

## A journey in *Megokgo ya lethabo* and “Tubatse”

### ABSTRACT

When Groenewald (1993a: 20) examined Northern Sotho novels, he realised that certain authors have written about a journey. They have used it in different ways to achieve different aims and objectives. Groenewald is the first to emphasise the importance of a journey when an author to reveal and display his intentions in writing such a work of literary art uses it. This will be examined in full so that the importance of the journey as used as a technique can be realised. In *Megokgo ya lethabo*, (1992) Lentsoane uses a journey technique to resolve problems brought about by Dikgoneng's marriage. On the other hand, Mahapa (1968) uses the journey technique to contrast modern and traditional ways of living. By so doing, he creates problems because a modern philosophy of life and a traditional attitude to life are two different things.

Ge Groenewald (1993a: 20) a sekaseka dipadi tša Sesotho sa Leboa o lemogile gore go na le bangwadi ba bangwe bao ba ngwadilego ka leeto. Ba diriša leeto ka ditsela tša go fapafapana go fihlelela maikemišetšo le dinepo tša go fapafapana. Groenewald ke wa mathomo wa go gatelela bohlokwa bja leeto ge mongwadi a le diriša go utolla le go tšweletša maikemišetšo a gagwe ka mešomo yeo ya bokgabo. Taba yeo e tla tsinkelwa ka botlalo gore bohlokwa bja leeto bjalo ka ge le dirišitšwe bokathekniki bo tsupollwe. Mo go *Megokgo ya lethabo* (1992), Lentsoane o diriša thekniki ya leeto go rarolla mathata a go hlagišwa ke lenyalo la Dikgoneng. Ka lehlakoreng le lengwe, Mahapa (1968) yena o diriša thekniki ya leeto go fapantšha bophelo bja sebjalebja le bja setšo. Ka go dira bjalo, o hlola mathata ka gobane tsela ya selehono ya bophelo le mokgwa wa bogologolo wa bophelo ga di nwešane a mkgako.

**Key words:** Technique, journey technique, traditional attitude to life, modern philosophy of life

### Introduction

When Groenewald (1993a: 20) examined Northern Sotho novels, he realised that certain authors have written about a journey. They use the journey to depict life. What is important is that (a) they have used it in different ways, and (b) they have used it to achieve different aims and objectives. For example, Groenewald (1993a: 20) says that the journey can be used to depict life and the growth of a person.

Groenewald is not the first one who have recognised the importance of a journey in Northern Sotho literature. He is, however, the first to emphasise the importance of a journey when an author

to reveal and display his intentions in writing such a work of literary art uses it. This will be examined in full so that the importance of the journey as used as a technique can be realised.

This investigation has revealed that there have been researchers who have examined the journey in Northern Sotho literature, such as Groenewald (1993b), Gérard (1981), Lebaka (1999), Lekganyane (1997) and Mampho (1999). Their intention was not to examine the journey in full, but to compare or summarise certain kinds of literature. Hence, the aim of this article is to examine the journey as used as a technique in Northern Sotho literature.

## **Technique**

When defining the concept technique Marggraff (1994: 69) says:

Techniques can thus be defined as the thematic compilations of facts by the implicit author.

She emphasises that a technique is an important weapon of a writer/author when compiling a story she/he is writing about. Kerkhoff (1962: 16) adds that a technique is that which can be seen, and that which can be used to reveal what is spoken or written. That is why Mojalefa (1993: 128) says that technique is what the author speaks of by writing, and how he says it through writing it.

Cohen (1973: 9) introduces a new and important idea by saying that with a technique the reader realises how an author displays his/her intentions as well as how he/she creates characters of his choice. Scholes (1961: 141) realises this idea by saying:

It is the only means, he (the author) has of discovery, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its means, and, finally, of evaluating it.

This excerpt reveals the usefulness of a technique because it is the technique that displays a theme for the reader. Furthermore, with technique the author is able to discover, to realise, to investigate and to expand his intention. Groenewald (1993a: 17) concludes these ideas by saying that a technique is the manner in which the author displays his message to the reader. On the same page Groenewald describes the two functions of a technique as being to:

- (a) emphasise, enlarge, and to consolidate a certain idea, and
- (b) relate that idea with the theme.

Through it, the author compares techniques when compiling his literature. Marggraff (1994: 76) says that there are various kinds of techniques:

The techniques will be broadly divided in the following two sections: repetition/order and rhythm.

## **Types of technique**

When explaining these two categories of technique Marggraff (1994: 76) goes on to say:

The former is subdivided into foreshadowing, flashback, true repetition and the cycle. Rhythm is based mainly on the reader's intuition and consists of ellipse, summary, scène, and retardation.

Those two main categories mentioned above, can still be subdivided into (a) (repetition) foreshadowing, flashback, time, frequency and cycle, and (b) (rhythm) ellipse, summary, retardation and scène. Besides these techniques Groenewald (1993a: 17) says that there are other

techniques, namely, mirror image, focus, journey, and others. Therefore, Lazarus and Smith (1983: 288) can say:

In Joyce's *Ulysses* the symbolic journey is one of the chief techniques.

These two theorists maintain that a journey technique is one of the vital techniques in arranging and ordering incidences in literary art.

### **A journey technique**

This section examines the ways in which the journey technique is explained by researchers of Northern Sotho literature.

Groenewald (1993a: 20) says that a journey technique is a weapon with which authors, especially those of Northern Sotho works, compile their novels. He says that in most cases if a Northern Sotho work is a novel, its content is based on a journey. The journey depicts life because it has the beginning and an ending. The plot of such literature is usually not complicated. It centres on one main incident that happens to the main character that is on the journey. Muir (1957: 32) explains that this journey technique is mainly used in picaresque and behaviour literature. He says that picaresque's main character is called picaro, who is on a journey, is befallen by certain incidences, meets with certain characters and has a real life situation displayed by the author to people through him.

To sum up these notions about the journey technique, Groenewald (1993a: 21) says that in most cases this technique is not used in short stories because of their shortness. However, he says that the journey technique can be employed in novels and other literature that depicts the length of a journey.

A discussion of how Lentsoane and Mahapa use this journey technique in their writings, namely, *Megokgo ya lethabo* (1992) and "Tubatse" in *Di sa re šaletše monaganong* (1968) respectively now follows. How Lentsoane employs (a) a journey technique, and (b) minor techniques, which broaden this main journey technique in *Megokgo ya lethabo*, in trying to resolve the problems of Dikgoneng's marriage is also discussed. Lentsoane bases his story on love problems. As he explains the novel's theme, he uses those problems of love that has limitations/restrictions. Problems arise when Kgoteledi wants to choose a woman for Dikgoneng. Dikgoneng insists on choosing the one he loves, Mihloti, himself. Kgoteledi hates Mihloti who is from a different ethnic group. This is why she does not want Dikgoneng to marry Mihloti.

Kgoteledi realises that Dikgoneng is undermining her authority because she is a woman and men deal with marriage matters. She feels that if her husband, Lehlagare, was still alive he could deal with these marriage affairs. These circumstances force Kgoteledi to seek assistance from her relatives, in particular the men, to deal with this issue of Dikgoneng's marriage. Kgoteledi is desperately in need of support against Dikgoneng's marriage, undertakes a journey to the Bopedi homeland.

### **Kgoteledi's journey**

Kgoteledi leaves her family at Diepkloof to visit the homeland, Marishane's place and Masemola's place before returning to her family in Diepkloof. This journey is to be examined as it uses six minor techniques, which are focus, shifting of focus, hurrying up of time, dialogue, rhetorical question and retardation.

## **Focus**

Strachan (1988: 42) defines focus as the way in which an author or narrator explains what is spoken. Focus can be a character, a thing or an incident. She goes on to say that focus is the mirror image of the author in relation to that which is spoken.

Hence, Groenewald (1993a: 23) says that an author focuses a thing when he explains it clearly. Thus, focus is the way in which an author explains his story to enable the reader to realise it.

As Lentsoane structures a journey using the focus technique, he uses a narrator to describe the bigger picture of all the incidences of Kgoteledi's journey from the beginning to the end. He focuses on the beginning of the journey in this way:

Ge iri ya seswai e itia ke ge Kgoteledi a šetše a le ka peseng yeo e ilego go kgatlampana mosegare ka moka ya goroga ge le dula dithaba ka morago... Ge Kgoteledi a tsena gaMarishane ke ge le šetše le hubahuba le nyaka go tamiša dithaba (p. 38)

(At eight o'clock exactly Kgoteledi was already in the bus which was going to take the whole day travelling to the Bapedi homeland... When Kgoteledi arrived at Marishane's place the sun was about to set.)

Lentsoane goes on to focus on the journey from Marishane's place to Masemola and back to Marishane. Even though the author does not describe the journey from Marishane, it can be accepted that he deliberately leaves out such an incident with the intention of speeding up the story in order to complete Kgoteledi's journey to Masemola's place.

Go fihla ga bona gaMasemola e bile tabanyana ya bofefo...Ba bo gogile, gomme le ile ge le ntšha nko ya ba ba šetše ba emetše dinamelwa. Taxi e eme gomme ba namela. Ba fetile gaMashabela, gaPhaahla gomme ba tsena ga, gaMarishane (p. 48)

(They immediately arrived at Masemola ... They slept there and woke up early in the morning to wait for transport. A taxi arrived then they got into it. They passed by Mashabela, Phaahla, then arrived at Marishane – their home.)

The author rounds off Kgoteledi's journey to Diepkloof by focusing on it with these words:

*Pese e fihlile, gomme leeto la thoma...E gorogile Gauteng ge letšatši le thoma go hubahuba le laela batho. E ile ge e ema Park Station ya ba Dikgoneng o šetše a emetše Kgoteledi gore a fologe* (p. 59)

(The bus arrived, then the journey started ... It arrived in Johannesburg when the sun was about to set. Upon the bus's arrival at Park Station, Dikgoneng was already there waiting for his mother, Kgoteledi.)

If the author through a narrator describes the journey, it convinces the reader to accept everything as reality. This helps the reader to understand and to accept what the author says about that journey, as the reader trusts the narrator. Therefore, this technique is important because it focuses on Kgoteledi's change. Furthermore, one realises that Kgoteledi's journey is not only described by the author, but also by the characters. Hence the author employs a technique of shifting the focus to focus on this journey.

### Shifting of focus

Lebaka (1999: 92) explains the implications of this technique when the story is told not by the author but by a character or narrator. According to Groenewald (1993a: 23) an author focuses on an idea by using mirror image and uses a character of the story to explain that idea.

When broadening this idea Thobakgale (1996: 112) describes the difference between the mirror image of an author and that of a character by saying that if the story is told by an author himself he exaggerates it but when it is told by a character, the character tells the truth because these things really happened to him.

With the technique of shifting the focus, Lentsoane changes his mirror image for he uses a character named Kgoteledi to describe her story of a journey to convince the reader. Kgoteledi herself tells her children her intention in undertaking such journey:

*Banake, ke bona gore la Mokibelo le ka se nshobelele mo. Le ge ke sa ikwe gabotse ke bona ke gapeletšega go yo bonana le Seporo kua gaMarishane mabapi le mathata ao Dikgoneng a ntswaletšego ona (p. 35).*

(My children, I do not think by Saturday I will still be here. Regardless of the fact that I am not feeling well, I am prepared to undertake this journey on Saturday to visit Seporo's family at Marishane about the problems that Dikgoneng has caused for me.)

If this journey is described by Kgoteledi, it makes the reader believe that her journey really happened as she described because Kgoteledi was pressurised by her family problems to undertake such a journey. When Lentsoane uses Kgoteledi to explain, the reader accepts it as the real story. Therefore, this technique is important because it focuses the journey. A journey itself implies life. The importance of this journey is realised when Kgoteledi arrives at Marishane at Seporo's family. Lentsoane emphasises the importance of the journey by using a technique of speeding up time in order for Kgoteledi to arrive immediately.

### To speed up time

Strachan (1988: 26) focuses on this technique by saying:

*Die snelheid van die verhaaltyd kan vinniger of stadiger as die geskiedenis tyd wees, of dit kan gelyk daarvan wees.*

(The tempo of the text time (discourse time) can be faster or slower than that of the story time, or it can be equal to the latter.)

He stresses that this technique is used when the author does not focus on an incident in full but explain it in short, even though such an incident might have taken much longer than the author's description of the incident. Groenewald (1993a: 21) emphasises that time is speeded up when the author omits certain incidents or tells a story through summary. Thus, only important things are included in the summary. The author focuses briefly on ideas and incidents that are important and leaves out those that he feels are not vital even though they might have taken a long time. Narratological time is compared to atmospheric time and one discovers that the former is the time that is slow. Lentsoane hurries time in this way:

*Pese e no re go tloga setešeneng sa Gauteng wa hwetša go lla lengwane go laetša mang le mang gore yela yona le ge ba re dilo di a swana, e lebile gona Bopedi...Go goroga ga Kgoteledi ka ga Seporo go tsošitše lethabo leo le ilego la emaemiša le baagišane ba go rata ditaba (p. 38).*

(Immediately after the bus left Gauteng station, passengers started making a lot of noise to indicate that the bus was going to the Bapedi homeland. Kgoteledi's arrival made Seporo's family, including inquisitive neighbours, very happy.)

How the author structures a journey through the technique of speeding up time will be investigated. Lentsoane speeds up the time of Kgoteledi's journey by letting Kgoteledi leave Diepkloof and immediately arrive in Bapedi homeland at Marishane. The author has therefore hurried time by leaving out everything that he feels is not important but has taken place on the way.

The strength of this journey is realised once Kgoteledi has arrived in Bopedi at Seporo's family. This technique makes the reader aware that what has happened on the whole day on the way from Soweto to Marishane's place are unimportant. What is important is explained by Kgoteledi to Seporo's family. This technique helps the author to omit incidents that are not useful. Only those that Kgoteledi describes to Seporo are important because they concern her journey.

The journey's importance arises when Kgoteledi sparks a dialogue between Seporo and herself.

## Dialogue

Cohen (1973: 183) defines this technique thus:

Dialogue is the conversation between people in poetry, plays and stories.

It implies that dialogue is one of the most important tools that an author has when compiling a story. He emphasises its usefulness in any art of writing. Serudu *et al.* (1995: 119) add to this by saying that dialogue is one of the author's most important tools in displaying his drama. This is why Groenewald (1993a: 49) says that dialogue is a useful mirror image that represents reality. Lekganyane (1997: 3) concludes by saying that dialogue is mostly found between characters. Lentsoane introduces Kgoteledi to Seporo:

*Yola Dikgoneng o re tswaletše koma ka lapeng. O gorogile a etetša kgarebe tsoko ya Motsonga a re yena o ipheleleditše. Ke lekile go swanishetšana le yena, eupša go padile. O re ga a sa katakata, o gatela pele (p. 42).*

(Dikgoneng has created problems in the family. He has come up with a Tsonga girl whom he says he loves. I have tried to direct him but all in vein. Dikgoneng has no regrets.)

Seporo replies thus:

*Banenyana ba Bopedi ge ba sa hlokwe kua Gauteng o be a tsenwe ke eng ge a no šiteletša mehlobo ye mengwe? (p. 42).*

(Because the Pedi girls are also found in Gauteng, why did he decide to choose a Tsonga girl?).

With this dialogue, Lentsoane emphasises the reason that has forced Kgoteledi to visit Seporo's family. Dikgoneng has persisted in loving Mihloti. The use of this technique enables the author to alert the reader to the fact that Kgoteledi and Seporo's family are conservative and still holds traditional values. Hence, Seporo's family strongly supports Kgoteledi against Dikgoneng's marriage to Mihloti who is from a different ethnic group. Both families deny that change has become part of their lives.

The importance of this technique lies, therefore, in the fact that Kgoteledi denies this change. Lentsoane stresses the usefulness of dialogue as technique by employing a rhetorical question technique.

### Rhetorical question

Abrams (1981: 161) defines this technique thus:

A rhetorical question is a question asked, not to evoke an actual reply, but to achieve an emphasis than direct statement, by inviting the auditor himself to supply an answer, which the speaker presumes to be the obvious one. The figure is most used in persuasive discourse, and tends to be important as an oratorical tone to a speech.

He emphasises that a rhetorical question is a question that does not need an answer. Serudu (1989: 4) adds to this idea by saying that a rhetorical question is the way in which the author triggers the reader's attention. For the reader to pay attention, Lentsoane introduces Ngwatomosadi's feelings this way:

*Ke dilo mang le gona tša kae tšeo Dikgoneng a di dirago? Ruri tšeo a lekago go di dira ke tša bošilo bja mafelelo* (p. 43).

(What is Dikgoneng actually trying to do? Actually what he does are stupid things and nothing else.)

Here the author displays the usefulness of the dialogue between Kgoteledi and Seporo's family. The author triggers the reader's attention to focus on what has made Kgoteledi leave Soweto to arrive at Marishane's place and Ngwatomosadi's family. Ngwatomosadi emphasises the problems caused by Dikgoneng. These problems concern Kgoteledi and Thola's lives. The author goes on to emphasise this life change by using a retardation technique.

### Retardation

Mojalefa (1993: 103) says that retardation has been used when the reader discovers that the author explores an event or story with a carefulness that goes beyond measure. Thus, the author relates the story in full. To stress Kgoteledi's journey Lentsoane employs retardation technique in the following way:

*Pese e fihlile, gomme leeto la thoma. E kgatlampane ya tsena Groblersdal. E gorogile Gauteng ge letšatši le thoma go hubahuba le laela batho. Eile ge e ema Park Station ya ba Dikgoneng o šetše a emetše Kgoteledi gore a fologe* (p. 59).

(The bus arrived; then the journey started. The bus travelled all the way until it arrived at Groblersdal. It reached Gauteng when the sun sets. Upon the bus's arrival at Park Station Dikgoneng was already waiting for his mother, Kgoteledi.)

This explanation broadens the story that concerns the novel's problems. Kgoteledi goes back home to Diepkloof from Marishane's place and then clashes with Dikgoneng. What the author does is to clear those problems by extending Kgoteledi's journey with information that is useless. This news can be summarised thus: when a bus arrives, a journey starts. Dikgoneng meets Kgoteledi at Park Station and they then go home to Diepkloof. Dikgoneng gives her a lift. Lentsoane employs the retardation technique by summarising Kgoteledi's final journey from Marishane to her family in Diepkloof. The importance of this technique is to summarise both the last journey as well as the change in Kgoteledi's life.

### **Application of a journey technique in “Tubatse” from *Di sa re šaletše monaganong* (1968)**

Mahapa undertakes a journey by car from Schoonoord to Tubatse, which is situated in the area of Steelpoort. He intends to tell the story of Tubatse. As he narrates incidents in Tubatse, he contrasts a traditional way of life with a modern philosophy of life. By so doing he creates problems because those two things are different.

To resolve the problem of the clash, a conflict between these two modes of living emerges. Hence, Mahapa uses minor techniques. These smaller techniques include use of a narrator, contrast, description and poetry. How Mahapa uses those minor techniques to enlarge the main journey technique will be examined.

#### **Narrator**

When defining a narrator Groenewald (1993a: 48–49) says that a narrator is a person who has no name, but is being realised when reading is done. On certain occasions the narrator speaks to the reader while on other occasions the narrator speaks to the listener. Furthermore, Groenewald emphasises that a narrator can be someone without name who is encountered during the process of reading. Such a person can either speak to the reader or to the listener.

Mohlala (1994: 56) defines the narrator as the director. On the same page, he goes on to say that the director is a character that is used by the author to lead a person(s) when crossing a country or climbing up a mountain. The author uses this director to explain everything in detail. How this narrator contrasts a traditional attitude to life with a modern philosophy of life will be explored. To employ this narrator technique Mahapa says:

*Matšatšing a lehono ke dipolasa tša Babašweu, re feta ntlo ye kgolo ka gona go la mpati ka gona go le letshadi ke ngwako wa poso ... (p. 55).*

(Nowadays there are whites' farms. We pass by a big house on the right hand side while on the left hand side is the post office.)

He simultaneously tells of events concerning the traditional way of life, for example ploughing Bapedi fields, as well as whites' farms and the post office. Mahapa goes on to say:

*Re thelela ka sefatanaga sa rena, tsela e a re dumela, re no budubutša re roka naga ka thaere, ka morago lerole le kgama kolobe. Ga ra ema! Bengtsela ke bao, bopokolo. Mmalo, anke o e bone, e no pshikologa gare ga tsela, maotwana godimo (p. 59).*

(We travel in our own car. The road is smooth and the car moves well. From behind there is dust. We did not stop. As we drive we see a donkey, which is rolling over on the road.)

A car and a donkey are simultaneously referred to. One realises that in the old days people undertook journeys by means of donkeys whilst today they travel by motorcars. One concludes that Mahapa has broadened the conflict between the traditional and modern ways of living by using the narrator technique.



### **Contrast**

Shipley (1970: 77) and Cohen (1973: 182) explain that contrast is a method of comparing two pictures or ideas that differ with the intention of explaining the story or event. Mahapa employs this technique by contrasting a traditional approach to life with the modern philosophy of life:

### **Traditional attitude to life**

This is displayed through Mahapa's references to fields on which the homesteads of Bapedi used to be found: Where the calves graze, there was a big community of Bapedi under King Thulare (p. 55).

### **Modern philosophy of life**

Furthermore, Mahapa says:

*Re thelela ka sefatanaga sa rena, tsela e a re dumela, re no bubutša re roka naga ka thaere, ka morago lerole le kgama kolobe (p. 59).*

(We travel in our own car. The road is smooth and the car moves well. From behind there is dust.)

Modern ways of living are related to cars, whites' farms and the tarred road. Here, Mahapa explains the usefulness of a modern philosophy of life and how it relates to the lives of modern people.

### **Description**

Kenny (1966: 75) explains the concept description thus:

By description we mean the direct presentation of the qualities of a person, place, or a thing. For some, description extends to the presentation of non-material qualities, as when the author tells us directly of the moral nature of the character.

He stresses that description is used when the story is focused on both characters and milieu. This technique investigates the character or narrator. Hence, Mohlala (1994: 58) says that through this technique the author explains in full the incident so that the reader can see it through his/her eyes. To emphasize this Groenewald (1991: 16) says that:

*Die uitvoerige beskrywing wat volg, bou die teenstelling wat terselfdertyd die spanning lewendig hou, versigtig uit. Mahapa handhaaf 'n subtiele korrelasie tussen die teenstelling; hy wissel hulle af; vul hulle selfs met nuwes aan, sonder om die eenheidsgedagte te versteur wat hierdie essays saambind.*

(Though the comprehensive description that follows, the oppositions, which at the same time keep the suspense alive, are carefully constructed. Mahapa maintains a subtle correlation between the oppositions, he alternates between them, even supplements them with new ones, without disturbing the unifying thought that binds these essays together.)

What he says is that description is a technique that displays the author's intention. Mahapa uses this technique thus:

*Gona ka mo godingwana ka mola, mo gonabjale go emeng sekolwana sa Mokororwane, ke gona mo go bego go agile Bapedi. Le meroto/ meloto ya bona lehono e sa le gona, mo ba bego ba bolotša gona. Ke gona mo ba ileng ba hloma mantswana a bona ba sa tšwa Kgatleng ba sa bina Kgabo, tšhwene ya makopo (p. 55).*

(On that side where Mokororwane School stands today the Bapedi once resided. Their circumcision kraal is still there, where they performed circumcisions. It is where they had built their houses on their arrival from Kgatleng.)

One realises that the author uses the minor technique of the narrator to broaden the description technique. Mahapa uses the narrator to lead the reader as he/she climbs Tubatse Mountains with the narrator. Climbing is symbolic of a life full of problems. The narrator climbs the mountain with the reader as an encouragement and also as a motivation that the reader must cope with those life problems. The narrator climbs down from the mountain with the reader as a sign that he/she must carry on with life. When defining the function or uses of that symbol, Groenewald (1991: 16) says:

*Die detail kwalifiseer hier, ken soveel kenmerke aan die berg toe wat termaties ter sake is, dat hy onmiskenbaar simbool word.*

(The detail qualifies here, allocates so many thematically relevant characteristics to the mountain that unmistakably becomes a symbol.)

The symbol that Groenewald refers to represents the traditional attitude to life and can also be seen as depicting a modern life philosophy. Hence, the symbol itself can represent both a traditional attitude to life and a modern approach to life. This difference is the one that causes conflict between the old way of living and the modern way of life.

It can be concluded that the usefulness of this technique is that with the help of the narrator, the author is able to relate himself to the reader because the reader is spoken to as if he/she is a character, and as if he/she sees these events.

## Poetry

When describing poetry, Gordon and de Villiers (1968: xv) say:

Poetry is a philosophy, often a substitute for religion, in which man expresses his ideals, hopes and strivings.

They say that on other occasions, the author uses poetry as a technique to frame and arrange his story. Hence, Beckson and Ganz (1961: 170) explain that:

Poetry is defined as any metrical composition; for the most part a distinction is made between it and verse. It presents an emotional and intellectual experience – it produces pleasure.

They emphasise that poetry is important as it reflects the intention and experience of the author. Mohlala (1994: 75) goes on to say that the main function of poetry is to enlarge and to praise. On the same page, he emphasises that with poetry the author stresses the importance, beauty or growth of a person or thing, as well as broadening the reader's attention.

Mahapa praises one of the brave men of Tubatse thus:

*Ke nna Phaswa 'a Makwa!  
Phaswa o retwa Matebeleng!  
O retwa ke Moshabane 'a Maredi.  
O reta Phaswa, a e reta a re:  
O šale o bona motse wa Ledimo ke woo,  
Motse ke tšhidinkokoto,...(p. 55)*

(I am Phaswa of Makwa;  
Phaswa is praised at Matebeleng;  
Is praised by Moshabane of Maredi.  
He praises a brave, praises him by saying:  
Remain to look after the community of Ledimo;  
The community is taken to be a stronghold...)

On the other hand when he praises Tubatse he says:

*Ke gona Tubatse tletlolo,  
Meetsemathata 'a Bokone,  
Maropolantswe (p. 54).*

(It is Tubatse  
The hardwater of Bokone,  
Maropolantswe.)

One realises that Mahapa uses this technique of poetry to praise the braves in the Bapedi nation at Tubatse with the intention/aim of showing respect to them as well as to place them in high esteem. He also uses this technique to describe the importance and the beauty of the mountains, which surround Tubatse.

One can conclude that the usefulness of this technique is that it focuses the reader's attention on the good things about the traditional attitude to life that is still to be found at Tubatse when this way of life is compared to a modern way of life. Therefore, one can say that Mahapa contrasts the traditional attitude to life with a modern philosophy of life through the poetry technique.

## Conclusion

In *Megokgo ya lethabo*, Lentsoane uses a journey technique to resolve problems brought about by Dikgoneng's marriage. On the other hand, Mahapa uses the journey technique to contrast modern and traditional ways of living. By so doing, he creates problems because a modern philosophy of life and a traditional attitude to life are two different things. Therefore, to resolve such problems, Mahapa uses minor techniques that extend the main journey technique.

Lentsoane uses eleven minor techniques to extend the journey technique, which triggers the reader's attention. Mahapa uses four minor techniques to extend the main journey from Schoonoord to Tubatse.

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