Sociocultural Themes in Selected Northern Sotho Fables: The Motif-Index Perspective

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Abstract

This article investigates the applicability and significance of the motif-index as a means to identify sociocultural themes in two selected Northern Sotho fables. The focus of this article is on how these motifs reflect on beliefs, customs and practices that exist within the Northern Sotho society as revealed in fables. Themes from the two fables are expounded and contextualised using Stith Thompson's motif-index alongside Christian Themba Msimang's views, according to which good deeds are encouraged over those that are considered unacceptable in the society. The article attains this through an analysis that focuses on, among others, literary aspects such as motifs, morals and sociocultural contexts. In conclusion, the article ascertains that the motif-index theory is applicable to explore themes in Northern Sotho fables.

Keywords: theme; fable; motif-index; motif; Northern Sotho

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Introduction

Research efforts in African languages of South Africa have been devoted to the study of oral narratives from a structuralist point of view. Branches within the theory of structuralism such as Vladímir Propp and Alan Dundes's motifemes, Claude Levi-Strauss's binary opposition, Axel Olrik's epic laws and diffusionism have been adopted extensively to investigate characteristics of oral narratives. However, what is very noticeable is the limited research contribution by folklore scholars in African languages on Stith Thompson's (1946) motif-index theory. This is despite the highly publicised debate between prominent folklore scholars such as Richard Dorson (1975) and William Bascom (1973) on whether certain motifs discernible in the motif-index are of African or European origin.

Lesoro (1983) adopted the motif-index theory to highlight recurring motifs in Sesotho folktales, albeit with no reference to what could be deduced from the dominance of those motifs or the theory itself. Although previous studies in other languages have been carried out using Thompson's motif-index, the focus has been on comparisons of oral narratives. This article, therefore, intends to reflect on sociocultural themes in two Northern Sotho fables through Thompson's (1946) motif-index. It demonstrates the applicability of the motif-index to extract themes in fables and delineates their relevance to the Northern Sotho society.

Our choice on the type of oral narrative is premised on the fact that other oral narrative genres such as folktales, legends and myths have received far more attention at the expense of fables in Northern Sotho. A Northern Sotho fable is an oral narrative where animals function as characters and are given human attributes to fulfil their roles (Serudu 1990). In this kind of oral narrative, animals resort to trickery, often striving to be distinguished from their counterparts, and this serves as the hallmark of the fable. As stated by Kgopa (1998, 73), in such oral narratives animals appear as human characters for the purpose of pointing out morals, hence, the stories are told mainly for reprimanding purposes. It is therefore assumed that through this discussion, an insight into Northern Sotho fables will be generated through the application of the motif-index.

The article adopts Thompson's (1946) motif-index as a research theory to identify themes in selected Northern Sotho fables. The theme is deduced based on identified motifs from oral narratives and are quoted as they occur in the narrative and matched with those compiled by Thompson for analysis. In addition to Thompson's motif-index, the discussion incorporates Christian Themba Msimang's (1983) views on themes as part of its theoretical framework by focusing on both social and cultural contexts to situate identified themes within the Northern Sotho perspective.

Literature Review

The advent of the motif-index as a literary research theory induced mixed reactions in the folklore fraternity. As expected with the emergence of a theory, there were sceptical

views on the application of the motif-index as a research theory. Ben-Amos (2005) states that motifs are not folklore constituents as Thompson contends. In his words, Ben-Amos (2005, 210) argues as follows:

> Motifs are not the folklore equivalents of words in a language. They are not the items that make up folklore, but only constructed entities that Thompson and his students abstracted and named within a particular body of narrative tradition.

Dundes (1997) considers the motif-index an indispensable textual analysis tool in folklore studies. However, he concedes that there is an overlap in Thompson's definition of motif, as the "incident" motif cannot function independently from the "actor" motif or "item" motif. The discussion concurs with this sentiment concerning the inescapability of having an "incident" that is driven by either an "actor" or "item." Nonetheless, it is critical for the folklore scholar to carefully scrutinise which category is emphasised in the identified motif. In motif C10. Taboo: "profanely calling on spirit," for instance, although the "actor" is implied in the incident, the emphasis is on the actual incident or the manner in which the spirit is called upon and this is substantiated by the fact that the incident is specified while the actor is merely implied.

European oral literature served as the primary source of folklore data for the development of the motif-index, and this has led to questions of whether it is suitable for analysing African oral narratives. When examining sociocultural aspects, which are fundamental to Arab-Islamic culture, El-Shamy (2005, 250–51) asserts that motifs under subheadings P. Society and V. Religion, as propounded by Thompson, are unable to adequately mirror Arab-Islamic beliefs. He reconciles this by introducing further motifs such as V215, "Mohammed as prophet," V333 "Conversion to Islam," among others, which relate directly to Arab-Islamic religion.

According to El-Shamy (2005, 252), aspects pertaining to socialising between sex groups, marriage and divorce reflect a dichotomy between Arab-Islamic and European communities. As a result, further motifs are generated to delineate the cultural identity of the community in question and he concludes that a considerable development in all spheres of life can only be attained through adequate and accurate data on social and cultural aspects of different communities. It is worth noting that these views do not by any means suggest that the motif-index is not compatible to make enquiries into other cultures' folklore material other than the European tradition.

Another study driven by the quest to evaluate the applicability of the motif-index for analysis of non-European oral literature is provided by Harun, Othman, and Annamalai (2021). In this study, it is demonstrated that despite Thompson's reliance on European folklore data to conceptualise the motif-index, it is applicable to Malaysian folktales. Religion is not applicable to Malaysian folktales owing to the study's selected sampling technique that excludes oral narratives with religious or sacred motivation, as such narratives are not considered folktales based on the scholars' definition of folktales.

Okpewho (1992, 169) states that theses employing the motif-index to examine African oral narratives, acquired at American universities, are of questionable value and concludes that the theory itself is a futile academic exercise. It is worth noting that apart from providing background on the motif-index theory, nowhere in the publication are the shortcomings of those theses mentioned; neither is the view that the pursuit of the motif-index as a research theory is a futile academic exercise substantiated.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This research article adopts a qualitative approach as it focuses on content analysis, as opposed to the quantitative research methodology, which relies on statistical data analysis. As stated by Cahyani and Junaidi (2019, 337), the qualitative approach plays an important role in understanding social phenomena, especially when research is based on observation and interviews. In this investigation primary data was collected through audiotaped and transcribed interviews with the consent of the participants, whilst secondary data was gathered from a wide selection of books, dissertations, and journal articles. The chosen Northern Sotho fables used in this article were analysed contextually by making use of Thompson's (1946) concept of the motif-index in order to identify their respective themes. Further details on data collection, Msimang's (1983) views on themes, and the concept of the motif-index as propounded by Thompson (1946) are provided below, including how the study incorporates these aspects as its theoretical framework.

Data Collection

Two informants, Mr Mantsho Monene and Mrs Mmakgabo Mabote, both above 40 years of age, were recruited at a rural area within the Waterberg region of the Limpopo province to collect and record fables from their skilful narration. The informants were briefed about the purpose of the recordings and verbal consent was obtained from them. The recordings took place in July 2015 at the Kabeane and Leyden villages, outside the town of Mokopane, in the form of one-on-one interviews. The given minimum age of the informants is considered on the basis that they are more likely to be acquainted with the practice of storytelling as they grew up during the era in which this practice was more dominant prior to the strong presence of media in those areas. For this discussion, two recorded fables were transcribed and translated from Northern Sotho into English for analysis purposes.

Msimang on Theme

Msimang (1983) discusses the extent to which folktales have influenced the themes of Zulu novels, with literary aspects such as theme and moral, theme and motif, and social and cultural contexts occupying the foreground of the discourse. He asserts that theme and moral are inextricable in a literary work and the former serves as a solution, which could be presented either overtly or covertly by the artist, to a problem in a literary work. The primary social function of the fable is to impart valuable moral lessons and this point is emphasised by Serudu (1990), who defines a fable as an oral narrative where

animals function as characters and are given human attributes to fulfil their roles. In this kind of oral narrative, animals resort to trickery, often striving to be distinguished from their counterparts, and this serves as the hallmark of the fable. He further asserts that a sense of humour is usually reflected, accompanied by great moral lessons, which the audience is expected to draw from this kind of narrative.

The correlation between theme and motif is briefly explained in Msimang (1983, 134) on the basis that an imaginative literary work evolves around closely related events, which are considered motifs. With this in mind, the article identifies motifs in Northern Sotho fables through Thompson's motif-index theory, whereby the development and establishment of theme is realised through the recurrence of closely related incidents or events in a literary work.

When discussing the social context of the theme, Msimang (1983, 135–36) states that through the theme of a literary work, the society's view of life and philosophy are reflected upon. He also emphasises that apart from entertainment derived from a literary work, important lessons are also communicated. In addition, he asserts that African literary works are not always overtly didactic, and the audience is expected to infer their own interpretation and moral lesson based on the contents of a literary work. The discussion contends that vital knowledge regarding the Northern Sotho community's views and their philosophy of life will be generated by situating themes identified in Northern Sotho fables through Msimang's (1983) observation. Thus, it is justifiable to explain and substantiate identified morals by adopting Msimang's (1983) views.

This kind of theoretically guided and substantiated analysis serves two purposes. First, to consolidate and heighten the objectivity and accuracy in formulating themes. Second, to explore themes in Northern Sotho fables while also explaining their social significance. It is argued that through this hybrid approach, the article will not only remain centred on identifying sociocultural themes, but will also provide an in-depth analysis on how the Northern Sotho society's worldview is embedded and reflected in its fables.

The Motif-Index Concept

Though a revised list of motifs is provided in Appendix 1 for illustration purposes, it is necessary to provide a brief discussion of this notion. The concept of the motif-index emerged from Antti Aarne's work *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen*, published in 1910, which is premised on oral narratives' classification as its focal subject. Aarne based his classification of European oral narratives on their type using a historical-geographical approach (Garry and El-Shamy 2005). After translating and revising Aarne's work, which was published as *Types of the Folktale* (1928), Thompson identified and classified motifs of oral narratives that were disseminated in *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1955) to serve as a supplement to Aarne's tale types.

Thompson (1946, 415–16) defines motif as the smallest narrative unit that has the power to be persistent and prevalent in a literary work. For this narrative unit to persist or recur in a literary work, it should be exceptional and striking in its nature. There are three categories of motifs, namely, the nature of the characters, single incidents, and last but not the least, certain items behind an action such as strange customs, unusual beliefs and so forth. He further asserts that the motif-index was propounded to display identity or similarity in thematic elements of tales across all parts of the world. With this background in mind, the study contends that the motif-index can unearth more knowledge about particular cultural aspects of the Northern Sotho community embedded in fables. To achieve this, we identify recurring incidents in the two fables whereby the incidents are extracted in a form of quotations and substantiated through Thompson's (1946) motifs to formulate themes. In Appendix 1, motifs are classified under each subject heading that is preceded by a letter from the alphabet, and they assume alphabetical letters assigned to their respective subject headings, followed by a particular number.

Discussion

As indicated, the discussion focuses on the analysis of the two selected fables, namely, *Phukubje le roto* ("The Jackal and the Male Baboon") and *Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse* ("The Jackal, the Baboon and Water"). In the following components of the study, we provide a comprehensive analysis of the two fables. For each narrative analysis, a synopsis of the relevant narrative is provided for ease of reference, while a detailed narrative account is furnished in Appendix 2 for an interested reader.

Synopsis: *Phukubje le roto* ("The Jackal and the Male Baboon")

After coming across a dead snake, the jackal decides to hang it on a tree to make it appear alive and then calls on female baboons to witness his intended actions. On their arrival, the jackal viciously attacks the dead snake while at the same time concealing the ultimate plan to ensure that the female baboons do not uncover his dubious act. The female baboons are stunned to see the snake drop dead from the tree and decide to challenge their husband to prove himself by emulating the jackal's deed.

Upon hearing about the jackal's brave act, the male baboon together with his wives embark in search of a snake. It does not take them long to find a live snake and the female baboons wait in anticipation to see their husband kill the serpent. After taking two cautious steps to launch an attack on the snake, the male baboon is craven and decides to look for a stick, but he never comes back.

Theme and Moral

The pursuit to ascertain one's bravery serves as the subject matter in this narrative. After encountering a dead snake, the jackal seizes an opportunity to be perceived as the brave one by devising a strategy, which is perfectly executed from beginning to end. The male

baboon, unaware that the snake was already dead, attempts to emulate the jackal's victory; however, the act of killing a snake proves to be an unattainable deed. Therefore, the theme deduced from this narrative is summed up as follows: acts of exceptional bravery are celebrated in society. Although nowhere in the narrative is the moral or theme explicitly stated, the chronological sequence of the narrative events revolves around this idea. This point is elucidated through the following discussion on motifs extracted from the narrative.

Theme and Motif

Motif H1561: "Test of valour." In the narrative, the jackal is boastful about his level of bravery and is willing to prove himself before the female baboons by killing a snake. Unconvinced of the jackal's assertion, the female baboons accept the invitation to see for themselves. The following incident reflects how the motif of "test of valour" is realised in the narrative:

> *Gatee fela phukubje ya ba šetše e tabogetše mokopa wola ya o thula ka hlogo. Ya boa ya taboga la bobedi ya thula mokopa wola. La boraro ge e thula mokopa wola, wa wela fase. Bommadibekwane ba šala ba maketše ba kgotsa bogale bja phukubje.*
>
> (In a blink of an eye, the jackal had already sprung up and attacked the mamba head on. He sprang up for the second time and head-speared the mamba. When he head-speared the mamba for the third time, it eventually fell from the tree. The female baboons were astonished by the jackal's bravery.)

Motif H1561: "Test of valour." This motif features again. However, in this instance it is the male baboon who is eager to prove himself. This is in response to the challenge advanced by the female baboons after experiencing first-hand the jackal's canny actions to display his bravery. Following is an incident from the narrative that fits squarely within the concept of the above motif:

> *Roto ya tšea kgato ya pele ya batamela mokopa, ya re ya bobedi, ge e sa re e tšea ya boraro mokopa wa emiša hlogo. Roto ya re go bona seo ya topelwa ke bofšega, ya re: "Aowaowa! Nna nka se kgone."*
>
> (The male baboon took the first step to move towards the mamba, took the second one, on his attempt to make the third one, the mamba raised its head. After seeing that, the male baboon gave in in fear and said: "No! I cannot do this.")

The male baboon's stature, as a husband and leader of the troop, is brought into question by the female baboons based on this incident. They do so on the basis that the male baboon, in their eyes, has failed to emulate the jackal's victory. It is worth stating that the male baboon, through his actions, has managed to save himself from the snake; however, the female baboons have lost respect for him as he failed in the same task that was successfully executed by the jackal. It is through this test of valour that the baboons are able to establish that the jackal is brave while the male baboon lacks this quality.

Social Context of the Theme

The jackal commands great respect from the female baboons following the false act of killing the snake on his own. Although he is a legitimate hero in the eyes of the female baboons, it must be stated that he is a false hero on the basis that the snake was already dead. Nonetheless, his actions elevate his social status after being given the credit from an orchestrated victory. This phenomenon is not uncommon in Northern Sotho society where one would dishonestly misrepresent oneself and be secretly involved in dubious acts while leading a completely opposite life in society. Although the jackal manages to get away with his actions without suffering any consequence or being exposed as a false hero, such an act is discouraged as it may have negative implications in one's future when members of society dishonestly project themselves as suitable prospects to potential friends, spouses, and employers.

Cultural Context

Bravery is among the values that are held in high esteem by Northern Sotho society. The jackal earns himself the respect of the female baboons through the deceitful act of pretending to kill a snake. Although the male baboon was keen to prove himself to his wives, the fact that he failed the test and even made an excuse in avoidance of the test casts doubts on his stature in a cultural setting and he cannot be accorded the same respect. Acts of bravery are encouraged and celebrated in both sexes in Northern Sotho society. This is on the basis that this quality sets men and women apart from other members of the society as distinguished figures within the society.

However, a man with this trait, in a cultural context, is considered to be more responsible and dependable to females than one who lacks this quality. This is encapsulated in the belief that a man ought to be able to protect his family and community. It is because of this context that in the narrative the female baboons are sceptical about their husband's manhood in comparison to that of the jackal, as the former failed the test.

Synopsis: *Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse* ("The Jackal, the Baboon and Water")

As the animals in this fable are faced with severe drought, they resolve to dig a well in a bid to solve the lack of water. The jackal refuses to take part in the process and is barred from drinking from the well as a result. However, the jackal gains access to the well when all the other animals are away and pollutes the water to spite them. The animals appoint one of them to stand guard at the well and the baboon is unanimously chosen for the task. Meanwhile, the jackal again manages to access the well, bypassing the baboon twice through a trick that entices him away from the well, and pollutes the water once again. In the last instance, before the jackal pollutes the well, he pulls yet another trick to tie up the baboon against a tree and then assaults him and leaves the helpless baboon to shame him.

Theme and Moral

In this fable, the baboon consents to the jackal's suggestions without suspecting any misdemeanour. This continues to happen despite the fact that the same character using honey as a bait previously hoodwinked him. These actions demonstrate the baboon's impulsive obsession with honey, which the jackal identifies as a weakness and seizes upon as an opportunity to exploit for his own benefit. Thus, the theme may be expressed as follows: obsession can cloud one's judgement. The act of being assaulted and shamed in the narrative serves to rebuke obsession within members of society. The following motifs delineate how this conclusion is reached regarding the theme of the narrative.

Theme and Motif

Motif K629.2: "Guardian enticed away." This motif is realised in *Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse* when the baboon is deceived by the jackal with the aim of gaining access to the well. The motif is reflected through the following extract from the narrative:

> *A re: "Wena tšhwene ke kgopela gore o nkitimele mola ke beile mamepe. Ge o fihla mola o a tšee o tle le ona mo re tle re a je." Tšhwene ka go rata mamepe a kitimela kua phukubje a bego a šupa gona. Tšhwene a re a sa ile mola phukubje a šala a enwa meetse a kgora. Ge a se no nwa a kga meetse ka boleke bjo a bego a bo swere a re go fetša a biloša sediba sela, sa tlala leraga gomme a napa a ipha naga.*
>
> (He said: "Baboon could you please go collect honey that I left over there and bring it here so that we can have it together." Because of his impulsive desire for honey, the baboon ran towards the direction that the jackal was pointing to. While the baboon was away, the jackal drank water to his satisfaction. After drinking, he drew some into a tin and polluted the well and then disappeared into the bushes.)

Motif K629.2: "Guardian enticed away." The same motif is experienced again in the narrative when the jackal orchestrates another trick to gain access to the well by pretending to be eating honey from the tin. As was the case in the previous trick, honey is used to entice the gullible baboon. In this instance, the baboon is not sent away but manipulated into being tied to a tree by the jackal. The following quote illustrates the enticement through honey:

> *A botšiša phukubje a re: "Phukubje o reng o itatswa menwana gabotsana bjale, e ka ba o ja eng?" Phukubje a fetola ka go re: "Aowa ke mamepe mogwera." Tšhwene a re: "Mphe!" E le ge a kgopela phukubje. Phukubje a re: "Go go fa nka go fa ge fela o ka dumela gore ke go kgokelle mo mohlareng mola, o be o mphe le melamo yeo ya gago gore ke e sware mo go nna. Gona ke tla go fa gore o kgone o ja le nna."*
>
> (He asked the jackal: "Why are you licking your fingers in that manner, what exactly are you eating?" The jackal responded: "It is honey my friend." The baboon then said: "Give me some!" The jackal said: "I can give you some, only if you allow me to tie you to the tree and surrender your weapons to me. If you do that, then we can eat together.")

The unsuspecting baboon heeds the jackal's suggestion to be tied up before he could be given the honey. The baboon's actions indicate his preoccupation with the desire to have honey, and he is clearly prepared to go to any length to satisfy his impulsive desire, which allows the jackal to take advantage of the situation and to attain his objective of gaining access to the well.

Social Context

As was observed with the previous fable, the current fable is not overtly didactic, taking into consideration that the moral is not summarised or stated explicitly. However, a closer observation of the events of the narrative clearly highlights the baboon's obsession with honey as a weakness. The baboon is assaulted and left helplessly tied to the tree, and none of the animals sympathises with him as he is considered a victim of his own ignorance. As a result, the baboon endures embarrassment in front of all the other animals and this serves to disapprove of and warn the community about obsession, which may compromise one's judgement and lead to irrational behaviour, as witnessed through the baboon's actions. Therefore, the narrative reflects the Northern Sotho community's intolerance of obsession, and such behaviour is associated with consequences, as observed in the narrative.

Cultural Context

Food and water are essential basic needs for life in general and this is no exception in the Northern Sotho community. The essentiality of these resources for life in Northern Sotho society is highlighted in the narrative when the jackal uses honey as a trap to dupe the baboon twice in order to access the water. As essential as they are to life, it is discouraged for members of society to allow themselves to be exploited and distracted from their primary responsibility through these very resources. The baboon's assault reflects the Northern Sotho community's philosophy in terms of the consequences associated with neglecting responsibility assigned to members of society.

Recurrence of Motifs in Fables

Although motifs have been identified in the fables in accordance with the motif-index, it is essential to explore how they are reflected, as well as their relationship in each fable. To attain this, this section reflects on the manner in which the motifs occur in the narratives. Second, provided that the motifs recur in the respective narratives, we demonstrate that the actual incidents are not always fixed. Lastly, the theme is summed up in each case to elucidate the applicability of the motif-index to expound sociocultural themes in the narratives.

Motif H1561, "Test of valour," is realised twice in *Phukubje le roto*, featuring two different characters in separate instances for the same purpose of asserting their prowess. The motif is self-explanatory as it revolves around the concept of a test of valour, which is reflected in the narrative when the jackal convinces the female baboons of his bravery by claiming to have killed a snake. The same motif is encountered again

in the narrative when the male baboon attempts to assert his bravery, albeit with no success. Although the actual incidents in the narrative differ to some extent on the basis that the jackal asserts his bravery over a dead snake while the baboon is faced with a live one, the emphasis and purpose behind the action remain to prove oneself in the two incidents. Thus, the incidents are identified and classified under the same motif mentioned above.

It is through this motif that the characters' parallel traits (i.e., bravery and cowardice) are established in the narrative and this mirrors the Northern Sotho community's attitude towards these qualities as encapsulated in the theme. Through Msimang's (1983) views, the theme is contextualised and interpreted against the background of Northern Sotho philosophy and cultural norms. Thus, a man with bravery is more respectable and dependable on the basis that he would be able to offer protection to his family and community at large.

In *Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse*, motif K629.2, "Guardian enticed away," appears twice where the jackal entices the baboon away from the well using honey. The two incidents involving the jackal enticing the baboon follow a slightly different but closely related pattern, where the baboon is drawn away from the well; however, in the second instance, he is persuaded to be tied to a tree. At the centre of the trick is the use of honey as a trap with the objective of gaining access to the water. Water and honey are essential resources for life; however, their essentiality is not equal, and they cannot be substituted for one another. This is made apparent in the narrative by the fact that each of the prominent characters in the narrative has access to either of the resources and strives to acquire the second one, as the two are rather complementary.

It has been pointed out earlier in the discussion that the central aim of a fable is to teach morals (cf. section 3). However, it needs to be established how this is achieved as the prominent characters in the narrative seem to be operating from contradictory axes of social norms and behaviour. In the two narratives, for instance, it could be argued that the means used by the jackal to attain his objective are morally questionable. In the first narrative, he misrepresents himself as brave, while in the second narrative he refuses to take part to dig the well with the rest of animals only to resort to mischievous actions to gain access to the well. Regarding this aspect of a fable, Canonici (1988, 50) states that traditional and accepted norms are enhanced through what is reverse and opposite to acceptable social behaviour.

Conclusion

This discussion has reflected on the adoption of a hybrid approach by fusing Thompson's motif-index and Msimang's (1983) observations to identify and examine sociocultural themes in two selected Northern Sotho fables. The motif-index theory is employed in this regard to extract themes from the narratives while their significance is explained in relation to the Northern Sotho sociocultural background based on Msimang's (1983) views. The theory of the motif-index was originally propounded

using European oral tradition material (Thompson 1955); however, it has been established in this article that it is applicable to explore themes in Northern Sotho fables.

The themes and morals in the fables discussed are neither summarised nor summed up and are realised only through recurring narrative incidents or events referred to here as motifs. Taking into account the applicability of the motif-index to examine fable themes, it may warrant further research to ascertain the extent to which this theory is applicable to explore other common essential oral narrative structural properties such as characters, settings and plot.

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Appendix 1: Motif Distribution

A. Mythological motifs A1. Identity of creator. A2. Multiple creators. A3. Creative mother source of everything.	**B. Animals** B1. Animal elders. B2. Animal totems. B5. Fantastic beasts, birds, etc., in art.
C. Taboo C10. Tabu: profanely calling up spirit (devil, etc.). C11. The Old Man and Death. C12. Devil invoked: appears unexpectedly.	**D. Magic** D5.1. Enchanted person cannot move. D6. Enchanted castle (building). D7. Enchanted valley.
E. The dead E1. Person comes to life. E2. Dead tree comes to life. E3. Dead animal comes to life.	**F. Marvels** F1. Journey to otherworld as dream or vision. F2. Translation to otherworld without dying. F3. Journey to otherworld as invasion.
G. Ogres G10. Cannibalism. G11. Kinds of cannibals. G12. Transformation in order to eat own kind.	**H. Tests** H10. Recognition through common knowledge. H11. Recognition through storytelling. H1561. Tests of valour.
J. The wise and the foolish J10. Wisdom (knowledge) acquired from experience. J11. Shipwrecked shepherd distrusts the sea. J12. Young ass avoids food eaten by animals before being slaughtered.	**K. Deceptions** K1. Contest won by magic. K2. Animals help man in contest. K629.2. Guardian enticed away.

L. Reversal of fortune L10. Victorious youngest son. L11. Fortunate youngest son. L112. Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance.	**M. Ordaining the future** M1. Senseless judicial decisions. M2. Inhuman decisions of king. M4. Deity settles disputes between races.
N. Chance and faith N1. Gamblers. N2. Extraordinary stakes at gambling. N3. Supernatural adversary in gambling (witch or giant).	**P. Society** P3. Issue of marriage of brother and sister of highest chiefly rank is a god. P10. Kings. P11. Choice of kings.
Q. Rewards and punishments Q1. Hospitality rewarded—opposite punished. Q2. Kind and unkind. Q3. Moderate request rewarded; immoderate punished.	**R. Captives and fugitives** R1. Wild man captured and tamed. R2. God holds the devil captive for three years. R3. King imprisons another king's embassy.
S. Unnatural cruelty S10. Cruel parents. S11. Cruel father. S12. Cruel mother.	**T. Sex** T1. Zeus gives man modesty, but it leaves when love enters. T2. The relative pleasures of love. T3. Omens in love affairs.
U. Nature of life U10. Justice and injustice. U11. Small trespasses punished; large crimes condoned. U12. Largest burdens laid on smallest asses: best offices to most ignorant men.	**V. Religion** V1. Objects of worship. V4. Value of religious exercises. V5. Negligence in religious exercise.

W. Traits of character W2. Good inclinations enter body at puberty. W10. Kindness. W11. Generosity.	**X. Humour** X11. Red pepper for the slow ass: man tries it on himself. X12. Man interrupted each time he tries to eat something. X21. Accidental cannibalism.
Z. Miscellaneous groups of motifs Z10. Formulistic framework for tales. Z11. Endless tales. Z12. Unfinished tales.	

Appendix 2: Fables

Phukubje le roto **by Monene Mantsho** *E rile ka letšatši le lengwe phukubje e itshepelela lešokeng, ya bona noga ye kgolo ya mokopa e hwile. E ile ya batamela ya lebelela noga yeo gomme ya kgonthišiša gore ka nnete e hwile. Phukubje e ile ya tšea noga yela ya e tatetša mohlareng ya e bofa gomme ya re go fetša ya sepela ya yo nyaka diphoofolo tše dingwe. E rile ge e le gare e sepela ya bona bommadibekwane gomme ya nama ya ba leba. Ge e fihla go bona ya re: "Naa le tseba mokopa?" Bommadibekwane ba re: "Ee! re a o tseba." Phukubje ya tšwela pele ya re: "Go na le mokopa wo mongwe o fetile mo tseleng wa nyaka go ntoma. A re yeng ke yo le bontšha wona. Ke nyaka go le bontšha gore nna ke*	**"The Jackal and the Male Baboon" by Monene Mantsho** It is said that one day while the jackal was wandering about in the bush, he found a dead big mamba. He stepped closer to inspect the snake and verified that it was dead. The jackal then took the snake and tied it around a branch of a tree then left to look for other animals. On his way, he saw female baboons and approached them. He then said to them: "Do you know a mamba?" The female baboons answered saying that they do know it. He then continued: "I encountered one and it almost bit me. Come with me so that I can show it to you. I want to show you how brave I am. I want to kill it." Knowing how mischievous the jackal is, the female baboons were keen to see

bogale gakaakang, ke nyaka go o bolaya." Bommadibekwane ka go tseba mathaithai a phukubje le go fišagalelwa go tseba, ba dumela go sepela le phukubje. Šedile, tša šala phukubje morago tša sepela.

Di ile tša fihla kgauswi le mohlare wola go nago le mokopa. Ya re: "Le a o bona mokopa wola o itatilego mola, nna nka o bolaya." Bommadibekwane ba lebelelana ka mahlong ba re: "Wena phukubje wa bolaya mokopa?" Aowa phukubje ya re: "Nka o bolaya le lena la se tshepe seo le se bonago." Gatee fela phukubje ya ba šetše e tabogetše mokopa wola ya o thula ka hlogo, ya boa ya taboga la bobedi ya thula mokopa wola. La boraro ge e thula mokopa wola, wa wela fase. Bommadibekwane ba šala ba maketše ba kgotsa bogale bja phukubje.

Bommadibekwane ba re go tloga fao ba ya go monna wa bona roto. Ba mo laodišetša ka bogale bja phukubje ba buša ba mo nyefola gore o phalwa ke phukubje. Aowa, roto le yona ya gana go nyatšwa ke bommadibekwane a re mokopa ga se selo le yena a ka o bolaya. Gomme tša tloga tša sepela go yo nyakana le mokopa go kgonthišiša gore roto a ka bolaya mokopa go swana le phukubje. Di rile ge di le gare di sepela thabeng, tša o hwetša mokopa wa go phela gomme tša phutha diatla tša re: "Re bontšhe gore wena o monna go swana le phukubje."

Roto ya tšea kgato ya pele ya batamela mokopa, ya re ya bobedi, ge e sa re e tšea ya boraro mokopa wa emiša hlogo. Roto ya re go bona seo

for themselves and agreed to go with him. The jackal led the way, followed by the female baboons.

They arrived closer to the tree where the snake was. He then said: "Do you see that mamba twisted around the branch? I can kill it." The female baboons looked at each other with disbelief and said: "You, jackal, do you really think you can kill a mamba?" The jackal said: "Yes I can kill it and you will not even believe what you would be witnessing." In the blink of an eye the jackal had already sprung up and attacked the mamba head on. He sprang up for the second time and head-speared the mamba. When he head-speared the mamba for the third time, it eventually fell from the tree. The female baboons were astonished by the jackal's bravery.

After their departure, they went to meet their husband, the male baboon. They explained to him the jackal's bravery and even criticised him saying he could not emulate the jackal's actions. The male baboon did not like the fact that he was being criticised by the female baboons and felt the urgency to do the same and said that a mamba was no match for him. They then left in search of a mamba to confirm that he was indeed capable of killing one just like the jackal. As they walked along a mountain, they discovered a live mamba, folded their hands, and said: "Show us that you are as much of a man as the jackal."

The male baboon took the first step to move towards the mamba, took the second one, and on

ya topelwa ke bofšega, ya re: "Aowaowa! Nna nka se kgone." Bommadibekwane ba re: "O ka phalwa ke phukubje, kgane wena o monna wa mohuta mang? Re nyaka go bona gore ka nnete o ka kgona go bolaya mokopa wo gore re tsebe le ka moso gore o ka kgona go re phemela bjalo ka monna wa rena." Roto ya re e reng ke nyakeng seroba gore ke thube mokopa wo hlogo ka sona. Roto ya potela ka mehlare ya re e yo nyakana le seroba, ya nama e le moka e ile.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse **by Mmakgabo Mabote**

Go thwe kgalekgale diphoofolo tša lefase di kile tša ba mo tlalelong ka baka la lenyora. Ge di le tlalelong bjalo, tša kwana gore di kgobokane di be le kopano gore di kgone go boledišana gore di ka dira bjang gore di kgone go hwetša meetse a go nwa. Ka nnete ka le le latelago letšatši di ile tša swara kopano yeo gomme ya ba gore tšona diphoofolo tšeo ka botšona tša kwana gore letšatši le le latelago re tla napa ra thoma go epa sediba seo gore re kgone go hwetša meetse a go nwa. E rile ka letšatši leo le latelago ka nnete diphoofolo tša boa ka moka ga tšona tša epa sediba seo go fihlela di hwetša meetse.

Nakong ya kopano phukubje e bile yena a gananego le taba ya diphoofolo tše dingwe ya go epa sediba. Yena o ganne ka lebaka la gore yena a ka se kgone go ngapa lefase ka lebaka la gore ga a nyake gore dinala tša gagwe di fetše ke lefase. Le ge go le bjalo, phukubje e bile

his attempt to make the third one, the mamba raised its head. After seeing that, the male baboon gave in in fear and said: "No! I cannot do this." The female baboons said: "The jackal is better than you. What kind of a man are you? We want you to kill this mamba as assurance that you can defend us in future as our husband." The male baboon went behind bushes claiming to be looking for a stick, however he never returned.

End of the narrative!!!

"The Jackal, the Baboon and Water" by Mmakgabo Mabote

It is said that a long time ago, animals were once in a quandary due to severe drought. Under those circumstances, they all agreed that there should be a gathering in order for them to discuss the problem and resolve on what should be done to get drinking water. On the following day, they did hold a meeting where they all agreed to dig up a well on the following day in order to get drinking water. On the agreed day, all the animals returned and began digging up a well till they discovered water.

However, during the initial meeting the jackal refused to be part of the decision to dig the well. He refused on the basis that he would not allow his nails to be damaged from scratching the earth. Despite his refusal to participate, he was the first to drink from the well and even went on to pollute

phoofolo ya mathomo ya go nwa meetse ao e sa bonwe ke tše dingwe ya boa ya dubiša sediba.	the water without being noticed by the other animals.
Diphoofolo di rile go bona gore go na le phoofolo yeo e di senyetšago tša kgopela tšhwene gore e be yona e letang sediba seo gore e tle e bone gore ke mang a dubišago sediba sa bona. Ka nnete tšhwene e ile ya ba mouwe. Diphoofolo tše pedi, e lego tau le nkwe, di ile tša tla di swere melamo gore tšhwene a lale a hlokometše sediba a itlhamile ka melamo gore a kgone go ka iphemela kgahlanong le yo a ka tlago a tlo ba nwela le go ba senyetša meetse ao.	After the animals discovered that there was one polluting the water, they assigned the baboon to be the one to stand guard over the well so that he could find out who exactly was responsible for polluting the water from the well. Indeed, the baboon did guard the well. The lion and the tiger brought weapons for the baboon to arm himself in defence against the culprit.
Ke nnete phukubje o ile a fihla, ge a fihla a humana tšhwene a letile mola gomme a dumedišana le tšhwene gabotse. A re: "Wena tšhwene ke kgopela gore o nkitimele mola ke beile mamepe. Ge o fihla o a tšee o tle le ona mo re tle re a je." Tšhwene ka go rata mamepe a kitimela kua phukubje a bego a šupa gona. Tšhwene a re a sa ile mola phukubje a šala a enwa meetse a kgora. Ge a se no nwa a kga meetse ka boleke bjo a bego a bo swere a re go fetša a biloša sediba sela, sa tlala leraga gomme a napa a ipha naga.	The jackal then came and found the baboon standing guard. He then exchanged greetings with the baboon and said: "Baboon could you please go collect honey that I left over there and bring it over here so that we can have it together?" Because of his impulsive desire for honey, the baboon ran towards the direction that the jackal was pointing to. While the baboon was away, the jackal drank the water to his satisfaction. After drinking, he drew some into a tin and polluted the well and then disappeared into the bushes.
Gwa feta matšatši a mabedi phukubje a boa gapegape. Ge a fihla a humana tšhwene gapegape a letile dikgoro mola sedibeng. Phukubje a boa a mo dumediša. Phukubje o be a swere boleke a itaetša a eja se sengwe ka ge a be a itatswa menwana. Tšhwene ka botlaela, a lemoga gore phukubje a ka ba a eja mamepe. A botšisa phukubje a re: "Phukubje o reng o itatswa menwana gabotsana bjale, e ka ba o ja	Two days passed, then the jackal returned. Upon his arrival, he found the baboon again standing guard by the well's entrance. The two exchanged greetings. The jackal was holding a tin and seemed to be eating something as he was licking his fingers. The baboon foolishly suspected that he might be eating honey. He asked the jackal:

eng?" Phukubje a fetola ka go re: "Aowa ke mamepe mogwera." Tšhwene a re: "Mphe!" E le ge a kgopela phukubje. Phukubje a re: "Go go fa nka go fa ge fela o ka dumela gore ke go kgokelele mo mohlareng mola, o be o mphe le melamo yeo ya gago gore ke e sware mo go nna. Gona ke tla go fa gore o kgone go ja le nna."	"Why are you licking your fingers in that manner, what exactly are you eating?" The jackal responded: "It's honey my friend." The baboon then said: "Give me some!" The jackal then responded: "I can give you some, only if you allow me to tie you to the tree and give me your weapons. If you do that, then we can eat together."
Ke nnete tšhwene ke ge a dumela gore morwa phukubje a mo kgoke. Phukubje a tšea thapo a kgoka tšhwene, a kgoka tšhwene. A re go fetša a ya sedibeng a nwa meetse a boa a ipušeletša. A re go fetša go nwa a boa a biloša sediba gapegape. A tšea melamo yela, a setla tšhwene ka yona. Ge a fetša a mo tlogela a bofilwe ka mokgwa wona wola, a tšea kgapana ya gagwe ya meetse a napa a ipha naga. Diphoofolo tša naga ka moka di rile ge di boa tša humana tšhwene a bofilwe, tša botšiša tša re: "Naa morwa tšhwene e ka ba e le gore bothata ke eng?" Tšhwene a fetola ka go re: "Ke bofilwe ke phukubje." Tša re: "Batho! O lešilo, o ka dumela phukubje a go bofelela mo mohlareng wa dumela le gore a go setle? Bona gore o tšwa madi a makaakang!"	Indeed, the baboon agreed to be tied up by the jackal. The jackal then took a string and started to tie up the baboon before proceeding to the well and drinking water repeatedly. After drinking, he went on to pollute the water in the well again. He then took the weapons and assaulted the baboon. He left the baboon tied up and took his tin with water in it and disappeared into the bushes. Upon the arrival of the rest of the animals, they found the baboon tied up and asked him: "What happened?" The baboon responded: "I was tied up by the jackal." They looked at him with astonishment and said: "You are stupid, how can you allow the jackal to tie you to the tree and assault you like this? Look how bad you are bleeding!"
Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!	End of narrative!!!