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**DEVELOPMENTAL TRENDS IN  
SETSWANA LITERATURE**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that:

### **DEVELOPMENTAL TRENDS IN SETSWANA LITERATURE**

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

## **SUMMARY**

### **DEVELOPMENTAL TRENDS IN SETSWANA LITERATURE**

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**DEGREE: MASTER OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

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A Marxist literary theory is used in this study. The aim of this study is to evaluate some Setswana novels using a developmental approach. The time frame of this study will extend from the time the missionaries came to South Africa until 1994. Karl Marx's background has been discussed. The following Marxist models are explained, i.e. reflection model, production model, genetic model, negative knowledge model and language centred models. An explanation of some Marxist concepts, e.g. ideology, dialectic, base, superstructure, reification and alienation have been given (Chapter 1).

Three Marxist models are used, namely reflection, production and genetic. These models are used in the discussion of Mokwena, Rammone wa Kgalagadi and Motimedi. The study highlights how missionaries manipulated Setswana literary creativity in an attempt to promote Christianity and how some Setswana authors resisted the attempt to make Setswana literature instruments for Christianising people (Chapter 2).

The development of the following novels: Sephaphati, Matlhoko, Matlhoko and Masego are discussed. Three Marxist models are utilised in the evaluation of these novels, namely reflection, production and genetic although the Government also harnessed Setswana literary creativity in an attempt to promote their ideology, some Setswana authors nevertheless resisted these attempts by the government (Chapter 3).

Explanation of the findings of the aim of the study is given. Mokwena primarily addresses its Christian readers (Batswana). Rammone wa Kgalagadi highlights the traditional world and westernised Christian world. Motimedi focuses on hardships experienced by Blacks, though Christianity also plays a role when the main character is converted. Sephaphati focuses on the Christian world and the westernised world. Matlhoko, Matlhoko highlights the implementation of the segregation acts in South Africa before 1994. Masego focuses on the impact of the oppressive laws of South Africa prior to 1994. The conclusion illustrates how Setswana authors were influenced by their traditional, cultural, religious and socio-economic background in writing the novels that I have evaluated (Chapter 4).

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Aim of Study

The aim of this study is to show how Setswana novels developed from the time missionaries came to South Africa until 1994. Because missionaries controlled publishing houses authors were compelled to condemn black culture and write about Christianity. To ensure that their books will be published, authors promoted Christianity in their literature. This also assisted missionaries to accomplish their goal of christianising blacks. Later publishing houses were controlled by government. The government also censored books to ensure that nothing was written that offended the state i.e. Batswana were not allowed to write about the hardships that they encountered and the oppression of the government. For instance the well-known Setswana author — D.P.S. Monyaise wrote about love in his first five novels. For that reason, in some cases Setswana authors waged a subtle guerrilla warfare in their works.

I intend to evaluate the development of six Setswana novels utilising three Marxist models, namely reflection, production genetic and how they are linked to social reality. I will confine the time frame of this study to the period 1940-1994. Any information given prior to 1940 and after 1994 is additional. The dictionary explanation of "evaluate" means to assess, while "development" means gradual unfolding. I am going to assess the gradual unfolding of events in these six novels using the Marxist Models that I have mentioned above over a period of more than half a century.

Thus far nothing has been written concerning a literary developmental approach of Setswana novels using Marxist theory. This has been thoroughly done in Xhosa literature in a recent doctoral thesis submitted at the university of Cape Town by S.Z. Zotwana (1993). There are no shortcomings in this thesis.

Because I intend to apply the Marxist literary theory in this study I find it fundamental to discuss the life history of Karl Marx under the aim of this study in order to highlight his convictions and principles as he is the father (pioneer) of Marxism. Marx was born on May 5, 1818 in Trier. His father Heinrich Marx was a lawyer. Karl Marx's studied in Bonn and Berlin. He is described as being intelligent with a trace of contempt. In 1848 he had already completed the political philosophy and revolutionary strategy that was named after him in his mind. He believed that politics and society must be interpreted in the light of history because they both develop and disappear. During his youth Marx had the idea of the "class struggle", that one social class would take over from another. Hegel was Marx's strongest spiritual model. Hegel concentrated on man's spiritual history and Marx explained changes in social conditions from spiritual history. According to Marx this was a reversal of reality. He argues that one must start with social reality, economic life, the existing legal and political situation and see spiritual matters in relation to them. The following quotation illustrates his thinking:

"In fact one must ask why man bothers to build such realms in the clouds. Was it because something was amiss in his real world where men ruled over men and exploited each other, where there were rich and poor, misery in spite of wealth, and increasing misery in spite of increasing wealth? Therefore, in his anguish, he invented gods, saviours and philosophical systems designed to explain an alienated, confused, agonizing reality. But these cloud-cuckoo-lands, of which the Hegelian system was the last and most elaborate, were of no help or effect. They had to be destroyed by criticism; this, however, could

not be done without an understanding of the social reality which had given rise to these ideas, without changing it and putting it in order" (Golo Mann 1968: 9-10).

After Hegel's death the philosopher's task was no longer to top the Hegelian system with another, but reality had to be recognised and changed and revolution had to be prepared scientifically. Idea and action had to replace pure philosophy, action should be derived from the idea:

"Philosophers have only explained the world in different ways; what matters is that it should be changed" (Golo Mann 1968: 10).

Marx was sometimes a successful judge of the present and the future. He met Kriedrich Engels in the eighteen forties and they formed a lifelong friendship. Engels taught Marx something about people and Marx taught Engels how to resolve reality into concepts. Later Marx, together with Engels, developed their special economic theories and the poisonous art of polemics which retained human character.

In 1848 Marx and Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto, the pamphlet that was to conquer half the world. It contained the most essential part of Marxism. According to this Manifesto, at the basis of man's history, lies his economic needs and the satisfaction of his daily wants. Forms of government, state and law, forms of thought, philosophy, morals and religion determine the way in which goods are produced and distributed. The disappearance of the primitive tribal communities gave rise to social classes. There was a ruling class which drew economic profit from its rule and those who were ruled, but the ruled revolted against the conditions imposed on them. History is therefore a history of class struggles. After the western European revolution of 1789 and 1830 the bourgeoisie became the ruling class, and achieved a great deal during its rule.

The bourgeoisie will not rule for a long time. The proletariat earn very little money through their labour. The proletariat, dissatisfaction with wages, will cause a great political revolution because the capitalists (bourgeoisie) control the state through their parliaments, armies, churches, legal systems, schools and kings. The revolution will change the basic structure of society. It will be the last revolution because previous revolutionary classes were minorities and they became ruling classes. The proletariat is in the large majority and will not exploit people when they are in power because they will not use power for their own interest, but will use it so that everyone benefits from it. Those who have been overthrown and dispossessed will resist the proletariat rule and the proletariat will have to rule with "iron dictatorship". When those who have been overthrown and dispossessed become submissive and as a result, dictatorship and the state will no longer be needed. People will pursue their occupations in free partnership without any obstruction from soldiers, kings, dispute, fear, priests and religious superstition. Reconciliation between consciousness and reality, which Hegel had accomplished in philosophical terms, will at last have been achieved (Golo Mann 1968: 13-14).

## **1.2 Marxist Literary Theories**

### **1.2.1 Some Marxist Concepts**

All Marxist theories of literature have a simple premise in common, namely that literature can only be properly understood within a larger framework of social reality. Marxists maintain that literature cannot be treated in isolation and detached from society and history because any theory that does so will be lacking in ability to explain what literature is. Marxist theories of literature are different from other approaches by having a number of specific concepts and ways of perceiving the world which give a structure to it. For Marxist social reality a clearly perceptible background from which

literature emerges or into which it mixes. It has a precise shape. Marxists see shape in history as a series of struggles between antagonistic social classes and the types of economic production they yield. The shape is also found at any time in society because particular class relationships and particular cultural, political and social institutions are related to the system of economic production in a definite way. Marx and Engels called the structure of history and the structure of society *dialectical*.

The term dialectic refers to a *method* that can be utilised to analyse history and society so that the true relationship between history and society can be revealed. When Marx studied political economy he did so dialectically. He looked at social classes, economic production and capitalism, before moving to general things. One might, for example, look at the structure of history and society and see whether the literary work reflects, or distorts, this structure. One could also start from a general concept of literature and go on to writers and texts and then to society, or start from a specific text and move to the author, the author's class and the role of this class in society. All these procedures have been used by different Marxists literary theorists. There is little agreement as to how to continue because of the problematic status of literature.

The model of base and superstructure is the structured view of reality which has an indisputable impact on Marxist literary theory. Marx's view of history and society, which distinguish him from his predecessors and contemporaries, was the emphasis he placed on the socio-economic element in any society as an ultimate determinant of that society's character. Social relations created by the kind of economic production predominant in a given society is what "socio-economic" means. This is the relationship between capitalist and proletariat in a capitalist society. It originates in exploitation and is therefore a relationship of actual conflict. The *base* or basic

economic structure gives rise to a number of social institutions and beliefs which act to regulate or break up conflict and keep the mode of production (in being) normal. Under a capitalist economy these may be a bourgeoisie form of parliament and judiciary, an education system, planned broadly to the needs of capitalist production and the values which support these institutions. Other elements of the base are religion, literature, education and ethics or morals. Marx calls the *superstructure* of society all elements which arise on the socio-economic base.

The term *ideology* has been defined differently by Marx and Engels. This is how Jefferson and Robey puts it:

"In Marxism 'ideology' is viewed to be contrasting with an objective kind of knowledge. Marx explains it by the way he sees capitalist economy which is a circulation of things. If we want to know how the economy operates, approaching it dialectically, we will find that this circulation of commodities is the ideological representation of relations between people, employers and employees, where the capitalist gets a surplus value from the workers' labour. The ideological view here is closely associated with what Marx calls *reification*, the process by which a world of human relationships appears as a set of relationships between things. Similarly, the process by which a worker sells his or her labour power to the capitalist in exchange for wages and becomes the appendage of a machine is part of what Marx called alienation (1986: 170)."

Marx sees literature within a larger ideological superstructure together with religion, philosophy, politics and legal systems. This is how Jefferson and Robey puts it:

"In this usage there is no suggestion that an ideology is a distortion of material reality. Marx however stresses that changes in these ideological forms cannot be determined with the same kind of scientific precision as changes in the

economic production. He also argues in another context that changes in art, in ideology, do not necessarily correspond evenly to changes in the socio-economic base. Rather, the development of the arts can be out of all proportion to the general development of society, hence also to the material foundation (1986: 170)". If ideology is a representation it may be argued that literature is also a representation.

The following are Marxist approaches which have been subdivided into five models and which have been devised for linking literature to social reality.

### 1.2.2 The Reflection Model

This model views literature as reflecting a reality outside of it. Lenin used this model when he wrote about Tolstoy as being the mirror of the Russian revolution. Early Marxists and "Aristotle up to the nineteenth century" view art as an imitation of life. This view was maintained by Marxists for a long time because Marx believed that external reality comes before ideas to the mind. Lukács did not see literature reflecting reality as a mirror reflects the objects placed in front of it; literature is a knowledge of reality, and knowledge is not a matter of making one-to-one correspondences between things in the world outside and ideas in the head. Reality is out there before we know it in our heads, but it has shape, it is a dialectical totality where all the parts are in movement and contradiction. To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through the creative, form-giving work of the writer. The result of the correctly formed work will be that the form of the real world will be reflected in the form of the literary work.

Lukács usage of *form* is the same as the one used by the Russian Formalists. According to them form refers to the sum of devices in a text. Form means different things in each case. For the Formalists and the structuralists form is something

technical or linguistic. Lukács maintains that the correct form is one which reflects reality in the most objective way. He sees the form of the early nineteenth century novels (Scott, Balzac, Tolstoy) as embodying a knowledge of the contradictory content of capitalist society as it develops to be the most correct. According to Lukács reality which literature manages or fails to reflect is a social and historical reality.

Lukács criticised Zola and Proust that "unmediated" totalities are present in their work. This means that these are representations of the world which give an artificial stress to one aspect of reality at the expense of others. Lukács maintains that these unmediated totalities were *distorted* perceptions.

"They had a political significance, since unmediated totalities were reifications, ideological deformations of reality which falsified the objective situation of a society founded on the contradiction between classes" (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986:172).

The critic who utilises a literary work using this model cannot see it as a reflection by making comparisons between elements in the work (e.g. a character or a scene or a descriptive detail) and elements in the world. That fails to be reflected in an *unmediated work* and to be reflected in a correct work is a whole objective *form* of reality, something which is far less immediate and perceptible by touch. For Lukács work which appears to be life-like will not necessarily be realistic and work which *distorts* appearances will not necessarily be unrealistic. He maintains that literary work is a self-contained whole.

The central component of Lukács's reflection model is the concept of the *type*. Lukács maintains that the type is not a statistical average.



"It is the character or situation in the literary work which brings together the general movement of history and a number of unique, individual traits into a distinctive particularity. The type gives the work the three-dimensionality which, for Lukács, is the essence of realism" (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986:173).

According to Lukács the average person like Leopold Bloom in Joyce's *Ulysses* possesses behavioural traits typical of many married men or advertising reps or lower middle-class Jews. Lukács argues that Bloom's traits are not portrayed as typical of the historical situation of his class and Bloom is not presented as being bound up in a general dialectical movement of history. Waverley in Walter Scott's book is not an average person. His life starts in adulthood with his head full of literary memories and fantasies which Scott says is a dream. According to Lukács Waverley is located within the form of the novel (between his Tory uncle on the land, his Whig father in town and the life of adventure of the Jacobite rebels he joins) and reveals the conflicts between three historically important social groups. He is a middle-of-the-road hero and the action of the novel revolves around him as a passive hub, and has the function of bringing into contact with each other: "the extremes whose struggle fills the novel, whose clash expresses artistically a great crisis in society" (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986:174). Waverley is a vehicle for presenting typicality, the fusion between the individual and the general in history.

Lukács's reflection model, it should now be clear, is in no way a primitive or a crude one. He never takes the view that a literary work is simply a mirror held up to nature, and his theory centres precisely on making distinction between accurate and erroneous reflections, between critical realists like Balzac and Scott and naturalists or modernists like Zola and Joyce. His idea that the literary work is simultaneously both a self-contained whole controlled by specific, objective laws of its genre and a reflection of the world is not a matter of conceptual acrobatics or confusion.

### 1.2.3 The Production Model

Pierre Macherey, a French Marxist developed a model which differs significantly from Lukács's reflection model, which is the relationship between the literary work and reality. This model deals with the correct literary form as a binder between the realist work and historical reality. It opens up some of the less presentable concepts of Lukács's model, the relationships between author and text and between ideology and realism.

The Theory of Literary Production is Macherey's most valuable theoretical work. It deals with how literary works are made. He gives production a specific explanation. He views literature like productive labour where raw materials are worked into an end-product. He views the author not as a creator (a concept which suggests that literary works are fashioned from nothing or from some shapeless clay) but as someone who works pre-existing literature genres, language, ideology and conventions into end-products, which are literary texts. According to Macherey anything that enters the text will be changed into something else when the text is written, e.g. the steel that goes into making an aircraft propeller changes its function and appearance after being cut, welded, polished and fitted onto the aircraft with other components.

Verne's The Mysterious Island which is analysed by Macherey by pointing out that Verne tries to update the theme of Robinson Crusoe by a small society of castaways (different from Crusoe who was living alone) who are compelled to put the natural wealth of the island to their social use (again different from Defoe's hero, who had a wreck full of socially made products conveniently to hand off-shore). As the story develops, Verne's castaways discover that they are not alone and are not the first colonists. Captain Nemo whose men have been on the island is living under the volcano. A bullet is found in a dead pig, Nemo provides the castaways with a chest

full of goods. According to Macherey, one of the aspects of the old Robinson Crusoe theme that Verne had left out (the wreck full of socially produced goods) is brought back (the chest supplied by Nemo). Verne's own text is undermined by his project. The modernised Robinson Crusoe theme is broken into by the old Robinson Crusoe theme. According to Macherey the narrative is faulty.

According to Macherey the result of Verne's novel reveals what he had not intended. Jefferson and Robey says this about it:

"Verne would like to believe that the pioneering conquest of new worlds by science and industry, part of the ideology of colonial imperialism of his time, can be achieved in the kind of artificial pre-social conditions set up in the Crusoe story. From the Marxist point of view this is impossible since society has to be not only in existence but also quite economically developed before science and industry can come into being. What Macherey says about Verne is implicitly based on a criticism Marx was fond of making of early bourgeois economists who did not see that Defoe's story was a myth. They used the image of Crusoe on his island to present their picture of primitive economic man without realising that Defoe's hero is really a bourgeois man. He does not in fact start with nothing but with socially made products and learned economic practices, such as book-keeping (1986: 179)".

Macherey is closely concerned with transformation of ideology which is part of literary production. He described literary production in a later work as a staging ideology, which suggests that ideology is produced and transformed by the writing of fiction in the same sort of way that the script of a play is transformed on stage. The ideological project of Verne is changed when it enters the faulty narrative. The ideological utterances of Balzac conflict with other component parts of his disparate narrative and

are transformed into something else, changed by fiction. Ideology in A Theory of Literary Production is understood by Macherey to be a compact system of deceptive social beliefs. Ideology is conditionally complete if it cannot see or say certain things. Ideology is produced in literature by writing it out. Literature gives it shape and contours it could not possess as ideology because illusions are not real. In this way the text channels the ideology and separates its fictional version from the same ideology before it enters the text.

As we recall Macherey's theory of reading, he maintains that the reader has to bring to the text the theoretical knowledge the text and its author did not possess. According to Macherey this view is bound up with Marxist theory and it is based on the idea of symptomatic reading which was developed by Louis Althusser, a French philosopher whom Macherey had worked jointly with in a project called Reading Capital.

Althusser's idea is as follows:

"when we write, we do not just record what we see and fail to record what lies outside our field of vision; rather we see all the elements of reality about which we write, but our written text cannot always make the right connections between them. A text thus tends to present reality partially or incoherently, leaving gaps. Through these gaps, however an informed reader can see what the text was hiding from itself" (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986: 180-181). Macherey pointed out gaps from Verne's text, *The Mysterious Island*, that I have mentioned above. To support this Macherey says "What is important in the work is what it does not say (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986: 181)".

#### 1.2.4 The Genetic Model

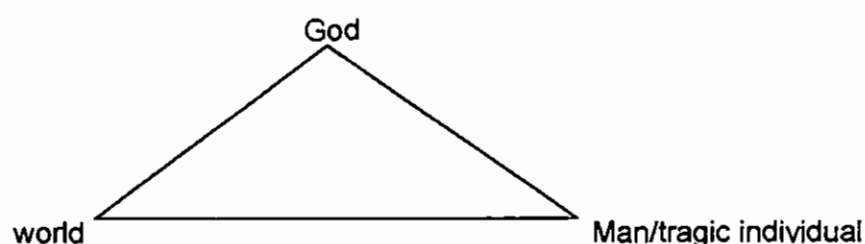
The genetic model deals with origins, causes and determinations of literature. It has developed out of social life. A Rumanian-born sociological theorist Lucien Goldmann wrote this model. He worked in France and died in 1970.

Goldmann maintains that the objective meaning of a literary or philosophical work was often not completely clear to the author himself. He maintains that literary criticism should not be focussed on the text but on the correlation between the work structure and mental structure of the author's social groups. Lukács influenced him by insisting that reality and thought form a dialectical totality in which everything is interrelated. With this influence it was meaningless for Goldmann to talk about a text in itself. Goldmann argues that literary works arise out of behaviour and social consciousness and he wanted to establish how they are linked to society.

By mental structure and the structure of a literary work Goldmann means patterns of ideas and concepts. According to Goldmann, world view is a superior form of ideology that is possessed by certain privileged social groups. The expression of those groups in a society whose thought, feeling and behaviour are directed towards an overall organisation of interhuman relations and relations between men and nature is a world view. These social groups can either be revolutionary or reactionary classes. Mental structure is expressed as a world view.

Goldmann's approach sees literary work as the expression of the social class of which the author is a member and not of the author's self. He emphasised that the origin of a work's mental structure is found in social behaviour. He saw social behaviour resulting from two or more individuals acting as one and not from the will of separate individuals, e.g. when they cooperate to lift a heavy load. For him literary works became *collective* products of social groups. Goldmann eliminated the role of the

individual author altogether because through the individual author the mental structure of the group is made known. In Goldmann's major work *The Hidden God*, most of these views were developed in practice in his original publication in 1955. In this project Goldmann investigates the mutual relations between a social group, a religious movement, the philosophy of Pascal and the plays of Racine. He discovered a particular form of world view, the "tragic vision" in each of these, in which man appears torn between contradictory obligations that the world prevents him from reconciling. The social group (of 17<sup>th</sup> Century France) is torn between its dependence on the absolutist rule of the monarch and the pull of bourgeois individualism. The religious movement called Jansenism is torn between the absolute authority of a hidden God and the rationalism of the human world. There are also contradictions between the philosophy of Pascal and the dramas of Racine and both were members of Jansenism and the noblesse de robe. Goldmann brings out these contradictory obligations as two corners of triangle, i.e. God and the world which exercises a magnetic pull on the third, i.e. man or the tragic individual. This he illustrates as follows:



Goldmann's mental structures are interrelationships of concepts and not linguistic structures. He sees the mental structures as being *represented* by characters, some of whom (like the gods who are necessarily hidden) are present in the text but not on stage. Goldmann's structure here is like the form which Lukács saw in the configurations of representatives of social classes in a novel. Goldmann maintained that literature was a language, but he meant that literature was reserved for the

expression and communication of certain contents which were world views. Goldmann maintains that language and literature are a vehicle for expressing a reality already in existence, the reality exists before the literary work in the world view and its mental structure. Goldmann uses the older sense of structure when he calls his approach genetic structuralism.

According to Goldmann world views are social facts. In Racine's *Iphigénie*, for example, Goldmann finds a conflict between a tragic universe and a providential universe with no mediating element between them. This destroys the coherence which makes a work of art completely valid. (1964: 361)

#### 1.2.5 The Negative Knowledge Model

In Lukács's reflection model, he could either show the understanding of the totality in a classic realist work or reject the unmediated totality of the non-realist work. Lukács began to criticise more openly the limitations of the socialist realism which had been promoted by Soviet cultural apparatchiks from the early thirties, and to reconsider modernist writers like Joyce and Beckett. He did this in his book, *The Meaning of Contemporary realism* which he wrote in 1956 at the beginning of the process of de-Stalinisation in the Soviet Union. But in the results of this reassessment, he actually justifies by evidence what he had been saying about the superiority of critical realism or authentic socialist realism over other forms of writings. This did not affect the basic writings of his literary theory and aesthetics.

Theodor W. Adorno of the Frankfurt School of Marxism who died in 1969, criticised Lukács's book adversely in written form. Adorno expressed dissatisfaction with Lukács's arrogant declaration of opinion and tried to show how Lukács was trapped within a vulgar-materialist view of the work of literature as a reflection of objective reality. In his criticism Adorno took Lukács to task for using a faulty pre-Marxist kind of

dialectic. Adorno's approach tried to give a definite value to modernist writings in opposition to a literary theory which had been highly recognised as compared to modernism.

Lukács treated the reflection as being similar to the way reality was reflected in human consciousness. Lukács is criticised by Adorno because he uses consciousness and actual world (reality) as if they were similar. Adorno's view is that art and reality are distant from one another and this distance gives the work of art a vantage-point from which it can criticise actuality. Adorno's criticism of distance is that literature has its own formal laws. The first law deals with *procedures and techniques* which dissolve the subject matter and reorganise it in modern art. In the second law he maintains that art is the *essence and image* of reality and not the photographic reproduction of reality. For Adorno, the work of art comes from the image from the artist (the subject). What he or she perceives in reality is absorbed in the creative process (the object). The object is absorbed into the subject in the form of an image.

The concept of reality for Adorno is similar to that of Lukács. For both of them reality is a dialectical totality, a structure which can only be seen by a process of thought, uniting things and seeing how they really are, it is (reality) not based on observing the world through our eyes or through the camera lens. They both also emphasise the estranged nature of reality in contemporary Western Society where people are at the mercy of the rationalised and bureaucratic state and the mechanical laws of the market. Adorno differs from Lukács in the role he places on art in this reality. Lukács maintains that for art to reflect the correct form of the totality it has to break through the crust of reified appearances. This is rejected by Adorno because he insists on literature's formal laws and emphasises the distance between literature and reality. Adorno argues that literary work acts within reality to expose its contradictions and does not give us a neatly-shaped reflection and a knowledge of reality.



A negative knowledge is that which can undermine and negate a false or reified condition. Adorno finds this kind of negation in Proust and Joyce's utilisation of the interior monologue. Adorno and his associates in the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research established a theory of culture which maintained that culture had become an industry in the capitalist society. All literature which had a positive content but an antagonistic political message would be negated by the culture of industry which aims at neutralising criticism against the social order.

### **1.2.6 Language Centred Models**

A new conception of the significance of language in the social process is needed so that a model can be centred on language and still continue to exist as Marxist (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986: 191). This model was developed by the Bakhtin school, a group of Soviet scholars who were active from the last period of Russian Formalism and who were influenced by the Formalists and Marxism. This model originally appeared under the following authors: Mikhail Bakhtin, Pavel Medvedev or Valentin Vološinov and they maintain that society is not separated from language. They perceive ideology to be made of language in the form of linguistic signs and that language is the material medium in which people interact in society.

According to Marxists everything ideological is a sign and Vološinov starts by saying that something that exists only in consciousness is ideology. This view was based on Marx who believed that parts of the ideological superstructure such as politics, religion and art are forms which men become conscious of. Vološinov calls ideology a material segment of reality. He feels that the base and superstructure model is essentially affected by this view of ideology, and that there is an unbroken material chain between the base i.e. material level and superstructure i.e. ideas and forms of consciousness (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986: 192).

The opinion of language by the Bakhtin school was new and interesting. An idealistic linguist, Karl Vossler was developing a view of language as an individual creative activity and as something which mainly stayed in the mind and at that time, Volosinov was writing his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Volosinov used creativity though he perceived language as a social activity which aroused the hearer's attention and maintains interest in a conversation. Saussure and Vossler do not emphasise the social reality of speech but the individual language user. But the Bakhtin school theorists concentrated on the study of language within real social situations, with what they called the study of utterance or word.

The basis of the literary theory of the Bakhtin school is that language and the related view of ideology should be perceived as a material embodiment of social interaction. The literary theory of the Bakhtin school had three main applications, i.e. as a theory of the literary work, as a procedure for analysing discourse and as a theory of literature as a practice. The last application has the greatest theoretical significance within the Marxist literary theory and the other two will be discussed briefly.

In Medvedev's book, The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship, is a developed theory of the literary work, and its first publication was in 1928. Two things are discussed in this book. Firstly, it is a critique on Russian Formalism (1978: 64).

For Medvedev the nature of literature is found in its separate form of ideology and a reflection of other ideologies. Secondly, Medvedev continues to argue with earlier sociological theories of reflection and with the vulgar Marxist view that literature is a direct reflection of socio-economic reality. He does not deny that literature is a reflection of reality but views it as a two-sided reflection of reality. For Medvedev, the literary work as a form of ideology, reflects another ideology and this ideology in turn reflects the socio-economic base.

Even if the Bakhtin School model is centred around language, it is not a conventional linguistic model and the reality of language for the Bakhtin school is discourse and dialogue which explains the second application i.e. procedure of analysing literary discourse. Bakhtin properly argues that the analysis of discourse should not be based only on linguistics and metalinguistics but within the sphere of the genuine life of the word. Bakhtin and Medvedev view language as a medium of human interaction and not as a thing or object (1978: 95).

Bakhtin calls it metalinguistics and according to him it is the procedure for breaking the language of a literary narrative into a form of dialogue. But Bakhtin's translinguistics is free indirect discourse (i.e. characters speech in the narrator's voice) which shows that narrative discourse can be an interaction between two or more voices. In his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Vološinov states that in periods under stable hierarchical societies, authors accept the arrogant authority of utterances which they quote or report and which have an official or sacred character, and that in transformational societies the author effectively challenges quotations by entering gradually into reported speech.

Bakhtin (A. Jefferson and D. Robey 1986: 195) maintains that Dostoyevsky established a new genre called polyphonic novel which has many voices in it and that none of them have authoritarian control over the writer. He creates free people who are capable of facing their creator (author), of disagreeing with him and even rebelling against him, unlike Zeus who creates voiceless slaves. This multiplicity of voices is not revealed as a multiplicity of styles. The characters of Dostoyevsky do not speak in noticeably different styles as do Tolstoy's characters. Dostoyevsky's characters gain their freedom from each other and from their author through their speech in relation to the authors speech. The characters of Tolstoy are more controlled by their author than Dostoyevsky's characters are. This makes Tolstoy's novels *monologic*, i.e. they are

controlled by the author's authoritarian voice while Dostoyevsky's are *polyphonic*. Monologue and polyphony are relations between author's and characters' voices which bring out what Bakhtin means when he claims that his approach is not linguistic but *translinguistic* and has nothing to do with style.

Bakhtin sees literature as a practice of language within reality and not as a knowledge of reality. Bakhtin's model is distinguished from those of Lukács and Adorno, where the literary work grants the theorist a knowledge, though in Adorno's case is a negative knowledge, of the real world. The basis of Goldmann's genetic model is an expression of ideas through the medium of language which is different from a practice in language i.e. Bakhtin's model. Macherey is concerned with the way literature produces something anterior to it, his model has to centre on the critics theory to distinguish between ideology as it is in a project and the way it is actually produced in the text. This is quite different from Bakhtin's view.

Bakhtin pays attention to Dostoyevsky's technique of polyphony because he is concerned with the social significance this technique of discourse has. For Bakhtin polyphony is a new genre and it is distinguished from other types of literature such as tragedy, novel, lyric or comedy. The real importance of a genre is conceptualising reality and stands in relation to other literary genres. For Bakhtin a genre is not only confined to literary texts but is bound up with the way we present the world to ourselves through language.

A genre's practical significance also lies in the way it relates to other genres. For Bakhtin, the novel is a supremely open and unregulated genre unlike Lukács who sees the novel as a modern attempt to reorganise the epic. The anti-authoritarian practices of the language of the carnival and popular festivity were developed by Rabelais. Bakhtin, with these views gives a privileged place in history to what he calls

Menippean tradition of carnival literature which includes the Socratic dialogue, the dialogue with the dead, the parody and the personal satire. The individual character has free play against the author, an interlocutor, social rules and conventions in all these types of literary discourse.

Bakhtin emphasises rebellion and freedom of the individual literary voice against constituted authority which could be objected to a Marxist point of view. This shows that Bakhtin's Marxism is consistently diluted and utopian especially on Rabelais than on *The Formal Method*. Bakhtin treats Dostoyevsky's polyphony as a more radical language practice than Tolstoy's monologue. He brushed a Marxist approach away from an identification between a progressive ideology (Tolstoy's as compared to Dostoyevsky's) and a progressive work. For Bakhtin, what matters is that literature should be viewed as a practice in language.

Despite the fact that the Bakhtin school theorists utilise a non-Saussurean view of language, a lot of their approach allows it to be adapted to a structuralist approach and Julia Kristeva makes the adaptation. She emphasises the revolutionary nature of literary language as one which renders the total signifying process of language, something acted out in automatised practical language. Kristeva retains Bakhtin's emphasis on literature as a practice and the social importance which Bakhtin assigns to it.

Kristeva developed these theoretical views in her book and applied them to poetry. She comes up with an opposite view to Lukács of the effective role of symbolist poetry in this process. Mallarmé had an elitist conception of poetry and during the revolutionary upheaval of the Paris Commune he retreated from politics into his private life as a pure *littérateur*. Mallarmé's texts are objectively revolutionary because they oppose the fetishization of poetic language created by the bourgeois regimes of

the Second Empire and the Third Republic which reduced poetic discourse to the beauty of life. The language-centred model indicates how language can be made the starting point of a broader sociological investigation of literature in society. It also opens up Marxist literary theory to areas such as the language of poetry.

### **1.2.7 Proposed Approach To Study**

I propose to discuss three Marxist models, nl. reflection, production and genetic. The Setswana books that I will discuss are: Mokwena, Rammone wa Kgalagadi, Motimedi, Sephaphati, Matlhoko, Matlhoko and Masego.

In chapter two I intend to discuss how missionaries manipulated Setswana literary creativity in attempts to promote Christianity and how some Batswana authors resisted the attempt to make Setswana literature instruments for Christianising people.

Chapter three will highlight the extent to which different governments also harnessed Setswana literary creativity in an attempt to promote their ideology and how Batswana authors resisted these attempts by governments.

In chapter four I intend to discuss the interpretation of the novels and conclusion.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE INITIAL LITERARY PERIOD IN SETSWANA

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Different British, American and European missionary societies who settled in South Africa during the 19th century made a large contribution to the cultural life of the African. They spread the Christian message, introduced literacy, developed different languages as written languages, established printing presses and developed religious and later secular literatures.

These contributions proceeded in different phases. Sometimes different missionary societies worked amongst the same people. Robert Moffat, from the London Mission Society started at Kuruman in 1824 among the Batswana. Archbell from the Wesleyan Mission Society also worked among the Batswana in Thaba Nchu from 1833. Archbell also worked with the Paris missionaries at Morija.

Black education and schools were under missionary control until 1954 when the Department of Bantu Education took over. The first book to be written in Setswana was the translation of the English Bible. Books that followed in Setswana were primers which dealt with a variety of religious stories — and were written by A.J. Wookey. Livingstone wrote, **The Livingstone Tswana Readers** i.e. **Mpepi**, **Tshipidi** and **Padiso** 1-5. The contents are based on Setswana background. Books that followed those written by Wookey were written by various Setswana authors among them were N.G. Mokone who wrote **Montsamaisa-bosigo** I-VI, P. Leseiyane wrote **Buka ya go Buisa** I-VI, P.K. Motiyane wrote **Bukana ea Tshimologo**. The contents of these books dealt with a variety of subjects. The Hermannsburg Mission series wrote **Mopele** and **Mogorosi** II. The contents deal with history, animals, birds and fables.

Ntsime, Rousseau and Mampie wrote **Matlhasedi I-VI** the standard of which is high and the contents are also for primary schools.

The original prose works or fiction in Setswana began to appear in about the middle of this century. From that time up to date the Batswana have shown interest in the literary development of their language, and works of a fairly high standard have begun to appear although considerable censorship prevailed. Creative Setswana literature may be classified under the following genres:

- (i) Novels
- (ii) Biographical novels
- (iii) Short stories
- (iv) Dramas
- (v) Poetry

I intend to discuss three novels which were written when the missionaries were in control of publishing houses and when Black education and schools were under missionary control.

## **2.2 MOKWENA (THE MAN OF THE KWENA [CROCODILE] CLAN) BY D.P. MOLOTO 1940**

### **2.2.1 The Fabula**

Mokwena may be regarded as the first Setswana novel. It is also the name of the son of the Bakwena chief. The chief, Ramonamane has three wives and lives in Botswana. Mokwena is his father's successor because his mother is of royal blood.

Mokwena is trained for chieftainship from the age of seven. He is trained together with his stepbrother Tawe. Mokwena and boys of his age are sent to initiation school to



learn how to fight with spears and sing traditional songs. In addition, princes learn to respect their father's advice and disregard that from their mothers.

Ramonamane instructs Mokwena to marry his cousin. Before the marriage there is war between the Bakwena and the Batlokwa. After the war Mokwena elopes, with a beautiful Tlokwa girl, Sewagodimo, to the Batlhaping. Phiri, chief of the Batlhaping plans to kill Mokwena because he intend to marry Sewagodimo. Mokwena and Sewagodimo flee to Mosita. At Mosita, Ramonamane makes Sewagodimo the chief's servant. Mokwena flees to Belabela, ruled by chief Thulare.

At Belabela Mokwena comes into contact with Christianity. He prevents bloodshed at a missionary village, Tshireletso, by using the word of God to discourage Mojanaga from killing Reverend Maledu. Chief Thulare shows his gratitude to Mokwena by offering him Tsholofelo, his niece, as his bride. At Mosita Ramonamane becomes ill. Powerdoctors diagnose him as being bewitched, point out those whom they believe bewitched him and the latter are killed. Ramonamane also lives in fear of being killed by those he has ill-treat. His condition deteriorates and he accidentally kills his son, Modise. Ramonamane dies of heartbreak.

After his father's funeral Mokwena is offered the chieftainship of Mosita by the tribesmen. He accepts the offer on condition ministers of religion and their teachings are accepted at Mosita, and he is not to marry another woman.

Because of the Christian teachings people stop using traditional medicine provided by powerdoctors and use medicine obtainable from ministers of religion. A church and school are built. Children learn to sing and articulate verses. People begin to wear White peoples clothing and build beautiful houses at Mosita. Reverend Maledu trains Mmamakwa to be a preacher and he helps him a lot.

Whites come to South Africa and usurp land from Blacks by shooting them. Reverend Maledu advises Mokwena to seek protection from England. The queen of England promises to protect Botswana from Whites. When Mokwena returns from England, Nkwe refuses to relinquish the chieftainship of the Bakwena. Nkwe's followers wage war against Mokwena's followers. But Nkwe's followers are cowards and they flee to the village. Mothulwe kills Nkwe because he has murdered his father. Thereafter there is peace among the Bakwena and they are again eager to learn about the word of God.

## **2.2.2 The period before the missionaries came to Botswana in the book Mokwena by D.P. Moloto**

### **2.2.2.1 The Reflection Model**

The above summary in 2.2.1 of the fabula manifests the reflection model which is a relationship between the literary work and reality.

People led a cultural Setswana life. When the heir to the throne was born a powerdoctor was called to strengthen and protect him with muti. This is what D.P. Moloto says in Mokwena:

... Mapadimole a re: "Se, rra ke madi a diphologolo tse kgolo tse di makete, a tlhakantswe le ditlhare tse di boima tse di tla dirang gore ngwana a nne le letsogo je le boima, mme e re ha a otlha sengwe le sengwe se wele fa fatshe. Ka sone lo tla mo tlhabela mo malokolong otlhe a mabogo." La bofelo a ntsha lonaka lo lo tletseng tshitlho a re: "Ka se lo tla mo tlhabela ka ngwaga o mongwe le o mongwe." p.9

(... Mapadimole said: "This father is the blood of big and powerful animals, it has been mixed with powerful medicines which will make the child's hand

heavy so that when he hits anything it will fall to the ground. This you will put on all the joints of his hands after pricking them." Lastly he took out a horn full of charms and said: "you will inoculate him with this every year.")

In the olden days people believed in powerdoctors. That is why it was necessary that the heir to the throne should be treated with muti.

When there was famine and drought at Mosita (Botswana). The chief called the powerdoctor to make rain because domestic animals died and some people left Mosita. D.P. Moloto puts it this way:

Pholo ya moletlo ya gogelwa kwa kgotleng mme ya re bakeng sa gore e tlhabiwe ka lerumo, Mapadimole a ntsha bupe jo bohibidu a bo baya mo seatleng a bo dupisa pholo. Ya tsikitlela ya wela fa fatshe ya swa. Banna ba e wela godimo ba e bua, ba re ba sena go e bua, kgosi ya tla ka lerumo je le bogale fela jaaka sabole ya sega sehuba ya re: "Seabe sa lona badimo borraetsho". A se naya Mapadimole gore a se tlhakanye le ditlhare. Mapadimole a se kgaoganya mangathanyana a mannye a se tlhakanya le ditlhare mo nkgong ya pula. Dinkgwana tsa basetsanyana tsa tladiwa ka metsi a setlhare sa pula, mme a rwalwa ke banna le basimane ba bagolo ba leba kwa meolwaneng ya naga. p.32

(A bull for the ceremony was taken to "kgotla" but instead of being killed with a spear, Mapadimole put red powder in his hand and let the bull sniff it. The bull became dizzy and died. The men skinned it afterwhich the chief used a sharp spear and cut out the heart and said: "This is your share my ancestors." He gave it to Mapadimole to mix with medicine. Mapadimole cut it into small pieces and mixed it with the medicine in the calabash of rain. Girls' calabashes

were filled with the medicine water of rain and they were carried by men and big boys to the boundaries of the land.)

After the rain ceremony the land turned green and the women ploughed the land. Everything returned to normal. D.P. Moloto maintains that initiation is a signal of plenty and peace for the Batswana, because in the year that followed Mapadimole's rain ceremony Mogale approached Ramonamane that Mokwena and his contemporaries were ready for initiation school. Moloto says:

... Mogale mo mosong o mongwe a ya go Ramonamane a mo raya a re: "Kgosi dipowana tsa motse wa gago di godile." Ka seo o ne a bolela gore basimane, thaka tsa ga Mokwena ba godile, mme ba tshwanetse go gwenisiwa. Ramonamane a araba ka gore; ke gone a di baakanngwe. p.34

(... One morning Mogale approached Ramonamane and said: "Chief the young bulls of your village have grown". By that he meant Mokwena and his contemporaries were ready for initiation. Ramonamane replied by saying that they should be prepared.)

Ramonamane had three wives, according to Setswana custom and each had a son. Moloto says:

... Mosadi yo o nyetsweng pele ga mmaagwe Mokwena e ne e le Itumeleng, mme ene e ne e le ngwana wa kgosana. p.1

(The woman married by Ramonamane before Mokwena's mother was Itumeleng, and her father was of a sub-chief.)

He further intimates that,

... Mophatong o wa ga Mokwena go ne go le ngwana wa ntlo ya boraro yo o bidiwang Segale. p.3

(... In Mokwena's regiment there was a child of Ramonamane from the third marriage whose name was Segale.)

Of the ailing Ramonamane's desperation, Moloto says:

... O ne a phutha dingaka tsa laola, tsa ntsha batho ba go tweng ke bone ba ba lerileng bolwetse jwa kgosi. Batho ba bolawa ba latlhelwa kwa dikgageng tsa thaba ya Thabatshukudu. p.110

(... Ramonamane called all powerdoctors to point out all the people who bewitched him. People were killed and thrown into the caves of the mountain of Thabatshukudu.)

Before the missionaries came to Botswana people believed in powerdoctors. For every occasion the powerdoctor was summoned, viz. when a child was born — to protect and strengthen him; for the rain ceremony — to use muti which brought rain; when boys left for initiation school — to protect them during their stay in the veld. In addition, when a person was ill powerdoctors should point out the people who bewitched him. In the case of a chief all the suspects were executed. Murdering people because it is alleged that they are witches is a barbaric act by the chief.

### **2.2.3 The missionary era in Botswana in the novel: Mokwena by D.P. Moloto**

#### **2.2.3.1 The Reflection Model**

Here the religious realities of the time as reflected in the text are discussed.

When Ramonamane became chief of the Bakwena tribe, the white ministers of religion started teaching Blacks the word of God. D.P. Moloto alludes that,

... O na a ba rata fa ba rapelela setshaba sa gagwe gore pula e ne. p.111

(... He loved them when they prayed for rain.)

Moloto portrays Ramonamane's simplistic faith in the missionaries as follows:

... ga tla moruti, mme a raya Ramonamane a re: "Tsaya melemo yotlhe ya dingaka tsa gago o e fise ka molelo, mme o tie re rapele Modimo, o tla bona ngwana wa gago o tla fola." Ramonamane a dira jalo. Ba rapela; mme ya re ka malatsi a mongwe le mongwe a badilwe ngwana a swa. ... A laela gore moruti a belesetswe ka lone lobaka loo, mme a seke a tihola o gata mo Mosita le ka letsatsi lepe. p.111-112

(... a minister came and said to Ramonamane: "Take all your powerdoctor's medicines and burn them, and thereafter pray to God to restore your child's good health. Ramonamane did that. They prayed, but because every person's days are numbered the child died. ... He instructed the minister to leave Mosita, never ever to come back.)

Powerdoctors medicines did not make Ramonamane's daughter healthy. A minister told him to burn all the medicines from the powerdoctor and pray for the child. In this particular incident prayer did not heal the child because every person's days are numbered. Ramonamane did not understand that people do not get everything that they request from God, that God's will is done. This reflects the realities of the time.

After Ramonamane's funeral at Mosita the tribesmen told Mokwena to marry his cousin Modiegi and take his position as their chief. Mokwena refused to marry his cousin. Moloto motivates his stance in this fashion:

... Ngwana wa ga malome ene ga nkitla ke mo tsaya, gonne rona batho ba tumelo ya Modimo re nyala mosadi a le mongwe. p.116

(... I will not marry my uncle's child, because we believers of God marry only one wife.)

As a new chief, Mokwena was expected to marry more than one wife, as his predecessors did. But because he had accepted the word of God, he could not disregard His teachings.

Mokwena, together with his wife Tsholofelo, Reverend Maledu and the Batlounge tribe moved to Mosita and settled there. Chief Mokwena asked Reverend Maledu to Christianise his tribe. D.P. Moloto says:

Kgosi Mokwena fa a sena go isa Moruti Maledu le motse, a mmontsha batho botlhe, a mo raya a re: "Rra, letsomane je o tshwanetseng go le disa ke lone le. O tla bona gore le santse le tshwerwe ke lefifi je lentsho; mme e re ka wena o le lesedi, o tla bonegela Bakwena, mme ba tla bona. Ke na le tumelo fela e e tletseng gore ba tla bona, mme ba tla go sala morago." p.121

(After chief Mokwena had escorted Reverend Maledu through the village, he introduced him to the people and said to him: "Father, this is the flock you are supposed to look after. You will realise that they are still in darkness; but because you are the light, you will provide light to the Bakwena's and they will see, I believe that they will see and they will follow you.")

A school was established at Mosita. The schooling was intended to supplement the church education in its goal to transform the "heathen" into a Christian and to make him more usable in the perpetuation of the conversion process. D.P. Moloto says:

Moruti Maledu ka tumelelo le thuso ya kgosi, a simolola sekole sa motshegare sa bana. A se simolola ka bana ba bararo ba ga Mokwena. E rile fa kgwedi e swa, go rogwa e nngwe, a bo a setse a na le bana ba ba masome a mane. O ne a ba ruta go opela, mme bana ba gagwe e ne e le ditswerere mo go opeleng le mo go bitseng ditemana.

(Reverend Maledu started a day school for children with the permission and assistance of the chief. He started it with Mokwena's three children. At the beginning of the following month he had forty children. He taught them how to sing and they were good singers and good articulators of verses.)

The missionaries secured the quick transformation of the whole being of the convert. In 1827, Thomson reported to the Glasgow Missionary Society that:

a neat little village has been formed, inhabited by those who a little while ago roamed the world at large, as wild and savage as their neighbours, the lions and the tigers of the forest. They imitate us in all things - even in their dress; and now beads and baubles have fallen in the market, and clothes are in demand. The bullock's skin dress is laid aside. Some of the people begin to imitate our people in their building, gardening, dress and manners. If you except the black faces, a stranger would almost think he had dropped into a little Scotch village.

Sheperd, 1941: 7

This state of affairs is reflected in the following excerpt:



Ntlo ya thapelo ya agiwa, mme le yone ya sekole sa motshegare ya agiwa gaufi le ya thapelo. Balekane ba bana ba tla, mme sekole sa tiya, sa tlhomama. Kgosi ya apara tshega ya sekgoa, borokgwe; mme le morafe wa mo latela wa apara dikhai tsa sekgoa. Mosita wa bogologolo wa fetoga motse o montle, ga agwa matlo a mantle, tswelelopele ya tsena gare ga Bakwena.  
p.125

(Church and school were built next to each other. Children's friends joined the school and it developed. The chief wore trousers; the tribe imitated him by wearing white peoples clothing. The old Mosita was transformed into a beautiful village, beautiful houses were built, there was progress among the Bakwena.)

and,

Moruti Maledu a ruta Mmamakwa go rera lentswe ja Modimo, mme Mmamakwa a nna mothusi yo o ikanyegang wa ga Maledu. p.125

(Reverend Maledu taught Mmamakwa to preach the word of God and he became a trustworthy assistant to Reverend Maledu.)

The missionaries had to use "Native Agents" even though they had managed to acquire skills to communicate in Setswana as a result of immersion into the communities they targeted. It still remained necessary to train Batswana agents for reaching the hearts of the Batswana. Moloto observes that this reflects on the realities of the time.

On Christmas day chief Mokwena made a feast for the whole tribe. He afforded it because, as Moloto puts it,

... Dikgomo le dihutsana tsa gagwe di ne di se na palo, e ne e le mmu le matlakala. p.125

(His cattle and other domestic animals could not be counted, they were as many as the soil of the earth.)

During the missionary era in Botswana, Whites in Africa were usurping land from Blacks. Reverend Maledu advised chief Mokwena to seek protection for his land from the queen of England, thereby making Botswana a British colony. Of their arrival in London, Moloto says:

Fa kgorong ba kgatlhantshiwa ke molebedi, mme a ba isa go ya go bona Mohumagadi. Ba fitlha ba bolela ka moo ba ratileng go ipaya ka fa tlase ga tshireletso ya mmuso wa Engelane ka teng, gone ba boifa gore lefatshe ja bone le tla tsewa ke makgoa a a setseng a bile a gapile lefatshe ja Batlhaping le ja Matebele. p.143

(At the door they met the guard who escorted them to the queen. They told the queen that they want the protection of England because they feared that their land would be usurped by the Whites as had been the case with the Batlhaping and the Matebele.)

Blacks in Africa as well as in South Africa lived in fear of their land being usurped by Whites using force of guns which Blacks did not have. According to Kevin Shillington in his The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900, Botswana became Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885. According to Moloto in Mokwena, Reverend Maledu advised chief Mokwena to seek protection for Botswana from the queen of England, which he did. If, for argument's sake, that reality was to be compared to Moloto's fiction, no one went to London in order that Bechuana should be protected.

Bechuanaland became a British colony through General Warren and Mackenzie who was a missionary and Warren's advisor. This event only confirms that the authors of those times had to write in favour of missionaries who were in control of publishing houses, otherwise their books would not be published. This is exploitation of authors in the literary art.

### **2.2.3.2 The Production Model**

The production model is used to analyse the book: Mokwena by D.P. Moloto. Macherey views literature as a productive labour where raw materials are worked into an end-product. Here the end-product is the book Mokwena.

The actual events and relationships are the materials used by Moloto to put together into a book. When Mokwena was seven years old, he was trained to be his father's successor who was chief of the Bakwena tribe. Mokwena was sent to a goat-post where he sometimes spent the whole day without drinking water, he ate meat only when an animal died, he also ate veld plants and his trainer used to beat him while chasing him without having done anything wrong. The aim was to make the boy strong, brave and to withstand hunger and thirst.

There was famine and drought at Mosita. Chief Ramonamane called the powerdoctor to conduct rain ceremony. This event is related to Black tradition.

The Bakwena fought Batlokwa. After the war Mokwena eloped with a Motlokwa girl to Batlhaping tribe of chief Phiri. Mokwena did this because he knew that his father would not permit him to marry a Motlokwa girl. This is what normally happens in real life.

Chief Ramonamane was sick, and he called all the powerdoctors to point all the people who bewitched him. These people were murdered. Chief Ramonamane had power over his tribe. He was an autocratic ruler.

During his illness chief Ramonamane was suspicious of every person who entered his hut. So, he accidentally killed his son, Modise, because he thought he was one of those who bewitched him.

After Ramonamane's death the tribesmen requested Mokwena to take up the chieftainship of Mosita as the heir to the throne. But they told him that he had to marry his cousin. He refused to marry his cousin because he was already married and according to the word of God a person may only marry one woman.

Chief Mokwena brought Reverend Maledu to Mosita. Maledu built a church and school. At school children were taught how to sing and articulate verses. Beautiful houses were also built at Mosita.

Whites came to the Transvaal and Mafikeng. They usurped land from Blacks. Reverend Maledu advised Mokwena to seek protection for his land from the queen of England. Botswana became a British colony.

All the above-mentioned events mirror on the probability of reality thus it may not be regarded as reality because the emphasis is not on content but on presentation and the author's imagination.

The theme is to Christianise people. The first part of this book deals with traditional beliefs and practices of the Batswana. Boys at the age of seven are sent to far-away cattle-posts where they herd live-stock. When they are approximately twelve years old they are sent to initiation school. Girls are also sent to initiation school at the same age as boys. Boys and girls married partners chosen by their parents. When there is

famine and drought the powerdoctor is summoned to make rain. When people are ill they are cured by powerdoctors' herbal medicines. They led a communal life of sharing and lived like one big family.

The second part of the book deals with the arrival of missionaries among the Batswana. The missionaries transformed their life-style altogether. Reverend Maledu did this with the permission, co-operation and motivation of chief Mokwena. Small children attended day school where Reverend Maledu taught them songs and verses from the Bible. People were told to burn their herbal medicines and resort to prayer for their illnesses. A church and a school were built. People wore White peoples clothing. Beautiful houses were built. A modern way of ploughing was used. Food and flowers were planted. But the main objective was to Christianise Batswana and alienate them from their traditional way of living.

### **2.2.3.3 The Genetic Model**

The socio-economic position of the author determines his standpoint, that is, the author will write within the demands and constraints of the class to which he belongs. It is in this sense that Marx saw art as part of the whole superstructure that emerges out of the economic base, and whose main function is not only to legitimise and perpetuate the power of the ruling class, but also to ensure that its ideas remain the dominant ideas.

The power base of the privileged class in the book Mokwena is perpetuated in the following ways.

- Missionaries versus Heathens
- Converted versus unconverted

The missionaries regarded the Batswana traditional beliefs and values as heathen practices. When boys and girls are approximately twelve years old they are sent to initiation school. Boys and girls marry partners chosen by their parents. When there is famine and drought the powerdoctor is summoned to make rain using muti. When people are ill they are cured by powerdoctors' herbal medicines. All the above-mentioned practices were discouraged by the missionaries. The missionaries prayed to God for rain in the event of drought. They also told people to burn powerdoctors' herbal medicines and provided the people with their type of medicines.

In the book Mokwena, the author, Moloto shows the influence of white missionaries. His characters adopted the "White" life-style. The Batswana that were converted practised monogamy. They wore the type of clothes worn by missionaries, built houses like the one in which Rev. Maledu stayed. The characters also attended church and the children attended school. Rev. Maledu's influence was so high that he had a hand in Botswana becoming a protectorate. He encouraged Mokwena to protect Botswana from being usurped by Whites by seeking protection from England. Because of missionary influence Blacks became preachers and assisted in spreading missionary work among Black communities. Mmamakwa was trained by Rev. Maledu and became a preacher in Mosita. The unconverted Batswana married several wives and wore animal hides.

## **2.3 RAMMONE WA KGALAGADI (RAMMONE OF KGALAGADI) BY M.O.M. SEBONI 1947**

### **2.3.1 The Fabula**

Rammone is the son of a Mokgalagadi near chief Setshele's village at Molepolole. These places are in Botswana. Rammone is born and brought up at Letlhakeng. He is a herdboys who spends most of his time looking for good grazing fields for his herd. He

is a praise-poet who praises cattle. He has a self-made musical instrument called "segankure" which he uses to back up his singing. He enjoys forest life.

Sebitola and Modise visit home from the mine. They inform Rammone about the beautiful and pleasing things of Johannesburg. They do not inform him about the negative life of a mineworker. Because of the interesting and encouraging talks, Rammone decides to go to Johannesburg. Everyone who wants to go and work at the Johannesburg mines has to sign a contract at Molepolole and Rammone is no exception. Mr. Rankudintsi lends him money to buy provisions and all other requirements, including a train ticket to Johannesburg. He spends Sundays at the compound because he does not know where the church is and what it is.

After nine months Rammone goes home for the first time. He receives £15,00 at Molepolole government, i.e. the money he has saved. His parents tell him to marry his cousin, but he flees to Kimberley because he is opposed to marrying a chosen bride. In Kimberley Rammone learns to read and write in different languages. The newspapers publish how he has assisted Kimberley residents. A White economist man offers to send Rammone to Fort Hare University. He completes his B.A. and LL.B. degrees in five years.

Rammone goes back to Kgalagadi to teach his people. His chief feels threatened. Rammone goes to the Orange Free State and marries there. True education provides Rammone with light about God, the world and its difficulties. Rammone teaches in the land of the Barolong tribe. His school work and the church are related. He is therefore also a preacher.

Rammone sells his house and settles at Molepolole. Rammone represents Bakgalagadi and Masarwa as their lawyer when the Bakwena cheat them in cases. The Bakwena try to find fault in Rammone but fail. The Bakwena burn his house with

lightning, but the insurance builds him another beautiful house which has lightning-conductors. They then send him a mamba but Rammone kills it. Rammone is promoted as advisor to the government and chief of the Bakwena. He continues to advise everybody until his death. Rammone believes that children should be taught at home, at school, in church and in their tribe.

Modise and Sebitola retire. Modise and others go hunting. He is lost in the forest and brought to Letlhakeng by Bushmen. He does not eat nor drink. He recovers after receiving medical treatment. Among the people who came to see the man who escaped death is Reverend Tlharesagae. He thanks God for taking care of Modise when he was lost, and asks Modise to be a church member and tell the people about the miracle of God. Modise agrees to serve the Lord who saved him, and he and Sebitola convert many people in Kgalagadi.

### **2.3.2. The Reflection Model**

**Here we investigate how the author reflects real life circumstances in the text.**

#### **Life in the rural area: Kgalagadi and Molepoiole**

Rammone grew up in the forest as a herdboys. He had a musical instrument which he always carried around. He sang for the old and the young. He was a praise-poet. It is said that the education of herdboys starts when they learn to praise the cows. The author quotes the following stanza:

... o ne a golela kwa dikgweng, a disa dipotsane le marole, mme e re letsatsi le  
sokologa, ka nako ya maneelo a dinku, a ye go kobetsa podi e rraagwe a neng  
a e mo tshwaetse.

p.3

(... he grew up in the forest, as a herdboys for goats and lambs.)



This reflects a rural setting and how Rammone grew up in that setting.

and:

... Gongwe le gongwe kwa a yang teng, o ne a sikara setinkane se a neng a  
tlhola a se kuruetsa, a se opelela, a opelela bagolo le babotlana ba ba neng  
ba mo kgopisa. p.3

(... Wherever Rammone went, he carried his musical instrument -setinkane-  
singing for the old and the young who hurt him.)

Rammone was a praise-poet. The author quotes the following stanza:

"Tii-tii thokwana e sebola.  
Selepe sa mosadi wa Senyedima,  
Selepe mogoma ga se loodiwe,  
Se tla rema yo o balabalang,  
Yo o ntseng a ganetsa Sebele, motho"

"Tii-tii the fawn cow  
The axe of Senyedima woman  
An axe is a plough it is never sharpened,  
It will chop the malcontent  
The one who contradicts Sebele, the person

Rammone grew up like all his friends in a rural area. But he was unique in the sense that he was a praise-poet and sang with a self-made instrument. These two qualities indicate that Rammone is an individual. In this case the form of the literary work reflects the form of the real world in Setswana setting.

Sebitola and Modise's conversation with Rammone about Johannesburg influenced him in the desire to go to Johannesburg. He annoyed his father so that he could have an excuse for fleeing to Johannesburg.

This is what boys in rural areas do when they want to go to urban areas. Rammone knew he had a responsibility as a shepherd. He knew his father would not allow him to go to Johannesburg. The scene — annoying his father, and the action — leaving home, makes the literature a knowledge of reality and not just reflecting reality as a mirror reflects the objects placed in front of it.

At Molepolole Rammone and others went to the government offices to sign a contract that they will do their work perfectly and show that no one forced them to go to the mines. They were told that they had been employed by Mr Rankudintsi to go to Mafutha (Ltd) Compound. Rammone signed another contract agreeing that he would repay Rankudintsi for all the things that he gave him on credit and the money he lent him. The author says:

... Rammone le ba bangwe ba ya Lekgotleng la Mmuso go ya go tshwara pene, go ikana fa ba tla dira tiro ka matsetseleko le go supa fa ba sa pateletswa ke ope go ya mosimeng. ... "Rammone o hiriwe ke Mesetere Rankudintsi go ya Komponeng ya ga Mafutha, Limintiti (Ltd). O tla amogela diranta tse pedi le disente tse somamatlhano, tshetele e nngwe e boela kwano gae, go tswalelwa, go tla o e amogela o boa. Rankudintsi o go pegile setimela, mme o dumetse gore o tla mo duela mo tuelong ya gago ya ntlha. E bile o go adimile tshetele ya mhago, a ba a go naya dilwana molato. O dumetse go duelela tsotlhe tse. Ka go ntse jalo, tshwara pene, o tsamaye!" p.14-15

(... Rammone and others goes to the government building to sign, to pledge that they will do their work perfectly and show that they were not forced by

anyone to go to the mines. ... Rammone you are employed by Rankudintsi to go to the compound of Mafutha Limited (Ltd). Your salary will be one pound five shillings (R2,50), the other money comes back home, to be saved for you, you will get it when you come back, Rankudintsi had bought a train ticket for you, you agreed that you will pay him from your first salary. He had borrowed you provision money, and gave you some goods on credit. You agreed to pay all these. If it is like that, sign and go!)

The workers are the producers of all social and economic wealth but their wages leave much to be desired, because it does not help to improve their standard of life. They are poor and remain poor despite their effort to escape poverty. In his journal, The South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905, Burton, D. states the dissatisfaction of mineworkers wages as follows:

"However, most Africans felt that the 60s (£3) per month fixed by the Chamber of Mines was inadequate 1987: 27."

Rammone received one pound five shillings (two rand and fifty cents) a month for nine months. After nine months when he arrived at Molepolole he received £15 (thirty rand). According to the author he was the one who saved more than the others. But the thirty rand was almost finished before he left for his home village, Letlhakeng.

This is exploitation by the bourgeoisie. It reflects capitalist reality in the most naked way.

Rammone's parents told him to marry his cousin when he was visiting home for the first time from Johannesburg mine. According to Setswana tradition during those years people chose marriage partners amongst relatives. The choice was not made by the bride or groom but by the groom's parents. Rammone did not want to marry his

cousin, so, when his parents were planning to visit his uncle to ask for his daughters hand Rammone fled to Kimberley. This time he paid for his own train fare. The author says:

... Ya re go sa ntse go rerwa go ya go kopa sego sa metsi kwa ga malomaagwe, mosimane a lala a thobile. Ka e ne e le gone o neng a boa Gauteng, a se ka a tlhola a tsamaya jaaka pele. A ipega setimela ka madi a o neng a a batelegile fa a senya a mangwe. Ga a ka a lekela Gauteng mme o ne a kotlomelela Taamaneng (Kimberley). p.32-33

(... While they were still planning to ask for the hand of his uncle's daughter, the boy (Rammone) fled in the evening. Because he had just arrived from Johannesburg, he did not leave as he did on the first occasion. He bought a train ticket with the money that he saved when he wasted the other. He did not go to Johannesburg but to Kimberley.)

This incident is an accurate reflection of the realities of the time when the novel was written. It was an accepted fact that a boy marry his cousin. In this same book Sebitola married his cousin Polelo.

Of Rammone's determination and intention as he went back home, the author says:

... Maikaelelo a gagwe e ne e le go kitlanya Bakgalagadi, gore ba utlwe kgosana ya bone, go ba tlhotlheletsa lefoko la Modimo, le go ba ruta go tshela botshelo jo bo siameng, ka go ithiba mo dinong, le go nwa metsi a a tlhapetsweng ke diruiwa kgotsa go ja dijo tse di wetseng dintsi. p.36

(... His intention was to unite the Bakgalagadi, to obey their chief, to motivate them to listen to the word of God, to teach them to live a good life by abstaining from intoxicating drinks, to drink clean water and food.)

Rammone's chief felt threatened by his wisdom. He made life unbearable for Rammone until he decided to leave and go to Molepolole. Reality is reflected in the sense that in real life people do not tolerate those who possess better qualities than themselves. The chief was intolerant towards Rammone.

Rammone sold his house in the Free State and settled at Molepolole, a place not far from his home village, Letlhakeng. He represented Bakgalagadi and Basarwa as their lawyer when the Bakwena tried to cheat them in cases. The Bakwena tried to find fault in Rammone but failed. So they destroyed his house and tried to kill him.

Bakgalagadi and Basarwa are very few in Botswana. They were oppressed and denied human rights. Rammone, as an educated Mokgalagadi, shouldered the responsibility of protecting his people against the injustices of the Bakwena. Rammone's conviction and what the Bakwena did to him reflects reality in the most objective way.

Rammone was subjected to trials and tests but he overcame them. He continued to do good work among the Bakwena and was promoted to a higher post. The author says:

... Mmuso wa tlhatlosa maemo a ga monnamogolo, Rammone. Wa mo dira mogakolodi yo mogolo wa ga molaodi le wa kgosi ya Bakwena gonne a ne a itse mekgwa le melao ya morafe sentle thata. ... Morafe wa Bakwena wa gatela pele. Bana ba tsenngwa dikolo, balemi ba ba ithutileng tiro eo ba tlatatlala. Tlala ya nyelela. p.67

(... The government promoted Rammone to the position of advisor to the governor and the chief of the Bakwena because he knew the traditions and laws of the tribe very well. ... The Bakwena tribe progressed. Children attended

school, and the number of trained farmers increased. There was no more hunger.)

The chief who felt threatened by Rammone's wisdom was no longer in power. The government utilized Rammone's knowledge to the advantage of the tribe. In this case the structure of the literary work reflects the structure of the real world.

Modise and other hunters went hunting. He was lost in the forest and was assisted to safety by Bushmen who took him to Letlhakeng. He could not eat nor drink. He recovered after receiving medical treatment. Reverend Tlharesagae thanked God for taking care of Modise when he was lost. The author says:

... A gadimela kwa go Modise a re, "Lekau, Morena yo o go sireleditseng mo ditaung le dinogeng le mo diphatseng tse o di itseng go re feta rotlhe fa, o a go bitsa, a re tlaa kerekeng ya me, mme o tle o bolelele bautlwi kgakgamatso e a e go diretsengi!" Ga re tu! A bua gape, mme lekau la araba la re, "Morena wa me o mpolokile e le ruri, mme ke tla mo direla." p.86

(... He [Reverend Tlharesagae] looked at Modise and said, "Young man, the God who protected you from lions, snakes and other dangers that you know better than all of us here, calls you, he says come to my church, so that you can tell all the listeners of the miracle that he has done for you!" There was silence! He spoke again and the young man replied and said, "My God really saved me and I will serve Him.")

When Modise related his experiences he was seconded by Sebitola. This helped Modise to accomplish his mission easily, that is, to convert many people in Kgalagadi. In this case the structure of the literary work reflects the structure of the real world.

Life in urban areas: Johannesburg, Kimberley and Orange Free State

Rammone, as a boy from the forest, was frightened by the multitude of people that he saw when the train arrived in Johannesburg. The author says:

A re o isa matlho ka fa phologelong, mme a tshosiwa ke bontsi jwa batho, ba Basweu le ba Bantsho. A tlhakana tlhogo, a ba a timelelwa le ke kwa letsatsi le tswang teng. Kgalagadi o ne a palelwa ke go go supa. Fa a sale mo sediding se, a utlwa sentlente e bile e kete lefatshe le mo tseisa mmamadikwadikwane, selo sa banyana. p.18

(When he looked at the platform, he was afraid to see many people, Whites and Blacks. He got confused, he did not know where the sun rose. He could not show where Kgalagadi was. While still slightly dazed, he felt clearly as if the ground was doing a merry-go-round with him.)

A scene like the above mentioned does occur in real life, and makes of literature a knowledge of some reflection of reality.

A messenger from the compound was sent to the station to fetch Rammone and the others. Their astoundment at the milling traffic is portrayed as follows:

... Ga nna thata, tshimane ya phaphasela; Rammone wa batho a kgoromelediwa kwa morago. Mme go tlogeng fa, a sotlega thata gonne nako le nako fa go tshwanetswe go tlolewa mmila, gareng ga mofere fere wa mebotorokara, Rammone a sale ka ntlha e nngwe, a roromaka a gadimaka, dikeledi di bile di se kgakala, le mororo e le monna. p.18

(... It was tough, boys were flying, poor Rammone was pushed to the rear. From there he suffered a great deal because every time when they were supposed to cross the street, amidst the confusion of cars, Rammone was left

on the other side of the road, shivering, looking to and fro, with tears not far away, even though he was a man.)

This situation of many cars on the streets is bound to confuse a boy from the forest like Rammone. According to the book, back home in his village, whenever he saw a person approaching, he would slide away like a snake because he was afraid to be seen. Now what about the multitude of people and fleet of cars that went to and fro in Johannesburg!. Unfortunately there are no trees and grass to use as a hiding place in Johannesburg. He had to continue with his journey by following the messenger from the compound. This reflects reality of Johannesburg in earlier days.

In Kimberley Rammone learnt to read and write different languages. He involved himself in church activities, in the community and recreation of children.

Rammone was studying while employed. Later a White man sent him to university to further his studies. The haves of this country paid the have-nots very little money. This made it difficult for the have-nots to go to university, hence Rammone's expenses at university were paid by a White man (the have). Rammone's learning to speak and write languages in a short time, and his completion of BA. LL.B. in five years, are somehow an exaggeration of reality.

### **2.3.3 The Production Model**

The materials used by Seboni to put together into a book are based on actual events. Men left their homes to go and work at the Johannesburg mines. They are usually influenced by the discussions they have with others (like Sebitola and Modise) who already work at the mines.

Whilst in Johannesburg Rammone requested a friend to write a letter for him to his parents promising to send them money.



Rammone goes home when he had completed his contract at the mines. His parents were overjoyed to see him and they made a feast to welcome him.

Rammone's parents told him to marry his cousin as it was customary to Batswana to marry an uncle's daughter. Rammone fled to Kimberley because he was opposed to marrying the chosen bride. This may be attributed to the author who is rejecting this tradition and uses the character to show this.

At Kimberley, Rammone learnt to read and write different languages. He helped in Black people's organisations by giving them sound advice. He also helped children in games and recreation. He did all these things because he cared for his people. The author has utilised the night school and recreational facilities which existed albeit to a limited extent, as well as his own knowledge of welfare organisations and philanthropic personalities.

A White man offered to send Rammone to Fort Hare University. He completed his B.A. and LL.B. degrees.

As mentioned earlier rising from total illiteracy to LLB in the time suggested in the text, is not realistic.

Rammone went back to Kgalagadi with the intention of uniting the Bakgalagadi tribe, to obey their chief, to motivate them to listen to the word of God, to abstain from intoxicating drinks and to teach them primary health care. This he did but the chief felt threatened and Rammoned decided to leave.

Here the author makes use of his knowledge of human fears and attitudes, the missionary activities and the evils that are inherent in the interaction of different peoples.

Rammone worked in the Oranje Free State and married there. He later settled at Molepolole. He represented Bakgalagadi and Masarwa as their lawyer when the Bakwenas oppressed them in cases.

Here the author shows his own yearning for justice and fair play in the face of prevalent socio-political injustice.

At Molepolole Rammone suffered through several trials of the Bakwena because they were dissatisfied in the way in which he defended the Bakgalagadi and Masarwa.

The end-product of these events is the book Rammone wa Kgalagadi. The theme as message is "Perseverance breeds success". Rammone was brought up as a herdboys in a Kgalagadi village. Other boys of his age had gone to work in the mines in Johannesburg and he also created an opportunity to go there. During his stay in Johannesburg he realised that it is a disadvantage to be illiterate because he had to find someone to write letters to his parents. From Johannesburg he went to Kimberley where he learnt to read and write. He continued his education at Fort Hare University where he completed the B.A. and LL.B. degrees in five years. He went back home to Kgalagadi to teach his people to read and write and live healthily. But the chief at Kgalagadi suspected his motives and he went to the Free State. After some time he went back home with the same intention of teaching his people. This time he was successful in his teachings because by then the ruling chief supported him.

The theme as subject is the burden of ignorance.

The gaps in Rammone wa Kgalagadi are the following:

- The author did not tell us that Rammone completed matric. He only told us that he went to Fort Hare University and completed his B.A. and LL.B. degrees.

The reader must estimate the duration of time from the events and also judge how possible they are.

- Rammone and other people who were going to the mines for the first time held the pen for getting what they needed from Rankudintsi but the author does not say what they did with the pen because they could not write.
- The author did not tell us that Rammone was asked if he would be able to repay Rankudintsi from his first salary.
- The author did not mention Rammone smoking when he was in Letlhakeng. It is said that he was smoking while dictating the words of a letter to his parents that was written by a friend. It can, therefore, only be surmised that smoking was one of the bad habits he adopted in Johannesburg.

#### **2.3.4 The Genetic Model**

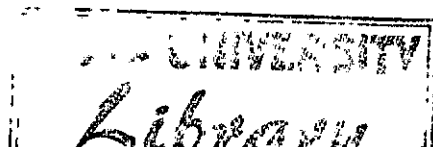
Everything that the author wrote about in the book Rammone wa Kgalagadi illustrate his cultural background. From this book it is clear that the author originates from a Batswana village and was a herdboys or had close contact with them. The power base of the privileged class in the book Rammone wa Kgalagadi is perpetuated in the following ways:

- In mines versus at home
- Education and Christianity versus chieftaincy
- Urban area versus rural area

In mines people lived in compounds where six to eight men shared one room.

Pomeroy in his book cites that:

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"the apartheid mass segregation acts were aimed at creating a black mass of very cheap, unprivileged, semislave labour that can be shifted about at will to satisfy the needs of white-owned enterprises (1971: 21)".

The above quotation suggests that comparatively Black labour was very cheap and therefore advantageous to white owned enterprises because it enabled them to make high profits. The apartheid mass segregation acts were therefore aimed at creating wage disadvantages to Black employees and to advantage the White employer. Mineworkers earned one pound five shillings (R2,50) a month and after nine months they got fifteen pounds (R30,00). These mineworkers earned low wages but their lives were always in danger underground. One of the workers' toes were cut by rocks, some were killed by these rocks. At home people are hunters and sheperds. They plough fields to obtain food and sell some of the produce of these fields to obtain money.

After completing his two degrees at Fort Hare University Rammone decided to go home. His intention was to unite the Bakgalagadi, to teach them to obey their chief, to motivate them to listen to the word of God, to teach them to lead a good life. The chief felt threatened by Rammone's wisdom and the way people listened to him, and used his powers to make life unbearable for Rammone.

In Black urban areas ruffians murder and take people's money. In Kimberley Blacks earned very little money. In urban areas of the period Whites were the ruling class and they exploited Blacks so that Blacks should turn to them for work. This perpetuated white economic supremacy.

## **2.4 MOTIMEDI (THE LOST ONE) BY D.P. MOLOTO 1942**

### **2.4.1 The Fabula**

A tired girl with torn clothes arrives at Rebeka's place and asks for food and water. The girl gives birth to a baby boy the same evening she arrives at Rebeka's place. She dies immediately thereafter. Rebeka takes the baby, Molatlhegi to hospital. When Molatlhegi is old enough he is taken back to Rebeka. Rebeka's children do not eat well, so they resort to raiding dustbins and dumping places. The children, including Molatlhegi start school. They are taught by Martha who punishes Molatlhegi for disobeying her orders and Molatlhegi bites her.

When Molatlhegi arrives at home he hides. Rebeka looks for him and when she finds him, he bites her. The minister decides to send Molatlhegi to Tumelo who is the principal of Mokgopolodi school. Tumelo uses different measures to discipline Molatlhegi. Molatlhegi does not endure the punishment and he leaves school and Rebeka's place. He accidentally meets his father, Monyamane who is unemployed.

Monyamane has a few boys who work for him during the day by stealing and robbing people of their money. Molatlhegi joins these boys and impresses his father greatly. Monyamane only goes out in the evenings when there is a big burglary to be carried out. Monyamane is shot dead after stealing money and clothes from a shop. Molatlhegi and other boys are convicted. He is baptised in prison and becomes a member of the Presbyterian Church. After completing his prison sentence the minister sends him to Dikene school to do teachers course. Molatlhegi teaches at Forera in Johannesburg. He disagrees with Motheo, a church leader and school committee member on several issues. Molatlhegi is dismissed from the school.

Molatlhegi is employed at the mines as a clerk. In the evenings he teaches those who are interested to read and write. He is troubled by the low wages the miners earn. He

organises miners to strike for a living wage. The mining manager calls the police and some are convicted, but they do not disclose who their leader is. The mine manager discovers that Molatlhegi is the ring leader of the unrest and he is dismissed. He is later employed by a lawyer. He wins £960 by betting on horses. He marries Maria and buys a house and furniture. The lawyer discovers that he is a swindler and dismisses him from employment.

Molatlhegi does not find employment. He and his family stay with his in-laws. He manages to get good money by selling gold that he obtains from mineworkers. He purchases a house for his family and they live like royalty. He goes back to church and donates money to the church. He sends his two children to a church school. His children misbehave at school and he takes them out. Molatlhegi is no longer respected in church. He joins the community board and organises gatherings in which he tells Blacks to fight for their rights. Molatlhegi is arrested and deported to Bohananwa. He dies after a short illness.

#### **2.4.2 The Reflection Model**

A tired girl arrived at Fitase and this is what the author says about her:

E ne e le mantsiboa ka letsatsi lengwe la malatsi a go neng go tletse batho ba bantsi mo mebileng ya motse wa Fitase, ha go fitlha lekgarebe le le makgasa, maleka a dikhai tsa gagwe a bile a phaphametse mo phefong ekete diphofa tsa ntshe; ka mokgwa oo a neng a le mantabola, a bile a itlhaganetse ka gone. Mosetsana yo, o na a bonala gore o tswa kgakala. p.1

(It was one evening when there were many people on the Vrededorp streets, a young woman in tattered clothes arrived, because she was walking hurriedly

parts of her torn clothes were hanging in the air like ostrich feathers. It looked like this girl was from afar.)

The torn clothes symbolise suffering and poverty. This is a reflection on the realities of the time because some Black women who lived in urban areas like Vrededorp depended on their husbands economically and on other means, and the men who were employed were exploited by their White bosses.

The woman gave birth the same evening that she arrived at Rebeka's place, and died. Of the baby the author says:

Ngwana yo wa mosimane, yo go tlogeng jaanong re tlang go mmitisa Molatlhegi, o na a re ha a sena go tsholwa a isiwa kwa ntlung ya Kokeio, gore a yo tlhokomelwa gone go fitlhella a ba a kgona go ja. ... Ha Molatlhegi a kokotletse a bonala gore ke motho, a romelwa kwa go Mosadimogolo Rebeka gore a mo tlhokomele mmogo le bana ba bangwe. p.1-2

(This baby boy, whom we shall henceforth call Molatlhegi, was sent to hospital after birth to be cared for there until he was able to eat. ... When Molatlhegi was fit and looked like a human being, he was sent to the old woman Rebeka to care for him together with other children.)

The children raised by Rebeka did not eat properly and they always looked for food in dustbins and dumping places. Most adopted Black orphans ended up that way in olden Johannesburg.

Rebeka was old and unemployed. She looked after her grandchildren, children that had been abandoned by their mothers and orphans like Molatlhegi. Rebeka received money from her children but that was not sufficient to feed and clothe the many children she stayed with. This is a clear distinction of the haves who were White and

the have-nots who were and are still Black. The government did not take it upon themselves to assist Rebeka financially because of the discriminatory and oppressive laws of those times.

Because the children obtained food from dustbins, one evening Molatlhegi fell very sick but Rebeka did not hear anything because she was very old.

The haves and the have nots in South Africa were determined by the colour of their skin. The former were white and the latter black. Lack of food drove children to seek food in dustbins and that resulted in Molatlhegi spending a sleepless night because of illness which was caused by rotten food.

## **Scavenging for food**





This picture shows children looking for food at a dumping place in Bloemfontein. It appeared in "Express" on the 2 June 1995. "Express" is a Bloemfontein local newspaper.

Of the wealthy man who was moved to pity, the author says:

Ka tsatsi le lengwe monna yo mongwe wa mohumi a tihomolwa ke tshotlego ya bana ba ga Rebeka pelo, mme a atswa Rebeka ka madi go batlela bana diaparo le dijo. p.3

(One day a wealthy man pitied Rebeka's children and gave her money to buy clothes and food for them.)

If more rich people could adopt such positive attitudes towards the poor a lot of suffering could be alleviated. They would thereby make the world a better place to live in, and the idea of sharing, propagated by Marxist theory, would be emphasised.

Martha was a good teacher. She loved all her pupils. Some boys thought she was afraid of them. They planned not to obey her orders. When she punished Molatlhegi he bit her, as is common with children who lacked parental upbringing and discipline.

After biting Rebeka, Molatlhegi was sent to Mokgopolodi school. The principal, Tumelo, applied different punishments on Molatlhegi. The author says:

... Tumelo a se ka a tihola a botsa sepe, a tsaya Molatlhegi a mo tswalela mo ntlwaneng e e lefifi mme a mo tlogela gona gore a lale gona. p.6

(... Tumelo did not ask any questions, but he locked Molatlhegi up in a dark room overnight.)

Molatlhegi was rebellious towards Martha but feared Tumelo. Tumelo used his masculinity and educational powers to ensure that Molatlhegi became submissive to him. This reflects on the reality of the time because boys despised females but feared males. This is an ages old discrimination on gender.

Molatlhegi fell ill, and, on recovering he did not go back to school, because he feared Tumelo. When he heard that Tumelo was looking for him he ran for his life until he arrived at a house and was offered meat and porridge through the window, the house where his father and other youngsters lived. The author says:

... Basimane ba mo goga ba mo tsenya ka mo teng. ... Ha basimane ba sena go tsamaya botlhe Monyamane a ba a ikgodisa gore ba ile botlhe mme ga go mongwe yo a mo utlwang, a atamela Molatlhegi mme a mo sekaseka ka matlho go bona gore o tshwana le mang. A latsa seatla sa gagwe godimo ga mosimane mme a mo raroletsa tsa botshelo jwa gagwe a re: "Molatlhegi, ke nna rrago. Ke ne ke le motho wa phuthogo ya kereke, ke ne ke le mogogi. Tiro ya me e ne e le go dira mo lepatlelong la thekisetso. Gone ke ne ke sa duelewe madi a ke neng nka iphedisa ka one mmogo le ba ntlo ya me. p.8

... Boys dragged him into the house. When all the boys had gone Monyamane looked at Molatlhegi. He placed his hand on the boy and told him the events of his own life and said: "Molatlhegi, I am your father. I was a church member. I was a church leader. I was working on the premises of a dealer. I was earning very little money which was not enough to support my family.)

Molatlhegi's father was exploited by his boss. He stopped working because it was futile to continue. He could not meet the humble needs of his family. Here the author reflects on pertinent real life issues.

The boys who were staying with Monyamane stole goods and money during the day. Molatlhegi joined them. Monyamane did this in the evenings because he feared being arrested as he still owed tax. The author says:

E ne e re ka gale ha ba feta fa mabenkeleng a Majuta a motse wa Seetebosigo, ba bone Mojuta yo o nonneng a rekisa mo go lengwe la mabenkele, mme mo pateng e e fa pele o ne a tsentse watshe e ntle ya gauta. Molatlhegi o ile a ikaelela go tsaya watshe eo. O rile ha ba ya gae mantsiboa a mangwe a itira yo o segole, mme a rwala kgetsana mo mokokotlong. Ha a fitlha go Mojuta a reka senkgwe, mme a itira yo o palelwang ke go se tsenya mo kgetsaneng. A kopa Mojuta a mo thuse a subele senkgwe mo kgetsaneng ... Ha Mojuta a tsenya senkgwe mo kgetsaneng Molatlhegi a ntsha watshe mo pataneng ya borukhu jwa Mojuta mme a e fitlha mo go ya gagwe pata, kwa ntle ga go lemogiwa ke Mojuta, mme a tsamaya a ntse a khukhutha jaaka sone segole.

p.10

(Usually when they walked passed the Jew's shopping area in Seetebosigo, they would see a fat Jew selling in one of the stores, with a gold watch hanging from his front pocket. Molatlhegi decided to take that watch. One evening while they were going home he pretended to be a cripple and carried a bag on his back. When he got to the Jew he bought bread and pretended to have a problem putting the bread into the bag. He requested the Jew to help him put the bread into the bag. While the Jew was helping him, he got the watch out of the Jew's trousers pocket and put it into his own pocket without being noticed. He left walking like the cripple he pretended to be.)

Exploitation of Black labour compelled Monyamane to resort to stealing. Molatlhegi joined him and became a professional.

One evening Monyamane was accompanied by Molatlhegi and his gang. They robbed a shop in Seetebosigo. They took money, food and clothing. The owners of the shop met them on their way home. The author says:

... Magodu a ile a lebala gore sekhukhuni se bonwa ke sebatladi. E rile ha ba tsena mo mmileng ba boela gae beng ba lebenkele ba re palakata Motho a latlha dithotwana a tlanola ditlhako. Monyamane a re o sa khukhuna ka thoto ya gagwe fela ya mo retelela. Ga utlwala sethunya sa re bam bam Monyamane a kolokotega mmogo le thoto ya gagwe mme a seka a tihola a tsoga foo a neng a letse gone. Ba phagelela basimane, ba ba thibelela fa pele ga matlo mangwe mme batho ba motse ba tswa go thusa; jalo Molatlhegi le ditsala tsa gagwe ba tshwarwa. p.13

(... The thieves forgot that there is always a possibility of being seen while committing a crime. When they were just on their way home, the owners of the store arrived. They dropped the goods and ran away. Monyamane tried to sneak away with the goods he had with him, but failed. There was gun shot: Bang! bang! He dropped to the ground with the goods, and he never rose again. The boys tried to continue fleeing, but the residents came out of their houses to render assistance. Molatlhegi and his friends were thus arrested.)

A minister of the Presbyterian church held a service in prison. He preached to all convicts. Molatlhegi confessed to him and he baptised him. He became a member of the Presbyterian church. The minister noticed Molatlhegi's intelligence and had him sent to school on completion of his sentence.

After completing his teachers course Molatlhegi taught at Forera. Motheo, who was a church leader wanted Molatlhegi to marry his daughter Lorato. Lorato made up a story that people are saying that she is in love with Molatlhegi. She misinterpreted

Molatlhegi when he said that he liked her. Molatlhegi wrote her a letter to explain his position. The author says:

Ke utlwa botlhoko thata go bona gore ga oa tlhaloganya ha ke re ke a go rata, ke ne ke sa re kea go batla; ke gore lorato lwa lenyalo. Ke ne ke raya gore ke go rata ka lorato lwa botsalano. O tla intshwarela ruri, etswe nna nyalo ga se selo se ke se gopolang jaanong, ka ntlha ya gore ga ke na se nka tlamelang mosadi le bana ka sona. Re tla kgaogana jalo. Le botsalano jwa rona bo tla fela. p.25

(I am heartbroken to discover that you did not comprehend when I said that I liked you, I did not mean I wanted you; meaning marriage love. I meant that I liked you as a friend. You will excuse me, I am not thinking about marriage now because I have nothing to support a wife and children with. We will part. Our friendship will also end.)

Motheo was hurt that Molatlhegi was not interested in his daughter. He requested a lawyer to make a case against Molatlhegi but the lawyer said there was no case. Motheo instigated school children to disobey Molatlhegi's orders. Molatlhegi punished Bontle for misconduct. Bontle's father, Motheo got Molatlhegi where he wanted him. The author says:

Ha Moruti a bona gore Molatlhegi o gana go ikokobetsa a re: "Bona Molatlhegi, ke utlwile dibese tsa gago go lekane. Tswa mo sekolong sa me jaanong ke ise ke go biletse mapodisi. O tla nna Molatlhegi wa nnete". p.28

(When the Reverend realised that Molatlhegi was not prepared to be humble, he said: "Look here Molatlhegi, I've heard all your nonsense. It is enough. Get out of my school now before I call the police. You will be a real lost one")

When this book was written the ministers were managers of schools. Church leaders also controlled teachers. The minister and Motheo who was a church leader abused their positions in education and dismissed Molatlhegi from employment. They judged Molatlhegi with prejudice.

Molatlhegi got work at the mines. He was dissatisfied with the salaries the mineworkers earned. He organised the diggers not to go to work. By so doing, the authorities would be pressurised to pay diggers a living wage. Workers were at the time not allowed to give vent to any dissatisfaction.

The ideology of Whites towards Blacks was most certainly oppressive. Whites exploited Blacks at all working situations. Blacks were supposed to be content with the meagre wage they earned at the mine because when they went on strike for a living wage the mine manager called the police. The exploitation of Blacks is confirmed by B.W. Vilakazi in his two poems,

"Because" and "On the Gold Mines" which was first written in Zulu and later translated into English. Lewis Nkosi says: "B.W. Vilakazi, the late Zulu scholar and poet, took up the cause of the newly urbanised African worker, especially the severely exploited mine labourer, in verse which showed in its content if not in its style a major break with previous African poetry in which the element of "protest" had been carefully muted. Noting the immense disadvantages under which the African labourer produced wealth for the privileged white minority, noting also the supposed acquiescence of the African worker because of a not clearly articulated sense of grievance." (1981: 112)

After the mineworkers strike, Molatlhegi was dismissed from employment. Molatlhegi was later employed by a lawyer. He met a girl he loved and wanted to marry. He did not have the lobola money that was asked for by the girl's parents. He practised his

employer's signature and wrote himself a cheque for two hundred pounds. His employer ran short of two hundred pounds when he was auditing books. He suspected Molatlhegi and had him arrested and dismissed.

This incident reflected the reality of the time — that is: Blacks being underpaid at their employment and stealing to make ends meet.

Molatlhegi was now without employment. He lived at his in-laws with his wife Maria and son. Maria and her mother resumed their old trade. The author says:

Mma-Maria le Maria ba simolola kgwebo ya bona ya bogologolo Molatlhegi a ise a ba ntshe bodiiding ka madi a gagwe. Ba simolola go apaya bojalwa. Ba reka jwa sekgoa; ntlo ya bona ya nna kwa setsageng. p.43

(Maria's mother and Maria started their old business of long before Molatlhegi took them out from poverty with his money. They started brewing liquor. They bought hard-stuff liquor; their house became a beerhall.)

Maria scalded Molatlhegi with a mixture of boiling water and caustic soda. Molatlhegi was admitted to hospital where he met Seforwe. Seforwe told him about a Santawana potion that could make them rich. Molatlhegi ordered the Santawana. When they were discharged from hospital they applied Santawana and went to different mines to get gold from mineworkers which they sold. Molatlhegi tricked Seforwe and disappeared with all the money. Seforwe looked for Molatlhegi so that he should give him his share of the money they gathered. He found Molatlhegi and demanded his money. Molatlhegi ignored him and Seforwe fought him, and got arrested. The author says:

Ba simolola go betabetana. Batho ba re tsokotsoko ga re thi, go ba potologa. Nakana ya lela, mme mapodisi a itelekela. Molatlhegi a dirisa loleme mme

aloma Seforwe, maseka a makgoa. Molatlhegi ene ba tsaya leina la gagwe mme ba mmolelela letsatsi la tsheko. p.48

(They started fighting and people gathered to spectate. The police were called and arrived soon thereafter. Molatlhegi convinced the police that Seforwe was the aggressor, and the latter was arrested. They wrote down Molatlhegi's name and gave him the date of the trial.)

Seforwe was found guilty for disturbing the peace and was fined five pounds or ninety days imprisonment. He paid the fine. From that day he resumed hunting Molatlhegi, his intention being to kill him when and where he found him. Seforwe murdered a man he thought was Molatlhegi and was arrested. On the day of the trial Molatlhegi was present. The author says:

Ha letsatsi la tsheko le tla a bo a le teng Molatlhegi a ntse kwa morago a utlweletse. E nile ha Seforwe a atlholelwa loso a ithaya a re, "Jaanong ke phologile. Ha ke le phala ke falotse. Ke tla sala ke ja lehumo le ke le kgobokantseng ka maano le kitso ya me. ..." p.49

(On the day of the trial Molatlhegi sat at the back of the courtroom and listened. When Seforwe was sentenced to death, Molatlhegi mistakenly thought that he was free to enjoy the money gathered cunningly.)

Molatlhegi worked at different places where he was exploited. He started selling gold illegally and became very wealthy. During those years for a Black person to survive one had to apply tricks. This is well reflected by George M. Gugelberger (1981: 204). "To survive, you have to break the law; it is illegal to survive."

One Sunday Molatlhegi and his family went to the Presbyterian Church, where he was dismissed as a teacher. The author says:



Dikgwedi di ise di nne kae bagogi ba kgetha Molatlhegi go nna leloko la lekgotla la sekwele, a ba a nna mogogi mo kerekeng. Molatlhegi le Maria ba tia mo tirelong moo Motheo a bileng a ba bitsa Matshego. ... Matshego a kereke.

p.55

(After a few months Molatlhegi was chosen as a member of the school management council by the church leaders, he also became a church leader. Molatlhegi and Maria became staunch members of the church and Motheo called them pillars of the church.)

Molatlhegi sent his children to school. They disobeyed the teacher's instructions. The teacher complained to Molatlhegi and he told the teacher to discipline the children. The teacher punished Doli severely and Molatlhegi decided to take them out of school. The author says:

"Nna Molatlhegi ke tla tlogela sekolonyana se sa lona ha e le gore go tla busa dilo tse di ntseng jaaka boSimon. Ke sentse madi a me ka maswe a le reng sekolo. Nxa, ke senyegetswe ruri! Wena Simon re tla kgatlhana". p.58

(I, Molatlhegi, will leave your school if it is going to be governed by people like Simon. I have wasted my money with this dirt that you call a school. Nxa, I have really lost! You, Simon, we will meet.)

Molatlhegi joined the community board. He used his money to organise gatherings so that Blacks could fight for their rights. Some board members told Motheo that Molatlhegi was organising war against Whites in order to be the ruler. Motheo informed the police and Molatlhegi was arrested. Moloto presents his punishment succinctly:

A atlholelwa go kobiwa mo motseng wa Gauteng. Katlholo ya ga Molatlhegi e ne e latela molao o o reng ha motho a dira khuduego magareng a Basweu le Batswana o tshwanetse go tloswa mo a dirang khuduego gone mme a romelwe kwa gongwe; jalo Molatlhegi a romelwa Bohananwa. p.59

(His punishment was banishment from Gauteng. Molatlhegi's verdict was according to the law which says if a person causes unrest between Whites and Blacks he should be deported from where he is causing the unrest and be sent elsewhere, so Molatlhegi was sent to Bohananwa.)

This incident reflects the ideology of White South Africans which was to suppress Blacks. The ruling class denied Blacks the right to voice their dissatisfaction. The government violated Blacks' human rights. Molatlhegi highlighted the human rights abuses in gatherings but because the government was oppressive and racist he was deported from the city to a rural area in Bohananwa where he died shortly after his arrival. The violation confirms Gugelberger's view that,

"... the system of oppression in South Africa is a very radical one indeed. Oppression takes the form of a constant and dangerous harassment. The system is not only out to impoverish you, to exploit you; its aim ultimately, is to kill you. (1981: 204)"

#### **2.4.3 The Production Model**

Materials used by Moloto to put together into the book are actual events and relationships. A girl arrived at Rebeka's place requesting food and water. She gave birth to a baby boy the same evening and died shortly thereafter. Such an occurrence is probable in big towns.

At school Molatlhegi disobeyed Martha's orders. Martha punished him and he bit her.

At home Molatlhegi hid himself. Rebeka looked for him and when she found him, he bit her.

The minister sent Molatlhegi to Mokgopolodi school. Tumelo, the principal of the school applied different measures to discipline Molatlhegi.

Molatlhegi left school and Rebeka's place. He coincidentally met his father, Monyamane.

Monyamane was shot dead after stealing clothes and money from a shop. Molatlhegi and the boys were convicted.

At the end of his prison sentence the minister sent Molatlhegi to school to do teachers course.

Molatlhegi taught at Forera but was dismissed after inflicting corporal punishment on Motheo's daughter.

Molatlhegi worked at the mine and was dismissed after the wages unrest at the mine.

Molatlhegi was employed by a lawyer. Molatlhegi forged his employers signature and issues himself with a cheque of two hundred pounds. His employer could not account for the money and he dismissed Molatlhegi from employment.

Molatlhegi obtained gold from mineworkers and sold it. This made him wealthy.

Molatlhegi joined the community board and organised gatherings in which he told Blacks to fight for their rights. He was arrested and deported to Bohananwa.

These events mirror the writer's knowledge and observation of the status quo and events that typify urban life in his days. All these, together with prevailing attitudes are

crystallised in the end product, the book Motimedi. The theme of this book is: oppression creates criminals.

According to Christian values you have to do to others as you expect them to do to you. Molatlhegi lost his post as a teacher because of the corporal punishment he administered. The response of the church to the corporal punishment was harsh. The judgement was clouded by Motheo's hatred and envy and the minister's irrational judgement and preconceived belief that Molatlhegi hated whites.

Molatlhegi believed that blacks should be treated in a manner that befitted human beings, but he was misinterpreted, probably intentionally. If his criticisms of the labour laws were received with open minds both the employers and employees could have benefited. Molatlhegi served as a lawyer's clerk. The way in which Molatlhegi struggled to augment his income by e.g. stealing £200,00 from his employer suggests low income. If Molatlhegi's behaviour was encouraged by low income then his employer becomes part of the problem-exploitation. Although the court of law found Molatlhegi not guilty of theft, oppressive judgement of the employer prevailed. He sacked him.

Moloto through Molatlhegi believed that blacks are human beings with human rights which must be upheld. He told his fellow black people not to continue to accept the oppressive situation. The oppression he spoke against was propagated and upheld by state laws. Molatlhegi, like all political activists, was found guilty and deported to Bohananwa where he met his untimely death.

#### **2.4.4 The Genetic Model**

The power base of the ruling class in the book Motimedi is perpetuated in the following ways:

- authority versus subordinates
- affluence versus poverty
- legal system versus legal subjects

The principal of Mokgopolodi school, Tumelo is the authority figure. He applies different severe measures to punish Molatlhegi for biting Martha and Rebeka.

Molatlhegi as the principal at Forera, punishes Bontle for disobeying her teacher's instructions. Bontle becomes unconscious. The minister, who is also the manager of the school is the authority figure. He dismisses Molatlhegi from the teaching profession for punishing Bontle because Bontle's father alleges that Molatlhegi had killed Bontle and that she has risen from the dead.

The Whites in Johannesburg are affluent and own shops. Monyamane lives in poverty and makes a living by stealing from White shops. Monyamane is shot dead by affluent Whites after stealing from their shop. The mine manager who is affluent pays Black mineworkers low wages. Molatlhegi earns low wages at the offices of a lawyer. This tempts him to steal money from his employer. The lawyer, as the one who holds power, dismisses Molatlhegi from his job.

Molatlhegi and Monyamane's boys are convicted for stealing from a White shopowner. During the strike at the mine over exploitation, police arrest some of the strikers. Police arrest Molatlhegi for conspiring to overthrow the government. The judge, as the representative of the legal system and the ruling class, deports Molatlhegi to Bohananwa.

## CHAPTER 3

### POST-MISSIONARY LITERARY PERIOD

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1953 the Bantu Education Act was passed by the Nationalist Party government. Authors were not free to write about the events surrounding them, because manuscripts were censored before being published. Reality about the socio-economic conditions of Blacks were not supposed to surface in literature. For literary artists, the transfer of Black education from the missionaries to the central government Department of Bantu Education, was a case of moving from a bad to a worse situation.

I intend to discuss three novels which were written when the publishing houses were controlled by the National Party government and when Black education and schools were under Bantu Education.

#### 3.2 SEPHAPHATI (VAGABOND) BY S.A. MOROKE 1959

##### 3.2.1 The Fabula

Sephaphati lives at Konanyane near Vereeniging with his parents, his younger brother, Nakedi, and his younger sister, Sadinyana. His father dies after a short illness. Sephaphati, Digopoleng and Ranamane leave Konanyane after school and go to Mangaung (Bloemfontein.) They are all employed at the market. After some time, Digopoleng and Ranamane leave Mangaung. Sephaphati meets new friends and on Mondays he does not go to work because of hangovers. His employer tries in vain to advise him not to absent himself from work on Mondays. He is subsequently dismissed from employment.

Sephaphati sells pictures and medicine, but this does not last. He is broke and has no more friends. He starts looking for work again but Whites are not eager to employ him, because he is dirty and in rags. He decides to go back home to Konanyane. At the station he meets a woman named Flora. He goes back to Mangaung with Flora. At Flora's home he sleeps in the coal storage. He stays with Flora and her mother Anna who employs him to sell coal and wood from a donkey cart. She pays him with food and shelter. One day Sephaphati punishes Flora's child and Anna dismisses him. He decides to go back home, but is arrested in town for not having paid poll tax for three years. His penalty is four pounds fine or two months imprisonment. He writes to his brother, Nakedi, to send him seven pounds — four pounds for court fine and three pounds to travel back home. Nakedi refuses to send the money, but his uncle Tirwe sends it. Sephaphati is overjoyed when he is released from prison.

In the train back home Sephaphati is having a discussion with Thulare and a lad. Their conversation is about the word of God. Sephaphati tells them that he is going back home where he had left not because of poverty, but because he was ungrateful to his parents. The lad tells him that the Bible says to fear God is the beginning of wisdom. Sephaphati arrives at Sadinyane's home in Ebatone. She gives him clothes so that he should not arrive home in rags. But he prefers not to wear them because he wants the people of Konanyane to see him in torn clothes so that they should believe what he is going to tell them.

On his arrival at home, he tells his mother that he is a shameful prodigal son. He asks his mother to forgive him because it is then that he will be able to be forgiven by God who is the Redeemer of our spirit. Nakedi also forgives Sephaphati and he slaughters a lamb. People of Konanyane assemble at Sephaphati's home and welcome him back home. Sephaphati advises all the young lads of Konanyane who wish to leave for the

cities, or who go to high schools. On Sundays after church he teaches boys and girls church hymns.

### **3.2.2 The Reflection Model**

Sephaphati's parents were Christians. The author says:

... Sephaphati ke morwa Kubu le Mmaphuthi. ... E ne e le dinatla mo tumelong ya borapedi. Ba ne ba rata mokaulengwe wa bone jaaka ba ne ba ithata. Ditiro tsa bone tsa lorato di ne di ba diretse leina le le rategang, le le tlotlegang mo motseng otlhe wa Konanyane. p.5

(... Sephaphati is the son of Kubu and Mmaphuthi. ... They were strong Christian believers. They loved their neighbour as they loved themselves. Their deeds of love made them lovable and respected in the whole village of Konanyane.)

People who accepted Christ did this wholeheartedly. Reality of the time is reflected in Sephaphati's parents.

Sephaphati's father Kubu, did not live to see his children grow. The author says:

... O (Kubu) rapame mo diphateng tsa boiwetse malatsi a matlhano a kudupantswe ke mala a a neng a sega jaaka thipa. Enile letsatsi la botlhano le dikela, tshipi ya kereke ya utlwala e lela ga botlhoko e latola monna yo o rategang yo. Naga ya Konanyane e ne e okametswe ke moriti wa Ieru le lentsho la loso. p.6-7

(... He (Kubu) was sick in bed for five days, he had severe stomach-ache. On the fifth day at sunset the church bell rang informing people that the man they loved had passed away.)



God takes his people while they are still serving him. He wants them when they are still pure. That is what He did with Kubu.

Sephaphati, Digopoleng and Ranamane fled to Mangaung. The author says:

... Erile fa ba ntse ba eme ba tshotse mekgweleonyana ya dikobo tsa ga Ranamane, ba bonwa ke Lekgowa la kwa mmarakeng mme la ba botsa gore ba tswa kwa kae le gore a ba batla tiro. O ba thapile, mme ba ya go dira kwa mmarakeng wa Mangaung. p.12

(... While they were still standing with Ranamane's luggage in hand, they were noticed by a White man who works at the Bloemfontein market. He asked them where they were from and whether they sought work. He employed them to work at the market.)

These children were employed at the market when they were supposed to be at school. Such exploitation of child labour by Whites was rife.

After ten months Digopoleng went to Kimberley, Ranamane went to Cape Town after three years and Sephaphati stayed in Mangaung and continued to work at the market. He made acquaintance with bad people and on Mondays he did not turn up at work because of hangovers. His employer spoke to him about this bad habit but he was ultimately dismissed because he did not heed the warning.

In real life, bad people often lead well-behaved people astray. Sephaphati is driven to drinking liquor and has to suffer the consequences.

Sephaphati was not in a hurry to look for work. He still had a lot of money. He sold pictures and children's medicines. After three years his money was exhausted. His friends decreased. People locked him out of their beautiful big houses. Hunger

reminded him that he had to live by the sweat of his brow. He went to seek work, but the author says:

Makgowa a ne a tshaba go mo naya tiro e a ka e dirang ka gonne e ne e tle e re fa ba leba diaparo tsa gagwe ba bonye di le makgasa, di le leswe. O ne a sa lebege jaaka motho yo o boikanyo. Erile ka letsatsi le lengwe go le mo maabanyaneng monna yo a neng a tlwaelane le ene a mmolelela gore go batlega batho kwa kusetse (Goods shed). Sephaphati a tsogelela teng mo mosong a pagame baesekele. Lekgowa le fitlhile la mo latolela la re ga go na tiro e Sephaphati a ka e dirang. p.13

(Whites were not eager to employ him because of his appearance. He was ragged and filthy. He did not look reliable. One day one of his acquaintances informed him that there were job opportunities at the Goods shed. Early in the morning Sephaphati cycled to the Goods shed but was told that there was no employment.)

This reflects on the realities of the time. To Whites, being ragged and filthy symbolised unreliability. It also detracts from the image of the company.

Because Sephaphati was not employed, he sold his bicycle and decided to go home to Konanyane. Whilst he waited for the train, a woman arrived at the station with a baby on her back. Sephaphati decided to accompany the woman from Phaphamang to the location.

This shows that Sephaphati was not yet ready to go back home. In reality desperation as a motivating factor plays a significant role in people accompanying strangers and even staying with them.

Sephaphati stayed at Anna's place for a long time. He sold wood and coal and was paid with food and shelter.

Anna needed someone to sell wood and coal for her. The profit was only enough to buy the necessities and not to pay the seller. This reflects on life in urban areas at the time.

Anna chased Sephaphati away after he had beaten her grand-child, Kgosiemang. Of his arrival in town, the author says:

Erile fa a (Sephaphati) tsena mo toropong a tlhakana le maphodisa a mabedi a mo emisa, a mmotsa dipasa le lekgetho la ngwaga. O ne a se na pasa. Go ne go setse go fetile dinyaga tse tharo a sa duele lekgetho. Mapodisa a mo golega. p.30

(When Sephaphati arrived in town he met two police officers who stopped him and demanded his identification documents and proof that he paid the poll tax. He did not possess the documents and was arrested.)

During those years every Black man had to pay poll tax, whether employed or unemployed. Also, if you did not produce identification documents to the police you were arrested.

Whilst in prison Sephaphati wrote to his brother to send him money to pay his fine and travel home. The author says:

O tla gakgamala fa o bona lokwalo lo lo tswang mo go nna. E setse e le dinyaga tse di masome a mabedi ke ntse ke tlogile kwa gae, ke sa kwale le gone ke sa kwalelwe. ... Nthuse tlhe morwarra. Lekgotla le nkatlholetse diponto tse di supang kgotsa dikgwedi tse pedi mo teronkong. Fa o ka

nthomela madi a, ke tla pagama setimela ke tle go ba ba nthatang, wena le mme. A mme o sa ntse a tshela? p.50

(You are surely surprised to receive a letter from me, because it is twenty years that you last heard from me. ... Brother, please help me. The court has fined me seven pounds or two months imprisonment. If you can send me the money. I will come back by train to those who love me, you and mother. Is mother still alive?)

This reflects reality in the most objective way. People left home in the rural areas to seek work in urban areas and forgot those that they left behind. They only remember those that they left at home when they are in a predicament as it is the case with Sephaphati.

When Sephaphati arrived in Ebatone (Evaton), he saw his sister who gave him better clothes to put on. He accepted the clothes but refused to wear them. The author says:

Sephaphati a re, "Diaparo tse ke a di rata. Di tla nna molemo thata mo go rna, mme ga ke rate go di apara jaanong. Di tla ntshuba gore batho ba tle ba se ka ba itse boammarure jwa se ke leng sone. Di tla dira gore ke lebege jaaka motho yo o tswang go dira ka tlhokomelo." p.114

(Sephaphati said: "I like these clothes, they look good for me. I prefer not to put them on now, because they will hide what I really am - a prodigal. With -- these clothes on I may look like someone who worked responsibly".)

Sephaphati's journey to Mangaung was purely adventure because his parents provided him with everything. His story reflects what probably happened regarding children from well-off families. The author also accentuates Black dependence on Whites employment.

Sephaphati told his sister that he is from Mangaung. The author says:

Sephaphati a araba, "Ke tswa kwa Mangaung. Ke tswa go bua dilo tse di bosula rure. Ke tswa go bona matlhomola a lefatshe. Ke tswa go bona kgolego, le tshotlego. Ke tswa go bona molete wa dihele ka matlho a mabedi."

p.116

(Sephaphati answered, "I am from Mangaung. What I uttered was really bad. I saw the sorrows of the world. I have seen prison and suffering. I have seen the fires of hell with my two eyes.")

This reflects on the disillusionment of many a young man who left his home with high hopes, for the big town in those days. Many returned home with shattered dreams.

About Sephaphati's arrival at home Moroke says:

"Mma, nna fa fatshe gore ke tle ke go boelelele sentle," go araba Sephaphati. "Ke nna ngwana wa gago wa sesenyi yo ke emeng fa pele ga gago jaaka motlhabani yo o tswang kwa ntweng mme a tla a fentswe. Melamu ya me e robegile. Tshaka ya me e rethefetse. Marumo a me a robegile dintlha. Ke fentswe. Ke tla fela ka mowa o sa ntse o le mo nameng. ... Ke a go rapela gore pelo ya gago e folepele, o be o intshwarele mme e tla nna gone ke tla nnang le tlelelelo ya go bona maitshwarelo le poloko ya Morena le Mmoloki wa moya wa me."

p.117-118

(He says: "Mother please sit down and let me tell you (said Sephaphati). I am your son, the prodigal, who is like a defeated warrior. My fighting stick is broken. My spear is blunt and broken. I am beaten. I am back only because I am still alive. I beg you to forgive me so that God may also forgive me.)

Nakedi told his uncle Tirwe that Sephaphati's coming home deserves to be celebrated. The author says:

"Rrangwane malatsi a a tshwanang le la gompieno ga a tlhabe gantsi mo botshelong jwa motho mo lefatsheng. Ke le lengwe la malatsi a go batlegang gore go tshololwe madi a phologolo mo go lone. ... Rrangwane, kwana ke yeo o a e bona."

p.120

(Uncle, days like this are very few. It is important that we slaughter a lamb. ... There it is, please attend to it.)

Sephaphati's home-coming brought joy to his family and this is indicated by the feast they arrange for him, in typical prodical son fashion.

After the church service, Sephaphati says the following to Thekiso and Mmaphuthi. Moroke intimates:

Sephaphati a re, "Go kwadilwe mo dikwalong tse di boitshepo mafoko a Jehofa, Morena wa rona. ... Ka ke akanya magodimo a gago, tiro ya menwana ya gago kgwedi le dinaledi; kana motho ke eng fa o mo gopola? Modimo o a gakgamatsa. O a gopola, a be a gopole le rona boSephaphati ba ba neng ba mo itebaditse."

p.132

(Sephaphati said words are written in the Holy Book. Which says that Jehova our God, who created the skies, the moon and the stars is great and amazing. He is also able to remember the low and wretched like Sephaphati who ignored him.)

These words reflect Moroke's position as a minister. He implicitly highlighted the injustices of the then socio-political and economic systems, but remained loyal to his

calling. These had to be given a socio-religious guise in order to survive sifting by the hawk-eyed Censorship Board.

### **3.2.3 The Production Model**

The materials used by Moroke to put together into a book are actual events and relationships. It is a probability that many teenage boys left their homes to seek work in big cities, like Bloemfontein, with great dreams in their minds.

Sephaphati and his friends are employed at the Bloemfontein Market.

Whilst in Bloemfontein Sephaphati met bad friends who taught him to drink liquor. He was dismissed from employment because he did not turn up for duty on Mondays. These are concerns that were quite prevalent, hence the term "Blue Monday".

During his period of unemployment Sephaphati exhausted his savings. When he decided to go and look for work again, he could not be employed because he was ragged and filthy. Whatever savings he had he could not augment because he lacked basic business skills, which were not catered for in Native and Bantu Education.

Sephaphati stayed in Anna Moruakgomo's coal storage and sold wood and coal for her. Anna Moruakgomo did not obtain enough profit from wood and coal to enable her to pay Sephaphati. This also reflects on poor business management by Blacks at the time. Business was merely for subsistence.

When Anna chased Sephaphati away from her home, he was arrested for failing to produce a reference book and for not paying poll tax for three years. The injustice and biased laws of the past exposed blacks to undeserved suffering; hence the imprisonment of Sephaphati regardless of his circumstances.

Whilst in prison Sephaphati wrote to his brother to send him money to pay his fine and to go back home. The money was sent by his uncle. Here possible reality is reflected. Sephaphati was away from home for twenty years and he had never sent money to his mother nor written to her. When in trouble he recalled that he has a brother and mother. In spite of that the strong typically african family bonds prevailed.

All these add up to the book Sephaphati. The theme as message is "employee exploitation leads to hardship". Sephaphati was exploited at the market. He earned money that was too little to enable him to send his mother something. He therefore resorted to drinking liquor in an attempt to forget his financial problems. He later worked for Anna Moruakgomo who also exploited him. His clothes were in tatters and he could not buy new clothes because he was paid with food and shelter. He could not go home nor pay tax for the same reason. He was imprisoned for not paying poll tax. He was willing to lead a decent life, but exploitation was an impediment to his goal.

#### **3.2.4 The Genetic Model**

The contents of the book Sephaphati represents the class to which the author belongs. The power base of the privileged class in the book Sephaphati is perpetuated in the following:

- Employer versus employee
- clergy versus ignorant people

Sephaphati started working at the market as a child and he was exploited by his White employer. He was earning way below bread line. He also worked for Anna Moruakgomo. He sold wood and coal for Anna. The profit she made did not permit her to pay Sephaphati but was sufficient for them to live. In this case Sephaphati was exploited by his Black employer. She paid him with food and shelter.



The author utilised Sephaphati to promote Christianity among his people. This he described by relating Sephaphati as a prodigal son who left home and came back to be forgiven by his parent and brother.

### **3.3 MATLHOKO, MATLHOKO (PAIN, OH PAIN) BY R.M. MALOPE 1980**

#### **3.3.1 The Fabula**

The novel is set in the early 1950's when the main character, Mpotseng, moves from his rural home in GaMosetlha to Eersterus. His move is motivated by the disappearance of their cows at Rooiberg and the death of his father which resulted from this disappearance. He has to go and seek work in Pretoria. He stays with his aunt, Mmadisenke at Eersterus. In 1956 Eersterus residents are forced to move to Phelandaba near Pretoria. Mmadisenke moves in with her employer in a white residential area. Mpotseng moves to Phelandaba hostel because of the influx control regulations.

Loneliness at the hostel drives Mpotseng to seek extramarital pleasure. His girlfriend becomes pregnant and gives birth to a baby girl. Mpotseng does not want this affair to be known at home but he has to support two families. His monthly income is not sufficient to provide for two families and he augments it by the unlawful sale of dagga. He is arrested and sentenced to five years imprisonment. Later his legitimate son, Kebarakile falls in love with his illegitimate daughter, Gaampatle (Emma). Emma becomes pregnant. She accompanies her parents to Kebarakile's home at GaMosetlha to discuss her pregnancy. Mpotseng commits suicide to escape explaining who his future daughter-in-law is.

### **3.3.2 The Reflection Model**

Any Black person who lived in a rural area and wanted to seek work in an urban area had to obtain a letter from the local commissioner which permitted him to seek work, Mpotseng was no exception. The author says:

... Ka labobedi o (Mpotseng) tloletse gategate ya gagwe jaaka bontsi a leba Hammanskraal kwa komosasa wa tikologo a neng a nna gona. ... fa o le mmala o sebil o bile o le legaba. Ga o age, ga o leme, ga o nyale, ga o dire, ga o je, fa o sa kgabaganya letsibogo le — fa o le mmala o sebil o. ... A tshwara mokoloko wa ntlha kwa mogatleng; ya re a le kwa tlhogong ya ona gatwe ke wa ba ba batlang makwalo a lenyalo. A tsenngwa mo go wa bobedi, a lefa diponto tse pedi; a ya go wa botaro, a gatsiwa menwana a ba a sala e kete o ne a duba tshitlho ya kadija wa matwetwe. A amogela go wa bone, a fiwa dipampiri. ... Teng koo a apola a sala a le mosampa, go lejwa gore a ga a na malwetse-thosola.

p.1-2

(... On Tuesday, like many, Mpotseng rode his bicycle to Hammanskraal where the district commissioner's office was situated. ... the Black and the hungry had to do it. You cannot build, plough, marry, work or eat without crossing this boundary. He was the last in a queue. When he was nearly at the other end of the row, he was told that the particular row was for those who had come for marriage licenses. At the end of the second queue he paid two pounds. At the end of the third queue his fingerprints were taken. At the fourth row he received forms. ... There he undressed and was examined to ascertain that he had no diseases.)

This long process of obtaining a permit was designed to discourage people from going to urban areas. This reflects the indignity to which the Blackman was subjected.

Mpotseng had to go and seek work in Pretoria after the death of his father. He believes that his father was killed by his cattle being sent (by the law) to a cattle-post far at Rooiberg and those cattle never came back. The law limited Blacks to a certain number of cattle. Excess cattle were taken away from their owners. This was an oppressive and inhuman law because it killed Mpotseng's father, and many others. Here the author focusses on the State's inhumanity to man.

People at Eersterus built houses on the stands that they bought from the government. They also built small rooms that people rented. The whole family lived in this one room, irrespective of the size of the family. For economic reasons people were overcrowded at Eersterus. This overcrowding caused violence and distrust. The hygienic conditions at Eersterus also left much to be desired. The author says:

Go bua boammaruri, nna ga ke ise ke bone koloi epe go tse ke ya molara le matlakala. Matlwana a bopotelo mo bontsing jwa ditsha ke a mesima, mme a diriswa ke bagolo. Bana bona ba kotama mo thothobolong ya melara le matlakala. BoRasetênê le boMmasetênê ba ba ikgonang ba duelela go dirisa emêrê mme e rwalwa bosigo ke bosampokane. p.4

(To tell the honest truth, I have never seen any vehicle collecting ash and refuse. Most of the toilets are holes, and they are used by adults. Children's toilets are dumping places. The landlords and landladies who can afford a bucket pay for it and it is emptied in the evenings.)

This is well reflected by George M. Gugelberger (1981: 190) when he says:

"The popular image of the city in the songs is a repulsive one. This attitude has its origin in the colonial times when the city represented all the inequities that came with foreign rule. Since independence, negligence by generations of the

neo-colonial bourgeoisie has worsened the social and hygienic conditions in the urban areas. This has made them more dreadful to the average rural dweller who is used to more open, and therefore more hygienic environments in the villages."

The apartheid system has a law like the influx control. Mpotseng's aunt, Mmadisenke warns him not to go outside. The author says:

"... Fa o ka sala o tletsetletse gotlhe, o itse gore o ile; mmadisefe o tla go metsa. O se ke wa leka" A mo tlhoma matlho. Mpotseng a atlhama fela a tlaletswe. Jaanong o tla bona tiro jang a sa tshwanela go tswela kwa ntle go e batla? "O nkutlwe Mpotseng O na le tetla ya go batla tiro, fela ga o na tetla ya go nna mo Tshwane." A didimala gore bokao jwa se a se buileng bo nweelele le tlhaloganyo ya ga Mpotseng. "Ka re o se leke" p.8-9

("...If you roam the streets, know that you will be arrested. Don't you ever try" She looked at him. Mpotseng was astounded. How is he going to find work if he is not supposed to go out and look for it? "Listen to me Mpotseng You have permission to seek work but you don't have permission to stay in Pretoria." She kept quiet so that the meaning of what she has said should sink in Mpotseng's mind. "I say don't you ever try")

This reflects the reality of the apartheid laws which created problems for Blacks.

Because of the oppressive laws of this country it was not easy to get permission to stay in an urban area; hence Mmadisenke requested Sefako to get permission for Mpotseng to stay in Eersterus and tell other policemen not to search her area until Mpotseng has obtained permission. Sefako asked for Mpotseng's identification document and found that there was indication that he was allowed to seek work in

Pretoria, but he was not allowed to stay in Pretoria while looking for work. This focuses strongly on the absurdities surrounding a black man's life in this country.

Sefako was able to find work for Mpotseng at the post office. His monthly wages was fourteen pounds and ten shillings, all because Mpotseng's aunt was his lover; a policeman's lover.

In 1956 lawyers and political parties helped people not to move from Eersterus. The author says:

BoRasetênê le boMmasetênê ba patilwe ke mekgatlho ya dipolotiki ba kokoanya madi go reka thuso ka ona mo go babueledi ba melao. ...Ba e tlhabana senna makgotleng a tshekelo gore bona ga ba huduge, gonne molao o o amogang batho tokelo ya boagi ga se molao ke patiko. p.49

(The landlords and landladies accompanied by politicians collected money to pay for lawyers... They bravely pointed out in courts of law that they were not moving away from the land they occupied, and that the laws which robbed people of their citizenship rights, were actually not laws but ways of victimisation.)

Forced removals of Eersterus residents took place in 1956. From a place where they had bought stands and own the property, to a place where they would be municipality tenants. The author says:

Le Mokgatlho wa Setshaba o ne o ntse o tsamaya motse ntlheng e nngwe — e le sa ntswa le phiri le Mayibuye, le mororo yoomebedi e bua fa e na le mmaba a le mongwe. Ona o kgothaletsa batho go dipa. Maloko a ona a sa reye gore ona a a dipa. p.49

(The National organisation was busy on the other end of the township — the former organisation and Mayibuye were at loggerheads although they claimed to have a common enemy. The organisations encouraged people to resist, while the members of the organisations did not say whether they were resisting.)

The laws of South Africa, during the apartheid era, were forced onto blacks because they were not permitted to voice their dissatisfaction, hence people were forcibly resettled in Phelandaba. This is reflected by George M. Gugelberger (1981: 204) "Thus the black population's experience of travel is, in many ways, an immediate symptom of the power of the apartheid state, whether this travel takes the form of commutation between the ethnic township and the site of employment in the "white" city, or between the "homelands" and the workplace, or of "forced removal", or of "resettlement", or of flight from the law, or of search for work. In every case, the necessity to travel is a reflection of the alienation of the black population from political and social self-determination within South Africa, and of the constant interventionary power of the apartheid state (Jurgen Schadeberg 1990: 75)". The forced removal of Africans applied all over South Africa. The picture below reflects the reality of the people of Sophiatown who were determined not to move to Meadowlands.



*Three days after the first eviction orders were sent to residents, the ANC issued a statement: 'The African people have rejected the removal scheme as a brutal and wicked plot . . . to rob the African people of freehold rights and to resettle them in specified areas in tribal groups . . . If the Nationalists implement the removal scheme, an extremely dangerous and explosive situation will arise'*

The above situation has been well reflected by Malope, albeit in fiction form, and well utilised to make his point about the unjustness of the denial of citizenship and land rights to Blacks.

During the apartheid era, there were many laws which applied to Blacks only. One of them was that an unmarried woman does not qualify for a house. That is why Mmadisenke moved in with her employer. The other law was that migrant labourers stayed in hostels. These laws were oppressive and inhuman and they affected Blacks only. This hostel was far from the working place and involved commuting. This is confirmed by George M. Gugelberger when he says:

"The image of blacks as a travelling population within South Africa bears a complex reference to the effects of racial oppression. The black population of South Africa is conceptualised by the apartheid state as a foreign population, necessary to the interests of the state only in the form of a migrant labour force. It is on the basis of this conceptualisation that blacks are denied political rights, as well as other social capacities, in South Africa. Access to the sites of labour is heavily guarded by a multitude of repressive and restrictive laws (1981: 204)."

About Mpotseng's desolation at the hostel, the author says:

A eletsa go ka nna nabo, go binabintsha Kebarakile mo diropeng tsa gagwe, Mmalesedi a sa ntse o apeile dilalelo. Kana go ne go tla nna monate jang... A itse gore ke maaka a leleme; o ijesa dijo tsa ditoro. E le fa a tla ba baya kae? Mo hosetele ga go tsenwe. Mo Phelandaba baeng ba batlega dikwalo tsa tetelelo; go sa nnang jalo-moeng o leka Modimo tumelo.



(He longed for his home, to enjoy the company of Kebarakile and Mmalesedi. He became aware that he was only dreaming because there is no room for them in the hostel. In Phelandaba visitors must have permits otherwise there can be trouble.)

This is an accurate reflection of the oppressive laws of those times regarding migrant labourers. Women were not allowed in the hostels and men did not earn sufficient money to frequent their homes. Men were denied the opportunity, by the then government, to witness their offspring growing.

Hostel life drove Mpotseng to seek extramarital pleasure. Keneeletse and Mosala inform him that he is not to blame but the hostel life. The author says:

..."Heela monna wa kgosing, wena o ntse o akanya gore botshegaingate ba ba sailang mo mebileng e e modumo o phatlolang tlhogo e, ba tsalwa ke bomang? Bontsi jwa bona ba tsalwa ke dihosetele tse ... Ke botshelo jwa dihosetele. Ga di a agiwa ke wena dihosetele tse ..." p.58

(..."Hey man, who do you think fathered all these illegitimate children who are roaming the streets and making such a terrible noise? Most of them are fathered by these hostels ... This is hostel life. You did not build these hostels ...")

Hostel life promoted immorality in rural men. This contributed to overpopulation in urban areas. This is well captured in this text.

Keneeletse gave birth to a baby girl. Mpotseng did not want his family at home to know about this affair. So, he supported two families. But the money he earned at G.P.O. was not sufficient. When his son was promoted mid-year, and he had to buy new books, it was too much for him. As the author puts it:

Bontsi jwa batho bo ne bo ka opela tiragalo e legofi — e seng Mpotseng. A leka motho wa batho. Go le gontsi bofelo jwa kgwedi fa a tla kgona go romelela ba GaMosetlha madi, a tshwanetse go tla Keneeletswe. p.62

(Most people would be delighted by this incident — but not Mpotseng. The poor man tried. In most cases he sent money to GaMosetlha, he had to dodge Keneeletswe.)

Mpotseng started selling trousers to earn extra money in order to enable him to provide for two families. He later augmented his wages with the sale of unlawful dagga, but was arrested and sentenced to five years imprisonment.

The situation is complicated when Mpotseng's legitimate son, Kebarakile, falls in love with his illegitimate daughter, Emma (Gaampatle) who later becomes pregnant. He consequently commits suicide.

This brings out strongly the evils of the oppressive migrant laws of this country which did not allow men from rural areas to live with their wives in urban areas (place of work). The structure of this literary work reflects the structure of the real world, as Malope saw it.

### **3.3.3 The Production Model**

Materials used by Malope to put together into a book are actual events and relationships. Mpotseng left his rural home GaMosetlha to work in Pretoria and stayed at Eersterus, as most Black men did in those days.

In 1956 forced removals of Eersterus residents took place. Mmadisenke (as most domestic workers did) moved in with her employer at a white residential area.

Mpotseng moved to Phelandaba hostel because of the influx control regulations, which were in place.

The phenomenon of illegitimate births involving hostel dwellers and careless township maidens is well demonstrated by Mpotseng's extramarital escapades and the accompanying financial burden.

The incestuous relationship between Kebarakile and his half-sister Gaampatle (Emma), brings out, with great impact, the inevitable evils of the unjust laws by which the Blackman was governed.

These events mirror the writer's knowledge, observation and manipulation of occurrences in his days, which resulted in the end product, the text Matlhoko, Matlhoko.

The theme is that migrant labour causes misery to Blacks.

#### **3.3.4 The Genetic Model**

Everything that the author wrote about in the book Matlhoko, Matlhoko represents the class to which he belongs. He knows the difficulties experienced by Blacks because of the apartheid laws in South Africa. The power base of the ruling class is perpetuated in the following ways:

- employer versus employee
- government versus migrant labourers
- government versus residents

Mpotseng was exploited by his employer because the money he earned at the post-office was not enough to cater for his family and visit them every month at Ga-Mosetlha. Mmadisenke was a domestic servant. She also earned very little money

and was not paid for overtime, she used to pay for her overtime work by stealing her employer's teaspoons. Mosala was also exploited by his employer and he augmented his wages by selling dagga.

The government placed migrant labourers at a disadvantage. They were forced to stay away from their families. Life in hostels promoted social problems, for example, Mpotseng stayed at Phelandaba hostel which was unhomely. Because of loneliness he eventually had a second wife. The second family he had to cater for was an additional strain to his poor financial position. Hostel dwellers were exposed to economic problems, they had to provide for themselves at the hostel and provide for their families elsewhere.

Government violated human rights by forcing people to move from one place to the other. People could not choose to stay at Eersterus or move to any other place of their own choice. Government debarred unmarried women from obtaining houses at Phelandaba and were therefore forced to seek other forms of accommodation. Mmadisenke, for example, had no choice but to stay with her employer at a White suburb. It was totally out of question for migrant labourers to qualify as residents in the township houses.

All these are depicted well, obviously by an author who belongs to the class that is on the receiving end of the system.

### **3.4 – MASEGO (BLESSINGS) BY G. MOKAE 1994**

#### **3.4.1 The Fabula**

The events in this novel start in 1959 when Masego has passed standard eight. 1959 is not stated in the novel but I have deduced it from the years given. The following year Masego attends school at Sedimosang near Warmbaths doing standard nine.

Sannah gives Masego alcohol, she becomes drunk and unconscious. Whilst in this state she is raped by three boys. She becomes pregnant and has to go back home to the farm (Silkatsnek). Masego's father, Kgabo Motsepe, is a farm labourer. Their White employer illtreats them. One day he floggs Kgabo thirty times on the back and Kgabo murders him. Other labourers burn the employers house with his wife inside. Kgabo is arrested and gets a death sentence.

Before his execution Kgabo tells his wife Goabaone the reason why Baas Schalk flogged him. Baas Schalk had impregnated Tsawe's daughter Lizbeth. Schalk had asked Tsawe to send his daughter away from the farm and promised to maintain Lizbeth's baby until it reached eighteen years. But Schalk never fulfilled that promise. Kgabo helped Tsawe to get a lawyer to sue Schalk for breach of promise. Schalk learnt about this and flogged Kgabo.

Masego, her mother Goabaone and her son Sello now stay in Atteridgeville with her aunt. Masego works for Sol and Cathy Lazar as a domestic servant at Randburg. Sol Lazar is a banned lawyer because he defended Blacks in court who fight against human rights injustices. Vusi Mgoma is also banned and is under house arrest from six in the evening until six in the morning. Vusi is a friend of the Lazar family. Cathy helps Vusi to sell his books overseas under a false name because they were banned in South Africa. Cathy and Sol go overseas and leave R20,000 in the bank for Sello's education. Vusi marries Masego and he stays with her and her son Sello at Alexandra. In 1976 Sello is in standard nine. The same year on 16 June Soweto students oppose the inferior Bantu Education. They reject being taught through the medium of Afrikaans. They riot against the oppressive White rule and many die in the process. The same year Vusi's banning order is lifted and he is murdered by the police. Vusi's first wife claims his body. Masego gives Vusi's sons his heritage.

Masego and Sello go to Mmakau. Sello is in standard ten at Ga-Rankuwa High School. Ntsime Molato joins the party that is going to rule Bophuthatswana after independence. He goes to Ga-Rankuwa High to address pupils. The latter burn his Mercedes Benz and assault him. They are opposed Bophuthatswana's independence. Sello passes all his matric subjects with distinction. He goes to the university of Natal where he completes his medical training in 1983. Thereafter he studies further to specialise as a laboratory technician. In the year 2004 Dr Sello Motsepe is selected as the winner of the Nobel prize in Medicine. His mother, Masego and Cathy Lazar attend the prize-giving ceremony in Oslo, Norway on 12 December 2004.

### **3.4.2 The Reflection Model**

Whites in the Silkatsnek farm district were oppressing their Black labourers. The author says this through Kgotle:

Maburu a tulo e a rata diphologolo go feta Bantsho, Chunky. Ke itse monna mongwe yo o neng a ketekwa ke mothapi wa gagwe go fitlhela a batla a raga kgamelo morago ga go bolaya ntswa ya leburu la gagwe ka go e gata ka terekere e tswa e se maikaelelo a gagwe go dira jalo. A e gatile ka phoso, a sa e bone.

p.8-9

(Boers in this area love animals more than Blacks, Chunky. I know a man who was assaulted by his employer until he nearly died, because he accidentally killed the boers dog with a tractor.)

This reflects on the race attitudes of the time. Whites in South Africa did not value Black life. They would kill a Black person rather than a dog eg. in Louis Tritchard where a man was flogged to death because his dog had mated with his employer's bitch.

To show Masego's predicament at Sedimosang high school the author intimates:

...Ka jalo, fa a oketsa go nna mmamoratwe wa mogokgo, o ne a intsha mmaba yoo barutwana ba bangwe ba neng ba mmetsa ka noga e utlwa. Segolose-tonna barutwana ba basimane bao, bontsi jwa bone a neng a gana bo ba olela fa ba ipobola gore ke mabele a a tshologileng; ba ipala mabala a kgaka. p.16

(...When she (Masego) increasingly became the principal's favourite, she created enmity between herself and other pupils, especially boys, because she did not give them a positive answer when they proposed love to her.)

Masego's intelligence created the problem of being disliked by other pupils. Reality is reflected in the sense that in real life people do not tolerate those who possess good attributes.

Concerning how baas Schalk van Jaarsveld treated his labourers, the author says:

Go a beleatsega gore gongwe Masego e tla nna mogolodi wa batsadi ba gagwe go tswa bokgobeng jwa mo polaseng ya ga base Schalk van Jaarsveld...

Fa base Schalk a ntse a tsofala, a simolola go nna setshwano sa moswi raagwe, Gert; a tlhakatlhakanya matshelo a badiredi ba gagwe ka go ba tshwara makgwakgwa.

Tota le ena kgaba Motsepe o ne a sa mo tlhaole, a mo loma ka sebepi sa gagwe se se bulang nama ya mokotla. p.25

(It is likely that Masego will be her parents redeemer from slavery in baas Schalk van Jaarsveld farm... When baas Schalk grew older, he began to show

a strong resemblance to his late father, Gert; he made life miserable for his employees by treating them atrociously. Kgabo Motsepe was no exception, he flogged him with his whip that tore the flesh on his back open.)

This is human rights abuse. Schalk utilized the racial bias backed by the then government (National Party government) in oppressing his labourers. In this case the structure of the literary work reflects the socio-political structure of the real world then.

Masego was exploited by three school boys. The author says this through Selamolela:

"Ka Masego a sa dumela go tsaya karolo mo tirong e e bosula eo; a ne a idibetse; seo se kaya gore o betilwe, mme mmaMotsepe", a mo tlhaga botlhale. "Go ima morago ga go betelelwa ke nngwe ya maemo ao, go ya ka molao o rre Kgotle a buile ka ona, mosadi a kgonang go bona phediso ya go ima ya semolao." p.27-28

("Because Masego did not consent in taking part in that unpleasant event as she was unconscious, that means she is raped, Mrs Motsepe", he explained.

"To be pregnant after being raped is one of the conditions Mr Kgotle spoke about, that a woman can undergo a legal abortion.")

Masego disagreed to undergo an abortion. This is reflecting on the *status quo* in the Catholic Church.

Baas Schalk attacked Kgabo and assaulted him with fists and a whip after a little error. Schalk flogged him thirty times on his back. Kgabo became furious and looked at him with eyes full of rage. Baas swore at Kgabo when he realised that he looked him in the eyes, instead of looking down as a slave is supposed to do.



This reflects the heartbreaking reality of that time; Blacks were oppressed and were not supposed to show any resentment.

About Kgabo's anger after being flogged the author intimates:

Kgabo a mo tshwara ka kgokgotso ka matsogo a gagwe a mantsho, a mesifasifa e e tiisitsweng ke tiro e e boima ya diatla. A gatelela. p.40

(Kgabo throttles baas Schalk with his black and tough hands, that have been strengthened by hard labour. He pressed hard.)

What is interesting is that Kgabo does not have any feeling of remorse for murdering baas Schalk, because Schalk treated them inhumanly. Kgabo had endured the pain inflicted by Schalk as he was the one who always discouraged other labourers when they conspired against Schalk's oppression. Kgabo could not put up with that any longer. Schalk flogged them whenever he wanted to, that hurt Kgabo deeply because they had grown up together, they were of the same age. Now when they were grown up Schalk built a racial barrier between them. This reflects the White supremacist attitude of the time. Murdering Schalk had saved many Blacks from his oppressive and exploitive treatment.

When other labourers witnessed Kgabo murdering baas Schalk they knew that no one would stop them from doing what they intended to do. They went to Schalk's house and tied his wife to a chair. Others fetched petrol from their cars and burnt his house with his wife inside.

Baas Schalk had tested the patience of his labourers for too long, hence they destroyed his family completely. In this case the structure of the literary work reflects the structure of the real world then.

Kgabo was found guilty by the court for killing and motivating others to kill and destroy. The judge sentenced him to death by hanging. Another nine labourers were given long prison sentences.

This reflects the injustices of the time. Kgabo's verdict was oppressive. He killed in self-defence, but killed a White man, hence his heavy sentence, death.

This racial bias is confirmed in an Afrikaans newspaper "Die Burger", 13 April 1960, as follows: "Drie naturelle wat skuldig bevind is op aanklag dat hulle verlede jaar op 25 September 'n 39 jarige blanke betaalmeester, Mnr Emile Ugo Fanton in Moroka vermoor het, is gister in die Randse Strafhof deur regter F.H. Badenhorst ter dood veroordeel. Hulle is Botha Desanyane, Patrick Rakgale en Edward Dumdum."

While Kgabo was waiting to be executed Masego visited him in prison. Kgabo advised Masego to educate his grandson, Sello, her son:

Thuto, mosetsana wa me yo o rategang, ke mokoro wa boikanyego, oo re ka kgabaganyang madiba a a tletseng dikwena a kgethololo ya mmala, thuto ke senotlolo sa kgololesego go bana ba mmala wa sebito, Masego. p.46

(Education my beloved child, is a dependable ship that we can utilize to cross a well with many crocodiles of racial discrimination. To Blacks, education is the key to liberation, Masego.)

This, in fact, is the author's advice to his readers, in view of the times. Schalk's attempt to silence Kgabo reflects reality: the former preferred his sexual involvement with a black child to remain unknown to the general public. He was forced to protect his pride and hidden immorality, as was common on South African farms at the time.

While Masego was employed by the Lazar family, the police picked her up in the absence of her employers. Masego described to the Lazar's through the author what the police did to her:

Mongwe wa mapodisi a a kwenneng o ne a mmofa ka ditshipi tsa go bofa batshwarwa, mme a mo gogakela kwa sejanageng seo se neng se letile kwa ntle. A mmata ka legofi le le bolelo fa a re o a gana. p.54

(One of the strongly-built policeman handcuffed her, dragged her to a waiting car outside. When she resisted he gave her a heavy blow.)

This is how policemen used to treat Blacks. Men and women were treated the same. Masego had done nothing, but was handled like a criminal.

The White policemen took Masego to a police-building on the ninth floor. In a room called "Waar kamer" (room of truth). In this room (which seems to represent the notorious ninth floor at J.B. Vorster square) the police utilised accepted and atrocious methods to get the truth from prisoners. Other prisoners lied to those crime perpetrators so that they should stop torturing them. The walls had spots of human blood. Masego spotted a freshly extracted tooth on the floor. The blood-suckers laughed. They asked Masego about Sol and Cathy's friends and how many times they visited them. But Masego told them nothing. The suffering of Blacks during the "Apartheid" era is well reflected on June 30 1996 in "Sunday Times":

"They (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) heard how he (colonel Gideon Nieuwoudt) and a colleague had flogged another young detainee with electrical cords, suffocated him with wet towels and put a full stop on the torture session by stomping on his naked body. The mother of former Congress of South African students leader, Sipiwo Mthimkulu — who

disappeared in 1982 — held up locks of his hair to show the effects of the rat poison which had rendered the 21-year-old a wheelchair-bound "cabbage".

Innocent Blacks, as represented by Masego, were subjected to horrible treatment. The police murdered those who were opposing the oppressive government and were pleased with themselves, hence they laughed.

Sol and Cathy Lazar sent Masego to Vusi Mgoma to stop him from coming to their house that evening. Because Masego was shown Vusi's photograph at the police building, the Lazars suspected that they intended to arrest Vusi who was banned. Vusi was also not supposed to leave his house from six in the evening until six in the morning. He was also not supposed to be in the same room with another banned person like Sol Lazar. Vusi was an author of poetry and drama. His books were not published and his dramas were not allowed to be publicly acted.

Sol Lazar represents a white lawyer who represented people who were accused of breaking many oppressive laws in the country. He was also a member of the communist party. That is why he and his wife Cathy helped Vusi to make a living. This reflects the hard realities of the time, in South Africa.

On 16 June 1976, Soweto Black pupils were in the streets opposing the inferior Bantu Education. They were Black conscious. They held their fists high as a sign of Black Power. Most of them were armed with stones and dustbin lids to protect themselves. They were against the oppressive White rule and feared nothing. They were against the Afrikaans that was enforced as a medium of instruction in black schools. Many students were massacred by police on that day.

Students felt their parents and elders were doing nothing to transform the oppressive situation in South Africa. That is why they took their grievances to the streets.

Though the novel is fiction, the above are actual incidents which were reported in every newspaper. The author has given an actual presentation of the *status quo* at the time.

Concerning Vusi's whereabouts after missing for three days the author says:

A ke o lebe, mme mmaMgoma; o bone fa dipotso tsotlhe tsa gago di arabega,  
a mo kopa.

Ya ne e kete o bona Sepoko. Setopo sa molekane wa gagwe se na le ntho e e  
boteng mo lerameng la molema, le tse dingwe mo sehubeng. p.94

(Listen Mrs Mgoma; are all your questions answered. It was as if she saw a  
ghost. Her husband's corpse had a deep wound on the left cheek and others  
on the chest.)

This incident reflects the brutality of policemen in South Africa. Vusi was against the White minority oppressive rule of South Africa. Vusi was banned for fifteen years and his banning orders were lifted in 1976. The same year that Soweto pupils rioted against the oppressive White rule and other grievances. Soweto pupils and Vusi's grievances were legitimate. The police massacred the pupils and they murdered Vusi. This is confirmed by Gugelberger's view that, "... the system of oppression in South Africa is a very radical one indeed. Oppression takes the form of a constant and dangerous harassment. The system is not only out to impoverish you, to exploit you; its aim ultimately, is to kill you (1981: 204)".

The burning of Ntsime Molato's mercedes Benz reflected accurately on the temper of the times:

Students at Ga-Rankwa High School realised that Whites were dividing Blacks hence they protested against the Bophuthatswana's independence.

### **3.4.3 The Production Model**

Macherey views literature as a productive labour where raw materials are worked into an end-product. Here the end-product is the book Masego.

The actual events and relationships are the materials used by Mokae to put together into a book. Mr Selamolela, a principal at Sedimosang was accompanied by Mr Kgotle to request Kgabo Motsepe to allow her daughter Masego to attend school at Sedimosang. This was to enable Masego to get a bursary and further her studies at university level. Mr Selamolela had contacts with bursary donors.

To be intelligent and decisive in life makes a person a victim of unpleasant experiences as it is the case with Masego who became pregnant through rape.

White farmers treated their labourers (Blacks) as slaves. They knew that the government of the time was on their side. Only a man of Kgabo's character could kill his white employer but with the knowledge that he would get a death sentence. Murdering Schalk was a lesson to other farmers to stop illtreating their workers.

During the apartheid era Whites were not supposed to defend Blacks in the court of law. Those who defended Blacks in cases of human rights abuse were stopped from practising as lawyers, as it was the case with Sol Lazar.

In real life on 16 June 1976 Soweto pupils rioted against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. They also opposed Bantu Education which was inferior. Later these grievances and rioting spread throughout South Africa.

The police of the then government used to murder political prisoners or people who were opposing human rights abuses. Many such cases are being revealed by the police themselves in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Blacks were not in favour of homelands independence. The, then White, government designed these homelands for Blacks in order to perpetuate the Apartheid system in South Africa. Pupils attacked the campaigners for these homeland systems to show the government that they were opposing it.

The events in the book are similar to events in actual life. The actual events are used by the author as the relevant raw material to produce the end-product, Masego.

The theme of this book is: oppression leads to revolt. Baas Schalk exploited his employees by paying them low wages. Kgabo augmented his meagre wage by cleaning gardens during weekends. Schalk flogged his labourers whenever he wanted to. He flogged them for every error they committed. One day he flogged Kgabo and attacked him with his fists, he was unaware that this was the last straw to break the camel's back. Kgabo fought back and murdered him. Other labourers murdered his (Schalk's) wife by setting her and their house on fire.

Blacks in this country under the National party government had their own inferior education known as Bantu Education. Subjects in high schools were taught through the medium of Afrikaans, which pupils had difficulty in understanding. On 16 June 1976 Soweto pupils rioted against the above-mentioned grievances. The pupils were opposing the oppressive White rule. This rioting started in Soweto but it later spreaded to the whole of South Africa. The National party designed ethnic homelands independence in order to perpetuate the Apartheid system in South Africa. The pupils at Ga-Rankuwa high school protested against the Bophuthatswana independence by

burning Bophuthatswana government cars and assaulting representatives of the latter government.

#### **3.4.4 The Genetic Model**

Everything that the author wrote about in the book Masego represent the probability of the class to which the author belongs. From this book it is clear that the author is a Black South African who experienced direct or indirect oppression and exploitation by Whites. The power base of the privileged class in the book Masego is perpetuated in the following ways:

- employer versus employee
- legal system versus legal subjects
- master versus servant
- parent versus child

Baas Schalk owned the farm Silkatsnek. He oppressed and exploited his employees. He flogged them for every error they committed. He fought Kgabo with his fists. He paid his employees very little money and they augmented it by cleaning gardens in the suburbs on weekends. This is as true as could be found on any farm.

The police interrogated people at the police station. They utilised unacceptable methods to obtain information. The police massacred Soweto pupils on 16 June 1976 for making their grievance known to the society. The police turned the orderly marches into bloodbaths. Vusi Mgoma was found at the police morgue with bullet wounds. He was killed by the police for being against human rights abuse. Kgabo Motsepe was arrested for murdering his oppressor in self-defence. The judge, as the representative of the legal system and the ruling class, sentenced Kgabo to death. These are actual incidents as vindicated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



Schalk sexually abused Tsawe's child, Lizbeth. Thereafter he promised to maintain the unborn child until it reached eighteen years. He never fulfilled that promise. This reflects on the master-servant relations on the farm, where honour is not at stake.

Kgabo physically abused his child, Masego. He thrashed her severely for being pregnant, a parent-child relationship that used to be, and still is, prevalent in many black communities.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4.1 INTERPRETATION OF NOVELS**

#### **Mokwena**

Mokwena as a young boy was brought up to withstand hardship. He ran away from home and was introduced to Christianity at Belabela. Though Mokwena was converted he could never be a replica of the missionaries but emulated them. Mokwena renounced all traditional values by accepting Christianity. He returned home with a wife who had been converted like himself. Mokwena disliked and denounced his traditional upbringing because he did not raise his children the way he was brought up. He introduced Christianity in his tribe and it was willing to absorb it.

In Mokwena reality is reflected. Blacks were compelled to undermine traditional life and uphold Christianity in order that their books should be published. Publishing houses were controlled by missionaries and they therefore preferred that books should support their mission — to convert people. This suggests that writers who did not include Christian themes in their literary texts would be sidetracked. The book Mokwena encouraged people to become Christians without preservation of tradition. Blacks were therefore encouraged by literary work to lose their identity, often adopting ill-understood Christian values.

#### **Rammone wa Kgalagadi**

In Rammone wa Kgalagadi the focus is on two worlds: the traditional world and the westernised Christian world. While at the Johannesburg mine, Rammone renounced his traditional life and followed the western ways as indicated by his way of dressing and talking. Rammone was also confused and frightened by the western world. He

went willingly to Johannesburg. He was converted to Christianity in Kimberley and obtained his degrees at Fort Hare University. He returned home with a converted wife and enlightened his people.

To a Black reader who is not yet converted the book may suggest that Christianity provides a safe route towards a successful life, which is just what the missionaries wanted over, and above, raising hopes of some utopia hereafter. Rammone changed from being a herder to a university graduate with a lifestyle desired by many.

In spite of the different levels of development between the leading characters in Mokwena and Rammone wa Kgalagadi in the end, the striking resemblances, in plot and theme, between the two books points to the latter having taken the former as model. The influence of christianity on both authors is equally evident in their works.

### Motimedi

The author focuses attention on hardships experienced by Blacks. He portrays Christianity as not being the answer to the hardships experienced. Motimedi, because of hardship, is imprisoned for theft. He willingly becomes a Christian and is trained as a teacher. He wants to teach his pupils through the medium of their mother tongue but is opposed by one of the parents who influences the minister. Motimedi ends up as an activist surviving by dint of crime. Thus to him the end justifies the means.

The book seems to encourage the reader to take a broader view of life and look for answers to his problem of being marginalised in the reality around him. Christianity seems to encourage acceptance of worldly problems and hope for a better life in a future world. Motimedi rejects the oppressive situation in which he finds himself and becomes an activist to stop abusive ways of life in which human rights are violated.

### **Sephaphati**

In this book the focus is on the Christian world and the westernised world. Sephaphati experienced hardship in the westernised world. He worked at the Bloemfontein market which was a low paying job meant for Blacks. Blacks were arrested for not being employed and for not paying tax. He staged a cautious protest against the westernised world and became a preacher. This story relates favourably to the Christian's pilgrimage (Loeto la Mokreste) and the prodigal son.

Sephaphati reflects the reality of the then government's attitude to Blacks. The book is written during the National Party government rule which was discriminatory and was oppressive to Blacks. After being exposed to the cruelty of discrimination and oppression Sephaphati is converted. He finds refuge in Christianity and converts others. The book suggests that Christianity makes life bearable to the oppressed. It may also be a means to escape hardship, rather than real conviction and conversion.

It is a subtle encouragement of the reader to bear the injustices of this world patiently, with the hope of a better life hereafter.

### **Matlhoko, Matlhoko**

The legal system denied Blacks to own cattle by limiting the latter to a certain number. The cattle in excess of the given limit were placed in custody of the law and were never retrieved by the owners. This compelled Blacks to seek employment from capitalists. Mpoteng and the others were exploited by their employers who did not pay them a living wage. Forced removals of Blacks from Eersterus to Phelandaba is a violation of human rights. Hostel life to which migrant labourers were exposed dehumanised Mpoteng who ended up having two families and being an illicit drug dealer. This phenomenon characterised all big cities in South Africa under White

supremacist rule. Again human values gave way to the concept that the end justified the means.

Matlhoko, Matlhoko reveals the oppressive laws as a death trap which Blacks must strive to escape for the sake of both present and future generations. He seeks to highlight the dehumanising effect of the evil apartheid laws as applied to the dispossessed and disenfranchised of the land.

### Masego

Ntsime Molato and two other boys performed a self-dehumanising act by raping Masego in a bus. Baas Schalk as a capitalist violated human rights by flogging his grown-up workers for every error they committed. Schalk exploited his workers by not sharing the economic profit of the farm and also exploited their women sexually. Exploitation, oppression, physical and sexual abuse compelled farm workers to revolt against their boss, Schalk. Kgabo was given a death sentence for killing his employer, Schalk. Although the latter was killed in self-defence the extenuating circumstances are not taken into consideration for the simple reason that he was black. The legal system protected the oppressive white employer.

In an attempt to retain the oppressive laws against blacks, political activists were silenced. Mgoma was placed under house arrest and was eventually killed. The police who were enforcing the oppressive legal system massacred school children who were in a peaceful march against the oppressive school system. The divide-and-rule approach of the oppressive government led to the emergence of homelands. In an attempt to prevent Bophuthatswana Independence being successful, school children acted against the government of the homeland. They assaulted the campaigner, Ntsime Molato and burnt the government car.

The book suggests that the situation in which Blacks find themselves is such that it demands immediate solutions. When cruel and hideous crimes such as the killing of children by those who claim to uphold the law are perpetrated, then action against the law should be taken immediately. Mokae, was aware of all these injustices, and the only way he could speak up was through his pen. He presents these realities forcefully and with crystal clarity.

#### **4.2 CONCLUSION**

In Mokwena and Rammone wa Kgalagadi the authors condemn traditional practices and uphold Christianity. In Motimedi the author resists to promote the Christian ideology.

In Sephaphati the author upholds Christianity and condemns westernised life. In Matlhoko, Matlhoko and Masego the authors write about the hardships experienced by Blacks under the oppressive White government.

What an author writes is commonly influenced by his past. This is illustrated in Maphike's thesis (1991) in Albert Nqheku's Arola naheng ea Maburu. Nqheku was a teacher and catechist for more than thirty years. He was a staunch Catholic. His daughter remembers how he used to tell them about uneducated Blacks who suffered while working on the Free State farms and in Johannesburg, where a labourer could be punished for getting tired in the middle of a task. Labourers were unable to communicate in the white man's language and this was a disadvantage to them because they were always in fear of being flogged, while there was nowhere to hide or to appeal. Nqheku reflects this in his novel, Arola.

A look at the authors' backgrounds and circumstances will shed more light as to why they say what they say.

**4.2.1 MOLOTO, D.P.** was born on August 6, 1910 at Welgeval, in the Rustenburg district which is situated in the now North-West Region. He was first taught by his father, the Rev. S.D. Moloto of Witfontein. D.P. Moloto went on to Stofberg Memorial School to obtain his Teacher's Certificate. This was an NG Kerk missionary institution. He was appointed principal of the Holfontein School in 1930, he continued private studies, taking both the Junior Certificate and the Afrikaans Certificate in 1935. He received his B.A. degree in 1939 from Fort Hare University College and, while working on his degree, completed his first novel, Mokwena which was first published in 1942, about four years after he completed the work. The subtle influence of Calvinist indoctrination of predestination is evident in the advocacy of hope in the hereafter.

His teaching and educational posts were: Bethesda Practising School; Emmarentia Geldenhuys Secondary School (1939-41). The chieftaincy idea used in the novel could have been taken from the Bafokeng tribe of Rustenburg. While at Emmarentia, Moloto wrote Motimedi.

Moloto's father was a minister of religion. According to his biography he was first taught by his father, Rev. S.D. Moloto. The idea that Rev. Maledu in Mokwena taught children to sing and articulate verses from the Bible at Mosita could have been taken from home by the author. The main objective of the missionaries was to Christianise Blacks and gain control over them. The use of English in the Missionary Schools can be seen as a way of preparing Blacks to be better servants who can communicate in English, thereby making life easier for the White masters. Tribal Blacks were a threat to White government because they could not accept that their land could be confiscated by the latter. Christianising Blacks can be seen as a way of softening them and thereby preventing their reaction to unfair white government land ownership. It can therefore be concluded that the main objective was coupled with evil intentions. In spite of their evil objectives, Blacks have to be grateful to missionaries for having

brought literacy to them earlier on D.P. Moloto was from a Christian family. It is therefore not surprising that he also was a Christian. He saw the need to proceed with the Christianising task.

In his attempt to Christianise the reader, Moloto is against polygamy. Moloto's character, Mokwena, was instructed by the tribal council to marry his cousin. He refused because he was already married. Marrying more than one wife would be against the teachings of the Bible.

In Motimedi Moloto chooses a social theme, oppression creates criminals, in contrast to the religious theme in Mokwena. He is possibly motivated by the increasing crime he witnessed among Blacks, with poverty being the root of the evil. The latter is coupled with homelessness, unemployment, theft and frustration. The social theme suggests that social problems were gaining priority in the author's life spectrum. He deemed it necessary to encourage the reader to focus attention on social evils which were promoted by oppression. This oppression is two-fold: there is racial oppression — Whites being oppressive to Blacks. And economic oppression — the haves being oppressive to the have-nots, irrespective of colour and creed. It is possible that the theme was encouraged by the social injustice which was prevalent in South Africa. Not only Moloto but also other authors like Nqheku who wrote **Arola naheng ea Maburu** chose to sensitise readers about the problem. According to Fowler, the social injustice in South Africa had government backing because of the Rustenburg constitutional law of 1858 which states that

"it was specially stated in the constitution that there was to be no equality between blacks and whites, not even in the administration of justice (Maphike 1991: 195)."



The inequality in South Africa was also economic. Employers were at liberty to exploit employees because they had no legal protection. In Motimedi, Monyamane was exploited by his employer who paid him a meagre wage which led to his family falling apart. Mine workers in Motimedi had very little chance for survival because they also were paid wages below bread-line. Crime against society was so glaring and cruel that it could not be left unattended by authors, social activists and whoever saw it fit to voice his disapproval.

It is evident that oppression, which was rife in South Africa, after being exposed by all those who sensitised the oppressed citizen could not continue. A process of transformation was bound to start. The legal system which encouraged the oppression was bound to give way to a non-oppressive legal system.

**4.2.2 SEBONI, M.O.M.** was born on July 9, 1912 at Molepolole, old Bechuanaland Protectorate, now Botswana. He was primarily a novelist, studied at Molepolole Primary School. Later he went to Fort Hare University College (1934-36), taking the B.A. and the University Education Diploma. He completed his M.Ed. in 1946 and B.Ed. in 1947 at Fort Hare. He won a D.Ed. degree in 1956 with the dissertation "The South African Native College, Fort Hare, (1903-1954)", and a Ph.D. (1958) from the University of South Africa.

His positions, mostly in education, have been as a teacher at several schools near his home town. He also served as principal (1940-1951) of the Nigel United Christian School, Transvaal, which, with Cedric Phatudi, he improved into the Charterston Secondary School. He was also Senior Lecturer and Department Head of Fort Hare Bantu Languages Department (1951-1953); named Senior Lecturer, Department of Education (1953); Councillor to the Paramount Chief of the Bakwana Tribe in

Bechuanaland Protectorate, Chief Ngari Sechele II. He became Professor of Empirical Education, Fort Hare, and a member of Fort Hare's Advisory Council and Senate.

Beginning to write in his mid-30's, his first work was a novel, Rammone wa Kgalagadi. His other novels are Kgosi Isang Pilane (1961), Kgosi Sebele II (1956) and Molema, Ngaka Modiri (1965). Gerard (1981: 217) explains that these novels utilise a real educating language. He also wrote folktales, KOKETSA-KITSO YA LEKATSHE in 1954. In 1949 he published a volume of Setswana poems Maboko Maloba le Maabane. He compiled Setswana idioms, riddles and proverbs to a book called Diane le Maele a Setswana. Together with Prof. E.P. Lekhela they wrote Setswana poems and called it Boka Sentle. He translated the following William Shakespeare's into Setswana: King Henry IV (Kgosi Henry wa bone) and Merchant of Venice (Morekisi wa Venisi). He also wrote a mathematics book in English.

Seboni evidently brought his knowledge of Tswana chieftaincy to bear in his novel, and coupled it with his experiences in the missionary schools of the time, bringing out missionary aims.

M.O.M. Seboni's life experiences are reflected in his novel, Rammone wa Kgalagadi. He attended missionary schools and therefore was Christianised. Through his book he attempts to Christianise the readers. The aim of the missionaries, among others, was to alienate Blacks from their traditional values and customs. In his book Seboni encourages the reader towards a hygienic way of life taught by missionaries. Seboni encourages the reader to abstain from intoxicating drinks probably because he personally witnessed how corrosive liquor is to good character and social values. Seboni encourages the reader towards western style clothing which, in the then transitional period, is more socially acceptable. He did not only attempt to Christianise his readers but also to convert them. The latter was the ultimate aim of missionaries in

order to gain control over Blacks, together with other objectives mentioned under D.P. Moloto.

Seboni was a teacher, and during his teaching career, teaching and preaching were going hand in hand because schools were controlled by missionaries. It is interesting to note that Rammone, Seboni's character in Rammone wa Kgalagadi was also a teacher and a preacher. Malao, S.J. in his dissertation says this: "Many events in Rammone wa Kgalagadi agrees with M.O.M. Seboni's experiences and life history (1990: 113)".

On completion of his studies, Seboni taught near his home town. His character, Rammone also taught near his home town. Seboni presents his character, Rammone, as someone who brings about positive change in the tribe. Unfortunately, Rammone is faced with a serious problem because the chief of his tribe is troubled by fear of being overthrown. For fear of a ruthless termination of his own life by the chief's assassins, Rammone flees. The latter goes back to his tribe during the rule of the subsequent chief to serve as advisor to the chief. The tribe can now reap good fruit from the positive changes he proposes. The close correlation between Seboni's experiences and those of his character, Rammone, suggests that Seboni's service to the Bechuanaland Protectorate, as the chiefs Councillor, exposed him to the problems with which chiefs are faced — separating friend from foe, and good advice from malicious derailment from a good course.

The theme of Rammone wa Kgalagadi is "perseverance breeds success." The author teaches the reader that whatever he wants to do if he perseveres he will ultimately reach his goal. Rammone started as a herdboyc who could not read or write, but because of perseverance he ended up as a University graduate and an asset to his tribe. The author clearly states in his book that Rammone encountered many

problems before achieving success. His problems were but stepping stones towards higher achievements. This mirrors Seboni himself.

**4.2.3 MOROKE, S.A.** was born on May 19, 1912 on a farm called Smaldeel about 9km from Vereeniging. Because there was no school near his home it was not until he was ten years old that he began attending school in the Vereeniging Location. To be on time for school, he and other children from the farm ran every morning to Vereeniging Location.

After passing the Std VI examination in 1933 he went to the Kilnerton Training Institution where he obtained his Teacher's Certificate in June 1936. After teaching at Bethanie, near Brits, for seven months, he was promoted principal of Snymansdrift School not far from Bethanie and after three years he was transferred to the Springfield Collieries School in the Vereeniging district so that he could be near his home.

When he was still young people told him that he would become a minister of religion one day but at that time ministry was a vocation far away from his mind. In 1939, the Rev. Jacob Mokwena whose sermons always appealed to him considerably encouraged him to join the ministry. This convinced him that there was something rare in him, which people had seen for a long time. He felt that it was his duty to join the ranks of dedicated men who were trying to save souls. As a result he offered himself to the ministry in 1942 and he was accepted by the conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa which stationed him at Bloemhof as a probationer.

In 1945 the Methodist Church sent him to Fort Hare to study for the ministry. While he was there he wrote and passed the Senior Certificate examination. After completing his training for the ministry he was stationed successively at Delmas, Wolmaranstad, Pretoria, Pietersburg, Boksburg, Ventersdorp and Vryburg.

Early in his school days he developed an interest in reading English and Sesotho poems as well as Psalms from the Bible and after he became a teacher he composed poems in Sesotho. He taught some of these poems to his class. His wife and other people who read them advised him to have them published but he was not interested in doing so because they were written in Sesotho. He then began composing poems in Setswana and sent them to Prof. D.T. Cole of the University of the Witwatersrand. Prof. Cole advised him to send his poems to L.D. Raditladi who sent him a long report on them, advising him how to compose poetry. As a result his manuscript was finally published in 1960 under the title Matshotlho.

After becoming a minister of religion he felt that Biblical stories could be understood by children if they dramatised them. Therefore he wrote Biblical sketches to be dramatised by Sunday School children and junior members of the church. Although it was not his original intention to have such sketches published, his attempt resulted in the publication of Puso ya ga Kgosi Faro, Morena Jeso ke Mmoloki and Lobisa Radipitse. These plays were edited by Prof. Cole to whom he is very much indebted.

In trying to write a book of short stories, Moroke experienced much difficulty. His manuscript of short stories, Tsa fa isong, was first rejected by a publisher who advised him to try something else because the writing of a short story was not an easy task. This did not deter him. He felt that it would an honour for him if he could master something difficult. He read books on the technique of the writing of a short story and read English and Afrikaans short stories. With the knowledge thereby gained he rewrote his manuscript of short stories which he translated into English and asked a certain Mrs Graham, then a school teacher at Pietersburg, to read them and give him her opinion. As a result Tsa fa isong was finally published by Better Books in 1967.

Moroke is a moralist par excellence. In all his works he shows concern about the moral life of his people and therefore, he more or less preaches to us through them.

As a result morality plays a leading role in all his works. His novels are:

Sephaphati, 1959

Lonaka lwa mafura a mantsho, 1960

Lehufa le lwa le thuto, 1962

Boa bo ganetsana le botsofe, 1968

Khumo, Segwagwa, e a pharuma, 1971.

What S.A. Moroke experienced in life has influence on his novel, Sephaphati. Moroke grew up in a disadvantaged area and had to walk long distances to school. His character, Sephaphati is also disadvantaged: Sephaphati, like Moroke, travels a long distance to school daily. It seems that some of Moroke's schoolmates became drop-outs like his character Sephaphati. Sephaphati left school at an early age and such an action cannot be justified. He could have braved the situation as did many other children who attend farm schools.

Moroke sees the unfavourable situation in which farm school pupils and most black children elsewhere find themselves as the very reason why they should persevere. Those who are disadvantaged are, more than anyone else, faced with the need to survive the situation and win eventually. They are faced with the greatest need to break loose from the vicious cycle in which they are placed by birth. They have to be the champions of the new era characterised by affluence for blacks; be the forefathers of black children who enjoy scholastic and socio-economic success which they deserve like all people who are prepared to work.

In Sephaphati Moroke looks scornfully at pupils who drop-out of school for reasons that they could have overcome. He preaches to the reader using his character

Sephaphati. In the train back home Sephaphati is a loser, but wise enough to advise others. He tells the youth he meets in the train that he should take care not to be like him. He left school because he lacked courage to persevere - not because he was too disadvantaged to attend school. While advising the young man Sephaphati describes himself as Lucifer who left the heavenly paradise and threw himself into the jungle of destruction.

Being a preacher also surfaces when Moroke compares Sephaphati with the Biblical prodigal son. After spending twenty years in Bloemfontein Sephaphati returns home empty handed with no earthly possession and pleads to be accepted back by those he had deserted. He serves as a good example of what the youth should avoid by staying in school to acquire education which they need to be worthy citizens who can contribute to progress.

**4.2.4 MALOPE, R.M.** was born on April 18, 1944 at GaMosetlha (Makapanstad). He started school at GaMosetlha, and in 1962 he completed his Junior Certificate at Nchaupe II Secondary School. He obtained his Senior Certificate at Hofmeyr High School in Atteridgeville-Pretoria in 1964. He then went to the University College of the North in Pietersburg where he studied B.A.; U. E.D. from 1965 to 1968.

He taught at Moruleng High School (1969-1970) and at Mamelodi (1971). In 1972 he became deputy-principal at GaRankuwa High School. He started as a lecturer at the University of the North in 1973 in the Department of Setswana where he temporarily held the position of the Departmental Head. He then went to Vista University where he lectured in Setswana. He became rector at Taung College of Education. He served as Deputy-Vice Chancellor at the University of Bophuthatswana from September 1987 to June 30, 1988. He was appointed Vice Chancellor at the same university from July 1,

1988 to 1994. He is currently a Professor in the Department of Setswana at the University of North West.

He obtained his B.Ed. degree in 1972 at the University of South Africa. He completed B.A. Honours at the end of 1973 at the University of the North. In 1977 he completed M.A. degree at the University of the North using the following topic: "Tshekatshekotsenelelo ya dipadi tsa ntlha tse tlhano tsa ga D.P.S. Monyaise." (In depth analysis of the first five novels of D.P.S. Monyaise). Matlhoko, Matlhoko (1980) is his first attempt in novel writing. He had also written short stories Mmualebe, which was published in 1982; together with J.E. Setshedi he wrote Thutamedumopuo ya Setswana (The study of phonetics in Setswana) which was published in 1980.

As a black South African Malope knows that migratory laws brought misery to blacks and this is revealed in his book.

"The Group Areas Act of 1950 initiated a policy of wholesale segregation of the entire black, coloured and Asian population. This Act and its associated laws make up the rigid and inhuman framework of apartheid - the physical separation of races (William J. Pomeroy 1971: 20)."

Only black Africans who are employed in "productive" labour may reside in an urban township. They have no rights as such to have wives, children or old folks living with them these people viewed as having no rights and termed "unnecessary appendages" by white officials; the law tears wives and children away from husbands and fathers and forces them to live apart in distant "reserves".

"It is accepted Government policy that the Bantu are only temporarily resident in European areas as long as they offer labour," reads a circular of the



Department of Bantu Administration, dated December 12, 1967 (William J. Pomeroy 1971: 21)."

A character in Malope's novel, Mpotseng, was a victim of this policy. The aim of the white minority South Africans was to keep blacks away from urban areas. No black person was allowed to remain in an urban area or township for longer than 72 hours without a permit. Therefore Mpotseng locked himself up during the day in Mmadisenke's room while waiting for a permit.

Malope wrote about what he probably lived through as a young boy during the removals. People were removed by force from land they owned to reside in rented municipal property. In 1947 the Nationalist Party distributed a programme pamphlet stating their new doctrine that

"The policy of our country should encourage total apartheid as the ultimate goal of a natural process of separate development." (William J. Pomeroy 1971: 15).

The Nationalist Party came into power in 1948 and effected this doctrine. The Group Areas Act of 1950 was also designed to put the above mentioned action into practice. This Act was a two-phased process: the compulsory transfer of the bulk of Africans from wherever they may have been residing to the "homelands", i.e. to the 13 percent of South Africa's land "reserved" for them; and the forcible removal of all non-whites from the central districts of cities and towns to new settlements called "townships" on their outskirts. Black domestic servants in white urban areas were kept in quarters wholly separate from the houses of their employers and the law forbade any connection passage or door. White families were fined £500 for any violation of this law (William J. Pomeroy 1971: 20).

In the merciless shaping of apartheid laws, black Africans were stripped of citizenship, residence, property and family rights. The main objective of this Act was to alleviate the fear of the Afrikaner of being in close proximity to the black majority. There was also fear of consolidation of a black urban proletariat.

"The apartheid mass segregation acts were aimed at creating a black mass of very cheap, unprivileged, semislave labour that can be shifted about at will to satisfy the needs of white-owned enterprises (William J. Pomeroy, 1971: 21)."

The Broederbond, the secret organisation of Afrikaners, instigated the creation of The South African Bureau of Racial Affairs' (SABRA's) Conception of Apartheid in 1947. The Broederbond members consisted of the elite white South Africans including Prime Ministers, i.e. Mr. P.W. Botha, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd and University professors. The aim of SABRA and the Nationalist Party was to segregate the economy, send blacks to homelands, and to employ poor whites in jobs which would be left vacant by the blacks who moved to the homelands. The latter were barren lands without facilities and conveniences, and without industry and other means of livelihood. Because of the poor conditions of the homelands SABRA felt that it had to develop the homelands first. The release of African labour from white economy would, therefore, be a difficult and slow process. Despite SABRA's intentions of developing homelands first, the government was sending people to homelands in great numbers. Malope's characters reflect very accurately Blacks living under such circumstances.

**4.2.5 MOKAE, G.** is an author, medical doctor and a fighter for human rights. He is a member of the liberation movement: Azapo-Azanian people's organisation. He served as a publicity secretary in Azapo in 1990-1993.

He was motivated by his parents Rev. Modisagarekoe Mokae and his wife Lotlamoreng to love Setswana. He first published a short story book in English. He

was thereafter disturbed by the fact that he wrote and improved other languages while his mother tongue lagged behind. It was his belief that Masego would be the first of his other Setswana books.

Dr. Gomolemo Mokae has won the African heritage literary award twice and the Bertrams V.O. literate of Africa award for his Setswana works "Masego", "Kaine le Abele" and "Nnete ke serunya." His detective novel "The secret in my bosom" and short story collection "Short, not Tall stories" have been launched by VIVLIA publishers at SAB Centenary Centre in Johannesburg on June 22, 1996.

Dr. Mokae attended the following primary schools: Khabele at Belabela (Warmbaths); Modimolle at Phahamang (Nylstroom); Micha-Kgasi at Kgabalatsane and Tsogo High School at Mmakau, Ga-Rankuwa. He studied as a medical doctor at the University of Natal. He is currently practising as a doctor in Ga-Rankuwa.

Mokae is an activist who fights for human rights and this is reflected in his novel. He was a pupil at Modimolle Combined School during the Soweto riots in 1976; he witnessed the uprising through the media eye-witnesses and personally.

Mokae uses different characters to convey his message to the reader. Kgabo and other labourers were usually flogged by their employer. The violation of human rights is similar to Nqheku's farm labourers who were flogged for being tired. The maltreatment of Black labourers was politically based in the Rustenburg Constitutional Law of 1858. Perhaps Kgabo felt that his employer violated their human rights and derogated them. Kgabo fought and killed his employer, baas Schalk.

Soweto School pupils in Masego marched in protest against inferior education and the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. The standard of education for Blacks is described in this manner by William J. Pomeroy:

"Education for Africans is not only segregated but is grossly inferior to that given to whites. A Bantu Education Act in 1953 transferred black African education from the provincial and national departments of education to the Department of Native Affairs. (1971: 19)"

The riots in the novel are a replica of the Bophuthatswana school riots in 1976. The Bophuthatswana school pupils were dissatisfied with Bophuthatswana being an independent homeland. It seems that the pupils knew the intention of the National Party — to dump Blacks in undeveloped land and remain in the developed towns and cities of South Africa which is approximately 87 percent of the land. The rejection of independent homelands is also reported in the Cape by Velthuisen in DIE TRANSVALER newspaper with the heading:

Aikôna vir tuislande (No for homelands) — "Ons is die burgers van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika - uit en gedaan. Die stedelike Bantoe in Suid-Afrika is nie gretig of geïnteresseerd om burgers van enige van die tuislande te word nie. So het mnr. A.L. Dwesi, lid van die Plaaslike Bantoe-adviesraad, hier gesê (13 Aug. 1976: 2)."

Vusi Ngoma was banned and given house arrest several times which eventually totalled 15 years. The banning order was due to political books that he wrote. To support this statement, in a book with a title Apartheid Axis, William J. Pomeroy states that:

"In 1963 and 1964 other amendments permitted the detention of persons without trial, as well as the continued confinement without further trial of persons after the expiry of a sentence (1971: 26)."

All these writers use the same raw materials — the *status quo* and prevailing circumstances and influences — but their final products have different ends in view. A much closer look at their respective social backgrounds and values, in relation to other contributory factors, would make an interesting study of Setswana literature as system. This study, therefore, opens the way for more research in Setswana literature.

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