Epiki: Sengwalo sa Sepedi go hlokometšwe diponagalo tša Leduleputswa (1953) le Sebilwane (1961)

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Abstract:
Serudu (1989) and Groenewald (1993) are literary theorists who have attempted to indicate the structure of Sepedi epic narrative. However, in their definitions of the concepts epic narrative, praise poetry, narrative poetry and heroic poetry they differ from each other. They differ from each other in their definitions of the concepts epic narrative, praise poetry, narrative poetry and heroic poetry. Serudu, in his argument, asserts that epic poetry and epic narrative are synonymous, while Groenewald argues that, although they are related to each other, they are not synonyms, because epic narrative focuses on (a) life or the world, as a whole; and (b) the style which is elevated; while heroic poetry focuses on ordinary people/life and their ordinary problems in a certain environment wherein characters, events and milieu play a significant role. The first problem that the discussed theorists reveal is directed at the two concepts: epic poetry and narrative poetry, this is because they imply that epic poetry and narrative poetry are synonymous. Epic poetry is a concept that explains a poem that praises heroism or size; in other words, the important differentiation with this kind of poem is to reveal heroism and size in the person or thing that is being praised. This means that this concept does not differ from that of the praise poem. When Serudu (1992/3:62) explains a praise poem, he stresses that the importance of the events of a praise poem is to reveal ‘heroism or size of the hero that is being praised’. The second problem is that Serudu states that epic poetry is narrative poetry. However, Groenewald (1993:62) does not agree with this statement, he argues that epic poetry and narrative poetry are almost the same but they are not synonyms. What Groenewald argues is that if one is not careful, the two concepts can be confused as one thing when they are analysed, which is not true. Seidler (1959:524-5) supports this, by explaining that epic narrative is aimed at life in general and comes from the poets themselves. Epic narrative is in relation to fantasy. That is why it can be said that its characters are mainly people and ancestors. Its events are in relation to people and to the ancestors.

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