le leswao leo ka lona re ka tsebago mmolai le bohlatshe bjo re ka mmegago ka bjona fela o tla lemoga gore ke taba e boima go tšama re hlahloba matsogo a batho ka moka (Bopape, 1982: 138).

(Thus, now we have a mark through which we can identify the murderer, and evidence to charge him, but you'll realize that it is difficult to inspect the arms of everybody).

One would think that, after inspecting Nnono's arms, the police would proceed to all of Mmatšhego's immediate family members. Nevertheless, the author still retards progress towards the zenith of this ascent.

5.2.2.4 Climax

The climax of the plot is reached when the police indicate to Mr Maleka and Nnono that Mmatšhego's murder was an inside job. The police stop short of identifying the murderer. This is left for the private detective to do, to his shock and that of the readers. To the dismay of the detective and the readers, when the last coat is peeled off, Brenda, the wife of the detective, is revealed to be the murderess:

Se sengwenyana mo letsogong la gagwe se ile sa tanya mahlo a ka. Ke ile ka lebelela letsogo la gagwe la go ja sebakanyana ke sa tsebe gore le nkgopotša eng. Ke rile ge ke gopola ka nyako idibala ka letšhogo le tlalelo (Bopape, 1982: 165).

(Something on her arm attracted my attention. For a moment I looked at her right arm not knowing what it reminded me of. When I remembered I nearly fainted with shock).

This shock is not only due to who the murderer is, but also to how she has been camouflaged from the beginning even though her behaviour has been suspicious. Just like the detective, the reader feels like kicking himself for not having realized the evil in this woman from the first and second pages when she displayed irrational outbursts and could not account for the soil on tyres of her car. All these tell-tale signs have been in front of our eyes, but the clues had to be discovered. Now, together with Nnono, we can only say: "Oh! my God!"

“Brenda, ke wena o mmolailego? Wena?
Ka badimo bagešo!” (Bopape, 1982: 166).

(Brenda you’re the one who killed her?
You? Oh my God!).

5.2.2.5 Dénouement

According to Thompson (1993: 120), one of the central conventions of detective fiction is the construction of the dénouement. At this point the detective reconstructs the events leading up to the crime. Bopape does not deviate from this formula. He starts by highlighting the tell-tales signs which always indicate that the killer was in fact just in front of our eyes:

Ke gona ke ilego ka thoma go lemoga botlaela bja ka. E be e swanetše go ba e le kgale ke tantše Brenda. Mabu ale ke a humanego dithaereng tša koloï ya gagwe Tlhaselo ya Naniki le yona e be e swanetše go ba e mputše mahlo ka Brenda (Bopape, 1982: 167).

(It was then that I realized my stupidity. I should have discovered that Brenda was the killer long ago. The soil on tyres of her car The attack on Naniki should have opened my eyes about Brenda).

This knowledge has always been available but it has been powerless to reveal the identity of the criminal.

The author also gives an account of Brenda’s life in Johannesburg, something which has always been a closed book. Thompson (1993: 120) supports this technique:

The desire for knowledge - the reader as well as that expressed by certain characters - is realized or thwarted at the dénouement, at which time a narrative of previously un-narrated events is given.

We now learn about Brenda's brief ownership of "*Lenong la gauta*", her life of sin with Nakedi, Maoka's gang and Mmatšhego's greed. What finally emerges is, according to Thompson (1993: 130),

"a more comprehensive narrative and a wider sense of the relations and motives between people and events - in short, a more extensive understanding of a represented reality, even if that knowledge is not liberating".

In his dénouement, Bopape has wrested events from their pre-narrative un-narrated state. Our suspense resulting from guessing has been relieved and all the secrets have been unmasked through the reconstruction of pre-narrative events.

5.2.2.6 Solution

Having tied up all the loose ends what remains is what happens to the criminal? This is the most important part of plot construction in the detective novel for it is what detection has been all about. Tani (1953: 4) says:

The solution is the most important element since it is the final and fulfilling link in the detective novel's sequence, the one that gives sense to the genre and justifies its existence.

Brenda, who has appeared at first as an accepted, respected figure, has had this mask stripped away and her real features as a law-breaker are seen. For

greed and murderous traits what type of punishment is awaiting her? On the other hand the detective is emotionally caught up in the case, since Brenda, his darling wife, is the criminal. This creates a conflict in the detective; he is torn between an upsurge of feelings and the necessity for rationality. Tani (1953: 42) puts it succinctly:

The detective's relationship with the mystery or with the crime cannot be impersonal any more, suggesting that something unexpected (not an unexpected solution) awaits the reader at the end of the fiction.

Pursuing her in his car, Nnono witnesses Brenda's incineration after failing to execute a sharp and dangerous bend. One wonders what Nnono intended to do had he caught up with her and what fate would have awaited Brenda had she been arrested.

Nevertheless, though not through a court of law, the selfish, criminal has died a fitting death, and she has gone with "*Lenong la gauta*", which could not remain because of the evil it inspires in those who are unfortunate enough to possess it:

"Ke tla romela maphodisa gore a ye go kgoboketša molora wa mosadi wa gago le lenong la gauta gona bjale"
(Bopape, 1982: 180).

(I will send the police to collect your wife's ashes together with those of the golden eagle necklace).

Brenda's informal cremation, together with the golden necklace, is symbolic of the purification process society was undergoing. The fire has purged society of the evil which had contaminated it.

5.2.3 The murder of Mmatšhego

About death in the detective novel Mandel (1984: 41) states:

Death - and more particularly murder - is at the very centre of the crime story But death in the crime story is not treated as a human fate, or as a tragedy. It becomes an object of enquiry.

With the murder of Mmatšhego, Bopape has obliged. Society's interest is in knowing why, how and by whom Mmatšhego was murdered. This type of crime cannot fail to capture our interest.

An important aspect to notice is that Mmatšhego's murder precedes the beginning of the story. In Thompson's (1993: 114) words:

"Before the first word of the first chapter something happened, but no one knows what, apparently not even the narrator"

The emotional outbursts by Brenda at the beginning of the story are due to a guilty conscience because of the crime she has already committed. This technique of crime presentation in a detective novel has its own problems. Murch (1958: 206) observes:

When a detective story begins with the discovery of a murder, as so many do, one of the fundamental difficulties is the almost inevitable need to interrupt the progress of the story at some point to relate the events that led up to the crime.

This Bopape accomplishes through his detective's search for the motives for the murder. Though it causes a break in continuity, it heightens suspense and captivates the reader when the movement continues towards the discovery of the truth.

5.2.4 Bopape's detection

Detection in this novel takes place on two fronts: first by the policemen under the leadership of Sergeant Maroga and secondly by the private detective, Nnono Molaba. Unfortunately the two do not co-operate; instead the police suspect Nnono to be the murderer. Initially the police are presented as an inefficient bully group, but at the end they prove to be effective and accurate in their detection.

In presenting his detection, Bopape adheres to the requirement that a detective novelist should play fair with the reader. In his detection all clues are laid bare for the reader to examine. There are no unexplained actions, no fifth sense female intuitions. What is not discovered by the private detective is discovered by the police.

In their detection the police contribute two important facts towards detection as a whole in this novel. Their first contribution is the discovery that Mmatšhego's murder is an inside job. They deduced this fact by observing two important clues: the unlocked doors and the opened secret window. Their second contribution, and the most important, is their provision of scientific tests on the skin found under the nails of Mmatšhego. Through their laboratory tests they identified the skin from the inside of a right arm:

Letlalwana leo, go ya ka diteko tša rena tša laporathori,
tšeo di dirilwego kua Tshwane, le tšwa mo karolong ya
bokagare bja letsogo la go ja (Bopape, 1982: 138).

(Our laboratory tests made in Pretoria show that the skin is from the inside of the right arm).

This was a positive sign clue to the murderer. Anyone with nail scratch marks on the inside of the right arm could be positively identified as the killer. This valuable information moves detection a step nearer to identifying the criminal, and there is no way in which Nnono could have gathered this information on his own.

Detection by the private detective starts even before the corpse has been discovered. Nnono observes soil on Brenda's car tyres and wonders how it could have got there:

Na e ka ba e le gore Brenda o ile a tšwa ka koloi maabane e sa le gosasa pele phoka e oma? (Bopape, 1982: 6).

(Could it be that Brenda had used the car early yesterday morning before the dew could dry?).

Nnono's analytical mind observes this inexplicable object: soil on Brenda's car tyres, and though it does not have meaning at the time, its meaning will be clear later when the murderess is identified. It will be further proof of Brenda's guilt, for this soil was gathered on her return from killing Mmatšhego. According to Tani (1953: 48) objects are important to the detective because they are all potential clues. Like an archaeologist a detective is a map-maker, a maker of meaning, who turns into rational symbols something that he cannot take hold of, because he cannot relive the past, but only piece together what is left of it. Emphasizing the importance of observing this soil on Brenda's tyres we can use the words of Bloch: "It is often the smallest, purely incidental signs from which the detective gleans the most salient information" (Thompson, 1993: 114).

Nnono had not yet officially embarked on his detection mission, though crime had already been committed. It is important to note how his detective mind already observes something which does not have logical answers. This analytical mind did not fail to observe the oddity of unlocked doors in the morning after Mmatšhego has been murdered. This fact suggests an inside job, and he notices it.

In his discussion with Mr Maleka, Nnono learns that Mmatšhego possessed some expensive jewellery in the form of two or three diamond rings and a golden necklace:

Mmatšhego o be a na le dilwana tše mmalwa tša go dirwa ka maswikana a bohlokwa. O be a na le dipalamonwana tše pedi goba tše tharo tša go dirwa ka taemane (Bopape, 1982: 29).

(Mmatšhego had a few things which were made from precious stones. She had two or three diamond rings).

Nnono could not fail to notice that this was motive enough for murder. Now that the motive for murder has been discovered, Nnono has to find the jewellery in order to identify the murderer.

In his detection, Nnono uses two methods: logical deduction and brute force. From Naniki he learns that Mmatšhego had been receiving frightening letters from Johannesburg. From the fact that Mmatšhego was frightened by these letters, and also that she did not want people to know about them, Nnono deduces that if he could discover the source of the letters he will have solved the riddle of Mmatšhego's murder. Detective fiction regards the incidental gesture, act or comment as potentially significant. Thus, Mmatšhego's fear is vital for solving the riddle of her murder.

Logical deduction comes in handy also for revealing Mmatšhego's past. After being suspicious of Mpho's real motives in his relationship with Sima, Nnono searches Mpho's room. This reveals that Mpho is in reality Mohlatlego, the orphan of Mmatšhego's former husband. This is the first break into Mmatšhego's past, and it brings the detective a step closer to being certain about the motive for her murder, and thus identification of the culprit.

Nnono sometimes resorts to brute force in his detection. He beats up Mohlatlego until he reveals that he is looking for "*Lenong la Gauta*". This finally reveals the motive for Mmatšhego's murder.

The purpose of detection is, finally, identification of the criminal. Throughout his detection, Bopape successfully maintains that thread which points towards the murder. Though this process has been retarded time and again by false traces, the thread has always been the navigation compass in this journey of detection. First, there is the soil on Brenda's car tyres the morning after the night of Mmatšhego's murder. This points to Brenda. Naniki is attacked after Nnono has phoned Brenda and told her about his intended rendezvous with Naniki. Appreciating that the breaking down of the delivery van and the beating-up of Molapo were ways of getting him out of the way the night Mmatšhego was murdered, Nnono realizes:

Ke fela motho yo a tsebago bophelo le ditlwaelo tša ka yo
a bego a ka tseba taba e bjalo (Bopape, 1982: 131).

(It is only a person who knew my life and habits who could
know such a thing).

Who was such a person? Brenda. By maintaining this thread, when Brenda is finally unmasked, we are shocked but not surprised, for, she always looked suspicious.

Finally it is revealed who the criminal is, why, and how she committed the murder. Tani (1953: 47) observes:

It is interesting that the detective's discovery is about the past, while we think of discovery always in terms of the future, as giving us knowledge that will make us progress into the future, ... The point is that a discovery is not about finding something really new, but, rather, about finding a missing link, something that already existed and we did not know about (or about which we had only a vague notion).

Who knew that the beautiful, dignified daughter of Maleka and wife to Nnono had lived a life of sin with a jail-bird called Nakedi? Who knew that she was so obsessed by the loot from a burglary and robbery that she was prepared to kill for it? Who would have suspected that the paths of Mmatšhego and Brenda had crossed in the past? We all knew that both of them had shady pasts about which they never spoke, but we never suspected this! Like an archaeologist, the detective, through his detection, has dug it all up.

5.2.5 Characters

As in other aspects of the detective novel, Bopape has complied with the requirements of the genre in his portrayal of characters. He did not portray deep characters as this would only act as a clog in the narrative.

5.2.5.1 Maleka, the important client

Mr Maleka, husband to the deceased, is a respectable member of his community. Unfortunately he does not hold the police service in high esteem:

“.... ke a tseba maphodisa a tlamegile go dira lešata.

Lešata leo le ka dira gore mmolai a timelele” (Bopape, 1982: 30).

(I know the police are bound to make a noise. It is that noise which might make the murderer disappear).

This lack of confidence in the police service prompts him to request his son-in-law to carry out the investigations into his wife’s death. The fact that he pays Nnono a retainer for carrying out the work of detection makes him our important client.

“Ka tšhelete o se ke wa tshwenyega - ke tla lefela tšohle.”
Mna Maleka o ile a ntšha sepatše ka morabeng, a hlaola R20 tše tlhano a nnea tšona (Bopape, 1982: 40).

(“Don’t worry about money - I’ll pay for everything.” Mr Maleka took out a wallet from his pocket, selected five twenty-rand notes and gave them to me”)

This incident brings our private detective into the picture, thus satisfying the requirement that for a private detective to exist in a detective novel, there should be an important client.

Also Maleka requires the services of a private detective because he feels guilty and responsible for Mmatšhego’s death. He feels he has failed to protect her. Having Nnono investigate the murder is a way of clearing his conscience:

“Go dilo tše dintši tšeo ke bego nka di dira e bilego ke tlamegile go di dira. Ke be ke swanetše go ba ke šireleditše mosadi yola” (Bopape, 1982: 30).

(There are many things which I should have done and was bound to do. I should have protected that woman).

Maleka's conscience will only be cleansed if justice is done and Mmatšhego's murderer is arrested.

There is another side to Maleka's character which makes one wonder about the type of man he is. He does not know anything about the past of his wife and behaves as if he believes that ignorance is bliss. Also his daughter was away from home for six years and it seems he has never bothered himself to find out what she has been up to. Maleka is a negligent man.

5.2.5.2 Nnono, the detective

In his portrayal of the detective, Bopape achieved a fifty-fifty balance between success and failure. The success achieved consists of the introduction of the detective and some of his personality traits in relation to his work of detection.

Nnono Molaba, the detective and narrator of the story, is an amateur, who is pushed into the work of detection by his love for the kind-hearted Mr Maleka, and by genuine desire for justice to be done. His amateur status increases the proportion of the danger he faces as he does not possess the necessary experience, skill and resources; but on the other hand, this is an asset for it makes his detection more thrilling and interesting. The author introduces him at the beginning of the story, for after all he is its narrator. The reader meets him as Maleka's son-in-law, but he has not yet started his work of detection because the corpse has not yet been discovered. What he awaits is the instruction:

"Gona Nnono, hwetša mmolai! Hwetša mmolai wa mosadi wa ka! Wena tsoma mmolai wa Mmatšhego!" (Bopape, 1982: 30).

(Now, Nnono, find the killer! Find the killer of my wife. You just hunt the killer of Mmatšhego).

Thus Nnono is pushed into the role of a detective. He is an unwilling hero whose shortcomings we can sympathize with.

Nnono has a scientific turn of mind. We find him attempting to solve the riddle of Mmatšhego's murder through a mathematical equation:

.... ge 'x' e lekana le 'y' gomme 'y' e lekana le pedi, gona ke gore 'x' le yona e lekana le pedi. Ge e le gore mathaka a koloï ya mmasebotsana a lekana le babolai ba Mmatšhego gomme babolai ba Mmatšhego ke banyaki ba lenong la gauta, gona bobedi bja bona, Mohlatlego le banna ba koloï ya mmasebotsana ke babolai ba Mmatšhego e bile ke banyaki ba lenong la gauta(Bopape, 1982: 131).

(If 'x' is equal to 'y' and 'y' is equal to two, then it means 'x' also is equal to two. If the guys in the beautiful car are equal to Mmatšhego's murderers and Mmatšhego's murderers are looking for the golden Eagle then both of them, Mohlatlego and the guys in the beautiful car, are Mmatšhego's murderers and the hunters for the golden Eagle).

This ability to solve problems mathematically establishes the relationship between Mohlatlego, Nakedi and Mmatšhego.

Nnono Molaba is a tough character. He is a manly man, suitable for the work of detection. This he shows in the way he can take a beating and give one as well. Mpho gives him a good hiding: a severe kick in the stomach, a right hook to the jaws, and a kick in the buttocks. Nnono rises, fights back and wins. Through all this he still has the energy to forcefully extract information from Mpho. Also it is his tough nature which makes him win the fight with Nakedi's friend, even after he has been beaten unconscious.

But alas, in his presentation of the detective hero, the author commits two serious mistakes. First he presents us with a stupid detective, who loses the battle of wits with the police with humiliating consequences. The insult to Nnono's intelligence is delivered by Sergeant Maroga:

"Mogongwe ga o tsebe go ya ka nna ga se o hlalefe mo o ka utollago ditaba tša go swana le tše fela e re ke go botše (Bopape, 1982: 138).

(Maybe you don't know to me you are not so clever as to discover issues like this, but let me inform you).

Now Maroga has the upper hand and he rejoices in insulting Nnono. It is not surprising that Nnono admits that Maroga is intelligent, even maybe more so than he:

Maroga ga se setlaela go etša ka fao ke bego ke gopola ka gona (Bopape, 1982: 162).

(Maroga is not as stupid as I previously thought).

The more serious flaw in the presentation of Nnono as a detective lies in making him fall hopelessly in love. Nnono's love for Brenda enslaves him. He

confesses:

Ka wona motsotswana woo ke ile ka thoma go elelwa gore mosadi yo o nkgolegile gomme goba ke dirang goba eng a ka se tsoge a lokologile pelong ya ka. Ke be ke le sebofša sa gagwe go ya go ile (Bopape, 1982: 93).

(At that second I realized that I was enslaved by this woman and no matter what I did I could not get her out of my heart. I was her slave for ever).

Considering the fact that later on this woman would be exposed to be the killer, this admission is a disgrace to the detective character.

Nnono's love for Brenda hampers his detection work. This is a serious flaw for under 5.1.5.2 it was emphasized how love interest in a detective novel is unwelcome. While hot on the tracks of the murderer he is distracted by this love. Brenda, realizing that Nnono is about to discover the truth about her movements on the night of the murder, diverts his attention by playing the part of a loving wife. Nnono does not get the answer to this question:

"Mpotše Brenda, na o ile wa tšwa ka koloi mesong goba mantšiboeng a labone? (Bopape, 1982: 94).

(Tell me Brenda, did you go out in your car in the morning or evening of Thursday?)

Had he persisted in his questioning the riddle of Mmatšhego's murder could have been solved earlier, but, instead he chose to play the part of a Romeo.

In Nnono Molaba, Bopape has portrayed a loving family man, but an utterly

flawed detective. Nnono can love a woman. In his eyes, Brenda (the killer) looked like an angel:

O be a ituletše fale malaong o ka re ke lengeloi leo le sa tsebego ditshela le mathaithai a lefase le (Bopape, 1982: 92).

(She was sitting right there on the bed, looking like an angel who did not have any problems or indeed a care in the world).

Nnono's love for Brenda is so deep that even after identifying her as the murderess he still loves her:

"Se ntlogele Brenda! Se sepele hle! Ke tla go thuša go rarolla bothata bjo! Ke tla go nyakela diagente tše kaone-kaone" (Bopape, 1982: 169).

(Don't leave me, Brenda. Please don't go! I'll help you to solve this problem. I'll get you the best attorneys).

This is stupid love in the extreme. No wonder our detective confesses "Ke gona ke ilego ka thoma go lemoga botlaela bja ka" (Bopape, 1982: 167). (It is then that I realized my stupidity). He has been fighting to expose the murderer, and now that has been accomplished, he turns and intends to fight to protect her! This love goes beyond stupidity; it is actually downright madness. Even death cannot make him part with Brenda. When she was burning to ashes he contemplated throwing himself into the fire to die with her!

Ke be ke nyaka go sepela le yena ka go ikwišetša ka leopeng gomme tšeo nkego le bala mogopolo wa ka,

lephodisa le ile la ntiša le go feta (Bopape, 1982: 173).

(I wanted to die with her by jumping into the fire, but as if he could read my mind, the policeman strengthened his hold on me).

Even though the evidence proves beyond any doubt that she's the murderess, to Nnono Brenda will remain his lovely wife. He is prepared to fight for her even after she has been burned to ashes:

“Ke mosadi wa ka, sersant!” Ka realo ka bogale le pefelo.

“O se ke wa re mosadi wa ka ke wa gago, mošaa”

(Bopape, 1982: 175).

(“She is my wife, sergeant!” I said so with anger. “Young man, you should not say my wife is yours”).

What difference did this make? What Nakedi said or did not say was irrelevant.

One wonders whether Bopape really understood this requirement of the detective novel. He rather wandered too far from detective fiction towards romance. Under 5.2.7 we will try to understand his intentions.

5.2.5.3 Brenda, the criminal

In Brenda, the author has portrayed a character who fits properly into the slot of a criminal. The first words in this novel introduce us to the criminal through the loving moans of her husband-detective:

"Brenda! Brenda!" Ka realo ka lentšwana la tlase ke bea seatla sa ka godimo ga molala wa gagwe ka boletiana (Bopape, 1982: 1).

(Brenda! Brenda!" I said so with a soft voice putting my hand on her soft neck).

Thus the criminal is introduced as a woman deeply loved by her husband. She is supposed to be one of the happiest women in the world, but she is revealed to be irrationally emotional. Her uncalled for outburst at the loving caress of her husband surprises the reader:

O ile a tloša seatla sa ka molaleng wa gagwe ka bogale gomme a se kgoromeletša kua thoko (Bopape, 1982: 1).

(With anger she removed my hand from her neck and pushed it away).

It is only at the end after her mask has been peeled off that we realize that this emotional outburst was the result of her guilty conscience as she had just killed Mmatšhego.

Brenda, as the daughter of Maleka and Nnono's wife, is a respectable and acceptable member of society. She should be content, but appears to be very unhappy. She keeps quiet about the six years she spent away from home, and thus seems to be hiding or suppressing something. It is only later that we discover that she was longing for the possession of "*Lenong la gauta*".

Brenda is a cunning woman. She uses her beauty and Nnono's love to regulate their relationship. When she needs sympathy from Nnono, she appears harmless and innocent:

Mahlo a gagwe a be a tletše manyami le bofokodi le matshwenyego le boikokobetšo - a tletše tšohle tšeo mahlo a basadi a tsebegago le go tuma ka tšona. O be a le bjalo ka leseana leo le tsomago tšhireletšo (Bopape, 1982: 77).

(Her eyes were full of sadness, self-pity and humility - they were full of everything the eyes of women can show. She was like an infant who desired protection).

This was a woman who had just committed murder hardly twenty-four hours earlier. Her cunning ways are also revealed by the way she deviates from the topic when Nnono asks her about her whereabouts on the night of Mmatšhego's murder. She starts to tell him that they should start a family and Nnono does not pursue his questions. She uses the same technique on her father when she attempts to persuade him to stop Nnono's investigations. Here she claims to be already pregnant.

Brenda is a greedy, cold-blooded murderess. She killed Mmatšhego because of her greed. She wanted to possess "*Lenong la gauta*" and nothing could stop her from achieving her dream.

Ke ile ka botša Nakedi gore nka se khutše go fihlela pheta yela e le thoto ya ka (Bopape, 1982: 168).

(I told Nakedi that I will not rest until I possessed that necklace).

To Brenda, Mmatšhego's life was nothing if it stood between her and the golden necklace.

The evil in Brenda is clearly revealed by the way she tells Nnono that she's leaving him:

"Nnono, bjale ke swanetše go sepela. Nakedi o tla ba a thoma go fela pelo" (Bopape, 1982: 169).

(Nnono, now I must leave you before Nakedi loses his patience).

To a loving husband like Nnono this must have felt like a stab through the heart.

Brenda dies a death befitting her evil nature. The fire which burns her and "*Lenong la gauta*" purges society of the evil she represented. Her death is symbolic of the purification society undergoes with her death.

5.2.5.4 Mmatšhego, the victim

As in the case of the criminal, with the victim Bopape portrays a character fitting her role. Mmatšhego's life is an enigma. The life she led in Mankweng was very secretive, like her past:

O tlike a nnoši a etšwa a re tse mme le go dula o be a dula a nnošinoši bjalo ka tšhiwana. O be a sa šome eupša go be go sa itaetše go le seo a se hlokago (Bopape, 1982: 22).

(She just dropped from nowhere, alone and stayed alone like an orphan. She was not employed, but from the look of things she lacked nothing).

It is this secretive past which makes detection of Mmatšhego's murderer difficult.

The high standard of life which she maintained without a valid source of income obviously made people envy her. This increased the number of suspects for her murder. This situation made people ask questions about her past. How did she accumulate her wealth? Thus to unravel the puzzle of her murder, her past had to be dug up like an archaeological site.

Another aspect of Mmatšhego's character which complicated detection after her murder is that she kept to herself:

“O be a sa tsebane le go tlwaelana le batho ba bantši mo”
(Bopape, 1982: 38).

(She neither knew nor befriended many people here).

This reclusive life-style did not make the work of the detective easy.

It is only when her past is pieced together that we stare in horror at the evil picture of Mmatšhego. She turns out to be an evil, greedy woman who ill-treated her stepson and stole his inheritance. Her greed is exposed in the way she sometimes took out her jewellery, the jewellery she has stolen from her husband's gangster, just to admire it. At the end it causes her death.

5.2.5.5 The suspects

The riddle of Mmatšhego's murder could have been solved earlier had the author not portrayed a wide field of plausible suspects. The first suspect is Mpho Mokone. His behaviour is indeed very suspicious. On learning about Mmatšhego's death he reacted in an odd way, thus leaving Nnono with many questions:

O ile a ahlama motsotsonyana a theeleditše tšeo re bego

re di bolela. Gatee ke ge ke bona a ipipa sefahlego ka diatla mme a lebelela thoko nke o swerwe ke sehlabi (Bopape, 1982: 70).

(For a second he gaped listening to what we were saying. All of a sudden he covered his face with his hands and looked sideways as if experiencing pain).

Considering the fact that Mpho pretended not to know Mmatšhego, this type of reaction at the news of her death was bound to leave our detective suspicious. This led to Nnono wasting time and energy pursuing the wrong tracks left by Mpho, while he could have done something more profitable. Nevertheless at the end even these false tracks did shed some light on Mmatšhego's past.

The second group of suspects includes Nakedi and his friend in the red Ford Escort. Their behaviour also made them strong suspects in this case. They were tailing Nnono, and seemed to be very interested in all his movements. Finally, when they caught up with him they were eager to discourage him from continuing with his investigations. Moreover, when Nnono searched their hideout in Seshego, he discovered one of Mmatšhego's rings in their possession. How did they get hold of it? This group diverted the attention of our detective too much. But in the end it was proved that they were accomplices to Mmatšhego's murder because they conspired with Brenda to keep Nnono out of the way on the night Mmatšhego was killed. Thus they are also guilty of conspiracy to murder Mmatšhego.

5.2.6 Bopape's narrative style

In section 5.1.6 we discussed how the narrative style of detective fiction has evolved. Bopape has adhered to this style in his narration. Here the narrator-detective presents the reader with the exciting events as they unfold before his

eyes. He tells the story as it happens, in the present tense:

“Brenda! Brenda! Ka realo 'ka lentšwana la tlase ke bea seatla sa ka godimo ga molala wa gagwe wa boletiana (Bopape, 1982: 1).

(“Brenda! Brenda!” I said, with a soft voice tenderly putting my hand on her smooth neck).

This style has the effect of bringing drama into the story; which is a necessary element in capturing the reader's attention. The reader is able also to move with the detective in his detection, and thus a bond is established between the two.

This style has its own shortcomings. The author cannot give a description of two scenes taking place at the same time; that is, he cannot leave an incident and describe what takes place at another scene at that particular moment.

Another shortcoming from which Bopape suffers greatly is to deviate from the present tense narration to the past tense. This leads to the over-use of the perfect tense morpheme *ile*.

Ke ile ka fela ke mo lebeletše lebakanyana, ke sa kgone go kwešiša gore o tsenwe ke eng. Ka morago ka retologa ka leba phapošing ya bohlapelo. Ke ile ka tšhuma mabone a motlhakgase pele ke bulela meetse a borutho. Ke ile ka hlapa (Bopape, 1982: 3).

(For a moment I looked at her not understanding what was wrong with her. Thereafter I turned and went to the bathroom. I switched on the lights before I could turn on the hot water tap. I washed).

The excessive use of this morpheme \ile\ has the effect of making this narrative boring.

The detective narrative is known for its use of a colloquial style. Hamilton (1987: 37) writes:

The master formula uses a colloquial style of narration. The vernacular appropriate to the characters and their milieu is featured.

This implies that the language used by Nakedi and his friends when they are together or when addressing Nnono cannot be the same as that used by Nnono and Mr Maleka. This point evaded the author. He is not conversant with "wietie". This is the language of the urban street-wise people like Nakedi and his friends. Molamu states:

As a pidgin, it developed rapidly as a means of verbal communication between people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds in the urban milieux (Molamu, 1995: 139).

Unlike Bopape, Moloto grasps this type of communication. In his portrayal of Setsokotsane he states:

Yo mongwe o ile a tlatša galase, gomme a nea mmethwa yola gore a nwe, a re: "Vat, jou hond!" (Moloto, s.a: 20).

(One of them filled up a glass and gave it to the guy they had beaten up: "Vat, jou hond!" he said).

When the police arrived at the gangster's hideout, a frightened sentinel was

asked: "Wat is dit Cookie!" (Moloto, s.a.: 22). This language well portrays the character and milieu presented in this novel. Such a portrayal is lacking in Bopape's novel. The language Nakedi used when he addressed Nnono is not appropriate to the street-wise character of Nakedi:

"Bjale theetsa mo nku: ke nyaka gore o bule ditsebjana tše tša gago gabotse gore ka moso o se ke wa tla wa re ga se ra go botša" (Bopape, 1982: 88).

(Now, listen you sheep. I want you to open your little ears carefully so that next time you won't say we haven't warned you).

For a criminal and jailbird like Nakedi, *tsotsitaal* would have been the most suitable language, all the more so because he referred to Nnono as "nku" (a sheep). Under these circumstances, slang or *tsotsitaal* would have added extra colour and more clearly depicted the "mxa" - "moegoe" relationship between Nakedi and Nnono. According to Hamilton (1987: 38) slang makes language more pungent and picturesque, it increases the store of terse and striking words and widens the boundaries of metaphor, whilst it also provides a vocabulary for new shades of difference in meaning. The nearest Bopape comes to this is only in his use of "nku", which, more than suggesting that Nnono is not streetwise, would also imply that he is a law-abiding fool.

Bopape's failure to exploit the artistic potential of the colloquial style is understandable. It does not exist in the milieu he grew up in, the world he so dearly loved, the world of *gaMamabolo*.

5.2.7 Bopape's social comment

People like to read crime stories. There can be no argument about this.

Symons (1985: 16) maintains that this type of literature is almost certainly more widely read than any other class of fiction in the U.S.A., Britain and in many other countries not under communist rule. Mandel (1984: 1) concurs by stating that he cannot help being fascinated by the enormous success of the crime story as a literary genre. A point over which there is no agreement is why so many people read it. This we leave for those who would like to indulge in psychoanalysis. Of interest to us is that its development is part of social history, and that through it society is mirrored.

What type of picture does Bopape reflect in his novel? This is the question we would like to answer. Bopape perceives two types of ills in his society: the inefficient and brutal police service and the evils of capitalist decadence.

5.2.7.1 Inefficient and brutal police service

The subject of the detective story is law and order and it does not matter on which side lies public sympathy, on the side of the detective or on the side of the criminal. It is in this type of literature that the author has an opportunity to portray a full picture of police services as he experiences and perceives them.

In his novel, Bopape portrays a bad relationship between the police services and the black population. This might be because the police were used as an instrument of oppression. People of different tribal origins were deployed for service among foreign tribes. Thus among the Northern Sotho speakers most of the policemen were either of Tsonga or Zulu origin, who are rather darker than the fairer-skinned Northern Sotho-speakers.

Sergeant Maroga fits this picture:

Yo mongwe e be e le thaba ya monna. Ntsho ya seema ka
dinao yo botelele bja gagwe e ka nyakago e le dimethara

tše pedi. Kgapa ya melalalala le sefahlego sa manyobonyobo sa go nona (Bopape, 1982: 36-37).

(One of them was a mountain of a man. A dark and tall fellow, almost two metres in height. He had a thick neck, a fat and ugly face).

This picture is not of a person one could go to for help. The employment of such a person in the police service is aimed more at forcing than serving, hence the service was called a police force. The appearance of such a character instils fear into the hearts of criminals and law-abiding citizens alike.

These policemen were not trained to serve, to show mercy and protect law-abiding citizens. Their training was aimed at terrorizing the population into submission, and since they were people of different tribal origins they served their masters well. When a law-abiding citizen reported a murder case he got answers like this:

Bona wena selo towe, ga ke na nako ka moka ya mo lefaseng ya go raloka le dikolobe tše bjalo ka wena (Bopape, 1982: 34).

(Look here you idiot, I don't have all the time in the world to play with pigs like you).

This is not the way to treat a traumatized law-abiding citizen when he reports the murder of a close relative. Maybe it was due to his character that the author named this sergeant Maroga, meaning "insults".

Even in undertaking investigations they harassed people rather than do their work smoothly. This is revealed by the bereaved Maleka:

“.... ke a tseba maphodisa a tlamegile go dira lešata. Lešata leo le ka dira gore mmolai a timelele. Bona ba tliilo hlwa ba golega lešaba la batho bao ba gononwago gore ke bona mola mmolai a timelela (Bopape, 1982: 30).

(I know that the police are bound to make a noise. It is that noise which will make the murderer disappear. They will go about arresting a lot of people they suspect while the killer gets a chance to disappear).

The communities they were supposed to be serving thus lost confidence in them.

Given the resources at their disposal, the police could have done a good job if they had been dedicated to serving the people. Bopape reveals this by crediting them with the discovery of the mark on the arm of the killer of Mmatšhego. No private detective possessed a forensic laboratory. It was only through the use of this facility that the murderess was finally identified.

Thus, Bopape paints a picture of a police service which could only be feared but not trusted. This was how black people perceived the police during the apartheid period, and it will take time for it to be corrected.

5.2.7.2 The decadence of capitalist society

Detective fiction as a genre is bourgeois literature. Bopape uses it to reveal the decadence of bourgeois society. He does this by comparing the moral values of the urbanized with those of the rural and communal. The urbanized have lost their humanity through greed while the rural maintain their respect for human life. This is revealed by the different ways in which “*Lenong la gauta*” is perceived by Nnono and Brenda. To Nnono it is just “a thing”. “O mmolaetše

sona selo seo?" (Bopape, 1982: 167). (You have killed her for that thing?) Even if he could see value in this golden necklace, to him it cannot compare with human life. But this is not the case with Brenda! Her humanity has been changed by her six-years' stay in Johannesburg. The mere sight of this golden necklace affects her physically:

Lebakanyana o ile a ema a lebeletše pheta diatleng tša ka.
O ile a thoma go buša moya ka bogajana a bile a tomotše
mahlo. Lebakanyana madi a ile a tšhaba sefahlegong sa
gagwe gomme ke ile ka lemoga gore o ile go wa (Bopape,
1982: 154).

(For a minute she stood still looking at the necklace in my hands. Her breathing was laboured while her eyes were protruding. All of a sudden her face was drained of blood and I realized she was going to faint).

This is greed at its worst. There is nothing which can stand between Brenda and "*Lenong la gauta*"; she was even prepared to take human life.

In his character portrayal, Bopape has divided his characters into two groups: the evil urban and virtuous rural. The evil urban characters are used as agents to transport turmoil from the industrialized urban setting and disturb the rural calm. Brenda left Mankweng for Johannesburg and was contaminated by the urban evil. She lived in sin with Nakedi. She saw and was captivated by "*Lenong la gauta*" in Johannesburg. She came back a different person who brought evil to Mankweng. She came back a bad girl, possessed by greed. Mmatšhego is also so evil and greedy that she robs an orphan of his legacy, steals the loot of Nakedi and friends and hides from them in Mankweng. Nakedi and his friend also bring their evil ways of life to Mankweng. They beat up Nnono, Molapo and Naniki. On their path to satisfying their greed for gold

nothing can stop them. All these characters are driven by one thing, greed, and that is what drives capitalist society. A man is not judged by the brilliance of his ideas but by his material possessions.

Bopape reveals his disgust at all this by making these evil urban people end up either dead or arrested. The rural good people, Nnono, Maleka and Sima, look on flabbergasted when the evil people meet their deserved ends. The author goes further to reveal the futility of greed by incinerating "*Lenong la gauta*" with Brenda. He is passing a verdict on greed: it is like chasing air.

Another aspect of capitalist decadence manifests itself in the lack of love on the part of women. They love property and money more than they love people. Bopape reveals this through the characters of Mmatšhego and Brenda. Maleka loved Mmatšhego:

O a bona Nnono, ke be ke rata mosadi yola ka botengeng
bja pelo ya ka (Bopape, 1982: 29).

(You see, Nnono, I loved that woman from the depths of
heart).

But on the other hand, Mmatšhego did not reciprocate this love. She could not reveal her past to Maleka, and this was not love. She had stolen Maoka's wealth and one suspects that she accepted marriage from Maleka not because of love but because of his wealth.

This lack of love is also revealed in Brenda. Nnono loved Brenda so much that he felt captivated by her: "Ke be ke le sebofša sa gagwe go ya go ile" (Bopape, 1982: 93) (I was her captive for ever). It is painful to realize how Brenda cared so little about Nnono. After getting hold of "*Lenong la gauta*" she told Nnono point blank that she was leaving him for Nakedi.

“Nnono, bjale ke swanetše go sepela. Nakedi o tla ba a thoma go fela pelo” (Bopape, 1982: 169).

(Nnono, now I must go. Nakedi will soon become impatient).

She cannot stay with her father's servant. She is now leaving for a man who owns the golden necklace.

Bopape is disillusioned with women in particular and with capitalist society in general.

5.2.8 Résumé

When the theorists (or so called “Legislators”) of the detective narrative codified the rules to govern writing in this genre they not only provided guidelines for the assessment of products in this genre, but, unaware they also limited the scope of possible creativity. Nevertheless, even though writers had to work with one eye on the manuscript, and another on these rules, there are those whose achievements are outstanding. Amongst these, in Northern Sotho, we count H. D.N. Bopape, whose novel, “*Lenong la gauta*”, was awarded the E.M. Ramaila literary prize for 1983.

In this chapter we attempted to give “*Lenong la gauta*” in-depth scrutiny. Bopape’s detour into love issues at the expense of the character of the detective has been highlighted. Two aspects were found to be lacking in this novel: first, an insight into scientific methods of investigation and the working of the police in gathering and processing evidence. Minimal research by the author on these issues would have given his artefact an aura of authenticity. Second, there is too much movement on the part of the detective at the expense of mental detection. Bopape seems not to be aware of the fact that some cases are

solved without the detective having to leave the comfort of his chair and office.

But having said this, it would be very unjust not to mention that Bopape's achievement is highly commendable. In Northern Sotho we are still awaiting an author who will surpass it.

CHAPTER 6 : S J CHOKOE: SETTING CONTEMPORARY TRENDS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

For a better insight into S J Chokoe's novel, "*Lengwalo*" it was decided to approach it from two perspectives: firstly it will be inspected in relation to the extent to which the writer has observed the rules that govern the writing of a detective novel, and secondly, its commitment to social issues will be analyzed from a Marxist vantage point. Thus this discussion is very much related to chapters two and five.

6.1 "LENGWALO" AS A DETECTIVE NOVEL

In this novel, Chokoe has tried, with limited success, to adhere to all the requirements of a detective novel. It would thus be great injustice to embark on a discussion of the outstanding merit of this novel: its social comment, without first commenting on the successes and failure of this up-and-coming writer at the art of writing a detective novel. Here follows an attempt at evaluating this novel on the scale as discussed under 5.2.

6.1.1 The murder of Seila

The murder of Seila Mapole in "*Lengwalo*:", accompanied by the puzzle of whodunit, provides a 'worthy plot' and an interesting problem, one of the basic requirements of a detective novel. Seila, as a person, due to his poverty, is seemingly not a worthy candidate for murder. It is only when the motive for this murder, a winning horse-racing betting ticket, to the value of five-hundred thousand rands, is known that his value appreciates and the circle of suspects widens. What complicates

matters is that horse-racing betting tickets don't have owners' names. The person who presents it is the winner:

Dithekethe tša dipere le tšona di tshwenya ka go se ngwalwe maina. Nka be di ngwalwa nka be go se na bothata. Ge o ka no topa ya ka, o tsebe o humile. Yo a tšerego ya Seila o humile (Chokoe, 1994: 27).

(The problem with horse-racing tickets is that names of owners don't appear on them. If you pick up mine you're rich. The one who took Seila's ticket is rich.)

With the discovery that his winning ticket is missing, it becomes clear that the motive for Seila's cruel murder was greed for his newly found wealth. The arrest and punishment of the merciless, greedy killer is now the interest of society. Thus, with the type of crime presented in this novel, the writer succeeds in capturing the interest of the readers.

6.1.2 The construction of an interesting plot

The writer of "*Lengwalo*" has beautifully woven an interesting plot which captivates the reader from the first page up to the last. He succeeds in this because he has an interesting, captivating story to tell, and he tells it effectively.

6.1.2.1 Exposition

Here the first three players in the drama that is about to unfold are introduced: Seila Mapole, his wife, Refilwe; and a family friend, Letshela Maleka. Whilst these three are sitting in Seila's lounge, an announcement of the results in horse-racing comes

over the radio. To the elation of Seila he discovers that he is the owner of the winning ticket:

“Ke di swere! Ke di swere! Nne, šupa, šupa, tharo! Ke di swere!” (Chokoe, 1994: 2).

(I am the winner! I am the winner! Four, seven, seven, three!
I am the winner.)

This announcement brings about a radical change in the life of the Mapole's family. The previously poor Seila is now worth five-hundred thousand rands. A good motive for murder since horse-racing betting tickets don't have owner's names printed on them. Anyone who presents it, is the winner!

6.1.2.2 Motic moment

The murder of Seila provides the crime to be investigated, the interesting puzzle to be solved in the plot of this detective novel. Seila, who was waiting to collect his fortune the next day, has been murdered in the night while alone in his house guarding his winning ticket. The winning ticket disappears.

Like in all detective novels, Seila's death is not regarded as an inevitable conclusion of life, it is a puzzle to be solved. The reader is horrified when a fortunate man who was just about to escape from the torture of poverty is denied a chance to enjoy his wealth. Now the reader is anxiously waiting for the evil-doer to be arrested and punished. This starts the chase of the killer by the detective.

6.1.2.3 Complication

The death of Seila is coupled with the allegation that Letshela, his friend, is the murderer. These two pieces of bad news are brought by the police who are already anxious to effect an early arrest of Letshela. This ushers in the complication in the plot of this novel. To the reader, Letshela does not look like a murderer, and he definitely is not one. But the police seem convinced that they not only have the right suspect, but they are detaining the killer in person. The complication in the plot is carried higher when the police seem to be piling evidence on top of another about Letshela's guilt.

The beauty in the plot construction of "*Lengwalo*" lies in the fusion of the characters of suspect and detective, police-officer and criminal. When Letshela decides to investigate and find out the real killer of Seila, the complication is intensified:

Ka kwa ke duma go ba laetša gore ga se ka bolaya mogwera wa ka Seila. Taetšo e tla tla fela ge ba tseba mmolai. Mmolai yoo ga go yo a ka mo ntšhago ntle le nna! (Chokoe, 1994: 18).

(I felt the need of demonstrating my innocence over Seila's murder. I could only achieve this if the real killer was revealed. This killer could only be exposed by me).

Now the suspect turns into a detective. The hunted is now the hunter. This leads to the evolvement of a new suspect, constable Sehlola. This is another beautiful fusion in characterization.

The complication is carried towards the climax by Letshela's evidence which more and more points towards constable Sehlola. The discovery that bra Socks and

constable Sehlola are one and the same person and that Sehlola has given Amos Ratila instructions to collect money for Seila's winning ticket, coupled with Sehlola's recent extravagant gift of twenty thousand rands to his girl-friend, strengthens the case against him.

On the other side, the police also seem convinced that they have a strong case against Letshela. They seem certain that they will get a conviction during his trial. This brings the plot to climax.

6.1.2.4 Climax

The climax in the plot of this novel is in Letshela's trial. Sergeant Motle's meticulous presentation of evidence for the state's case against Letshela, starting with the bloody soccer socks and ending with the extravagant expenses on Refilwe, makes a strong case against Letshela. The aura of the fear that a wrong man will be convicted for the murder of Seila prevails here (that a wrong man will be convicted for the murder of Seila). When the court recesses before the judge could pass his sentence, we wait with abated breath.

6.1.2.5 Denouement

It is constable Sehlola's confession which solves the case against Letshela and brings about the denouement of the plot. The fear of being convicted for murder, after Letshela has pointed at him, makes Sehlola to confess that he was always carrying the instructions of the culprit, sergeant Motle. This finally reveals the murderer, the hunter is now the prey.

Chokoe does not reveal what happened at the trial of the murderer, Letshela's letter to his friend ends with the two policemen handcuffed and led to the holding cells, but this is an indictment of their guilt and subsequent fate. This is in keeping with

Revzin's (1978: 387) observation that epilogues, happy endings, and similar features have no relation to the plot construction of a detective novel.

6.1.3 Where is detection?

In this detective novel, Chokoe demonstrates his mastery of the principle that superficially convincing evidence is ultimately irrelevant. This is achieved through the portrayal of two suspects, Letshela Maleka and Constable Sehlola. Evidence planted against Letshefa seems convincing and at his trial the case against him is apparently watertight. It is only in the few minutes before sentence is passed, when he is given a chance to plead for mitigation, that the tide turns against the police and the truth is revealed. In the case against Constable Sehlola, his behaviour and evidence strongly suggest that he is the criminal. Even our detective, Letshela, believes that Sehlola is the culprit and therefore points him. It is only when he confesses that he was carrying orders from his senior, Sergeant Motle, that it is revealed who the murderer is.

The second point to be made about Chokoe's detection is that his detective though he observes clues there is no interpretation and conscious effort at verifying their meaning. Proof of this is in the following incidents: even before the murder is committed Letshela observes the Toyota Sprinter with the number plates LEB4-7730. He comes across the same car several times in his investigations, and its number plates match the numbers on Seila's horse-racing winning ticket over which Seila was killed. Nowhere in this detective novel does the detective take any steps to identify under whose name the car is registered.

Also related to the above shortcoming is the fact that the motive for Seila's murder has been established as being his horse-racing winning ticket. So, it follows that to identify the killer, the detective should find out who claims the money for the

winning ticket. Throughout this novel nowhere does the detective make conscious effort towards finding out who was paid for the winning ticket. This is a serious flaw in the art of writing a detective narrative.

Another point which needs mentioning is the fact that the detective, Letshela, moves between places, from one point to another, to do anything one can think of under the sun, except for one thing he exists for in this novel: detection. He goes to Potgietersrus to see his friend, Mašilo, to Mmadietane to spend the night with his lover, Lerato, and to Holiday Inn to spend the night of pleasure with Refilwe. He doesn't go anywhere with the purpose of doing detection.

One of the most glaring short-coming in the detection of this novel is that the detective depends too much on luck. The writer seems to be unaware of the requirement that: "no accident must ever help the detective, nor must he ever have an unaccountable intuition, which proves to be right" (Symons, 1985: 13). Chokoe's detection is based on coincidence or the act of God rather than on logical deduction. This issue can be substantiated by citing three incidents: First, due to a running stomach and the long cue in front of Mapole's toilet, Letshela ends up in a neighbour's toilet in which whilst busy responding to the call of nature he happens to read a piece of newspaper he was about to use to complete the job. He comes across the heading: "THE MOST FORTUNATE PUNTER : AMOS RATILA (PIETERSBURG)". This cannot be called detection. This detective does not in any way detect crime, throughout this novel he tumbles over clues than go about purposefully gathering clues. Secondly, whilst hiding from constable Sehlola under the bed of their shared girlfriend, Sehlola's identity document falls into his hands with the receipt of Seila's photos which are to be developed by O.K. Bazaar. This detective knew that the victim took photos from a vendor photographer on the fateful day before he could place his bet for horse-racing, he also knew that a photographer has been killed, but nowhere in this novel does he look for these

photos until he has the receipt delivered into his lap by divine luck while lying upside-down below a bed! Thirdly, whilst at the Holiday Inn, having abandoned the work of detection, which at any rate he has never done, for a night of pleasure, he has fate provide him with the identity of Amos Ratila and his link with constable Sehloa. This detective is really lucky, and this writer does not play fair to his readers.

The Detection Club in Britain made its members to swear an oath promising that their detectives would “well and truly detect the crimes presented to them”. Had Chokoe been made to swear to this, “*Lengwalo*” could not have existed. The novel has its own merits, but definitely detection is not one of them. There is no iota of detection in this novel.

6.1.4 The setting of ga-Mashashane

The milieu depicted in this novel is the calm rural world of ga-Mashashane, coupled with fleeting, sporadic visits to the semi-urban Potgietersrus and Pietersburg. Life here is slow and communal, in which people know each other. The element of destruction which destroyed this calm is invited by Seila’s luck when he wins five-hundred thousand rands at a horse-race. This, like rotten meat which attracts flies, invites the crooked, criminal police from Seshego police station. It is the calm nature of this milieu which makes the sound of Seila’s murder to be loud, for, here murder is rarely committed.

That element of constant lurking danger in urban areas, which is so important for detective fiction is lacking in this novel. Nevertheless, the beauty of milieu in this text lies in the vivid portrayal of the world of ga-Mashashane with its different villages of Naledi, Maune, overlapping into Matlala’s village of Mmadietane. The writer knows this world, but as for township life of Mahwelereng and Seshego, there

he is just a passer-by.

6.1.5 Fusion in character portrayal

In his character portrayal, Chokoe presents the following external expressions of fusion:

- a. Detective ~ 1. Suspect No. 1
- b. Police officer ~ 2. Murderer
- c. Assistant Police Officer ~ 3. Suspect No. 3

Revzin (1978: 387) maintains that fusion is analogous to homonymy and like a person pronouncing a homonymic word, the writer knows who the murderer is. The reader, just like a person who hears a homonymic word can only establish its meaning after it has been placed sufficiently in context; and does not know until the end which was the actual fusion of figure types. "Context" here referring to the whole text. Thus, amongst these three characters, Letshela, Motle and Sehlola, he can only know at the end of the text who the murderer is and who the suspects were. Understanding this fusion throws more light upon the personalities of characters portrayed in this novel.

6.1.5.1 Letshela, the unpromising hero

Letshela, the detective in this novel, is an unpromising hero whose hidden potential allows him to prevail. His physical weakness as compared to the strength of the rogues he is pitted against, particularly Constable Sehlola, makes him an underdog hero. Even before the crime is committed, Sehlola intentionally trips Letshela at a soccer match. This he does because as a stronger man and policeman at that, he knows Letshela cannot do him anything. This turns out to be true because the sight

of Sehlola throws shivers through the body of Letshela:

Ka kwa madi a ka a bela, fela ke tla e tsena kae tšhukudu ye?
Magetla ke dinamanama e bile a kukegile; letswele ge a le
phutha e ke hlogwana ya segotlane; maoto e no ba tšona
ditsepu (Chokoe, 1994: 4).

(I felt my blood boil, but when I looked at him I knew there was
nothing I could do against this rhinoceros. His shoulders were
muscles all over; with a protruding chest; his first was the size
of a baby's head whilst he was anchored on long, strong legs).

After the crime has been committed the very same policeman beats Letshela up
and Letshela is really frightened of him. It is only his intelligence and determination
which finally make him a hero.

Through Letshela, Chokoe deals with the magical ascendancy of the weak over the
strong. Letshela, a weak teacher, ignorant of the law, is pitted against the rogue
policemen, determined to frame him for murder. His weakness and helplessness
when faced with these rogues make him choose the court of law as the only
suitable place in which to expose them. Even here he barely escapes with his life.

Chokoe has brought in a new variation of a detective hero in Letshela: a school
teacher. This man has been pushed into detection because of the need to clear his
name:

Mmolai yoo ga go yo a ka mo ntšhago ntle le nna! Ke nna fela
ke swanetšego go mo ntšha: ka se dire bjalo ke ile go ba

mmolai, ka tswalelelwa, ka senywa leina (Chokoe, 1994: 18).

(There is nobody to expose that murderer except for myself. I am the only one who should expose him. If I don't do that, I will be charged for murder, be sent to jail and my name will be destroyed).

Mandel (1984: 139) has observed that detecting takes time, and teachers don't have time of their own for detecting. Their time belongs to the Education Department, the parents and the pupils entrusted into their care. Here the writer has pushed into detection a teacher, a person without independent means. One wonders what his immediate superior was doing about Letshela's frequent absences from work?

Detection is the business of men, too serious a business to be undertaken by women or boys. Letshela is a boy. Hence the frequent times he falls hopelessly in love, something taboo for a detective in a detective novel. This is one of the most serious shortcomings of "*Lengwalo*" as a detective novel. Its detective runs after girls at the expense of doing the serious business of detection. The novel lacks that air of seriousness. It trivializes the serious business of detecting criminals who have committed serious crimes, particularly murder. Criminals who have committed crimes worthy of capital punishment cannot be chased by boys! There is too much at stake here to be handled by the likes of Letshela.

6.1.5.2 Sergeant Motle: from the dedicated police officer to the criminal

Sergeant Motle is introduced early in the story, immediately after the crime has been committed. We see him as the chief investigating officer in the case of Seila's

murder. The fact that he is the murderer himself is so beautifully camouflaged that the reader, together with the wrongfully accused Letshela, pin their hopes on Sergeant Motle. He seems to be the right person to catch the murderer. Moreover, he seems to be human as compared to the brute, Constable Sehlola. They are the classic examples of the nice-cop and bad-cop combination.

Sergeant Motle's behaviour is always very much suspicious. When entering Seila's yard he looks at the dented gate. This dent occurred on the night of Seila's murder, does he know something about it? Also in his investigations into Seila's murder he seems not to be interested in looking for the murderer, but in proving that Letshela is the murderer. Infact, he is framing Letshela than investigating the murder. This is revealed by the way he uses Refilwe to gather evidence against Letshela. It is only when the mask is finally peeled off his face, and his true colours as a murderer are revealed that we say: yes, we always thought as much!

Sergeant Motle's motive is simply greed. He planned the murder so well that he erased almost all of his tracks and he had a proper fall-guy in Letshela. This is a criminal who abuses his office, sending his juniors on criminal errands, terrorizing the public and wasting state money and time by sending to trial an innocent man. This man's crimes cannot be pardoned. Though the writer does not give the sentence, the reader can assume the verdict of guilty and a heavy sentence at the end of Sergeant Motle's trial.

6.1.5.3 The suspect-detective and the suspect-police man

There are two suspects in this novel. First, there is Letshela Maleka, who turns detective because he is suspected by the police for having killed his friend, Seila Mapole:

“Morena Letshela Maleka, o gononelwa go ba mmolai wa mogweragwe Seila. Bohlatse re nabjo le ge dinyakišišo di tšwela pele” (Chokoe, 1994: 17).

(Mr Letshela Maleka, you are suspected for the murder of your friend, Seila. We have evidence to prove that, though we are proceeding with investigations).

Though the police take Letshela to be the suspect, the reader knows that he is an innocent man who is just being framed. What the reader does not know is why he is being framed. It is only at the end of the story when the killer is exposed that the reader realizes that Letshela was falsely accused by the real killer.

The second suspect is Constable Sehlola. His behaviour and extravagance make him a strong suspect. He seems to be all out to pin the murder of Seila on Letshela. Also he spends money like water. Even people next to him seem surprised about how he has suddenly become rich. He has bought a brand new bed for his girlfriend, Lerato. He is worried when his other presents for Lerato have not yet arrived. He has also given his other girlfriend twenty-thousand rands to buy a brand new car. Where does all this money come from if not from Seila's winning ticket? This assumption is later proved to be right when it is revealed that he received a hundred-thousand rands from Sergeant Motle for his co-operation. Thus he is an accomplice in the murder of Seila.

6.1.5.4 The man who worthed five-hundred thousand rands

Seila Mapole's winning at the horse-race makes him a good victim for murder in a detective novel. A man in possession of a ticket to the value of five-hundred thousand rands in the rural area without protection, a man whose winning is not a

secret, when murdered the list of suspects is inexhaustable. Many people were jealous of him and they knew that his ticket did not have a name on it. Moreover the selection for the winning horses was not done by him, he was given the numbers by Mašilo. So, Mašilo was entitled to the money as well, and if he had lodged a claim he could have had the same right as Seila. Mašilo also took the winning numbers from copying the number plates: LEB-4-7730 from one Toyota Sprinter. Doesn't the owner of this car also have a legal claim to the winning ticket? Thus in Seila, the writer has succeeded in portraying a good victim for murder.

Thus, Chokoe did not allow the constraints of the set of rules governing the writing of a detective novel to stifle his creative spirit. Though to an extent he respected these rules, he regularly allowed his spirit free flight, and after an examination of his social comment it will become clear that the result is an artefact worth reading.

6.2 SOCIAL COMMENT

The reading of this section should be coupled with that of sections 1.2.1 and 2.1.

Marxist criticism analyzes literature in terms of the historical conditions which produce it, and if one adopts this vantage point the difference between Northern Sotho detective narratives of the 70s and those of the 90s will be discernible. Marxism attempts to understand ideologies underpinning societies at different stages of development. Since these ideas, values and feelings are reflected in the literature of the time we find in the detective narratives of the 70s compliance with the apartheid system, whilst those of the 90s reveal defiance of authority and a growing spirit of freedom. The study of these phenomena in literature is justified by Eagleton (1976: viii) who observes:

To understand ideologies is to understand both the past and

the present more deeply; and such understanding contributes to our liberation.

In this section we will first try to show how the apartheid government used art, that important element in the superstructure of society, to ensure that in the apartheid society the situation in which the whites have power over the blacks is either seen by most members of the society as natural or not seen at all. A most relevant example of this nature of the deployment of art is found in H Z Motuku's "*Ralato 1*". The analysis of this short story is not an end in itself, but should be seen as a means towards an end, the end being an understanding of Chokoe's social comment in "*Lengwalo*". This will serve to highlight the commitment in "*Lengwalo*" towards illuminating the sufferings of blacks at the hands of the brutal police force. Chokoe's loud articulation against police harassment is thus the purpose of this section. The comparison of these two texts is proof of the truth of Plekhanov's comment:

All art springs from an ideological conception of the world; there is no such thing as a work of art entirely devoid of ideological content (Eagleton, 1976: 17).

6.2.1. H Z Motuku: commitment to apartheid

The discussion under this section should be linked to that under 1.3.2.

The crime to be investigated in "*Ralato 1*" is freedom fighting. From the choice of this crime one can recognize imprints of the historical epoch from which this story originates. Also, because the apartheid government labelled freedom fighters "terrorists" and "criminals", the side which the writer upholds is clear. Motuku's short story is about how a cell of freedom fighters operating in Sekhukhuneland,

around Nebo and Glencowie is penetrated by a detective, Ralato, who wins their trust. At the end, due to this detective, the whole group is rounded up and arrested.

Literary works are forms of perception, are forms of particular ways of seeing the world. Eagleton (1976: 6) observes that “they have a relation to that dominant way of seeing the world which is the ‘social mentality’ or ideology of an age”. Hence it is not surprising that Motuku, a blackman, sees the world in a twisted way, the way of the apartheid government. The minority National Party government propagated an apartheid ideology and this was dominant in the country. In the eyes of this government the freedom fighters were terrorists hired by the communists while black policemen fighting against freedom fighters were patriots deserving medals for their heroic deeds. Here follows an attempt at substantiating these statements.

According to Motuku, the mission of the freedom fighters was the destruction of South Africa. This is evident from the words of the Minister under whose department Ralato served:

“.... lehono ka thušo ya gago re kgonne go swara ka moka diphelephethe tšeo maikemišetšo a tšona e lego go senya le go dubakanya lefase la gabo rena” (Ramokgopa & Motuku, 1971: 83).

(.... today due to your help we have been able to arrest all the criminals whose mission was to destroy and cause disorder in our country).

The idea that the freedom fighters were bent upon destruction is propagated throughout the whole short story. When giving the job description of Major Schoeman’s department, Motuku says that it was defending the country against

those: "... nyakago go hlanola lefase la gabo rena la Repapoliki ya Afrika Borwa" (Ramokgopa & Motuku, s.a.: 83) (... those who were intending to turn our fatherland, the Republic of South Africa, upside down). To Motuku, the freedom fighters were bent on destroying the land and government he loved and they thus deserved to be looked at with contempt. That is why he regularly refers to them as "diphelephethe" (criminals) as in the sentence: "... a ekwa gore diphelephethe ka moka tšeo di bego di ikemišeditše go senya lefase la gabo rena di be di swerwe ka moka" (Ramokgopa & Motuku, s.a.: 84) (... she had heard that all the criminals who were intending to destroy our land were arrested). To show his contempt it is not only enough to call the freedom fighters "criminals", he should also emphasize that all of them have been arrested. This was also to show that the apartheid government would overcome the struggle for freedom by blacks.

Motuku also portrays the freedom fighters as people who have been hired, not fighting out of the patriotic love of their country.

"Lesogana le Thongwane e be e le yo mongwe wa diketapele tša basenyi bao ba bego ba hirilwe go udubatša lefase la gaborena" (Ramokgopa & Motuku, n.d.: 78).

(This young man, Thongwane was one of the leaders of the criminals who were hired to bring chaos in our land).

Motuku completely disregards factors such as the love of someone's lost heritage. There is no mention of colonialism; there is nothing about oppression and nothing about apartheid. The freedom fighters were just hired terrorists and criminals. This was the perspective of the white ruling class during the apartheid period.

To the apartheid government the freedom fighters were foreigners, not people of

South African origin. The government's propaganda machine tried to spread this misinformation through all the means at its disposal. Motuku brings out the same idea here:

".... ga ba tsomege lefaseng la gaborena ka ge ba ferehla badudi ba lefase ka go khupetša botse ka bobbe mahlong a batho" (Ramokgopa & Motuku, 1971: 71).

(.... they are not welcome in this country because they sow confusion amongst its citizens by exposing bad things instead of showing the good).

This excerpt does not only show the apartheid government's perspective that freedom fighters were foreigners, it also propagates the idea that the same government was doing good things for the black people of this country. According to this perspective, apartheid was not oppression, it was separate development. It was only the foreigners who were distorting it and spreading the wrong perception amongst the blacks. Hence, the same newspaper report goes further to state:

"Manaba ao boikemišetšo bja bona e lego go senya tše botse ka moka tšeo Mmušo wa rena o re direlago" (Ramokgopa & Motuku, 1971: 71).

(Enemies whose intention is to destroy all the beautiful things our government does for us).

The way Motuku goes all out to demonise the freedom fighters and glorify the apartheid government finally makes it clear that this short story was an assignment for government propaganda.

Motuku's short story also propagates the idea that those who were fighting against the freedom fighters were patriots. Hence the medals and praises. The freedom fighters are depicted as a stupid, easily deceived bunch of fools, who reveal vital information to a person whose identity they have not verified.

From the above, it is hoped, we have revealed how "*Ralato 1*" is not only a product of concrete social relations during the apartheid period, but also an attempt at legitimizing and perpetuating the dominance of the whites over the blacks as it was experienced.

6.2.2 S J Chokoe: the mirror of police harassment

To understand "*Lengwalo*" one must first understand the complex, indirect relation between this text and its ideological world, the relation which emerges not only in its theme, but also in its tone, style and imagery.

The text though published in 1994, was already completed by 1991. This fact is deduced from a letter of its rejection by one of the publishers dated 19th June 1991. So, its tone and sentiment represents the aura of freedom ushered in by the unbanning of the freedom fighting movement in 1990, whilst its theme originates from the pre-1990 world. In this world, the police were an instrument of suppression by the apartheid government rather than a service to the people. Because in the line of their duties they harassed more than helped the black population, they were feared and despised by this section. Various deaths of people in police custody were reported, and the circumstances under which these occurred were always suspicious: jumping from the window of the sixth-floor of a building; hanging by shoe laces in a shower room; slipping on soapy floors, shot while trying to escape or attacking a police officer, etc. etc.

Thus, due to the fear of suffering the same fate, people could not be vocal about the misery they suffered at the hands of the police. But now, after 1990, voices articulating the most horrible tales of atrocities committed by the police were beginning to be heard, and "*Lengwalo*" is one of those. Chokoe's perspective of this life can be dissected as follows:

In South Africa it was common practice for the police to arrest people without any warrant being issued. It is doubtful whether a warrant of arrest was needed at all for a black person to be arrested. It was because of this practice of random arrests that a police van was referred to as "khwelamahala" (freeride). Even if innocent, if one got into this van, what happened to one from the time the doors closed to the time one was released, was bound to leave one with a scar of emotional trauma which would take some time to heal.

Bothata ke khwelamahala ye! Bangwe batho ba e bitša
'namela o tla bolela pele' (Chokoe, 1994: 3).

(The problem is this police van, nicknamed 'freeride!' some call
it 'just climb in, you'll talk ahead').

In recounting his experiences in the back of the van, the narrator, Letshela just says: "Ka morago ka eta ke di bona" (Chokoe, 1994: 11) (What happened in the back of the van to me, I can't explain). That is why the sight of a police van instilled so much fear in the hearts of black people. This was due to a long period of suffering at the hands of this necessary law-enforcement agency which, instead of serving people, was used to oppress them.

Unlike in most western countries where a suspect is assumed innocent until proven guilty, in South Africa a black person was assumed guilty until his innocence had

been established. This resulted in cruel treatment of suspects. The treatment meted out to Letshela bears testimony to this. He was treated as if he was serving sentence, even before he could be charged.

The freedom from prosecution which the police enjoyed turned some of them into criminals. In return for their support and service, the unpopular system they helped to keep in power, protected them. Hence, they could commit crimes with impunity. Some policemen grew wealthy from the proceeds of crimes committed during the apartheid years. It is regularly reported in the press how some of them continue on this path. What sergeant Motle did was not an exception to the rule, but common practice within the police service, namely, to plant evidence or kill for gain. In fact, a suspect in the hands of the police had no rights whatsoever - his life depended on their mercy. Silencing witnesses through poisoning, as it was attempted on Mašilo, was common practice. To the horror of the white section of the population, stories of this nature were recounted at the TRC hearings. The blacks in this country lived through all that. It was common knowledge, though people could not articulate it in public.

This fear of the police has not yet altogether disappeared from society, and their censure in literature is not yet acceptable to the publishers who still feel it might offend the government. Books in African languages are aimed at the school market and as such prescription for particular school levels is the only means of economic survival for publishers.

This is actually the reason why "*Lengwalo*" was rejected by a publisher who flourished during the apartheid era, and as such is mentally still imprisoned there. However, "*Lengwalo*" went on to win the Bertrams V.O. Award for African Literature in which it was entered by a progressive publisher. Here attached is a copy of the letter which rejected the manuscript of "*Lengwalo*". One can't help to marvel at how

19 June 1991

Mr S J Chokoe
P O Box 5648
PIETERSBURG NORTH

Dear Sir

LENGWALO

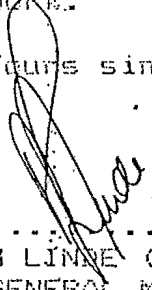
Enclosed herewith please find your original manuscript.

We regret to advise you that our reviewer has informed us that the literary standard of your manuscript is not high enough to warrant publication.

Furthermore, in view of the fact that the Department of Education and Training prescribes books for a period of 4 years we can only consider publishing books of a "very high standard" at this stage.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider your work.

Yours sincerely


.....
M LINDE (MRS)
GENERAL MANAGER

“very high standard” can turn out to be extremely relative.

6.3 RÉSUMÉ

Since this chapter starts with the evaluation of “*Lengwalo*” as a detective novel, the relationship between it and chapter 5 is very strong and thus unavoidable. But in spite of that, “*Lengwalo*” has been found to be unique in its treatment of social issues. This is where the beauty of this text lies. We have tried to reveal it by comparing this text with H.Z. Motuku’s “*Relato 1*”. We hope that we succeeded in this endeavour.

CHAPTER 7 : GENERAL CONCLUSION

7.0 INTRODUCTION

In this study we examined the work of different authors who have tried their hands at the detective narrative. In the course of our study we have discovered salient facts peculiar to each author and representing important signposts in the development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho. It is the purpose of this chapter to highlight these findings and make recommendations.

7.1 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Like in any language, the development of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho is part of the social history of the blacks in this country. In this genre the politics of power within the South African society are properly reflected. This is especially revealed through the relationship between the people and law-enforcing agencies. From D.N. Moloto's "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" to S.J. Chokoe's "*Lengwalo*" it has been revealed how the abuse of the police by the oppressive government in making them enforce unpopular and oppressive laws, has damaged their image. The blacks do not view the police as a service to protect them but as an oppressive force, which should not be trusted. Now recently it has been proved that policemen are involved in SBV robberies, car hijacks and bank robberies, and thus it won't be a surprise if future detective novels reflect these. It is hoped that the new democracy in South Africa will usher in a new perspective of the police service and this too will be reflected in future detective narratives.

The evolution of the detective narrative in Northern Sotho reflects as if in a mirror, the evolution of the South African society: the struggle for liberation by the oppressed masses and the attempt by the ruling white minority to maintain its position of power. Though many Northern Sotho writers show commitment

to the liberation struggle there are those like H.Z. Motuku in "*Ralato 1*" who seemingly are on the side of the oppressor. This queer phenomenon has also been observed by Kunene (1993: 155): "... by a strange quirk of the mind that only a Sigmund Freud can fathom, blacks often admire the very whites who torment them". This phenomenon would make an interesting field of research in different but relevant fields of humanities.

Throughout this study each and every writer has been approached from a specific different literary theory. The choice of these different approaches has been a conscious action predetermined by the text at hand. We allowed the text to determine the theory to be applied, not the other way round. We believe that a text speaks for itself; it gives direction as to the approach to be adopted in unlocking it. Something in the text will, if properly searched, deliver the key to be used. It is for the critic to search for this key or listen to this voice. The subtle protest in "*Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo*" dictates a Marxist approach, the comment on women's issues in Kekana's work, more than the fact that she is a female author, demands feminism. The existence of Chase's works as inter-texts in "*Letlapa la Bophelo*" makes it imperative to adopt an inter-textual approach to this text, whilst Bopape's attempt at adhering to the requirements of a detective novel as a genre on its own, woos one to look at his success or failure in his endeavour. "*Lengwalo's*" frank censure of the police services also calls upon the critic to view it against a Marxist background. For argument's sake, let us suppose we had adopted inter-textuality as an approach to Kekana's work! What could we have achieved? Very little if not outright failure. The same applies if we had adopted a Marxist approach to V.N. Moloto's "*Letlapa la Bophelo*".

We believe that this finding should serve as a guide to future researchers in

literature and should minimise the regular futile exercises of attempting to fit round pegs into square holes. The words of Holmes provide us with wisdom in this regard: "It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts" (Thompson, 1993: 65).

Closely related to the above discussion, is the issue of V.M. Moloto's "*Letlapa la Bophelo*". The author of a detective story should have a good story to tell and tell it well. Murch (1958: 256) observed that this is a game of skill played with enthusiasm by both writers and readers alike. Moloto did not have a story to tell, he had James Hadley Chase's stories to steal. Though "*Letlapa la Bophelo*" has provided us with a text on which to experiment with the theory of inter-textuality, we cannot regard the text as literary art. Although inter-textual interpretation views as artistical naivety the desire and striving for complete originality, this does not negate the fact that new ideas and creations do exist though inspired by existing works of art. V.M. Moloto does not bring new ideas in his text. There is no pretence of artistic creativity in this text. There is only a dishonest theft of Chase's work. An honest work could have been a translation - this is cheating.

Another discovery made in the course of this research is the ignorance prevailing amongst authors and critics alike over the requirements of a detective narrative. Both the detective novel and short-story are governed by rules and regulations which should be strictly adhered to. Many Northern Sotho writers and critics seem unaware of these rules. Writers violate many of these rules, and those that they adhere to seem to be more by accident than by intent. Also it came as a surprise to find some critics erroneously classifying certain texts as detective novels. A good example is M.C. Mphahlele's "*Letsogo la molao*", recently republished under a different title of "*Mohlokapasa ke moka a hwile*". We came across two Honours articles with the titles: "Protest in the detective story with special reference to

"*Letsogo la molao*": by Shongoane, M.M. and "The significance of milieu in detective stories with special reference to "*Letsogo la molao*" by M.C.J. Mphahlele; Mashao, S.R. There is no way in which Mphahlele's novel can be called a detective novel, for it lacks three basic elements: (i) An interesting puzzle. (ii) A detective. (iii) The process of detection. It is a serious mistake to classify this novel as a detective novel, to say the least.

Closely related to the above discussion is the way Northern Sotho writers of detective stories ignore the fact that there is a total ban on love interest on the part of the detective in detective narratives. Symons (1985: 14) quotes Sayers who severely reproved: "the heroes who insist on fooling about after young women when they ought to be putting their minds to the job of detection". In four of our detective novels the detectives fall hopelessly in love and the duties of detection are hampered. In "*Lenong la gauta*" though the detective's love interest is beautifully intertwined with detection because at the end the criminal is revealed to be the much-loved wife of the detective, it is the extent of this love which tarnishes the image of the detective. In "*Lengwalo*" the detective literally abandons his detective duties and runs after Refilwe. This is downright irresponsibility and childish on the part of the detective: or can we say even the author? It would be interesting for future researchers to reveal how this shortcoming affects the quality of detective novels in Northern Sotho.

There is a glaring absence of the use of forensic science in Northern Sotho detective narrative. Techniques of determining the time of death through rigor mortis, evidence like type of hair, blood groups, carpet threads are important features of a detective story, but our writer don't use them. It is only in "*Lenong la gauta*" that forensic science comes to the rescue in identifying Matšhego's murderer. This absence is one of the legacies of apartheid, because some jobs in the police services were reserved for whites only. Even those writers who did a

research before they could write had no access to certain information and this included forensic science. With the removal of these discriminatory barriers it is hoped future detective novels will include these missing features.

Throughout these texts which we have analyzed for this research it has been observed that there is too much movement on the part of the detectives and too little logical deduction. Successful detection can be carried out without the detective having to leave the comfort of his chair and office. This obvious fact seems to have escaped the thinking of writers of this genre in Northern Sotho; and it is hoped future writers will take notice of the fact that pure geniuses solve cases sitting in their armchairs while the actual chasing is done by nimble acolytes.

7.2 FUTURE RESEARCH

This study can in no way claim to have covered all the angles from which the detective narrative in Northern Sotho can be looked at. Throughout this work various areas of future research have been suggested, but, nevertheless we would like to make one more suggestion.

Some literary critics in African Languages maintain that literary theories of foreign origin should not be applied as they are because they are not indigenous to African languages. A sort of a hybrid for this purpose should be devised. Here we have applied Marxism, Feminism and Inter-textuality with an amount of success. It would be interesting to see more of these literary approaches applied to a wider field of literature in indigenous African languages. This would be very helpful towards making an informed decision on this matter and the necessity of formulating home-brewed literary approaches.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. TEXTS

Bopape, H.D.N.

1982 Lenong la Gauta. Pretoria : J L van Schaik Ltd.

Chase, J.H.

1959 Shock Treatment. London : Panther Book.

1961 No Orchids for Miss Blandish. London : Corgi Book.

1978 Lê haar tussen die Lelies neer. Johannesburg : Olympos Uitgewers.

1979 Geel vir Geld. Johannesburg : Olympos Uitgewers.

Chokoe, S.J.

1994 Lengwalo. Johannesburg : Skotaville.

Kekana, M.A.

1985 Nonyana ya tokologo. Johannesburg : Educum Publishers.

1994 Nnete fela. Johannesburg : Educum Publishers.

Maputla, S.M.

1991 Ga se nna mmolai. Pretoria : J L van Schaik.

Moloto, D.N.

1960 Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo. 1st Ed. 2nd Imp. Johannesburg : Via Africa.

s.a. Tšhipu e rile ke lebelo. 2nd Ed. 3rd Imp. Pretoria : Via Africa.

Moloto, V.M.

1983 Letlapa la bophelo. Pretoria : Rostrum.

Mothapo, M.T. 1986 Etshwang mare. Pretoria : J L van Schaik.

Ramokgopa, H.H. & Motuku, H.Z.

1971 Nka se lebale. Goodwood : Via Africa.

B. SECONDARY SOURCES (CITED)

Bolt, R.

1960 A man for all seasons. London : Heinemann.

Eagleton, M.

1991 Feminist Literary Criticism. London : Longman.

Eagleton, T.

1976 Marxism and Literary Criticism. Los Angeles : University of California Press.

Fokkema, D.W., Kunne-Ibsch, E.

1977 Theories of Literature in the Twentieth Century. London : C Hurst & Co.

Gerhart, G.M.

1978 Black Power in South Africa. The Evolution of an Ideology. Berkeley : University of California Press.

Good News Bible

1982 Today's English version. Society of South Africa.

Groenewald, P.S.

1977 "Die Speurverhaal" in Studies in Bantoetale. Vol. 4.1. 1977.

Guerin, W.L., Labor, E., Morgan, L., Reesma, J.C., Willingham, J. R.

1992 A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature. 3rd Ed. New York :
Oxford University Press.

Hamilton, C.S.

1987 Western and Hard-boiled Detective Fiction in America. Houdmills :
MacMillan.

Jefferson, A., Robey, D.

1991 Modern Literary Theory : A Comparative Introduction. 2nd Ed. London :
Batsford.

Kunene, D.P.

1984 "The peopling of a story : A new view of characterization in African
Literature" in Turner, J E (ed). The Next Decade : Theoretical and
Research Issues in Africana Studies. New York : Cornell University.

1989 Thomas Mofolo and the Emergence of written Sesotho Prose.
Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

1993 "Characterization, realism and social inequality in the novel of C L S
Nyembezi" in South African Journal of African Languages. Vol. 14 No. 4
1994.

Lodge, T.

1983 Blacks Politics in South Africa since 1954. Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

Makgamatha, P.M.

1990 The Nature of Prose Narrative in Northern Sotho. (Unpublished) D.Litt. Thesis. Pretoria : Unisa.

Mampuru, D.M.

1986 "Critical assessment of Lenong la Gauta as a Detective Novel (story)" in South African Journal of African Languages. Vol. 6. 1986 supplement.

Mondel, E.

1984 Delightful Murder : A social history of the crime story. London : Pluto Press.

Mogale, N.S.

1993 Mamogobo's protest poetry and its influence. (Unpublished) M.A. dissertation. Pretoria : Unisa.

Mokgoatšana, S.N.C.

1996 Some Aspects of N S Puleng's Poetry. (Unpublished). M.A. dissertation. Pretoria : Unisa.

Molamu, L.

1995 "Wietie : The emergence and development of Tsotsitaal in South Africa" in Alternation. Vol. 2 No. 2 1995.

Muller, C.F.J.

1993 500 years : A history of South Africa. 3rd Revised a Illustrated Ed.

Pretoria : Academica.

Murch, A.E.

1958 The Development of the Detective Novel. London : Peter Owen Ltd.

Oliver, R. & Atmore, A.

1981 Africa since 1800 (3rd ed.) Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Palmer, E.

1987 "The feminine Point of view : Buchi Emecheta's The Joys of Motherhood"
in African Literature Today. No. 13.

Petőfi, J.S., Olivi, T.

1994 Approaches to Poetry : some aspects of Textuality, Intertextuality and Intermediality. Berlin : Walter de Gruyter.

Plottel, J.P., Charney, H. (ed)

1978 Intertextuality : New Perspectives in Criticism. New York : New York
Literary Forum.

Randall, P. (ed)

1972 Power, Privilege and Poverty : Spro-cass Publication No. 7.
Johannesburg : SACC.

Reuzin, I.I.

1978 "Notes on the Semiotic Analysis of Detective Novels : with examples from
the novels of Agatha Cristie" in New Literary History. Vol. IX No. 2 1978.

Riffaterre, M.

- 1984 "Intertextual Representation : On mimesis as Interpretive Discourse" in Critical Inquiry. No. 11 September 1984.
- 1990 "Compulsory reader response : the intertextual drive" in Worton, M, Still, J : Intertextuality : Theories and Practices. Manchester : Manchester University Press.

Serudu, S.M.

- 1989 "Modern Literary Theories, Methodologies and Approaches : A global view". (Unpublished). A paper delivered at the University of the North.

s.a. Noga ga di etelane. Pretoria : J L van Schaik.

Shava, P.V.

- 1989 A people's voice : Black South African writing in the twentieth century. London : 2ed Books Ltd.

Showatter, E.

- 1986 The New Feminist Criticism. London : Princeton University Press.

Symons, J.

- 1985 Bloody Murder From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel : A History. Great Britain : Northumberland Press.

Tani, S.

- 1953 The Doomed Detective : The contribution of the Detective Novel to Postmodern American and Italian Fiction. Edwardville : Illinois University.

Thompson, J.

- 1993 Fiction, crime and empire : Glues to Modernity and Postmodernist.
Chicago : Illinois University Press.

Thosago, C.M.

- 1995 The Postmodernist Novel with special reference to Italo Calvino's If on a
Winter's Night a Traveller. (Unpublished). M.A. dissertation. Sovenga :
Unin.

Webster, R.

- 1990 Studying Literary Theory : An introduction. London. Edward Arnold.

Worton, M, Still, J. (ed)

- 1990 Intertextuality : Theories and Practices. Manchester : Manchester
University Press.

C. SECONDARY SOURCES (UNCITED)

Alper, J.S.

- 1985 "Sex differences in brain asymmetry : a critical analysis" in Feminist
Studies. 11 no. 1. Spring 1985.

Appiah-Kubi, K., Torres, S. (ed)

- 1979 African Theology en route. New York : Orbis Books.

Babuts, N.

- 1992 "Text : Origins and Reference" in PMLA 107/1 of 1992.

Becker, P.

1974. Tribe to Township. Great Britain : Panther Books.

Bickerton, D.

1967. "The Language of 'Women in Love' in Page, D (ed) 1984 The Language of Literature". London : MacMillan.

Boesak, A.

1984 Black and Reformed : Apartheid, Liberation and the Calvinist Tradition. Johannesburg : Skotaville.

Bozzoli, B.

1985 "Migrant women and South African social change : biographical approaches to social analysis" in African Studies vol. 44 No. 1 1985.

Brooks, C.

1959 Understanding Fiction. New Jersey : Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Chapman, R.

1973 Linguistics and Literature : An introduction to literary stylistics. London : Edward Arnold.

Collins, P.H.

1989 "The Social Construction of Black feminist thought" in Journal of Women in Culture and Society. Vol. 14 No. 4.

Fanon, F.

1970 Black Skin white masks. Great Britain : Paladin.

Gikandi, S.

1987 Reading the African Novel. London : James Currey Ltd.

Gugelberger, G.M. (ed)

1985 Marxism and African Literature. London : James Currey Ltd.

Hawthorn, J.

1987 Unlocking the Text. Fundamental issues in Literary Theory. London :
Edward Arnold.

Kolodney, A.

1975 "Some Notes on Defining a "Feminist Literary Criticism" in Critical Inquiry.
No. 2 1975.

Leavis, F.R.

1958 The Common Pursuit. London : Chatto a Windus.

Manganyi, N.C.

1981 Looking Through The Keyhole. Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

Ndebele, N.S.

1991 Rediscovery of the Ordinary : Essays on South African Literature and
Culture. Johannesburg : Cosaw.

Pampallis, J.

1991 Foundations of the New South Africa. Cape Town : Maskew Miller
Longman.

Said, E.W.

- 1978 "The Problem of Textuality : Two Exemplary Positions" in Critical Inquiry.
No. 4 1978.

Selden, R.

- 1985 A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory. Great Britain : The
Harvester Press.

Serudu, S.M.

- 1987 The Novels of O.K. Matsepe : A Literary Study. (Unpublished). D.Litt et
Phil Thesis. Pretoria : Unisa.

Tompkins, J.P. (ed)

- 1980 Reader-Response Criticism : from Formalism to Post-structuralism.
London : The John Hopkins University Press.

Wellek, R., Warren, A.

- 1973 Theory Literature. Harmondsworth : Penquin Books.

West, P.

- 1963 The Modern Novel. London : Hutchison University Library.