

THE SHORT STORIES OF B.M. MALEFO

BY

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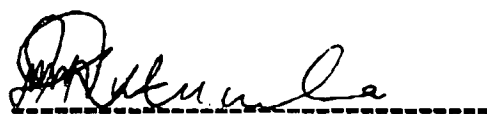
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DECLARATION

I declare that the short stories of B.M.Malefo is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by appropriate references.



Malebo Kutumela



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SUMMARY

The aim of this study is to analyse the Tswana writer B.M.Malefo's, short stories. Narratology played a major role in this analysis. Although the theory, of Rimmon-Kenan formed the basis of the study, the work of other narratologists were used as well.

An interview with Malefo provided biographical details, while she also revealed her interest in writing, particularly in the volume **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** (It is dished up while hot).

With regard to titles and theme, Malefo adopted an old-fashioned approach, namely to state a theme directly through a title. Themes are based on daily problems concerning marriage, love, relationships, et cetera.

Events are presented in an a-chronological order, whilst anachronisms are used to liven up the stories. Credible and motivating characters are presented via different methods throughout all the stories. These characters are located in urban and rural areas and act according to the milieu in which find themselves.

Some recommendations of this study are as follows:

- Firstly, more dissertations on Sotho and Tswana literary works should be done to compete with other developed languages.
- Secondly, Sotho and Tswana writers should benefit from narratological principles.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is die analisering van Malefo se kortverhale. Narratologie as teorie speel 'n belangrike rol in hierdie analise. Rimmon-Kenan se teorie vorm die basis van die studie, maar die werke van ander narratoloë word ook gebruik.

'n Onderhoud met Malefo het biografiese besonderhede verskaf en het ook haar besondere belangstelling in die skryf van verhale, soos **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** (Skep op terwyl dit warm is), openbaar.

Wat titels en tema betref, is daar tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat Malefo 'n ouderwetse benadering gevolg het waarvolgens 'n tema regstreeks deur 'n titel gestel word. Temas is voorts gebaseer op alledaagse probleme wat in die huwelik, met die liefde, menseverhoudinge, ensovoorts, ondervind word.

Gebeure word in 'n a-chronologiese volgorde aangebied terwyl anachronismes plek-plek ingespan word om die verhaal te verlewendig. Geloofwaardige en gemotiveerde karakters word met behulp van verskillende metodes deur al die verhale heen voorgestel. Hierdie karakters bevind hulle in stedelike sowel as landelike gebiede en tree op ooreenkomstig die milieu en leefwêreld waarin hulle hulself bevind.

Die aanbevelings van die studie is soos volg:

- Eerstens word voorgestel dat meer verhandelinge Sotho en Tswana literêre werke geskryf word ten einde met ander ontwikkelde tale te kan kompeteer.
- Tweedens moet Sotho en Tswana skrywers baat vind by narratologiese beginsels.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Aim of the study

The objective of this study is to make a critical analysis of Professor B.M. Malefo's short stories contained in the volume **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** (1985; It is dished up while hot).

The decision motivating this study is the fact that Malefo, in her first attempt of writing short stories in Setswana, contributed a collection of stories of high literary quality. Furthermore, no research has been done on her work. Therefore, this study intends to determine the merits and demerits in her stories.

My insight was enriched by personal communication with Professor Malefo. She commented that she never taught Setswana in her teaching experience. The enriched language of her mother, who would not utter a sentence without an idiomatic expression, motivated her. As a result, her aim in writing **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** was to enrich and develop the language.

1.1.2 Scope

The entire short stories in B.M. Malefo's **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** will be studied. Attention will be focused on title and theme, events and time, characterisation, milieu and space. Other important elements of the short story will be referred to when necessary.

1.1.3 Theory

The investigation in this study will be based on the theory of narratology, as described by one of the structuralists, Rimmon-Kenan. Other theorists' work will be consulted.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Many scholars have tried to define a short story. What is strange and thought provoking about their endeavours, is the difficulty to agree on a fast binding and all embracing definition of this genre, a short story. However, this study will attempt to define the short story by firstly looking at the different existing definitions. Secondly, it will consider some of those characteristics that distinguish a short story from other prose forms, such as the sketch, the anecdote and the folk-tale, which share many similarities. Furthermore, it will point out differences between these genres and a short story.



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1.2.1 The short story

The **Encyclopaedia Britannica** (Vol. 16, 1982:711) states that 'a short story is a kind of prose fiction usually more compact and intense than the novel and the novelette'.

Shaw (1983:343) portrays a short story as

a relatively short narrative (less than 10 000 words) which is designed to produce a single dominant effect, and which contains the element of drama. A short story concentrates on a single character, in a single situation, at a single moment.

Webster (in Vol. III, 1981:2103) defines a short story as 'a brief inverted prose narrative that typically deals with a limited group of characters involved in a single action'. He further says: 'it aims at unity of effect and often concentrates on the creation of mood rather than the telling of a story':

On the other hand, Smith and Hart (1981:8-9) say that 'a modern short story is a distinct literary genre having certain characteristics'. The characteristics are enumerated as follows:

- It is always fictional
- It is seldom more than thirty printed pages in length and it is often less than ten
- It is written in prose, although it may include verse
- It deals with a single unified consideration, either a dramatised incident or something remembered or imagined
- It places strong emphasis on character and human values against a backdrop of contemporary society
- It contains conflict, crisis, climax and resolution, either acted out or implied
- It seeks, like a lyric poem, to make a single point or impression and then subsides.

From the above quoted definitions, the phrases 'single action', 'single situation' and 'moment', highlight the main idea or quality of a well-constructed short story. It goes without saying that, as the name implies, a short story must be short, and there should be a tight unity. Furthermore, the characteristics portrayed by Smith and Hart prove that, although there are certain rules that govern the formation of a short story, these characteristics only serve as a guide and thus no-one is bound to follow them to the letter.

In conclusion, it seems reasonable enough to say that a firm definition of a short story is impossible, for no single theory can encompass the multifarious nature of this genre. As a result, it would be better to understand the form of a short story by observation rather than by definition. For better understanding of a short story, a description is given of other genres to see how they differ or concur with the short story.

1.2.2 Anecdote

It is regarded as a short narrative of an interesting, curious and amusing incident about some real person or event. An anecdote is characterised by human interest and items of unpublished or secret history. It gives a brief explanation of an incident that is originally true about the life of a famous individual. The incidents need not have all the developmental stages of a short story.

1.2.3 Essay

The essay is a discussion of a topic without necessarily aiming at exhausting the subject. According to Webster (in Vol. I, 1982:777), an essay is said to be 'an analytic, interpretative literary composition' and it usually 'deals with a single subject from a limited and often personal point of view, experience or outlook.'

1.2.4 Sketch

Webster (in Vol. III, 1981:2132) defines a sketch as

a short literary composition, somewhat resembling the short story and essay, but being less formal and pointed than these and intentionally slight in treatment, discursive in style and familiar in tone.

The sketch is by nature suggestive and descriptive, and the writer is more an agent of space.

1.2.5 Folktale/Tale

In Webster (Vol. III, 1981:212) it is stated that the folktale is a prose story, traditional in content, transmitted orally through many generations.

In ancient times, the folktale was concerned with speaking, singing and listening. Tales were characteristically anonymous, timeless and placeless. Tales could be characterised by hyperbolic and fantastic incidents.

Some of Molefo's short stories are influenced by the characteristics of folktales, though employed in a sophisticated way. For example, in *Bojang ga bo ipofe*, the narration is typically that of a folktale. There is one character narrating incidents from his youth while they are around a fire at night.



One of the aims of the folktale is to fascinate. As a result, incidents of animals talking are permissible, the aim being to arouse interest. Unlike the folktale, a short story imitates incidents from real life situations. Thus, Pretorius and Swart (1981:12) state that characters around whom a short story is constructed, are people like ourselves.

1.3 THE HISTORY OF TSWANA LITERATURE - THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHORT STORY

This will be done with reference to short stories in the different periods from 1961 to date. Four periods are identified.

1.3.1 The period 1961 to 1970

During this period, M.O.M. Seboni made his presence felt by publishing a collection of short stories, called **Koketsa Kitso ya Lefatshe** (Increase your knowledge about the world) which was published in 1967. This was the first and only volume of a collection of short stories published during this period.

1.3.2 The period 1971 to 1980

Only one collection of short stories titled **Mpolelele Dilo** (Tell me tales) by B.D. Magoleng, was published. In this collection, Magoleng wrote 12 stories, the others being written by J.M. Ntsime, Magoleng's collection of short stories has a carefully constructed plot structure and excellent characterisation.

1.3.3 The period 1981 to 1990

A dramatic change occurred during this period, due to an increase in the publication of short stories. One of the contributing factors could be the fact that the requirement for specialising in a language was probably providing a literary manuscript in some universities. As a result, more than ten volumes were published during that period alone.

In 1981, R.M. Malope published his first collection of short stories under the title **Mmualebe** (The Critic). In this volume, Malope advocates adherence to the old tradition. He says that nowadays we have no direction in life. The following year, 1982, S.A. Moroke made his first attempt in the writing of short stories by publishing **Tsa fa Isong** (Besides the fire).

In 1983, the following volumes were published: **Mosekaphofu** (Fighting for your needs), written by J.E. Setshedi, and **Mantswe a robong** (Nine voices)

by R.M. Malope. The other text by D.B. Magoleng was known as **Mareledi** (Slipperiness).

A year later, P.P. Keamogetswe published a collection of short stories known as **Ikarebele** (Answer for yourself). In the year that followed, two other collections were published, one by J.E. Setshedi, and the other one by B.M. Malefo, namely **Magana go utlwa** (The hard-headed) and **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** (It is dished up while hot) respectively. This research is based on **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** which will be studied thoroughly in the next chapters.

In 1987, three collections were published namely published **Letlhokwa la tsela** (The grass stalk of the road) M.K. Molebaloa, **Mafaratlhatha** (Complications) by O.K. Chikane and, finally **Le pelong** (Suppression) by B.D. Magoleng. In 1990, two collections, namely **Khupamarama** (Secret) and **Ditedu tsa Nkwe** (The beard of a tiger), both written by C.I.S. Thobega, were published.

1.3.4 The period since 1991



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In 1991, B.D. Magoleng made his appearance again, this time with S.F. Motlhake, with their volume **Mokaragana** (Conflict). T.K. Malebye made his first attempt by publishing a collection of stories under the title **Sabobi** (Lost in a known area) in 1991. R.S.A. Noanyane, also made his debut with **Se time tsala** (Share with friends).

Magoleng has been the most productive writer of short stories.

1.4 LIST OF SETSWANA SHORT STORIES

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
1965	Mamepe a Dinotshe	Niemand, J.J.	Educum, Johannesburg

1967	Koketsakitso ya Lefatshe	Seboni, M.O.M.	Educum, Johannesburg
1972	Mpolelele Dilo	Magoleng, B.D. and Ntsime, J.M.	Van Schaik, Pretoria
1974	Ke a go bolelela	Magoleng, B.D.	Van Schaik, Pretoria
1981	Mmualebe	Malope, M.R.	Craft Press, Babelegi
1982	Tsa fa Isong	Moroke, S.A.	Educum, Johannesburg
1982	Mathaithai	Thobega, C.I.S.	Makgonatsotlhe, Gaborone
1983	Mareledi	Magoleng, B.D.	Van Schaik, Pretoria
1983	Mantswe a Robong	Malope, R.M.	Maskew Miller Longman, Cape Town
1983	Mosekaphofu	Setshedi, J.E.	Maikatlaapelo, Mmabatho
1984	Ikarabele	Keamogetswe, P.P.	Dinaledi, Mmabatho
1985	Magana go utlwa	Setshedi, J.E.	Maikatlaapelo, Mmabatho
1985	Bo tsholwa bo le molelo	Malefo, B.M.	De Jager & Haum, Pretoria
1985	O foo, ke fano	Shole, S.J.	De Jager & Haum, Pretoria
1987	Letlhokwa la tsela	Molebaloa, M.K.	Molebaloa, Pretoria
1987	Le pelong	Magoleng, B.D.	Van Schaik, Pretoria
1987	Mafaratlhatlha	Chikane, O.K.	Maikatlaapelo, Mmabatho
1990	Khupamarama	Thobega, C.I.S.	Makgonatsotlhe, Gaborone
1990	Ditedu tsa Nkwe	Thobega, C.I.S.	Makgonatsotlhe, Gaborone
1991	Mokaragana	Magoleng, B.D. and Motlhake, S.F.	Van Schaik, Pretoria
1993	Sabobi	Malebye, T.K.	Shikwane, Mabopane
1993	Se time tsala	Noanyane, R.S.A.	Van Schaik, Pretoria

1.5 STUDIES ON SOTHO SHORT STORIES

Not much has been done concerning studies of Sotho short stories. However, a few dissertations on this genre have seen the light.

1.5.1 Theme, character, setting, style and language in Maditsi's short stories : A critical evaluation by P.L. Boshego (1977)

Here, Boshego concentrated on elements such as characterisation, setting and theme, as deployed in the three volumes by Maditsi, namely **Mogologolo**, **Monyane** and **Dipheko**. All the stories are centred around modern life, traditional life, religion, and culture.

With regard to setting, Boshego shows how milieu can be used as a place of action or as a determinant of a character's behaviour and action.

1.5.2 The short stories of E.M. Ramaila, by A.O. Makwela (1992)

Two short stories by Ramaila that is *Taukobong* (Lion in the blanket) and *Malomatsebe* (One who bites the ear) are studied. They have bearing on the modern life of the South African black man. The basic concern here is the evil that arises from the modern living in both rural and urban areas.

The stories have a moralistic tone, which is based on aspects such as crime, religion, theft and superstitious beliefs. Makwela also focuses on the plot and characterisation of these stories.

1.5.3 *Tshekatsheko ya Kgotlhang mo dikhutshweng tsa Setswana* by S.A. Sekgobela (1993)

The aim of this study was to show conflict in short stories. Different short stories were chosen from a vast number of published short stories.

Furthermore, it showed that conflict was introduced at the beginning of the stories. The study also revealed that the building of conflict needed competence.

1.6 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PROFESSOR B.M. MALEFO

Professor Malefo was born in Roodepoort West, in the year 1939. She received her primary education at St Angela, situated near Roodepoort and at Gopane Stad. She completed her Junior Certificate in Lichtenburg and matriculated at Morris Isaacson High School in Soweto. Professor Malefo is known as 'Sis B'.

Her first employment experience was gained in Zeerust at Moshana Primary School, from 1959 - 1972. She was then approached to assist in the teaching of South Sotho at Mncube Junior Secondary School, in Soweto. She was there for 13 years before moving to Nchaupe High School to serve as Vice-Principal.

Professor Malefo has shown her dedication and professionalism in the Department of Education from 1959 to date. She occupied different positions in the teaching and lecturing fraternity, for example Rector, Vice-Rector, Head of Educational Studies Department at Tlhabane College of Education and Principal of Khamanyane High School. She is presently Education Officer, specialising in the administration and co-ordination of in-service training of teachers and other related programmes.

Professor Malefo has written a number of books, radio drama and articles, namely:

(a) Books in Setswana

- (i) **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** - short stories. De Jager-Haum (1984)
- (ii) **Obakeng** – novel. Educum (1987)

- (iii) **Go gola go tlhogola** - drama based on the novel Obakeng. Educum (1991)
- (iv) **Dinaane tsa Gaetsho** - folklore, co-author with Rantau. De Jager-Ahaum (1993)

(b) Radio Drama

Khumo le Lehuma di robala ntlo e le nngwe. It was written for and has been presented by Radio Setswana.

(c) Articles

- (i) Implications for nursing profession - Popagano. In: Republic of Bophuthatswana Educational Journal, December 1991, Vol. 1.
- (ii) Maintaining an appropriate balance between stated goals and their implications. In: Tlhabane College Magazine, 1990.
- (iii) The college curricula and the searching for quality and relevance with special reference to affiliated colleges in Bophuthatswana. In: Tlhabane College Magazine, 1989.

What is most remarkable and interesting about 'Sis B', is the fact that she never offered Setswana as a subject in her teaching profession. She inherited this talent from her mother, Tebogo, who is presently 84 years old. In my conversation with her, she said:

I was motivated mostly by my mother. I inherited the richness of the Tswana language from her Each statement she uttered was an idiomatic expression, but my mother was not aware of it.

Her main aim in writing was to enrich the Setswana language. Her first attempt at writing was **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** while she was still a student at the University of the North. It was found to be the best and was awarded first prize in De Jager-Haum Literary competition and second prize in the Sol Plaatjie Literary

competition. Consequently a Honorary Professorship was conferred on by the then Bophuthatswana University.

1.7 COMPOSITION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 2 will examine title and theme. Various views concerning the choice of title and its relevance to the theme will be studied. A discussion of various themes will also be necessary.

Chapter 3 will focus on events and time and whether events are characterised by anachronies or not.

Chapter 4 will deal with character and characterisation. I will evaluate Malefo's portrayal of characters and assess characterisation.

In Chapter 5 the milieu and space will be studied. The function and importance of setting and space will be analysed.

Chapter 6 will include the conclusions and the general assessment of all aspects scrutinised.



CHAPTER 2

TITLE AND THEME

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed what a short story is, and how it differs from other sub-genres, attention will now be focused on the themes as portrayed in Molefo's stories. This will be done with special reference to different critics' views about theme. Lastly we will consider Molefo's titles, topics and themes, as deployed in **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** will be considered.

2.2 DEFINITIONS

2.2.1 Title

A title can be defined as the name of the heading of a story.

2.2.2 Topic

With regard to fiction, a topic is the shortest possible summary of what is to be presented.

2.2.3 Theme

Theme is the strongest factor contributing to the unity of the story. As Fenson and Kritzer (1966:66) confirm: (Theme) 'is the intellectual stratum upon which the structure of the story is built'.

Pretorius and Swart (1981:128) say:

Theme is what a story means, what it says to us, and its results from the integration of plot, character, emotions and symbolism. Theme is the sum total of everything that takes place in a story plus the effect all this has on the mind of the reader.

Theme may be stated directly or implicitly. Stating it directly is considered by some critics as an old-fashioned procedure, and the danger may be enforcing an idea upon the reader.

The aspects title, topic, and theme cannot be separated as they are closely related. For instance, a title can be an indication of the topic of the story. A topic, then, leads to a particular insight. The title of the story may be 'Money is the root of all evil'. The topic may be 'crime', and the message may be 'crime does not pay'. Message is but one aspect of a theme.

2.3 TITLES USED IN MALEFO'S STORIES

Titles used by Malefo are proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Generally, they are used to teach, warn and enlighten people, and Malefo is no exception to this rule. Malefo used the following titles:

2.3.1 *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo* (It is dished up while hot)

With this expression, Malefo gives an indication that, when there are problems, they need to be attended to immediately before it is too late. If not, such problems can become worse and bring about something undesirable. The reader's interest is aroused by the title, which encourages him/her to read further.

2.3.2 *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube* (When things go wrong completely)

According to the content of this story, the title refers to when one experiences a bad day or time. It is bad, because things are not as they ought to be; there are some abnormalities in life, and they need to be normalised through calm emotions.

2.3.3 *Motlhodi wa motho* (Influence of a person)

Here Malefo used the first part of the proverb *Motlhodi wa motho o gaisa wa ting*. This expression means that the things one learns as an adult can be bad and dangerous compared to things that are inherent. The latter things are likely to be more controllable than the acquired ones.

2.3.4 *Bana khumo* (Children are the wealth)

This is an idiomatic expression indicating the wealth one receives from God. In this case, children are blessings from God; if one is not blessed, then one will have emotional disturbances that ultimately create problems.

2.3.5 *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana* (Hasty actions bare no good fruits)

The complete proverb is *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana, modikologa pholo e tona*. Malefo indicates that time is important when making decisions; failure to do this, often leads to frustration and disappointment.

2.3.6 *Go sa bitseng motho* (Talk of the devil)

The proverb as a whole runs *Go sa bitseng motho go bitsa Modimo* (Talk of the devil, the devil comes). The implication here is that, when one thinks or talks of someone/something, that person/thing one is talking about can appear. This is actually what is happening to characters in this story.

2.3.7 *Bothale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng* (Wisdom knows no age)

This proverb indicates that adults can learn something valuable from the young ones. Malefo, advises that ideas of other people should be respected, irrespective of age.

2.3.8 *Bojang ga bo ipofe* (Unity is power)

Here, Malefo teaches us that problems being solved by people who are not on good terms with each other will definitely bring out unfair and unsatisfactory results, as opposed to the ones solved by those who are united. Malefo clearly delivers the idea that in unity there is power.

2.3.9 *O se bone thola borethe* (All that glitters is not gold)

The complete the proverb reads *O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba* (All that glitters is not gold). It means that assessing or judging a person on physical appearance, is not always right, as appearance often hides reality, thus beauty is not always good.

2.4 TOPICS AND THEMES

Titles used in Malefo's short stories can be seen as a summary of a story's topic and theme. Her topics reveal experiences about social problems, which include people of all status in the society, especially women. They are about everyday life situations. The reader has the opportunity of identifying himself with characters and with events happening in the story.

In the nine stories recorded in **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo**, two main related topics are emphasised, namely love and morals.

2.4.1 Stories dealing with love

Of the nine stories by Malefo, only two deal with love. They are *O se bone thola borethe* and *Go sa bitseng motho* I). In these stories female characters are faced with problems concerning their love affairs.

In the story *O se bone thola borethe* Malefo is warning readers through Motsei, a lady teacher, who is a widow, about the painted gold that can mislead people. Motsei finds herself attracted to Poifo whose profession is dubious. Poifo does not love Motsei, instead he uses her to look after his only daughter, Mmethile, while he is doing his evil deeds at night. He abuses her sexually, pretending that he loves her.

Poifo is handsome. Throughout the story his physical appearance concealed his true personal trait. Poifo is a real '*thola e e borethe*' (painted gold) that glitters at first sight. His true colours are revealed in these words:

Motsei, seleele sa sematlanyana, o tlanona pelo ka mathe o nkemela gore soomang? O tlogele go nna o bua matlakala....Ke ne ke go dirisa fela Motsei. (1985:123)

(Motsei, you foolish idiot! How long are you going to wait for me? You'd better stop talking that rubbish! I used you in order to achieve what I wanted.)

The implied message in this story is that love is blind. Motsei cannot discern that Poifo is a radical man not capable of true love.

The topic of love is portrayed in the story *Go sa bitseng motho* (Talk of the Devil), through the life of Dikeledi, the only daughter of the wealthy family of Phiri in Soweto. Mr and Mrs Phiri think their wealth will lead Dikeledi to a happy marriage.

On the contrary, Dikeledi knows that the ingredients of a happy marriage are love and commitment.

Mr and Mrs Phiri try to force Dikeledi to marry Mothobatho, who is also rich. Dikeledi, realising that marriage is a lifetime commitment, cannot come to terms with the demands of her parents. She runs away from her home and parents. At Dikhudu village, she meets a man called Kathotha, who wins her heart. She is now ready to commit herself.

Dikeledi, having found what was best for her, returns home and asks her parents' blessings. This is a lesson to her parents that love and commitment, rather than material things, can bring an everlasting relationship. As a result, Mr and Mrs Phiri decide not to kill the goose that laid the golden egg because kissing goes by favour (*pelo e ja serati*) - one's heart is satisfied by what one loves most.

2.4.2 Stories dealing with morals

It was stated earlier on that Malefo used titles that are in the form of proverbs and idiomatic expressions. These expressions teach, warn and give advice so as to build human personality. Social and emotional aspects are developed through morals. Malefo is no exception in this regard, she gives moral education through the titles used in **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo**.

The stories dealing with moral education are the following:

- *'Motlhodi wa motho'*
- *'Bana Khumo'*
- *'Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana'*
- *'Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng'*
- *'Bojang ga bo ipofe'*
- *'Bótsholwa bo le molelo and'*

- *'Fa bo sele bo se na mahube'*

The moral lesson in the story *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube* is that one should not cry over spilt milk. This is revealed through the life of Nkgomotsang, who is the mother of three children. She tragically lost one of her sons, Mofeti, and mourns for him.

During the mourning period Nkgomotsang neglects her family, forgetting their needs, also forgetting her beloved husband, Ketshwerebothata. Her mourning continues despite the advice and comforting words she receives from her two children and husband. Nkgomotsang forgets that Mofeti had passed away and that she will never see him again, but she continues to mourn.

Her mourning affects the lifestyle of the family. Her constant mourning forced the family to engage in dangerous situations in order to please her. For instance, Pheko, the brother of Mofeti, goes to the dangerous spot where Mofeti died, with the aim of calling him back, to satisfy his mother. This dangerous act taught Nkgomotsang that her attitude had caused much suffering in the family. She realises that she had cried over spilt milk, and had gained nothing good, and as a result she decides to change her lifestyle.

In the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo* Malefo presents the moral teaching by revealing the relationship between the new bride, Tsholofelo and her mother-in-law. Tsholofelo, an orphan, was pregnant when she married. She expects a warm welcome from her mother-in-law, MmaThebe, since her husband, Thebe, is the only child and son in the family. To her disappointment, they led a life like that of incessant fighting.

The traditional gap between Tsholofelo and MmaThebe brings problems in the family. Traditionally, daughters-in-law are treated and regarded as slaves, whereas the modern ones expect to have a helper in the family. MmaThebe expects Tsholofelo to act like a real daughter-in-law of the old tradition, but to her

surprise Tsholofelo does not bother to help at home, but concentrates on what pleases her most: listening to loud music.

MmaThebe shouts at her, but Tsholofelo just listens to her music and never talks to her-mother-in-law. She would only engage in conversation at night when her husband, Thebe, returns from work. Despite all the hardships she endures through her mother-in-law, she endured all problem encounters. On the other hand, MmaThebe also perseveres in what Tsholofelo is doing to her. Eventually this led to success, for the two became friends after Tsholofelo had given birth to a baby girl and named her after MmaThebe. It really shows that tolerance pays and perseverance is the mother of success.

In the story *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng* Malefo reveals that life is a combination of happiness and sorrow. When someone is happy others might be unhappy. That is life, and people experience problems on a daily basis. When faced with problems, one should thus be bold, meeting the challenges, seeking advice, fighting and not giving up.

Malefo reveals this through the life of Matsetsele, who is married to Mokgaotsi. In happier days Mokgaotsi became involved in an extra-marital affair with Koloti, and this brings about a separation between Mokgaotsi and Matsetsele.

Koloti and Mokgaotsi are madly in love and neglect Koloti's son, Ontiretse. Ontiretse, realising that Koloti is no longer a loving, caring and merciful mother, tries to find pleasure and something to eat outside the home. Stealing is the ultimate thing he does. Matsetsele realises the problem that Ontiretse is faced with. She approaches him, showing love and care, and in the end Ontiretse is relieved and happy, and promises to change his lifestyle.

On the other hand, Matsetsele, realising that she had helped Ontiretse, wishes that she could have found someone to talk to after Mokgaotsi had left her for Koloti. She realises that to be divorced from Mokgaotsi is not the end of life. Life

has to go on in spite of problems and hardships. The advice she gave Ontiretse concerning his faults (stealing) has made her wise and able to correct her own faults. Hence, by other's faults, wise men correct their own.

In the story *Bojang go bo ipofe*, Christmas day is a red-letter day for the family of the late Mmapema. The moral teaching the late Mmapema delivered to her children before her death was that they must always remember that in unity lies power. This was learnt and practised by her sons-in-law.

One of her sons-in-law, Morakile, initiates a get-together at the late Mmapema's place. The celebration is to serve two purposes. Firstly it was to fulfil ritual obligation. The proverb *Baswi ba a bona* (Malefo 1985:78) means that those who are dead are able to see and hear and consequently bless the living ones. This is a traditional belief of the Batswana. Secondly, the get-together served as a lesson and a reminder to Morakile's family that in unity is power. As young couples they should also know that children should be reared and nurtured in a good way by their parents/elders and that they should always listen to good advice from the elders, hence the title *Bojang ga bo ipofe* (Children cannot build themselves on their own, but should be helped). Thus, in the end they are all prepared to work as a team, to prove the fact that in unity lies power. They also had to accept that elders are important in the lives of the young ones.

The power of unity is emphasized by aunt Seboko when she says: "A go se nne phefo epe e e re tsenang gare" (Malefo 1985:84; Let there be no intruders or anything that will mislead us in whatever we want to achieve). In other words, let us be a united family.

The theme of this story directly states that in unity lies power. This may be regarded as an old-fashioned way of presentation, but it serves to educate readers. This also proves that Malefo's titles can be seen as topics and themes.

Moral teaching is also presented in the story *Bana khumo* through the life of Gabanthate, who is so blessed with wealth and who has servants to take care of her property. They were really treated like slaves and Gabanthate was the master. But all this could not make her happy and never satisfied her. She wanted to have a child. This dissatisfaction causes her to be in a bad mood; she is always in a temper, which leads to the fact that she cannot keep a servant for longer than two months as no servant can tolerate her behaviour.

Her temper will rise especially when she sees children. She becomes angry with God and expresses her anger to any child she came across. This happens to Korwe, the son of Seabotseng who was once Gabanthate's beloved servant. This leads Gabanthate and Seabotseng into a quarrel which ended in a dramatic way, for, instead of Seabotseng being chased out of Gabanthate's house, Gabanthate by confession, brought her problem of having no children to light.

This confession settles their disputes Seabotseng and all her servants. The moral teaching portrayed in this story is that one must learn to accept wholeheartedly the way God has created every one and things that are created for oneself. One should also accept every gift, no matter how cheap or small it may be. Lastly, learn to accept that children are blessings from God, hence the title *Bana Khumo* - children are wealth from God.

In the story *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana*, Malefo brings to the fore the idea that charity begins at home. The moral teaching conveyed here is that one has to do good to one's family before concentrating on neighbours.

The insufficient salary of Mosala, the husband of Gadifele, brings this lesson home. Realising this problem, Gadifele tried to relieve their financial burden by working at the supermarket near their home. Yes indeed, this eased their financial situation but it causes some disturbances in their social life. She always arrives home late in the evening, and can no longer cook for her family. Things become

worse when she is no longer able to accompany Mosala to the stadium, for Mosala was a keen soccer player.

Serious tension occurs when Gadifele refuses to satisfy Mosala sexually and this discourages Mosala badly as a husband. Mosala thinks that a trip to Durban might ease and solve their marriage problem, but he is disappointed because Gadifele rejects the invitation. She is disappointed and angry that Mosala decided hastily before thinking about this matter. He joins his friends on a trip to Durban. He doesn't enjoy anything and returns home a day after his departure. He finds nobody at home, searches for his family and finds them at his parents' home. Mosala realises that he acted hastily and asks for forgiveness. They start a new life and practise the saying 'Charity begins at home'.

In the story *Motlhodi wa motho* (Inborn traits build better than the learnt ones), tension builds up around Gaorutwe, the main character, who is subjected to a number of problems, including shyness, especially when in public. Her husband, Banthala, tried a few times to make her feel confident, but he failed.

The cause of the problem was Banthala, who tried to cure Gaorutwe's shyness by a glass of punch mixed with liquor during their party hoping that she will feel free to welcome visitors. Gaorutwe started to enjoy a glass of wine even on ordinary days at home. She keeps taking a glass or two until she is unable to stop. She even believes that her act of stealing liquor is a secret to her husband, forgetting that she is making a habit of stealing and not realising that she will eventually be caught.

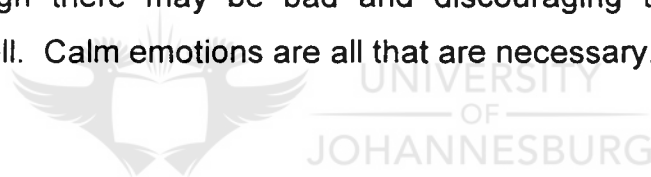
Gaorutwe's style of living affects Banthala at home and even at work. Banthala is eventually dismissed from work. His dismissal is a blessing in disguise because on his arrival at home he manages to save his baby from drowning in the bath, because Gaorutwe is drunk and helpless. When she had recovered from her intoxication she decided to be a changed person even though it is difficult to change without experiencing problems. This shows that teaching adults new

things can be dangerous. The title is thus borne out that one can control his/her inborn trait more easily than those that one had learnt or acquired.

2.5 CONCLUSION

As stated earlier, to state a theme directly through the title of the story is old-fashioned and Malefo is no exception to this rule. She has adopted this style in stories such as, *Motlhodi wa motho* and *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana* in which the themes are directly stated.

Secondly, it was found that Malefo uses idiomatic expressions and proverbs as titles that are relevant to the content. The titles direct the reader towards the theme. In all the stories Malefo reveals female problems. Ladies of different status are faced with problems with regard to marriage, love, money, good relationships with husbands, *et cetera*. Above all, the title of the book indicates that, even though there may be bad and discouraging things in life, all will eventually be well. Calm emotions are all that are necessary.



CHAPTER 3

EVENTS AND TIME

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at establishing the nature and arrangement of events in Malefo's short stories.

3.2 EVENTS

Rimmon-Kenan (1983:15) defines event as a 'thing that happens'. An event leads to change, as a result a story is made up of different events, in different situations effected by different subjects. A story is the result of a combination of micro- and macro-sequences of events.

Events can be described according to possibility, process and outcome stages as stated by Rimmon-Kenan (1983:22). These stages can be arranged according to embedding, joining or enchainment. The use of these different arrangements depends on the author's purpose of the story, which is to be presented. Furthermore, events can constitute either improvement or deterioration, though others cannot be identified in this way.

3.3 EVENTS IN *BO TSHOLWA BO LE MOLELO*

The manner in which events are presented depends largely on the author's priorities and the aims or objectives thereof. Based on the idea suggested by the title of the volume, *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*, it is believed that Malefo's aim in writing these stories is to show her readers that, normally, there are problems that

cause disturbances. These problems need to be resolved immediately so that life can return to normal again.

All Malefo's stories are characterised by improvement. In her stories she tries to show that a state of disequilibrium between characters will always be there but that problems need to be resolved immediately, so that all may end well.

In the story *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng* the story starts with a state of disequilibrium in which Mokgaotsi, the husband of Matsetsele, decides to end their marriage. This is caused by his newly-found lover, Koloti, who, in turn, neglects her son and concentrates on her love for Mokgaotsi. The neglected son, Ontiretse, tries to find happiness and food outside his home and he ends up stealing other people's property. He steals a packet of sweets from the supermarket where Matsetsele is working. Matsetsele then spends time to bring Ontiretse back to a normal life, and shows him that he can still do well without his mother's care. Ontiretse's attitude to live changes when Matsetsele, in turn, realises that life can still go on without her husband Mokgaotsi. She has found a new lover, Legadima, and the disequilibrium caused by the problems in her marriage is resolved and everybody experiences happiness.

The principle of improvement is also realised in the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*. The story begins with a state of equilibrium where MmaThebe and Thebe are leading a happy life. The disequilibrium is caused by the love affair between Thebe and Tsholofelo. Thebe's mother cannot accept Tsholofelo, as a result their social life suffers, and tension and disharmony ensued. They lived in the same house without talking to one another. This terrible state is resolved when Tsholofelo gives birth to a baby girl who is named after her mother-in-law. MmaThebe then accepts Tsholofelo as her daughter-in-law. With regard to sequence, most of Malefo's short stories are characterised by embedding and enchainment.

Malefo makes use of the embedding technique in several stories, such as, *O se bone thola borethe*, *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa bo tswa pphalaneng*, *Bojang ga bo ipofe* and *Fa bo sele bo sena mahube!*

In *Bojang ga bo ipofe* the sequence of events dealing with the announcement of the engagement between Seloko and Seabelo is embedded in the sequence of events dealing with Christmas. As a result, the two events are celebrated on one day. Through this technique Malefo captures her readers' interest.

In the story, *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*, the sequence of events are related to Pheko's absenteeism from school lessons because he visits the place where his brother, Mofeti died. His aim is to call him (Mofeti) back to life. This event is embedded in the sequence of events dealing with Nkgomotsang's (Pheko's mother) mourning and visits to the cemetery every morning. During this times neglect her children, including Pheko, and returning late in the afternoon after visiting the grave. Pheko fails to attend school to satisfy his mother. This is a childish act but it causes Nkgomotsang to accept the stressful situation she has caused within the family; as a result she changes her style of living. Her change also brings about an improved lifestyle within the whole family.

The technique of enchainment serves to show the results of a sequence of events. In the story *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana* the events start with a state of equilibrium where Mosala finds himself happily married to Gadifele. They have two children, a house and a new car. The disequilibrium is brought about by financial problems. Mosala's salary can no longer fulfill all their needs. Gadifele gets a job, at a supermarket. Tension builds up when Gadifele concentrates solely on her job, neglecting her family to such an extent that she forgets that she has a husband. Mosala, on the other hand, realises that his wife has no interest in him, and she decides to find happiness outside the home. He prefers to please his friends rather than his family. Everything comes back to normal when Mosala realises that his friends cannot really replace his wife. He reconciles with his wife and the story ends in improvement.

Enchainment is also used in the story *Bana Khumo*, in which the events begin with Seabotseng's family moving from Sophiatown to Meadowlands. There Seabotseng finds a job in her neighbourhood. The owner of the house, Gabanthate is very rich, but childless. Their relationship started out well (equilibrium), both understanding and enjoying each other's company. The frustration of being childless causes disequilibrium. This led to quarrels almost every day, especially when Seabotseng brings her children along to work. Seabotseng manages to solve Gabanthate's problem. She trusted Seabotseng to such an extent that she reveals to her the secret of being childless, and refers to it as the main reason causing her temper to flare high and uncontrollable on a daily basis. Their relationship returns to normal again and the story ends with an improvement.

From the discussion above it can now be concluded that Malefo prefers to write stories about improvement. All the techniques she uses in the presentation of events, starting with a state of equilibrium or disequilibrium, finally lead to the establishment of a state of equilibrium, which is an improvement.

3.4 TIME

Rimmon-Kenan (1983:46) distinguished three different aspects of the management of time in fiction namely order, duration and frequency.

3.4.1 Order

Order is the relation between the succession of events in the story and their linear disposition in the text, according to Rimmon-Kenan (1983:46). Order answers the question: 'When did an event take place and when is it narrated?'

The order in which story events are narrated need not necessarily be chronological; it may also be in an a-chronological order. The latter is referred to

as anachronies. Genette (in Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:46) uses the term 'anachrony' to refer to all forms of temporal deviations between story order and text order, such as prolepsis and analepsis that are the terms employed in this study.

Rimmon-Kenan (1983:46) states that analepsis is a narration of a story event at a point in the text after later events have been told. In this regard, the narrator returns to a past point in the story. Prolepsis, on the other hand, is a narration of a story event at a point before earlier events have been mentioned. This implies that the narration takes an excursion into the future of the story. Analepsis fills the gaps in the narration while prolepsis has a linking function it replaces the suspension of: 'What will happen next?' by another kind of suspension revolving around the question: 'How is it going to happen?'

Analepses occur in the stories *Go sa bitseng motho*, *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*, *O se bone thola borethe*. In the latter story, the first story event is the relationship between Motsei and Tatlhego. Then follows the event where Motsei trains as a teacher, then she gets married to Tatlhego. After completing her training she is appointed at Mr Rakanang's school where she served the community with a warm heart and open hands. This is then followed by the accident she had with her husband and mother-in-law. Her husband died on the spot. She leads a life without a husband and a child.

In the text the event concerning the appointment of Motsei as a teacher returns to a past point. It is presented after the death of her husband. It is the first event according to the story, but in the text it is placed as the fourth event when Mr Rakanang, the school manager where Motsei works, proposes marriage to her. The presentation of this story event is homodiegetic because it refers to the same character, Motsei. This event concerning the appointment of Motsei is expressed as follows:

Rre Kobang e ne e le motlhatlhabi wa sedika se Motsei a neng a dira mo go sona. ... E rile Motsei a se na go thapiwa,

a dira moletlo kwa ga gagwe. Barutabana le maloko a komiti a le teng. Fa a sa le a ntse a tlhomile Motsei matlho. (1985:113)

(Mr Kobang was the inspector of the circuit where Motsei was working. ... After Motsei had been appointed as a teacher, she held a celebration party. Teachers and members of the school council honoured the occasion. Ever since the party started, he could not stop looking at Motsei.)

Analepsis is also presented in the story *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*. The event concerning Ketshwerebothata and Nkgomotsang's early love affair and how they spend their leisure time before marriage, is presented long after they have been married and blessed with three children. It now serves as an explanation of event that deals with the death of their son, Mofeti.

Malefo also makes use of prolepsis. In most cases, Malefo presents the introductory part of her stories in an interesting way. She uses prolepsis as part of the introduction. The reader starts his/her reading with many questions; thus being encouraged to find solutions for the questions raised.

In the story *Go sa bitseng motho* Malefo introduced the main character and her problem as follows:

Koloi ya re kgo! Mo tseleng e e fetang fa goora Dikhudu. ...
Dikeledi a kabakanya. (1985:52)

(Dikeledi's car broke down at Dikhudu village She was confused, and looked around for help.)

This event takes place two days before her engagement. If the events are to be arranged in chronological order, it should be the fourth event, but instead it serves as an introduction. Before Dikeledi came to Dikhudu village, several events take place, namely:

- The relationship between Dikeledi and Mothobatho
- The discussion held between Dikeledi's parents concerning Mothobatho as a good son-in-law to be
- The conversation between Dikeledi and her mother about marrying Mothobatho.

Other stories which are characterised by proleptic introductory events are *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube* and *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana*. In the first story, Nkgomotsang, the mother of Mofeti, is found at the cemetery, mourning her son, whose death is portrayed late. In the story *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana*, Mosala is introduced as a frustrated man and he decides to part with his wife. This happens long before actual problems are encountered. These introductory events portray the character that will appear later and an event that will be continued.

3.4.2 Duration

'Story time' refers to the time it takes for the events to take place, while 'discourse time' refers to the time it takes to tell or present the story or event. This is also referred to as the time it takes to read a text. Analysis is based on comparison of the relation of the story time and the discourse time. In comparing the two, the story time can be stated as hours, days, weeks, months and years. The discourse time is measured in terms of the number of words, lines or pages of the text devoted to events.

The temporal relation between story time and discourse time is expressed as pace or speed. Rimmon-Kenan distinguishes two forms of modification with regard to pace, namely acceleration and deceleration. Acceleration happens when a short

segment of the text is devoted to a long period of a story, whereas deceleration refers to when an event of a story is prolonged when a long segment of text is devoted to an event. Different techniques of manipulating the pace can be used by the narrator, such as ellipsis, summary, scene and descriptive pause.

Ellipsis

This occurs when a section of a story is omitted. Sometimes, what is left out is not very important, but this is not always the case. The reason may be that the event that is left out or not presented is too painful to talk about. This allows the reader to fill in the gaps created in reading. In the case of ellipsis, the story-time is longer than the discourse time, because in the discourse time, something that happens is kept back.

Summary

The portion of the story is briefly summarised. This is suitable for background information or the linking of scenes. The discourse time becomes shorter to enable the pace to be accelerated through textual condensation or compression of a given story-time.

Scene

With reference to scene, the discourse time and story-time are almost the same. It is mostly characterised by dialogue. In scene, events are presented in detail.

Descriptive pause

This is the opposite of scene since there is no action or movement. This occurs when character or place is described.

Duration in *Bo Tsholwa Bo Le Molelo*

The technique of ellipsis is used in its own style. In the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*, Malefo presents the characters, Tsholofelo and Thebe, as adults already in their different fields of work. Tsholofelo is pregnant and ready to stay with her in-laws. The narrative begins with the event of pregnancy without its formal introduction. Nothing is known about these characters as toddlers. The only thing that is presented to readers is that Tsholofelo was an orphan. Her parents died while she was an infant. Who brought her up, and how, is not presented, thus the story commences *in medias res*, as it is referred to.

This technique is also used in stories like, *Bana Khumo*, *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng*, and *O se bone thola borethe*.

The technique of descriptive pause always decelerates pace since no event takes place. This is often caused by description of milieu. Malefo adopts one special pattern or style in presenting descriptions. For example, all the descriptions are presented before the actual action takes place. Malefo does this purposely in order to give readers background about the important place where the events will occur and the description of characters.

In the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo* Malefo gives a description of the hospital, the place which is very important in this story because it is where differences between characters, Tsholofelo and MmaThebe (her mother-in-law) are resolved and they start a happy life. It is described as follows:

Gaufi le teropo ya Roodepoort go ela ntlheng ya botlhabatsatsi, go teropo ya Hamberg e re tlwaetseng go a bitsa 'Diskhabari'. Mo teropong e, go sepetlele se se okang basweu le bana ba thari e ntsho. Sepetlele le sona se bidiwa "Diskhabari". (1985:22)

(Hamberg was a town on the eastern side of Roodepoort. It was commonly known as Discovery. In the very same town, there was a hospital, which was meant for all whites and blacks. This hospital was also called Discovery.)

The name of the hospital in this case is relevant to the actions that take place in the story. Both characters, Tsholofelo and her mother-in-law, are the discoverers. They discover the wrongs they have done each other and ask for forgiveness in the very same hospital. Thus Malefo has a purpose in using this hospital for Tsholofelo to deliver her first-born baby.

In the story *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*, the important place that is used to be a place of fun for Ketshewerebothata and his family, turns out to be a place of sorrow because it destroys all the happiness experienced within this family. Malefo presents it as follows:

... namane e tona ya phate ya bojang ... ,e thekeleditswe ke
namane tse ditona tsa majwe a o sa ka keng wa a
kgokolosa. (1985:28)

(The broad lawn was surrounded by large rocks, which could not be moved.)

Malefo's style in presenting description of places or characters serves to prepare the readers for a particular action. These catalysts are important in these stories.

Within these catalysts, there are some that serve no purpose for the reader. For instance, in the story, *Go sa bitseng motho*, there are descriptions of characters who are not part of the development of the plot. Pogiso and Kebuang's physical appearance and their presence serve no purpose in this story, as a result there is unnecessary delay.

The technique of scene in a form of dialogue characterises Malefo's short stories. In all the stories characters are exchanging verbal communication, thus prolonging some events and making them more vivid. In this way Malefo liven her stories by using dramatic features that capture the readers' attention and instil interest.

In *Bana Khumo*, Seabotseng and her husband argue in the following manner:

Seturumane are: "Seabotseng, ke go reile ka re, phutitla o je letlhodi. Le gona, mosadi ke mosalagae, molelo o se time ..."

Seabotseng a araba ka gore: "A e nne modiga, morwa Seturumane. Kgangkgolo ke gore noka e tladiwa ke melatswana". (1985:89)

(Seturumane said: "Seabotseng, I told you to feel free at home, and I will do everything. A woman's place is in the kitchen and to look after the children!")

(Seabotseng replied: "Calm down Seturumane's son. The main idea is that no man is an island. Achievements are reached through assistance. A single salary is not enough; it needs to be supplemented!")

In the story *Motlhodi wa motho*, there is also an exchange of verbal communication between Banthala and his wife, Gaorutwe as follows:

Gaorutwe a hupa a re: "Moratiwa, ke fetotse maikutlo a me, ga ke dumele fa ke tloholetswe go nna letagwa tota ..."

Banthala a re: "Nyaa tlhe wa me. Tsaya setlhare sa gago. O tla ikutlwa o le botoka thata."

Gaorutwe: "A o a ntsholofetsa?"

Banthala: "Ke a go solofetsa." (1985:43)

(Gaorutwe, drinking the liquor said: 'My darling, I have decided not to take liquor anymore. I also believe that I am not meant to be a drunkard.'

Banthala said: 'No, my dear. Take your punch, it is a medicine, and you'll feel better.'

Gaorutwe: 'Do you promise me?'

Banthala: 'Yes, I promise!'

The exchanged words could have been summarised but they are presented in a dramatic way that serves a purpose that is to vary the style and illustrate Banthala's disposition.

3.4.3 Frequency

It is the relation between the number of times an event appears in the story and the number of times it is narrated in the text. Repetition occurs less in short stories than in novels.

The same applies to Malefo's short stories. Malefo, as a short story writer, has no time to narrate events repetitively. She only narrates them once or mentions them once, but in a way that shows that it actually happened several times. For example, in the story *O se bone thola borethe*, Ranka's interest in and jealousy of Motsei are mentioned in a way that reveals that it happens time and again. The repetition is revealed by Ranka's comments when saying:

Motsei o a itse gore fa o ka bo o sa itswaketsa wa nna wa tswa ka fa, wa tsena ka fa, re ka bo re sa tshabe matlho a batho. (1985:114)

(Motsei you are aware that if you were not giving me so many excuses, we would now be free to expose our love to everybody.)

The other stories with the events that happen on few occasions but are narrated only once, are *Bajang ga bo ipofe*, *Bana Khumo* and *Leptlapotla le jele phokwana*.

3.5. CONCLUSION

Malefo's particular style of employing analepsis and prolepsis encourages readers' participation and creative thinking. The readers are given a chance to fill in the gaps created by the author.

Malefo's use of time is interesting, especially when she uses the descriptive pause technique. It is presented in one pattern that attracts the readers to what they are reading about, demanding that they link the kernels and catalysts. Catalysts are also used to prepare the reader's mind for the action that is to follow. Malefo's stories demand and provoke thinking capability and are thus not boring.

CHAPTER 4

CHARACTERISATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter will focus on character classification and characterisation, that is character portrayal.

4.2 CHARACTER CLASSIFICATION

In order to classify characters of a story, it is vital to define a character clearly. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:59) viewed character as a network of character traits. These character traits can be noticed by character trait indicators in the text which render a character life-like, and created by an author in order to deliver his/her aim and message.

Fenson and Kritzer (1966:18) are of opinion that the actions of characters in a story mirror life and that what is pictured in a story, is a reflection of ourselves as human beings, as we exist within the framework of human experience. They regard characters as representations of people created to carry out the actions of the plot. They also remind readers that, while it is true that the author creates an image, he/she cannot forget that he/she is not completely free of certain limitations imposed upon him/her by the realities of the story and of real life. What is important to the author is that characters must be credible, motivated and consistent.

Scholars differ in classifying characters. For instance, Forster (in Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:40) distinguished between flat and round characters. The former are

'constructed around a single idea or quality', and therefore 'be expressed in one sentence' Forster continues by stating that these flat characters do not develop while round characters, on the other hand, having more than one quality, develop in the course of action.

Rimmon-Kenan, on the other hand, follows Ewen who suggests 'a classification of characters as points along a continuum, rather than according to exhaustive categories' (1983:41). Both believe character can be described in terms of complexity, development and penetration into the inner life of characters. According to their view and, contrary to Forster's view a complex character can be undeveloped and a simple character can develop.

Their idea suggests that if at one pole on the axis of complexity, for example, characters with one single trait are located, then the other pole will locate characters with more than one trait, and between the two poles one can distinguish infinite degrees of complexity. It therefore suggests that characters have varying degrees of complexity and development and that, with others, there may or may not be penetration into their inner lives.

4.2.1 Classification of characters in *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*

From what Ewen and Rimmon-Kenan suggest, this study is now able to classify Malefo's characters according to the axis of development and complexity. The characters in almost all the stories are types of which some develop. Malefo presents types of characters such as those who are faithful, traditional, modern, untrustworthy, and working mothers who are dedicated to their work. Although they are types their physical appearance and emotions make them 'human'.

As stated earlier, Malefo makes use of proverbs and idiomatic expressions in the titles of her stories, so as to teach and warn readers through her characters' traits. She uses bad traits to urge readers not to imitate them. Malefo warns readers that bad traits lead to no good. Good is often shown implicitly. For instance, in

the story *O se bone thola borethe*, Motsei, the main character, is shown as a complex and developing character because of her industrious work as a lady teacher, as a mother to Mmethile and her mother-in-law, and also as a lover.

As a mother to Mmethile, Motsei understands the problems of Mmethile being deserted by her mother. She takes Mmethile to her house while her father is away from home until she eventually lives with her. As a mother to her in-laws, Motsei refuses to leave her mother-in-law without care, and even though her husband is dead, she remains faithful. As a lover, Motsei remains faithful to Poifo. She even introduces him to her mother-in-law as a friend. Her mother-in-law accepts their relationship, amidst the pain of having lost her own son, the husband of Motsei. Her mind is opened to the readers. Her plans are revealed as she contemplates to visit Poifo in jail rather than visiting her mother-in-law in hospital. This proves that Motsei will remain loyal and loving to Poifo no matter what the circumstances may be. Thus Motsei is one of the characters that are faithful, trustworthy and dedicated.

Poifo on the other hand, is portrayed as the abusive, exploitive type. He separates from his wife, and meets Motsei whom he ill-treats, although she loves him and cares for him so dearly. He reveals his true feelings to Motsei when he says "*Ke ne ke go dirisa fela*" (I was just using you for the sake of my needs) (Malefo, 1985:123). In Poifo Malefo portrays men who are untrustworthy.

Gaorutwe and Nkgomotsang, the main characters in the stories *Motlhodi wa motho* and *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube* respectively, represent a single trait around which they are constructed. Gaorutwe initially represents a single trait of shyness, which is removed by a 'punch' mixed with liquor (brandy). The aim is to make her lively, but she becomes a drunkard. Her name suggests this, and the narrator confirms as follows: "O ne a sa tlhole a itshwenye ka senwelo kgotsa go lekanya o ne a tsaya botlolo fela" (She no longer bothers to use a glass or to take a certain measurement ... she just drinks right from the bottle, mind you -

brandy!) (Malefo, 1985:46). Time and again she thinks of stopping to drink, but to no avail; she is already addicted to liquor.

Nkgomotsang, on the other hand, represents the mourning mother. Her son, Mofeti, has passed away and she thinks that she has to carry the blame. As a result she neglects the entire family and concentrates on visiting the graveyard where her son was laid to rest. Malefo uses the proper name Ketshwerebothata (I am faced with difficulties), representing the trait of the husband in the story *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*. He is seen as the truly loving, caring father, parent and husband. He will prepare the children for school, collect them from school and prepare supper for them while his wife is at the graveyard. Ketshwerebothata shows dedication in whatever he is doing.

In the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*, Mma-Thebe's trait is that of protectiveness of her son. She fears that Thebe will marry and leave home to stay with his wife. This fear causes her to tolerate any bad or unfair conditions in her home. Her character trait resembles that of a true traditional African mother-in-law, who is always against the ideas of the daughter-in-law, and time and again she loses her temper unnecessarily. Her mind is open to the readers who have no difficulty detecting the hatred she feels for her daughter-in-law, Tsholofelo. Mma-Thebe is a real traditionalist representing a mother who is very jealous about her family and her properties.

Tsholofelo on the other hand, is the undesirable daughter-in-law. The relationship she has with her mother-in-law also leaves much to be desired. She behaves as though she expects her mother-in-law to clean her room, prepare her food and wash her. What makes her happy is the loud and irritating music she plays the whole day, without helping her mother-in-law with duties at home. She behaves like an unmannered street kid.

4.3 CHARACTERISATION

Characterisation is also of vital importance to the revelation of the main idea in the story. The author has to organise his/her material to help construct a theme. Malefo's presentation of characters takes different forms in its application, namely direct definition, naming technique and indirect presentation.

4.3.1 Direct definition

This method of character delineation is sometimes referred to as the expository technique. The author is directly involved in providing the reader with information and comments on a character's appearance or personality trait. This can be done through comments made by other characters as well. With this method, the narrator knows all, and tells all about his/her characters

Malefo, like other authors, directly exposes her characters' physical appearance with purpose. In all the stories, a direct description is given of the main characters. The primary objective here is to distinguish the principal characters from others. Malefo also wants to direct the reader's mind to the actions performed by the principal character. She uses this method also to direct the actions of characters whether or not they suit the characters' trait. The reader is able to compare the physical appearance of characters, together with their actions and traits, and then to detect and conclude if the character is a caricature type or representative of a true human being.

4.3.1.1 Direct definition in *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*

In the story *O se bone thola borethe* Molefo directly defines Poifo's appearance as follows:

A ya go rakana le Goliath, mokaloba o ronoka o raleitse phaposi ya borutelo. ...O fitlhetse go kwakwanta namane e

tona, motho moleele re mo lela tlala. Magetla o bona sentle gore. ... Moriri a o latswitse ka ditsantsana e bile e kete wa Makhalate. Selo se sentle bontle. (Malefo, 1985:110)

(Her eyes met Goliath, a giant, walking boastfully across the classroom. ... She sees a big giant, a tall man who is worthy of being seen. The jacket suits his shoulders showing that he is a real man and not just a small and lousy boy. His waist is broad like that of a girl in her early pregnancy. ... His hair is also cared for just like that of the Coloureds. A thing of beauty!)

From the above description of Poifo's physical appearance, it can be concluded that Poifo is a handsome man who is also aware of his features. As a result, he is boastful. His features attract women at first sight. For example, he attracts Motsei, a lady teacher of his daughter, from the first day she sees him. Motsei is attracted to the extent that she offers to look after his daughter, Mmethile, knowing that he will come to school time and again to fetch his daughter, and he will find no one else except herself - Motsei.

Malefo uses Poifo's description here to bring out the meaning of the title, that 'it is not all gold that glitters'. Poifo is handsome but has no manners. His features do not tally with his behaviour. The implication given here is that beauty does not guarantee manners.

In the very same story, the author directly states Motsei's personal trait as follows:

Morutabana Motsei, motho yo o maitseo, yo o nang le lerato lwa tiro e a e dirang le mo baneng ba a ba rutang. Tota re ka re mo ... ke mme. (1985:109)

(Teacher Motsei, a well-mannered person, with love for her work and especially for children who she teaches. To tell the honest fact, she is a mother to grade one pupils.)

Motsei is trustworthy, industrious, professional, motherly and someone one can rely on when in difficulties. But Motsei cannot see what is behind the attractive features of Poifo.

The direct technique is also used in the story *Bana Khumo*, in portraying Tawana's physical appearance, her cleanliness, unbecoming behaviour and personality in this manner:

Mmalo! Seabotseng a ya go fitlhela namane e tona ya Setobotobo sa motho. Ka dingwaga a godile mme go ithata go setse ... E ne e sa le mo mesong mme o ne a setse a kgabile ka mosese o montle wa jujete, moriri o le boletswa e bile e kete wa Makhalate. (1985:88)

(My God! Seabotseng found a giant of a person, very bulk. She was a grown-up person, but was already dressed in her smart georgette dress. Her hair was very fluffy just like one of Coloured people.)

From the above expression, Gabanthate is rich. She has almost everything and also has servants to take care of her and her property. She is clean, but unfortunately she is childless; and this makes her life miserable, unpleasant, frustrated and short-tempered. Her quick temper spoils the relationship that could have existed between a master and servant, or a person and neighbours. With this character, Gabanthate, Malefo shows that one can have everything yet still not be satisfied. In the story *Go sa bitseng motho*, Malefo directly presents the physical appearance of Dikeledi, the daughter of Mr and Mrs Phiri in the following way:

Dikeledi o ne a tthatlogile monyo ... Theka la gagwe le ne le le lesesane jaaka la moruthwane. Sefatlhego sa gagwe se sentle se na le letlalo le le boreletsana ...Matlho a le borokwa jo bo sa tiwaelegang. (1985:53)

(Dikeledi is slender and tall, with a well-trimmed figure like that of a virgin. She has beautiful, light complexion. Her sleepy eyes change when faced with direct sunrays just like other types of stones sometimes do.)

It is with this appearance that she becomes Miss Soweto - Queen of Soweto. It also tells us that she is well cared for by her parents, to such an extent that they allow her to visit other beauty queens in London to learn more about skin care and other things that can improve her personality. Fortunately, the description of Dikeledi's features tally with her actions and behaviour. This is contrary to Poifo's actions in *O se bone thola borethe*.

4.3.2 Naming technique in *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*

Apart from exposing the physical appearance of characters, Malefo also uses the technique of naming in almost all her stories. The naming technique is self-explanatory since Malefo, like other authors, uses names of characters that will direct the reader towards their character trait. As explained above, names given to characters are often seen as forming an integral part of their individual behaviour and personality. Through this technique the reader is able to get some clues as to what the character will do during the progression of the story. As a result, this technique directs the readers' mind and instils interest in the reader.

Most of her characters bear the name which tally with deeds, for example in the story *Bana Khumo*, the surname of the main character, Gabanthate is Tawana for lioness. Gabanthate is the real lioness for she is wicked, short-tempered,

frightening and very quick in attacking other people, especially her servants and children. Just the mention of her name sends shock-waves through her servants' and neighbours' hearts. The mere fact that she is not blessed with children, frustrates her and as a result one will find her roaring like a hungry lion the whole day. Her servants are so frustrated and frightened, not knowing what best to do or to say. Thus Gabanthate's behaviour represents the group of people who are very rich but never satisfied; they still need more, hence the Setswana, saying that goes *Dipelo go tswa tsa baji*. (Those who are rich are never satisfied).

Malefo continues to use names like Nkgomotsang (comfort me), Gaorutwe (you are not taught), Ketshwerebothata (I am faced with difficulties), Mofeti (one who passes away), Dikeledi (tears/hurts), Mokgaotsi (the stopper/one who ends), Ontiretse (you did on my behalf), *et cetera* that tally with, and reveal the personality traits of her characters. Each character acts according to his/her name, for example, Mofeti is faced with anger and dies of carelessness. He falls down in a deep hole and the heavy bricks in the hole shatter his head and he passes away.

In the very same story, Ketshwerebothata is faced with real difficulties/problems to comfort his wife after the death of Mofeti. When he concentrates on his wife, the children, on the other hand, need attention. His name reveals the difficulties he is faced with.

The name Tsholofelo (hope) in the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo* is ironically used. According to this name, every reader expects Tsholofelo's personality to be positive to everybody; even the fellow characters expect most of the best things from her. Unfortunately her character trait resembles that of a street kid, one who never experienced parental love or sisterly love, knowing nothing about hygiene in the house or of herself. Tsholofelo is revealed as cheeky towards her mother-in-law, friends, almost everyone close to her, except her husband. Her dirty tricks lead her into trouble. She becomes pregnant, she loses her job, and she has a bad relationship with her mother-in-law and ultimately delivers her premature

baby. Malefo uses the name Tsholofelo (hope for the good) which is contrary to the expectations of the readers. They expect Tsholofelo to be kind to the mother-in-law, but all in vain. The main aim of using this name, according to the content of the story, is to reveal the gap between the modern and traditional marriage relationship. In the traditional marriage, the daughter-in-law is expected to be loyal and respectful to the in-laws irrespective of the problems she might encounter - she is also always blamed for anything that goes wrong in the family. This is contrary to the modern marriage - the daughter-in-law is no longer respectful; she only concentrate on matters concerning themselves (she and the husband) forgetting about the in-laws. That is why after marriage the couple moves away from the in-laws for the sake of better understanding of each other.

With this method, Malefo also names her characters according to their deeds. Her characters act in such a way that they reveal the meaning of their names. Therefore, the reader continues to read with a certain position of understanding, for example who the characters are, and what is expected of them through their names. Thus, in short, naming directs the reader's mind.

4.3.3 Indirect presentation

This method can sometimes be called the dramatic method, since it involves characters exposing their behaviour. It is from what they say, do, their thoughts and attitudes, as well as how they relate to other characters that one is able to judge their behaviour or personalities.

With this method, the narrator/author has a chance of standing aloof, thus giving characters a chance to unfold on their own. Commenting on this method, Rimmon-Kenan (1983:60) says that the indirect method displays and exemplifies the trait of a character in various ways, leaving the reader the task of inferring the quality they imply. The various ways in which the author can give life to the characters are speech, action and environment. Malefo is no exception to this effect. She portrays her characters through these various ways as follows:

4.3.3.1 Speech

Speech is one of the examples of character trait indicators. It may be in conversation form or as a silent activity of the mind. What one character says characterises his/her personality and what he/she says about another character, characterises both his/her own character and that of the person under discussion.

Malefo never hesitates to let her characters reveal their personal traits through speech. In fact, all her stories are characterised by this technique. The use of this technique is very dynamic in her stories in the sense that she gives her characters a chance to explore more, thus revealing the fact that her characters are human. What happens to them can happen to anyone. Thus, Malefo's characters are motivated and credible human beings.

Malefo uses Gabanthate's speech to reveal her behaviour and personality as follows:

Ke moleko wa eng o ke o bonang? Fa o tla o eteleditse dirathane pele jaana, a o tlile tirong kgotsa o tlile go tlhola o pepetletsa dilo tse tsa gago ... Matlakalanyana a, a maragaraga, a tlile go nkgotlelela ntlo ya me a nkokela dipeba. (1985:91)

(What a temptation am I faced with? You come escorting your cluster of unspaced progeny. Have you come to work or to be unduly kind and tender to these. Rubbish! These filthy children will make my house dirty and attract lots of rats.)

It is understood from this comment that Gabanthate's problem of having no children causes her to have a bad attitude towards neighbours, servants and children. This leads her to a stressful and frustrating life. Her frustration always

makes others uncomfortable and frustrated, to such an extent those workers rather leave work than tolerate her bitter remarks. Her speech also reveals Gabanthate's social class. As a rich lady, she undermines those of low socio-economic standing (helpers whom she regards as slaves.)

The other speech used is from the story *O se bone thola borethe*. Here Malefo uses the master of the school (Rakanang) to reveal his behaviour and attitude towards Motsei. Rakanang loves Motsei very much and he easily reveals his trait of jealousy towards any male person who comes near Motsei. When he realises that Motsei keeps watching Mmethile every day after school until her father, Poifo fetches her, he furiously said:

Ke eng fa Poifo a ne a sa batle mmelegi gaufi le sekolo fa.
Mmethile o ne a tla ne a re tabotabo! fela fa sekolo se tswa,
Poifo a lesa go tihola a tliile go mo sikara. Le gale, ke
sefapaano sa gagwe a a se sikare. (1985: 112-113)

(Why cannot Poifo look for a baby sitter just next to the school. Mmethile would simply dash home when the school is out. Poifo could stop fetching her at school. Anyway it is his burden, let him carry it.)

The comment above reveals how jealous Rakanang is, especially since Motsei is attracted to a handsome guy like Poifo. This is a sort of advice to Motsei, but sarcastically stated, Rakanang is afraid that Poifo's visits to his school will eventually disturb his progress towards Motsei. It also reveals that Motsei is cheap - she is easily attracted to men and they are not showing her real love. Since characters are like people, they are also defined partly by what they say, do or what others say about them. Here, Malefo allows Poifo to expose his personality trait through his speech when he says:

Motsei, seleele sa sematlanyana, o tla nona pelo ka mathe o nkemela soomang? O tlogele go nna o bua matlakala ao ...Ke ne ke go dirisa fela Motsei. (1985:123)

(Motsei, you foolish idiot, you will persevere waiting for me, for what good reason? You'd better stop talking that rubbish ... I was just using you to achieve my needs.)

It can be deduced from Poifo's speech that his personality trait is cunning, and he is a good pretender. He fools Motsei, pretending to love her, only to find that he needs security for his child while faced with divorce. He needs someone to rely on during those disturbing and frustrating moments. Poifo is revealed as bad, annoying and a cruel person.

4.3.3.2 Action

Action, together with speech, conveys characters' traits through a cause-and-effect relation. Thus from action committed or omitted, the reader may find out the meaning thereof.

Actions may be one-time or habitual. Both actions may imply a trait of a character. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:61) distinguishes three categories to which both acts belong. They are commission, omission and contemplated acts. Malefo uses all three categories of actions but reveals her characters' traits mostly through habitually committed actions. The reason may be that she wants to ensure brevity of the short story and avoid everything that will cause her stories to be unnecessarily lengthy.

In the story *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng* (By others faults, wise men correct their own), Ontiretse's action of stealing in the shop where Matsetsele is working time and again, reveals the trait of his mother Koloti's negligence. Koloti is attracted to the new lover, and as a result neglects her only son, Ontiretse.

From Ontiretse's habitual act of stealing, it brings the understanding that Koloti is someone who is easily fooled by love, lacking motherly love, careless and a negligent lady. Her habitual omission of caring for her only son reveals a trait that leaves much to be desired, and needless to say, it also reveals child abuse.

Another example of habitually committed action is that of drunkenness that is experienced/revealed in the story *Motlhodi wa motho* through Gaorutwe. Gaorutwe continues to drink liquor even though she realises that it destroys her character. Malefo reveals her act continuous commission of drinking by saying: O ne a sa tlhole a tshwenya ka senwelo kgotsa go lekanya... o ne a tsaya ka botlolo fela. (1985:46) (She no longer bothers to use a glass or taking a certain measurement ... she just drinks from the bottle.) She is presented as a careless, cheeky, unprofessional and a careless mother for she nearly drowns her baby.

Malefo continues to depict her characters' habitually committed action through Motsei in the story *O se bone thola borethe* where Motsei commits the habitual act of agreeing to outings with different gentlemen in the evening. She ends up having none of the four gentlemen and nearly losing her job as a teacher. She is depicted as a lady who is tactless and easily moved by love.

4.3.3.3 Environment

Environment involves the physical surrounding of a character either in a room, house, street or town. It also involves a human environment that includes, among other things, a family or social class. These aspects may affect the life and personal traits of a character. The environment also affects Malefo's characters.

In the story, *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng*, Koloti's personal traits are also connoted by her family environment. When finding herself in another man's warm hands, she cannot let the moment pass. The environment she finds herself in made her to concentrate more on her new lover than her child. Her new lover, Mokgaotsi, leaves his wife and the house, so Koloti makes sure that she is not the

second loser. She is revealed as an opportunist. What Malefo presents about Koloti's trait is backed by Rimmon-Kenan when he says "a character's physical surrounding as well as his human environment are often used as trait - connoting metonymies" (1983:66). Koloti is faced with a problem of being a single parent who is not working, but has to feed and rear her only son to maturity. As a result she fights hard and by any means to survive.

Again, in the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo* Malefo presents her readers with Tsholofelo who is pregnant and faces a problem of staying with her new family and the mother-in-law. She feels that her mother-in-law does not welcome her. As a result she acts like a person who does not care about others. The new family environment affects her lifestyle and she acts irresponsibly by concentrating only on herself, her husband and her loud music. Her behaviour brings about serious tension in the family, to such an extent that she exchanges angry words with her mother-in-law.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The conclusions that can be drawn concerning this chapter, is that Malefo has managed to present her readers with characters who are like people and who develop throughout the story. Each story reveals different types of characters that are presented in contrast, for example, trustworthy viz untrustworthy, faithfulness viz unfaithfulness, *et cetera*.

Different methods of character portrayal are used, namely the direct definition, naming and indirect presentation. All these methods are thoroughly used in all the stories and from none of them can one conclude that one is used better than the others, but with the indirect presentation the emphasis is on speech which is used to liven the stories by using the dramatic features. Thus, Malefo manages to present characters that are credible, motivated and consistent.

CHAPTER 5

MILIEU AND SPACE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Milieu and space are considered to be important in literary art, for the mere fact that the author has to locate his/her characters and their events so that they can reveal the atmosphere of the story. Moreover, the theme of the story depends partly on spatial conditions. Through milieu and space, the reader is able to perceive where events take place and what the place signifies.

Milieu includes material, physical social conditions, as well as temporal circumstances, telling readers of the emotional quality and nature of the story, the characters and events. Milieu speaks of time and place, whereas space speaks of the symbolic dimensions of milieu. The two aspects are inseparable in literary texts.

Most narratological scholars have ignored milieu and space as compared to other aspects of short story such as plot, characterisation and theme, to mention just a few. Famous scholars, like Rimmon-Kenan, do not say anything as far as these aspects are concerned; therefore the discussion of this study will be based on Bal's views (1985).

5.2 MILIEU

Milieu denotes geographical and temporal location, and it also refers to the topological position in which the actors or characters are situated, as well as when events take place (social surroundings). The milieu may either be real or imaginary. At times it may be explicitly stated or implied. Whether the milieu is

real or imaginary does not matter much, because finally each and every reader has to create his own mental picture. The description of milieu normally helps the reader to direct and channel his/her imagination.

Milieu is used synonymously with environment. Neal (1914:59) views environment as a larger concept, which implies not only setting, but also all other surroundings and accompanying conditions and it may therefore be psychological and non-objective. As a result affects it influences the character and his/her life. This study will now look into Malefo's location of characters and how they are affected.

5.2.1 Aspect of place

In all Malefo's short stories, the focus is mainly on modern and urban places. Malefo makes use of real modern and urban places to locate her characters and their actions. Places like hotels, schools, restaurants, prisons, magistrate's offices are all modern and urban(inized). Her characters are located in places that are real, for they can be physically traced. One of the reasons for using urban places may be the fact that Malefo wants to reveal the behaviour of characters living in urban places as opposed to that of characters living in rural areas. It is clear, from Malefo's characters that are living in urban areas, that their lifestyle is that of a one-man show. One concentrates only on one's affairs. Morals are not thoroughly observed, everybody does what pleases him/her most.

5.2.1.1 Stories set in urban places

In the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*, Malefo describes Roodepoort as a city adjacent to Johannesburg, which is part of Gauteng Province. It has suburbs like Florida, Hamberg, and townships like Dobsonville *et cetera*. Dobsonville is also described as situated west of Roodepoort. Its residents are close to their working places, and transport is not so important as the people walks easily walk to and fro daily. Other places described are those on the east side of Roodepoort, like Florida, where the hotel known as Killarney is found. Hotels, taxis and trains

reveal that this story has a modern background. Moreover, all the places mentioned in this story are urban.

Malefo never gives a description of the Killarney hotel even though a crucial event takes place there. On this point it may be assumed that Malefo does it on purpose so that the readers will not focus too much on the place, but rather on the characters and the development of the plot, since characters cannot act in a vacuum. Thus the reader can detect what type of characters one may expect throughout one's reading. For example, the locality of the main character, Tsholofelo, in a hotel exposes herself and her problem of pregnancy.

The places mentioned in the story *Bana Khumo* are also real and urban. There is a mention of places like Sophiatown and Meadowlands that are part of Gauteng Province. Malefo gives a description of one of the houses in Meadowlands as "namane e tona ya ntlogadi" (1985:85), meaning 'a very big and beautiful house'. The house suits the place/area and the owner, Gabanthate, for she is a rich lady. The condition in which Gabanthate finds herself affects her life and reveals her problem of barrenness.

The places used in these stories really affect the behaviour of characters. Other stories such as *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana*, *O se bone thola borethe*, and *Bothale ba phala bo tswa phalaneng*, denote modern and urban locations.

5.2.1.2 Stories set in rural places

There is only one story in which Malefo locates her characters in rural places, namely *Bojang ga bo ipofe*. This story is a contradiction of the lifestyle experienced in urban areas. For example, the description of the mattress on which characters sleep reveals where this kind of object can be found.

In this story, the name of the village where Mmapema's children are celebrating Christmas and the milieu where all actions are performed is not given. Like it was

said earlier, the place is a general term that might imply anything, for example a street, a shop, home, a field and so on. In this story, Malefo uses reference such as *Kwa matlotleng* (Old house/place). Since the place where actions occur is not specified, this story has an indefinite locality and is only known through inferences, that is actions of characters and their behaviour indicate to the reader that the place is rural.

5.2.1.3 Stories set in both urban and rural places

This aspect is observed in stories where the events move from one place to the other. In two of Malefo's stories, the location of events is both in urban and rural areas. This enables the readers to distinguish between the type of lifestyle from these distinctive areas. In these stories, Malefo clearly brings out the differences between traditional, moral-based life and promiscuous and carefree life. These are revealed in the short stories, *Go sa bitseng motho* (Talk of the devil) and *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana* (Hasty decisions bear no good fruits).

In the story *Go sa bitseng motho*, Malefo locates her characters in Soweto. Characters in Soweto reveal their real lifestyle, namely that of looseness and lack of caring for another person. This is in contrast with characters located in Dikhudu village, who prove to be well-behaved, treating other characters the way they would like to be treated. For instance, all the relatives of Kathotha welcome Dikeledi with open arms, and help her solve the problem with the car. This is unlike the characters that are located in Soweto, for example Dikeledi's parents, whom only care for their wealth and have no consideration for characters of a low socio-economic background.

The same applies to the story, *Lepotlapotla le jele phokwana*. In this story the name of the township where events take place is not mentioned. The reference of *Kwa ga Mosala* is made. It means events take place at Mosala's home (the main character), which is in an urban area because there is mention of Mafutha's

Supermarket which caters for people around the township. Secondly, technology is well developed, where characters communicate telephonically.

The place, Sepolonko, where Mosala's parents live, is a rural area. There is no description of it. It is taken as an important place in Mosala's life, because that is where his problem with his wife is solved. All the misunderstanding he experiences at home is settled in Sepolonko. This place, though not described, is very important, because it influences and facilitates the character's actions.

Malefo also touches on different fields of occupation such as Law, Education, Medicine (Pharmacy), Business (Shopkeeping) and so on. As a short-story writer, Malefo does not give an extensive description of the places where these careers are practised. Even though Malefo's characters are located in urban and rural places, she only describes events in which they are involved. This suggests that Malefo does not want readers to focus so much on the place but more on characters and their events. The other reason may be that Malefo wants to show the influence the place has on characters irrespective of status. This characteristic qualifies her short stories as well-structured.

5.3 SPACE

Space refers not only to a place or physical entity where events take place; it also refers to a particular perceptual point of view. Bal (1985:93) says: 'places seen in relation to their perception are called space'; that is, space is viewed in relation to the meaning and the influence it has on characters.

Bal distinguishes two kinds of space in narratives. They are the space of language and the language of space. The former refers to the number of lines, paragraphs and chapters used in the narrative, whereas the latter deals with the use of language in describing the space. The discussion in this study will be concerned with the language of space.

The problem that underlies the language of space is that it has only one channel of transmission, namely verbal language. The reader depends entirely on the words used by the author as the only means of spatial perception. Since the text-space is perceived from the written words only (diegetic), as compared to that of drama which is perceived both mimetic and diegetic, it is not surprising to meet with a situation where one and the same space is perceived differently by different readers depending on their understanding of words used. The difference in space-perception will automatically lead to different interpretations of a story as a whole.

Bal continues to state that space can be perceived through references to three senses: sight, touch and hearing. She argues that sizes, shapes and colour are always visually perceived, whereas sound can be effective in the presentation of the mood of space. For example, the description of a soft sound can denote a perception of a sad or romantic space, whereas a noisy one may denote happiness or chaotic space. Bal (1985:94) also states that the sense of touch in space indicates adjacency. Thus, a character that is able to feel walls around him is confined in a very small space.

Bal (1985:94) uses the term 'frame' to refer to the space in which characters are placed. For a better understanding of the term 'frame', she divides space into inner space and outer space. According to her view, inner space may denote safety and security, while outer space could mean unsafety and insecurity. However, this is not always the case, for inner space could also mean unsafety and insecurity while outer space could denote liberation. This implies that the function of space depends largely on the text. Thus, space can function as a place of action or as a thematic space. According to Bal, thematic space is space that shifts from being a place of action to an 'acting place'. At this point in time, it facilitates the occurrence of events in the text by affecting, influencing and shaping the development of the narrative. This means a certain space may influence or encourage the character to behave in a specific manner. Cohen (1973:29) agrees with Bal in this regard when he says that 'sometimes the setting

or environment in which a character operates will explain the social, moral or religious code by which he operates'.

5.3.1 Aspects of space in Malefo's stories

The above discussion indicates elements that are important in the presentation of a convincing and artistic space. Some of these elements are colour, shapes and sounds. These elements will be used in trying to determine the meaningful presentation of space in Malefo's short stories.

Malefo places her characters in a 'frame' which implies either security or insecurity and secure or insecure spaces. The following discussion clearly illustrates this:

5.3.1.1 Space of insecurity

In the story, *Bana Khumo* there is mention of the place Meadowlands. The description of this space is not given. The only description given is one of the houses in Meadowlands, that of Gabanthate. Malefo's comments reveal the size of the house as follows:

Mo mmileng wa bona ga bo go eme namane e tona ya ntlogadi. Seabotseng fa a e bona la ntlha a akabala, a okomela ka seokomelabagwe gore a bone fa go se ne go tswa lekgoa mo go yona ka a ne a sa dumele gore a Motswana mongwe a ka tgonagaga seboitshega se se kalo sa ntlo. (1985:85)

(In their street, there stands a huge, beautiful and amazing house. For the first time Seabotseng became puzzled and then excited; she peeped through the window and expected a white man to come out of it, for she never thought that a black man could build such a beautiful and big house.)

The big house symbolises insecurity, for the characters found in it never experience happiness and freedom. The first character who feels insecure is the owner of the house, Gabanthate. She is never satisfied in this big house, because she is childless. The size of the house frustrates her a lot and influences her to reveal her rude, impulsive and indignant manners; thus her actions are influenced by the prevailing circumstances within her environment.

The second groups of characters who feel insecure or imprisoned are Gabanthate's workers. Those working in the inner space of the house are not sure whether they are doing the perfect job. They are also not sure if they are giving their employer the expected satisfaction because she keeps on complaining, shouting at them and dismissing them any time she feels like it. Neither are they sure of the security and safety of their jobs.

The same applies to characters in the outer space. They feel unsafe and insecure, for the readers can see their work as punishment. They always fear that they might be dismissed and as a result they have no rest. In short, they are paid a meagre salary and for all practical purposes, they are prisoners.

Space of insecurity is also realised in the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*. The main character, Tsholofelo, is introduced to her new home and to her mother-in-law. She feels unwelcome, not free to communicate with her mother-in-law, and as a result her behaviour is seriously influenced. Here the in-law's home serves as a thematic space and symbolises a place of insecurity in which Tsholofelo cannot exercise her freedom of speech, action and movement. Tsholofelo is not sure of her safety with her mother-in-law.

The same applies to Gaorutwe in the story *Motlhodi wa motho*. Gaorutwe feels imprisoned in her own house. She is in the chains of drunkenness and never feels safe in the inner space of her house except when drunk. This inner space is not safe for her health, for she risks her life by abusing liquor.

In most of Malefo's short stories the space denotes insecurity. The reason being that the themes and titles used in her stories warn readers to take care of their lives. In most cases she presents characters in an insecure space in order to warn her readers not to follow her characters' footsteps as this may lead them into dangerous situations.

5.3.1.2 Space of security

Very few stories are presented in a safe and secured space. In the story *O se bone thola borethe* Motsei is able to reveal her feelings for Poifo in a secured space like the restaurant. Her movements in the restaurant show no restrictions. This is not so in the classroom, where she fails due to the circumstances in which she finds herself.

The secure space can sometimes denote freedom or liberty. This is realised in stories like *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*. The main character, Tsholofelo is found working in a hotel around Johannesburg. The hotel in this story is used as the background of events, but at the same time denotes a space in which Tsholofelo is free and at liberty to do what she wishes at anytime. The fact of being a pregnant teenager working in a hotel reveals that characters are given a chance to exercise their freedom, but Tsholofelo turns it into promiscuity.

Freedom is also exercised in the story *Botlhale jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng*. The town, Rustenburg, is seen as the nucleus around which all the events occur. The space in this story functions largely as the facilitator for its events to occur. Mokgaotsi's home is situated in Tlhabane Township. The mere fact that his home is in the township where morals are not thoroughly observed, causes the reader not to be surprised that he acts and behaves like a real illiterate. Norms and values of society are not observed here. The space in which Mokgaotsi acts gives him a chance of exercising his freedom carelessly. It is very easy for him to leave

his wife alone and to stay with a girlfriend in the very same location. The space of locality makes it easy for him to act and behave immorally.

Freedom can also be realised in stories like *Go sa bitseng motho* through the actions of the main character Dikeledi and in *O se bone thola borethe* through Poifo's actions.

5.4 THE SYSTEM OF SPATIAL RELATIONS

In the system of spatial relations, space not only relates to story-space, that is location and description of things, nor text-space, but also with non-spatial features, in understanding and interpreting the meaning of the text.

The spatial models are based on opposition so as to give the space contextual meaning. For example, opposition between black and white, male and female, big and small, *et cetera*. In addition to opposition, Lotman (1977:230) identifies the border that divides space in the narrative into two sub-spaces, where a distinction between weak and strong, the living and the dead can be made.

In the story *Bana Khumo*, for example, Malefo starts by giving a description of Mr and Mrs Seturumane's house by comparing its size with that of their neighbour, Gabanthate, by saying:

Namane e tona ya ntlogadi! E ya rona e bile e kete
lebokisi la mmankgwari. (1985:85)

(A gigantic huge house! It makes ours too small like
a box of matches.)

The above comment brings forth an idea of big versus small. Gabanthate's house is very big and beautiful as compared to that of Seturumane's. The size of the house and its beauty can be identified with material of high socio-economic status

(wealth) and freedom of movement within that house. On the other hand, the small house can be associated with characters of low socio-economy standing, living a hand-to-mouth existence, hard-working and with no freedom of movement.

There is also a contrast in the upbringing of children in the story *Bo tsholwa bo le molelo*. Thebe comes from a decent family where his mother, after the death of his father continues to show a strong sense of responsibility and guidance. For instance, his mother spends sleepless nights when Thebe does not shown up from work. On the other hand, Tsholofelo lacks parental guidance, because her mother passed away while she is an infant. Malefo presents Tsholofelo as an adult lady working in a hotel. As a result she does as she pleases even in Thebe's home.

The opposition of beauty and literacy versus ugliness and illiteracy is presented in the story *Motlhodi wa motho*. Malefo provides the following comments:

... mo go Banthala o ne o bona maatlametlo a Mmopi. Le fa go twe bontle le boboko ga di ke di rakanela mo mothong, e seng mo go Banthala. (1985:40)

(... from Banthala's appearance, Gaorutwe could realise the wonders and tremendous deeds of God. It was unusual for one to be blessed in this way. Banthala was handsome and educated.)

Gaorutwe e ne e le mang? Molalanyana, maswe, bothogoethata ... a tswa ka soba la mogodu mo ditlhatlhobong tsa setlhopha sa borataro. (1985:40)

Kana Gaorutwe o ne a se montle. Le ena tota o ne a ikitse. (1985:41)

(Who was Gaorutwe? Poor lady; ugly, obstinate and difficult to deal with ... Through a slim chance she just barely passed her standard six examinations.)

(By the way, Gaorutwe was not beautiful; she was also aware of this fact.)

The above comments reveal that 'love knows no boundaries' by firstly giving the opposition of appearance, secondly the opposition in education. Banthala is handsome and educated. He marries Gaorutwe who is ugly and uneducated, but very neat in her work. Her actions that spoilt her whole life match her ugly face. She only comes to her senses after having a bad experience of nearly drowning her only child. Banthala progresses in life because of the education he receives.

Malefo uses contrast of colour as one of the things constituting space. Malefo mentions the green grey colours in the story *Fa bo sele bo se na mahube*. These colours describe the place where Ketshwerebothata's family used to celebrate the moments they had before. This area is presented as a place where the green colour has now turned grey, that is life versus death. The green colour symbolises life. It means this place used to have life and happiness, when nature took its own cause. Unfortunately, on their last visit to the same spot near the valley, the lawn has become grey. This symbolises that there is no life as the grass is dead. The grey colour predicts the death of Mofeti, while the colour of space predicts the sorrow that will be experienced by the family of Ketshwerebothata through the death of Mofeti.

Apart from using the contrast of colour, Malefo uses colour to constitute space; in the story *Go sa bitseng motho* (Talk of the devil) as a description of the costume belonging to Dikeledi. Malefo describes her jacket in this manner:

Baki ya gagwe e ne e le lenyibi, e na le furumo ya letlalo la konyana le le bolejana, le le swana jaako sefako. (1985:52)

(Her jacket was made of velvet. Its lining was made of a soft skin of a lamb, which was white as hail.)

The white colour in this regard symbolises love, happiness and innocence. The above description symbolises the main character's characteristics. She (Dikeledi) decides to leave her home, as she does not want to commit herself to marry someone she does not love wholeheartedly. She finally finds someone she loves dearly at Dikhudu Village, and she eventually marries him. By the white colour, Malefo wants to reveal that Dikeledi's character will not hurt anybody and that she wants peace at all times.

5.5 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Malefo manages to bring out different lifestyles experienced in urban areas compared to that of rural areas. It is also clear that the places used to locate characters influence their behaviour or lifestyle. Some of the places serve to facilitate characters' actions. In instances where places are described, the description gives readers an indication of where events are taking place, where characters are located, and thus enable readers to compare the characters' actions, behaviour and detect if the characters' actions suit the place or locality.

Malefo prefers to locate characters in an insecure place. The reason may be to warn and teach readers about the danger one may find herself/himself in if she/he is not careful in life. In most cases, Malefo's characters learn from their mistakes, and then return to their normal life and situations. This gives readers a feeling that if this or that is done, it could be the end result and they try not to fall in the same trap.

CHAPTER 6

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The major aim of this study is to analyse Malefo's short stories with regard to title and theme, events and time, characterisation and, lastly, milieu and space.

With regard to theme, it is revealed that Malefo's titles are in the form of idiomatic expressions and proverbs in order to give a clear message. The themes presented in this volume are concerned with the everyday life situation in which characters are faced with both traditional and modern conflicts. Mostly ladies irrespective of their status in life experience these conflicts, and they are resolved through calm actions.

When analysing events and time, it is found that Malefo prefers an a-chronological sequence of events. Anachronism is used to involve readers in the completion of her writing as well as to supply information. As a result Malefo's stories are found to be lengthy, because of the time allocated to the description of the catalysts which cause deceleration of speed.

The characters in the volume **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** are credible and faced with typical real-life problems. For example, in the African society it is a reality that life with in-laws has never been without obstacles. The mothers-in-law always want the daughters-in-law to feel that they do not form part of the family at first. Malefo's characters are developing throughout the story. They represent traditional trustworthiness and faithfulness. Characters in all the stories are credible and motivated.

Space functions as a place of action and as a facilitator of actions. It is also integrated easily with other literary elements, thus making the stories very interesting and meaningful.

Malefo can be regarded as one of the best short story writers. **Bo tsholwa bo le molelo** is rich in language and well structured.



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