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Navigating the Intertextual Landscape: KPD Maphalla's Poetry in Dialogue

By Sol Chaphole
North-West University

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Keywords: *intertextuality, theory, plurality of meaning, autonomous text, host and parasite.*

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Keywords: intertextuality, theory, plurality of meaning, autonomous text, host and parasite.

"The good of a book lies in its being read.
A book is made up of signs that speak of other signs,
which in their turn speak of things.
Without an eye to read them,
a book contains signs that produce no concepts,
therefore, it is dumb."
Umberto Eco *(1980), 'The Name of the Rose'.*

I. Introduction

Moleleki ([1988: 182] 2020) says Maphalla, like any other author, has fed on the work of other authors like a parasite, especially his predecessors in the genre of poetry. To support his statement, Moleleki quotes Miller (1979:225) who writes:

'any poem, however, is parasitical in its turn on earlier poems,
or contains earlier poems within itself as enclosed parasites,
in another version of perpetual reversal of parasite and host.
If the poem is food and poison for the critics,
it must in turn have eaten.
It must have been a cannibal consumer of earlier poems'.

Moleleki's statement is a hunch, an inspired guess, because he has not investigated what he claims. He does, however, suggest that future research should find out if Maphalla is a parasite whose poetry has fed on earlier poems of his predecessors. Alternatively, investigate if there is a perpetual reversal of parasite and host in Maphalla's poetry. This research will investigate none of Moleleki's suggestions as supported by Miller (1979). Rather, our analysis will focus on the theory of intertextuality as initiated and developed by Julia Kristeva (1966, 1967, 1980, 1986) which Culler (1981: 103) describes as follows:

'Intertextuality thus has a double focus.
On the one hand it calls our attention to the importance of prior texts,
insisting that the autonomy of texts is a misleading notion,
and that a work has the meaning it does
only because certain things have previously been written.
Yet in so far as it insists on intelligibility, on meaning,
intertextuality leads us to consider prior texts as contributions,
to a code which makes possible the various effects of signification'.

Our aim then, in this research, is to explore through Kristeva's theory of intertextuality that a text is more than a chain of parasitical presences as Moleleki (1988) suggests. Moleleki's view of intertextuality hinges on looking at an earlier text as a host and a later text as a parasite. The symbol of host and parasite suggests that an earlier text (host) is destroyed by the later text (parasite, thief). Kristeva's theory of intertextuality on the other hand, views textual relations as complementary where texts 'support', nourish, and nurture one another.

According to Makhubela (1999: 16–17), Maphalla's oeuvre includes the following collections of poetry: *Tsie lala* (1982), *Mahohodi* (1983), *Fuba sa ka* (1984), *Kgapha tsa ka* (1984), *Dikano* (1985), *Ditema* ((1987), *Ntekeletsane* (1989), *Makgaolakgang* (1991), *Sentebale* (1991), *Ditlabotjha* (1992), *Ntetekeng* (1992), *Mphe leihlo* (1993), Seitebatso (1993), *Pinyane* (1994), *Sentelele* (1994). It is from some of this output of Maphalla's poetry that data will be drawn for the purpose of analysis in this article.

Correspondence Author: Focus Area Languages and Literature in the SA Context, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa. e-mail: solchapole@gmail.com

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II. Origin of the Concept of Intertextuality

The concept of *intertextuality* goes very far back to the writings of the classics, to the works of Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Cicero, and others. It should be noted though, that *intertextuality* as a concept, was not referred to explicitly as such at that time. According to Worton and Still (1990), neither Platonic nor Aristotelian theory of imitation is to be understood as imitation of nature. In the case of Plato, the poet always copies an earlier act of creation, which is itself already a copy. For Aristotle, dramatic creation is the reduction, and hence intensification of a mass of texts known to the poet and probably to the audience as well. This is what Kristeva came to christen intertextuality. We do not have space here to discuss the classics in detail in relation to Kristeva's theory of intertextuality. (see Martinez, 2011; Kehinde, 2003; among others).

Allen (2000) teaches that modern literary theory is often viewed as having stemmed from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) in his groundbreaking work '*Course in General Linguistics*' (1915). (see also Zengin, 2016; Mavengano and Hove, 2019). Saussure's linguistic theories first recognized language as a system of syntax, phonology, and semantics; and then applied the theories to literature much later (see Enkvist and Gregory, 1964; Austin, 1969; Searle, 1969; Chatman, 1971; Enkvist, 1973). The theory of language as style is a case in point here. For instance, Enkvist (1975) offers succinct summaries of Saussurean views on *langue* and *parole* and Chomsky's notions of *competence* and *performance*; and comments interestingly on ways of describing styles within grammar.

Viewing language as an intricate web of signs, as a structured system of linguistic elements, Saussure established the bases for structuralism. The theory of structuralism challenged the long-established beliefs and assumptions that a literary work expresses its author's mind and personality and that it gives its readers an objective reality, an essential truth about human life (Allen, 2011). Clearly, the reader is passive in the process of reading a literary work according to this claim. Structuralism, for its part, offers a structural analysis of a literary text to reach its meaning. It emphasizes the structural elements of the text and closes it down rather than opening it up, considering no outside context such as historical and biographical contexts. Kristeva then developed Saussure's innovating ideas to challenge the closure of the text. She also questioned the notion that a text is a closed off entity, and forwarded the notion that a literary text is not a product of an author's original ideas with one referential meaning, rather it is a construction of various ideas with diverse meanings embedded in the text (Zengin, 2016).

The origin of the concept of intertextuality is not only rooted in Saussure's structural linguistics but also in Mikhail Bakhtin's interest in the poetics of language. Poetics of language is understood here as the theory of techniques, structure, form, and discourse, particularly within poetry. Kristeva combines Saussure's and Bakhtin's theories of language to query the transparency of signs in relation to reality. As an instance, it can be said that the post-structuralist theories of Bakhtin led to the conception of text in the theory of intertextuality (Allen, 2000). Bakhtin's theory of dialogism and heteroglossia lies at the core of Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality. Bakhtin did not use the term intertextuality; this term was first used by Kristeva with reference to his dialogism and heteroglossia. For Bakhtin, it is the dialogic aspect of language which foregrounds class, ideological and other conflicts, divisions, and hierarchies within society (Allen, 2011). Bakhtin stresses the notion of *otherness* in words. In his view, the self is always in dialogue with the other**,** with the world and with others. The self is always in dialogue with the word of the other. Because the words we select both in speech and writing have an *otherness* about them, and because they belong to specific genres, it is inevitable for the words to bear traces of previous utterances (Bakhtin, 1935). Bakhtin's insistence on *otherness* is related to the theory of intertextuality because for him the meaning of every word or utterance is formed through the speaker's [or writer's] relation to other people, other people's words and expressions experienced in a specific time and place (Mavengano and Hove, 2019).

III. Julia Kristeva's Theory of Intertextuality

Julia Kristeva is a Bulgarian-born French literary critical theorist, best known for her writings in structural linguistics, semiotics, psychoanalysis, and philosophical feminism. Kristeva was born on June 24, 1941, in Sliven, Bulgaria. She received her degree in Prague School linguistics from the University of Sofia in 1966. Later in that year, she immigrated to France on a doctoral fellowship. In Paris she worked with the structuralist and Marxist critic Lucien Goldman, the literary critic Roland Barthes, and the structuralist anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. Kristeva received her doctorate in linguistics in 1973 titled '*Revolution in Poetic Language'*. The thesis was partially translated into English in 1974 (Oliver, 2010).

Shortly after she arrived in Paris, from her native Bulgaria, Kristeva wrote *'Word, Dialogue and Novel'* (1966) and '*The Bounded Text*' (1967). These essays were later included in her volume of essays titled '*Desire in Language*' (1980). The concept of *intertextuality* that Julia Kristeva initiated was first discussed in these debut essays (Martinez, 2011). Philippe Sollers (2016) writes

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that Julia Kristeva *is able to gain recognition in linguistics with major innovations, astonish Jakobson, Levi-Strauss, Benveniste, Barthes, and Lacan, become a well-known psychoanalyst and an international academic. She is now a star in England, the United States, Japan, and Norway.* Julia Kristeva married Philippe Sollers, founder of the *Tel Quel* French journal, on August 2, 1967. After 56 years of marriage, 'Philippe Sollers, novelist, critic, essayist, died on Saturday, May 6, 2023, in Paris, France at the age of 86' (Philippe Forest, May 6, 2023).

Julia Kristeva (1966) proposed the text as a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of analysis instead of static structures and products. She writes in '*Word, Dialogue, and Novel',* that the *literary word* is an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point of fixed meaning. [It is] a dialogue among several writings. There are always other words in a word, other texts in a text (Kristeva, 1980: 65). The concept of intertextuality requires, therefore, that we understand texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of *otherness*, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures (Kristeva, 1980:66). Rejecting the New Critical principle of textual autonomy, the theory of intertextuality insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and so, it cannot function as a closed system.

There have appeared a wide range of attitudes towards the concept of intertextuality and what it implies. One of the most immediate consequences of such a proliferation of intertextual theories has been the progressive dissolution of the text as a coherent and self-contained unit of meaning. This view has led in turn to a shift of emphasis from the individual text to the way in which texts relate to one another (Martinez, 2011).

McAfee (2004) observes that Kristeva never separates the study of language from subjectivity. This is because she sees language as personal utterance, as the choice of the speaker or the writer. Language cannot be objective because it depends on the subjectivity of the speaker, writer, or reader. Different readers, she says, bring different experiences to a text in the same way as writers write their texts putting across their own experiences, assumptions, insights and so on. By extension, Kristeva is saying there is no identical reader, and therefore no identical reading of a text. Kristeva (1986: 86) emphasizes the point that the author and the reader or the critic of the text join the process of continual production. They are on trial over the text. Barthes (2001) agrees and puts the reader into an active, productive reading process. For Barthes, it is the writerly text which makes readers of the text productive in their reading. We round off this brief discussion of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality by taking a walk into the inner space of the *Tel Quel* French journal:

"*With its essays working on poststructuralism and deconstruction, Tel Quel, an avant-garde literary magazine founded in 1958 by Phillipe Sollers and Jean-Edern Hallier changed radically the traditional approach to text. It challenged the conventional beliefs in the uniqueness of the text and the authorial originality, and the respects for the originality of the author's creativity. Tel Quel authored and collaborated with such thinkers and theorists as Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Pierre Faye, Phillipe Sollers, Umberto Eco, Gérard Genette along with Julia Kristeva, investigated literature's radical relation to political and philosophical thought. The Tel Quel group's contribution to the generation of the intertextual theory is its resistance to 'the stabilization of the signifier/signified relation' (Allen, 2000: 33). Thus, the text has become something that resists stable signification. This is perhaps one of the most significant pronouncements of intertextuality: In a text there is no original thought, no unique intended meaning created by a unified authorial consciousness and a unique meaning to be discovered and deciphered by the reader. As the text is 'a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture' (Barthes in Leitch, 2001: 1468), it has a plurality of meaning, i.e., it embraces the layers of meaning. With Kristeva, along with the other members of the Tel Quel, intertextuality made a fundamental reversal of the traditional relation between a work and its author, where work is seen as a product and an author a producer, and work is made the object of interpretation, behind which a deep meaning is supposed to be lying waiting to be deciphered. Intertextual interpretations' emphasis on a text's meaning forming processes rather than the meaning in the text which was traditionally thought to be the object of interpretation is a significant paradigm shift that owes much to Kristeva's ideas"* (Zengin, 2016: 317–318).

IV. Literature Related to the Topic

Nolte and Jordaan (2011) utilised the theory of intertextuality to investigate the way in which religious texts, specifically Judith 16, generate meaning in the production of texts. The authors affirm and embrace Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality as groundbreaking work. They write further that they 'know now that a religious text is not a line of words releasing a single theological meaning (the message of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash' (Barthes, [1977: 146] 2001). Indeed, in this space, texts enter a dialogue and negotiate a plurality of meaning. This article serves to prove the relevance of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality in disciplines other than literature.

Ayo Kehinde (2003) clears the haze between the concept of *influence* and that of *intertextuality*. He says the concept of influence was jettisoned in favour of intertextuality because of some inherent flaws in it. Because of its excessive emphasis on authorship, the concept of influence gave way to intertextuality. However, the shift from influence to intertextuality does

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not totally bracket off the author-centred criticism. It will be interesting though, to see how this view will unfold and hold in the future in relation to Roland Barthes's (2001) '*The Death of the Author*'. Barthes like Kristeva places emphasis on the text rather than the author. An example is Barthes's insistence that a text is a tissue of quotations without quotation marks.

In '*Intertextuality and African Writers*', Abiodun Olofinsao (2017) shows a leaning towards influence rather than intertextuality. He says it is a general misconception that influence of one literary work on others is a denial of the author's claim to originality. That a writer influences another author, does not mean that the newly produced work lacks originality. Olofinsao (2017) concludes that no writer could actually claim that he has not been influenced by another writer. Therefore, he says, borrowing is not a sin, but failure to acknowledge others' influence on you is hypocritical and condemnable. The author of this article seems to be saying influence happens when a writer borrows from another writer. Olofinsao places emphasis on the writer rather than the text.

The authors, Esther Mavengano and Muchativugwa Hove (2019), argue that reading fictional narratives is a complex process that has been a preoccupation of scholars and critics in linguistics and literary criticism since Plato and Aristotle. These authors argue further that the contention that texts are constructed through a network of prior and concurrent discourses, problematizes the view that a text functions as a hermetic, self-sufficient closed system. The article draws from critical insights on intertextuality, which as a theory, is rooted in Saussurean structuralist linguistics and Mikhail Bakhtin's poetics of language. The authors have put together an honest, well-written and extremely well-informed research article.

V. An Intertextual Analysis of KPD Maphalla's Poetry

The literature review just presented has created extant space for the current article. The rationale for this paper has been established; this research has not been done before. As we set out to present an intertextual analysis of KPD Maphalla's poetry, we admit upfront that our analysis will be both bumpy and gropy. Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, elegant as it is, is not without limitations. Its main criticism lies in its inability to provide critics with a clear analytical tool when they approach texts (see Culler, 1976; Riffaterre, 1980; Genette, 1989).

Ntsane, KE (Mmusapelo II)

'Mmusapelo II' is Ntsane's second collection of poetry. The data we consider below will first come from this book, followed by examples from Khaketla, and lastly Mokhomo.

The literary element, *satire,* is Ntsane's main weapon for reprimanding society. This technique is also found in abundance in Maphalla's later texts. Examples:

Ke re ha o tshaba, o tshabe *hwenene*,
0 tshabe le mosadi wa *hiki,* Mmanyeo,
Basadi bana le ritelang *hiki* le baloi,

(Mmusapelo II: 67)

(I say you should fear liquor completely,
You should fear the woman who brews 'hiki'.
Mother-of-so-and-so!
You women who brew hiki, are witches.)

compare with *Maphalla*

Kgabane di ketotswe ke *hiki, mokankanyane,*
Tjhefu ya tsoho la mosadi wa *kgera*.

(Kgapha tsa ka: 21)

(Gentlemen have been dethroned by hiki,
an intoxicating drink.
Poison from a woman who brews a strong drink).

Moleleki ([1988: 184] 2020) says Ntsane refers to liquor in several names as though it is worthy of praise. It is not just '*hwenene'*, but it is also called '*hiki*' and '*bodila*'. These are names given to liquor by those who 'enjoy' it. The very object of their praise is the source of their misery. Further, the woman who is also a mother, is the one who brews the poisonous stuff as if she does not know the pain of seeing one's child in misery. This is satire at its best. Maphalla also satirically elevates liquor to the same level as Ntsane: he too refers to it as '*hiki*', '*mokankanyane*' and *'kgera'.* Moreover, he indirectly equates it with gentlemen who are also worthy of praise. The irony is that these respectable men are dethroned from their fragile pedestals by a stronger gentleman, liquor. In the last line, Maphalla calls liquor what it ought to be called: a poisonous stuff.

There is a relational connection between Ntsane's text and that of Maphalla. Julia Kristeva (1966) proposes a text as a dynamic site in which relational processes are the focus of analysis instead of static structures and products. Maphalla was able to produce the texts he did because Ntsane's prior text, was not a static and closed-off system. Further, Kristeva writes in '*Word*, *Dialogue*, *and Novel'* that there are always other words in a word, other texts in a text (Kristeva, 1980: 65). In the implied superordinate term/word (MacCawley, 1975) *'jwala'* (liquor), there are other words/collocates: *hwenene, hiki, bodila, mokankanyane, kgera* which relate, interact, and collaborate in the dynamic space of continual textual production (Barthes, 2001).

Ntsane, KE (Mmusapelo II)

Declaration of love for a young woman is made in almost similar terms in Ntsane's and Maphalla's texts.

Ka re, ngwana, ha ke o rate ke a petsoha.

(Mmusapelo II: 33)

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(I said, maiden, I love you so much that I can split/ crumble).

See *Maphalla*

Ka re ha ke o rate ke a shwa ngwana ditjhaba,

(Mahohodi: 45)

(*I said I am dying of your Love, child of foreign lands).*

This manner of declaring one's love for a young woman is typical of how, within the Sesotho culture, a young man puts across his proposal to a young woman. What we notice here is that the prior poet, Ntsane, is not original in any way. His text has inter-texted what has been said before in the oral tradition of Sesotho culture. He has drawn from the sociolinguistic repertoire of Sesotho as a language and as a culture. There are other oral forms through which a young man would declare his love to a maiden. Examples include:

Ke lekopokopo ke a koposela.
(I am an empty tin sounding nothing).
Ke metsi a noka ke a lelemela/Ke metsi a foro ke a forosela.
(I am river-water flowing along).

For Kristeva (1980: 66), the concept of intertextuality requires that we understand texts not as [hermetic], self-contained systems, but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures. In the last two examples given above, we see textual relations going far back into pre-literate Sesotho.

Khaketla, BM (Dipjhamathe)

The iconic potential of the Sesotho language exploited by Khaketla is evident in

Maphalla's works:

Ba ile, ba ile, re boMolahlehi,
Ba ile, ba ile, jo motso qhalane;

(Dipjhamathe: 54)

(They are gone, they are gone,
we are the lost ones,
They are gone, they are gone,
alas! the household has disintegrated).

Maphalla says:

0 ile, o ile wa hlooho ya kgomo,
0 ile, o ile ke setse lepalapaleng.

(Dikano: 38)

(He is gone, he is gone, my bosom friend.
He is gone, he is gone, I remain stranded).

and

Ba ile bonnake, ba ile,
Ba tswile letsholo ho sela bophelo.

(Sentebale: 70)

(They are gone dear ones, they are gone,
They have gone out in search of a livelihood).

Both poets use '*ile'* for iconic effect to create a gloomy atmosphere associated with loss through death. The iconic effect of '*ile*' seems to have more presence in Maphalla's poetry so that when the reader goes back to Khaketla's text, he has a better understanding of the eerie atmosphere evoked by this word.

The New Critical principle of textual autonomy is called into question here. Rejecting this principle, Kristeva (1980: 66) insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and so, it cannot function as a closed system. This shows a shift of emphasis from the individual text to the way in which texts relate to one another. The examples from Khaketla and Maphalla given above, are an intersection of textual surfaces rather than points of fixed meaning.

Khaketla, BM (Dipjhamathe)

Khaketla and Maphalla evoke extreme pain through the image of coagulated blood which clogs the heart:

Bohloko ba pelo, mohlohlwa-mahlwele,

(Dipjhamathe: 51)

(*Heartache stuffed with coagulated blood),*

Maphalla says:

Ke hlatse mahlwele a nkimetse pelo,

(Kgapha tsa ka: 8)

(So that I vomit blood clots that weigh heavily on my heart).

Khaketla, says Moleleki ([1988] 2020), uses the image of coagulated blood stuffed into his heart to portray excruciating pain emanating from the death of his loved ones. Maphalla's image is conveyed in a more explicit way than Khaketla's, so that his image sheds light on Khaketla's image, which remains obscure until the reader has come across Maphalla's text. Taking the comparison of the two texts further, Barthes says a text is 'a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centres of culture' (Barthes in Leitch, 2001: 1468); a text, he says, embraces layers of meaning. Looking at Khaketla's text we see an image of coagulated blood sitting in the heart (symbolic dynamic space) and causing excruciating pain. Maphalla's text arrives in this space and takes the image of coagulated blood to the next layer of meaning. Here, the heart is *relieved* of pain through vomiting coagulated blood. Vomiting is both disgusting and debilitating, yet relief from pain comes through the very disgusting act. Going back to Barthes's mention of cultural centres of meaning, we recall a cultural practice of treating a boil (relief of pain). Painful and stuffed with thick pus, a boil will be treated by placing hot, stiff porridge on it to help ooze the pus (Mtshali, 1971) and thereby provide relief from pain.

Mokhomo, MA (Sebabatso)

Mokhomo's anthology of poetry, *Sebabatso* (A beautiful thing), opens with a poem titled

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'*Mopherathethana'* (An unpalatable dish); through which she appeals to fellow poets to lend her support so that her dish could be palatable. On the surface, she seems to doubt that her poetry will rise to the expected standard. Maphalla also opens one of his collections of poetry, *Fuba sa ka* (My feelings) with a poem titled '*Bopepele ntlohele*!'(Bad-speaking leave me alone) in which he voices doubt concerning his ability to compose poetry of good quality. He says the inherent tendency to speak badly should leave him alone. The similarity in the cherished ideal in both poets is remarkable. Both poets seem to be saying their poetry cannot be regarded as creations of a high standard without assistance from other poets. (Nonyana e haha sehlaha sa yona ka ditshiba tsa dinonyana tse ding. *A bird builds its nest using the feathers of other birds)*. This cultural observation confirms Kristeva's (1966) insistence that no text is a self-sufficient closed off entity. We stay with Mokhomo for a moment and read this stanza from her opening poem:

Mopherathethana

Bashanyana ba heso ntoisetseng
Ke phehile mopherathethana.
Bana ba bohadi ba hana ho ja,
Ba re ke phehile ntswetle.
Bona ba ja masutsa a baholo,
Ba ja tsa boMofolo le Khaketla.

(Sebabatso: 1)

(An unpalatable dish

My brothers, lend me a helping hand,
I have cooked an unpalatable dish.
My husband's siblings are refusing to eat,
They say I have prepared a half-cooked dish.
They prefer delicious dishes from elders,
They enjoy dishes by the likes of Mofolo and Khaketla).

Mokhomo uses the metaphor of a cooking pot. She equates her book of poetry, *Sebabatso*, with a cooking pot; and the contents (the poems) with an unpalatable dish. If we invoke the principle of a plurality of meaning, the stanza given above can reveal various layers of meaning (Barthes, 2001). The most obvious available meaning is that Mokhomo was in doubt of her own poetic talent when she wrote *Sebabatso* (Moleleki, [1988] 2020; Lechesa, 2021). At the level of philosophical feminism (Oliver, 1998; 2010), Mokhomo could have been ironically announcing the demise of the male-dominated writing fraternity. Upon entering the textual dynamic space (Kristeva, 1966), she could have said in the most modest yet biting tone: *here I am*, *taste my dish. The dish is safe to eat* (Ke tlositse boloi). The opening poem 'Mopherathethana', is written in time past, a completed action: Ke phehile mopherathethana. (*I have cooked an unpalatable dish*). As a cook, she must have tasted her dish (read her poems) before dishing it out; and Oh God! What a mouth-watering *dish* it is!! (See also Kunene, 1971; Moleleki, 1988; 1992). Creators of texts, rely on their own intuitions, on their own judgements. Why is there a contradiction between the name of the book, *Sebabatso* (A beautiful thing) and the opening poem '*Mopherathethana*' (An unpalatable dish)? Who gave the book its title? Genette (1993) will answer and say the author did.

Lastly, we come to mundane issues to see if there are intertextual relations between the poetry of Mokhomo and that of Maphalla. Kristeva (1980: 66) says creators of texts are in dialogue with other texts constantly, even if they are not consciously aware of it. Both poets see an eagle as a symbol of spirit, courage, and freedom: freedom to soar and explore the creative firmament; and most importantly courage and spirit to continue to intertext as the following examples indicate:

Ntsu, tsubella o nkuke·, nnake,

(Sebabatso: 10)

(Eagle, snatch me up, my dear,)

compare with

Ntsu, nkadime mapheo ke tsebe ho rura,

(Dikano: 41)

(*Eagle, lend me wings so that I can fly,)*

and

Rona re tla fofa sa ntsu,

(Sentebale: 22)

(We will fly like an eagle),

These examples suggest that up there, in the dynamic space of the eagle, there is a textual intersection where both Mokhomo and Maphalla are in conversation with the most powerful bird:

(Eagle, snatch me up, my dear,

and

Eagle, lend me wings so that I can fly).

In this conversation, the two poets admit, as Barthes did, that they 'know now that a [poetic] text is not a line of words releasing a single [poetical] meaning (the message of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space, in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash' (Barthes [1977: 146] 2001). Indeed, in this multi-dimensional space, poetical writings, none of them original, meet and negotiate a plurality of meaning.

VI. Conclusion

Kristeva (1986: 37) says every text is constituted by 'a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of another text'. A text's meaning, she argues, is not specific to itself because every text is an intertext. Kristeva employs the metaphor of a mosaic to describe her interpretation of the insights of Bakhtin (1935). A mosaic presents an interplay of a wide variety of colour and different sizes and types of material. Although a mosaic is a historically specific display of someone's interpretation or creation of an idea, the

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mosaic itself is not a static, fixed point in time. It can be developed further. It is, itself, an intersection of different patterns and colours and styles which form part of the creator's repertoire. It takes over *stylistic* features from earlier and/or contemporary artists and masters. *But it is always a new creation*. It carries the signature, as it were, of the person who created it.

In the same way, says Kristeva (1980:66), creators of texts are in dialogue with other texts constantly, even if they are not consciously aware of it. They draw upon an array of information on the same *theme* or related themes, societal and cultural forces and discourses, prejudices, and personal experiences. This wide range of relations plays a significant role in shaping the way texts are created. Texts take up, incorporate, and absorb other texts and, at the same time, these intertextual threads are altered and remodelled into something else - into the text the author wants it to be. For Kristeva, meaning cannot be viewed as a finished product, but it is always in a process of production. The metaphor of a mosaic demonstrates the non-closure of a text. Just as a mosaic is an intersection of different patterns, texts can also intersect and negotiate a plurality of meaning.

Our intertextual analysis of KPD Maphalla's poetry has clearly demonstrated the relevance of Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality. The analysis has demonstrated further that KPD Maphalla's poetry is in dialogue with the poetry of Ntsane, Khaketla, and Mokhomo. Kristeva's theory of intertextuality overrides Miller's (1979) view that later texts are parasites and earlier texts are victims.

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