

K. Mogapi, *Tsheka-tsheko Ya Dikwalo: Padi*,  
Longman Botswana, Gaborone, 1982, pp.143, P4.50

Mogapi's latest book is an important addition and a significant contribution to the study and development of Tswana literature, especially in the areas of the novel, drama and short story. A fair number of novels, plays and short stories have been published in Setswana but until the appearance of Tsheka-tsheko Ya Dikwalo, Setswana had nothing written on literary theory and criticism.

The book is written in Setswana which will ensure that it enjoys wide readership by the speakers of the language. It is the first time that secondary schools and first year University students studying Setswana have a literature textbook available for teaching and studying by direct method. This is particularly crucial at secondary school level where teaching of Tswana literature is done through the medium of the home language. The uniqueness of this book consists in the level of the audience it addresses, the medium of communication and the comprehensiveness of the scope of its coverage of the various genres of Tswana literature.

The first part briefly reviews the development of the Tswana novel. In this part the development of the novel is perceived in three stages according to thematic content. The stages are as follows: novels depicting traditional life; those portraying a clash between modern and traditional life; and finally those that are confined to the portrayal of urban life.

This survey and classification is however limited by the fact that it bases itself only on the popular content of the novel, but this the author made no reference to. Without consideration of this aspect of the development of the novel, it cannot be correctly said that the statement of the author reflects the developmental picture adequately.

The second part of the book is a simple but clear treatment of the following aspects: direction and style, characters and characterisation, theme, plot, setting, conflict, plausibility, and climax. But again insufficient attention is given to questions of exposition and points of view which should also form essential elements of such analysis. The treatment of setting is rather controversial for the author merely adapts it to his thematically biased review of novel development.

Mogapi's treatment of plot is fresh and commendable. It goes beyond that of Forster's in his classic Aspects of the Novel<sup>1</sup> which accounts for plot in terms of action only. Plot as reflected in Mogapi's text, has action, thought and character as its integral parts. This makes it possible to state adequately what any plot is. Plot is seen as a synthesis of the three elements. Mogapi goes further to demonstrate that plots will differ in structure according to how one of the three ingredients is used as a dominant or synthesising principle. He therefore details plots of action, plots of thought and plots of character. For example, in a plot of action the synthesising principle is a completed change in the situation of a protagonist determined and effected by character and thought. He illustrates this by the plot of Monyaise's Go Sa Baori.

In the third part, the novels Matlhooole by Mmileng and Onphile Umphi Modise by Monyaise are analysed to illustrate the operation of the principles outlined in the second part. This is followed by exercises for practice.

The last part of the book consists of a list of the literary terms which have been used in the text and their English translations. This should be particularly useful for readers in Botswana and other parts of the Setswana speaking countries.

1. E.M. Foster, Aspects of the Novel, Edward Arnold, London

J. MOILWA  
Department of African Languages & Literature  
University of Botswana